Classics

Overview

Classics is the study of the languages and cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. To study classics is to enter into a world that stretches from Europe to western Asia and North Africa, and in time from the Bronze Age to the fall of Rome and beyond. As a student of classics, you’ll acquire a deep understanding of the civilizations of Greece and Rome, whose role in shaping the modern world is immeasurable.

Classics is an interdisciplinary field combining language study in Greek and Latin with work in archaeology, art history, history, economics, gender and women’s studies, philosophy, theater studies and other disciplines. This field gives you a wide experience of the liberal arts.

Special Opportunities

Students are able to tailor their studies to match their interests, selecting from major tracks that focus on Latin and Greek language, classical civilization, or medieval studies. We support our students who wish to combine their study of classics with other programs, such as teacher certification or a certificate in museum studies.

International Opportunities and Study Abroad

We offer a wide range of opportunities to spend a semester or summer abroad, usually during or following your junior year. Classics majors can study in Rome or Athens, gaining firsthand knowledge of the monuments and artifacts of classical civilizations while continuing their studies of Latin and ancient Greek. You might also participate in an archaeological project, or take classics courses at any number of College-approved international programs.

Selected Courses

Elementary Greek, Elementary Latin; Classical Mythology; Greek Oratory; Homer, Hesiod & Homeric Hymns; Latin Epic Poetry; Roman Drama; Ancient Comedy; Roman Foundation Myths; Greek Tragedy; The Roman World; Romans, Barbarians, and Children of Abraham; Roman Political Culture; The Age of Augustus; Beauty Stand Still Here; Classical Mythology in Western Art

Becca Napolitano

Physics, Classics

Q: How did you decide to come to Connecticut College?
A: I love both physics and Latin and knew that I could never narrow my interests to only one. I looked into how different schools offered double majors and their flexibility, and I also love the stone walls, the water and the warm New England feel!

Q: What motivated you to become a classics major?
A: For me, classics was a marriage between my love of math and literature. The Latin language is formulaic on a microscopic level, with different cases and tenses of verbs; however, on a macroscopic level, you can see the intrinsic beauty formed not only by the content of what you are reading, but by the actual words on the page. A classics major has enabled me to see the liberal arts education for what it truly is — interdisciplinary.

Q: Who’s your favorite Greek or Latin author?
A: This is a tie for me! Lucretius on the one hand mixes my love for both physics and Latin. In De Rerum Natura, Lucretius sets to the rhythm and music of a hexameter the contents of an atomic physics book. On the other hand, Ovid’s sassy nature and sarcastic tone lend themselves to lighter reading which still thousands of years later can make you fall out of your seat laughing!
Faculty

Ellen Cole Lee, C3 Postdoctoral Fellow in Classics
B.A., University of Texas at Austin; Ph.D., University of Michigan
Classical and medieval Latin; reception studies; memory studies; queer and gender studies

Nina Papathanasopoulou, Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics
B.A. National and Kapodistrian University of Athens; M.A., Ph.D., Columbia University
Greek drama and performance; classical mythology and its reception, especially through modern dance; Greek art, architecture; Latin poetry

Tobias Myers, Assistant Professor of Classics
B.A., University of Colorado at Boulder; M.A., Ph.D., Columbia University
Homeric Studies; Greek and Latin literature; ancient magic and religion

Darryl Phillips, Associate Professor of Classics; Chair of Classics Department
A.B., Stanford University; Ph.D., Duke University
Ancient Greek and Roman history; Latin literature of the late Republic and Augustan age; Roman topography

Why Major in Classics

• It’s fascinating and you get to read some of the world’s greatest literature.
• Learning about the past offers a broader perspective on the present.
• Learning Latin and Greek trains your mind to fit details into a bigger picture, and to absorb, analyze and interpret information efficiently and thoughtfully.
• Classicists’ problem solving and critical thinking skills make them competent leaders.
• Mastering Greek and Latin grammar will improve your English writing, expression and communication skills.
• Studying ancient literature invites and rewards creativity and imagination.
• By constantly being intellectually challenged, classics students are trained to cope better with all of life’s challenges and to pursue any profession.
• Classics is the foundation of the liberal arts education.

About Connecticut College

Connecticut College educates students to put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society. A leader in the liberal arts since 1911, the College is home to nationally ranked programs for internships, community action, arts and technology, environmental studies and international studies. Our beautiful 750-acre arboretum campus is located in the historic New England seaport community of New London, Conn.