



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Department of Classical Studies offers courses in the languages, literatures, history, art, archaeology, mythology and religions of ancient Greece and Rome — two cultures that provided the intellectual, social, political, legal, scientific, philosophical and artistic origins of Western civilization. Undergraduate students are afforded a great variety of choice, since the field is wide and deep and may be explored through traditional and interdisciplinary approaches. Through classical studies, students gain a detailed knowledge of life in the ancient Mediterranean, Near East, northern Europe and North Africa over a period of more than 4,000 years (3,000 B.C.E. to 1,000 C.E.).

What makes the program distinctive?

Classical studies is flexible and vibrant, changing constantly from new discoveries, methodologies and interpretations. Students can learn from the great literary works in the original languages, Greek and Latin,

or in translation (literary theory and genre studies). They also can learn from the historical and archaeological records of these cultures, including iconic monuments and the concerns of everyday life.

FAST FACTS

Current number of majors and minors: 35

Number of faculty: 6

Can you minor in this program? Yes

Emphasis within the major: archaeology, art, history, language and literature

Popular second majors: anthropology, biology, fine arts, history, language and linguistics, math, music, Near Eastern and Judaic studies

Website: brandeis.edu/departments/classics

ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH

Areas of study

Classical studies offers three tracks: classics (both Greek and Latin); Greek or Latin language and literature; or classical archaeology and ancient history. An independent concentration in classical and English literature is also available in collaboration with the English department.

Scholarly inquiry

Students learn to participate in scholarly collaborations, they learn research methods that are open and honest, and they come to appreciate excellent public dissemination of research results (through traditional publications and the Internet, conferences, and work with local museums and institutions). They learn how to engage scholars across time and geographical space in pursuit of a common scholarly goal — their pursuit of the truth about ancient Greece and Rome.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Hands-on research

The Classical Studies Artifact Research Collection at Brandeis provides interns with training in archival and museum collection management, archaeology and publications.

Classical studies and social justice

The ancient Greeks were the first people in the West to try to define justice and what it means in social, political and philosophical terms, and the Romans were the people who invented the fundamental concepts that survive in the British and American legal system. In this major, close exposure to social justice is a given, and students often become committed to it and to learning for service.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Excellence in teaching

Three of the four full-time faculty of classical studies have won major teaching awards either from inside Brandeis or on the national stage, including the Lerman-Neubauer Prize for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring and the American Philological Association National Award for Excellence in Teaching. In addition, many of our faculty members are widely recognized for their scholarship, pedagogy and impressive research agendas.

Student awards

The department is proud to have a generous supporter in Eunice M. Lebowitz Cohen, who annually has given us a scholarship, four fellowships for individual student projects and two prizes for graduating seniors to be awarded to majors in classical studies.

AFTER BRANDEIS

Diverse career fields

Aside from its aesthetic, spiritual, moral and intellectual value, classical studies has practical uses as well: the study of Latin is a proven key to communication skills in English and the Romance languages, and both Latin and Greek have long been and continue to be sources of technical concepts and vocabulary in all fields of study, from cybernetics to political economy. Classical studies enhances preparation for a number of professional fields, including business, education, government, law, library science and medicine, in addition to graduate study in literature, history, fine arts, archaeology, anthropology, philosophy, religion and classics itself. The major provides students with the knowledge, ethics and critical thinking necessary to function as informed citizens in our complex, global society.

Real jobs

Recent classical studies alumni have gone on to become a doctor of internal medicine at California Pacific Medical Center; the editor-in-chief of New York Press; a consultant at Random Walk Computing; a photographer; the communications coordinator at the American Federation of Arts; and a professor of classics at the University of Texas, San Antonio.

“Professor Muellner is brilliant, open to student ideas and endlessly encouraging. He is a master storyteller who makes even the most miniscule detail suddenly fascinating. His greatest strength, however, is that he really cares about his students and their learning.”

A former student on classical studies professor Leonard Muellner, recipient of the 2008 Lerman-Neubauer Prize for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring.



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