

The Classical Studies Minor



James Madison University

The Classics at JMU

Classics is the study of the history, art, literature, philosophy and religion of ancient Greece and Rome. The Renaissance humanists and artists, such as Petrarch, Da Vinci and Michelangelo, viewed the Greco-Roman period (ca 500 BC – AD 500) as a golden age of man that provided ideal, “classical” models that inspired the great cultural movements of the Renaissance. Classics has continued to fascinate in the centuries since the Renaissance, inspiring writers and artists as diverse as John Milton, Nicholas Poussin, Jacques-Louis David, John Keats, T.S. Eliot and Eugene O’Neill.

Classics underlies the whole basis of the Liberal Arts. From the beginnings of university education at Bologna in Northern Italy in the eleventh century, Classics has been the starting point for a serious education. It has traditionally been the core of the curriculum. Art, literature, sculpture and architecture have all been fundamentally influenced by Greek and Roman models from the Middle Ages to the present. Even the great statesmen have valued and applied their Classical education. James Madison himself was thoroughly educated in the Classics, as were all of the founding fathers. He modeled the American constitution on a description of the mixed and balanced constitution of the Roman

Republic by the Greek historian Polybius (Universal History, Book VI).

The Minor in Classical Studies promotes the study of classical antiquity. It also draws attention to the importance of ancient thought, art and writing to contemporary literary, historical, artistic, philosophical, political, religious and moral inquiry. Pupils who add the minor will partake of the great traditions of classical education, seeking alongside the poet Keats after beauty and truth and inspired by the questions of the human condition. You too can say with Solon, the great poet, sage and statesman of Athens:

“I grow older always learning many things.”



Faculty

The Minor in Classical Studies fosters interdisciplinary cooperation among scholars in participating departments. The faculty involved in the Minor are:

Michael Allain (History, Foreign Languages):
Ancient Greek, Greco-Roman Civilisation

Charles Bolyard (Philosophy/Religion):
Ancient Philosophy

Stephen Chappell (History): Greek History, Roman History, Byzantine History

Frances Flannery (Philosophy and Religion):
Judaism in the Hellenistic/Roman World

Alan Kirk (Philosophy and Religion): Early Christianity

Paul Klemt (Foreign Languages): Latin, Greek,
Mythology, Classical Literature in translation

Carrington Petras (Foreign Languages): Latin,
Greek, upper-level translation courses in Latin

Kathryn Stevens (Art History): Egyptian Art, Greco-Roman Art

Anne Wiles (Philosophy and Religion): Ancient Philosophy

Advisor and coordinator

Dr. Stephen Chappell

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Email: chappesx@jmu.edu

Requirements

The requirement is successful completion of 24 credits chosen from the following courses offered by participating departments. Students who take Latin or Greek can apply up to 12 credit hours to the minor.

Choose one of the following:

HUM 250. Foundations of Western Culture:
The Greek Experience

HUM 250. Foundations of Western Culture:
The Roman Experience

Choose seven of the following:

GRK 101-102. Elementary Greek I-II

GRK 231-232. Intermediate Greek I-II

LAT 101-102. Elementary Latin I-II

LAT 231-232. Intermediate Latin I-II

ARTH 205. Survey of World Art I: Prehistoric
to Renaissance

ARTH 322. Ancient Art

ARTH 340. Early Medieval Art

ARTH 424. Arts of Ancient Egypt

CLAS 100. Latin and Greek Roots of
English Words

CLAS 265. The Individual and Society in
Ancient Greece and Rome

CLAS 266. Greek and Roman Classics in
Translation

CLAS 337. Human Values: The Classical
Tradition

CLAS 360. Topics in Greek and Roman Culture

ENG 305. Mythology

HIST 101. World History to 1500

HIST 369. Greek History, 3000 BC – AD 267

HIST 370. The Byzantine Empire

HIST 391. Travel Studies Seminar

HIST 467. The Roman Republic

HIST 468. The Roman Empire

HIST 489. Selected Topics in World History¹

PHIL 340. Ancient Greek Philosophy

PHIL 460. Topics in Classical Philosophy

POSC 310. Political Theory Ancient to Early
Modern

REL 240. Jesus and the Moral Life

REL 344. Christianity in the Roman Empire

REL 346. Religions of Greece and Rome

REL 360. History of Christian Thought

REL 460. Topics in Ancient Jewish and Early
Christian Literature



¹When topic is related to Greece or Rome.

Study abroad programmes may apply by petition. Check with the minor coordinator.