

CLASSICS, BA

Contact

Jeffrey S. Carnes

Associate Professor, Classics and Classical Civilizations and Program Coordinator

331 H.B. Crouse Hall

jscarnes@syr.edu

315-443-2068

Why Study Classics?

The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.

L.P. Hartley

Students approaching Classical Studies for the first time may wonder how the study of languages and cultures from antiquity is relevant in the digital era; why study Classics?

First, Classics provides students with many fascinating intellectual opportunities. Because the range of Greek and Latin literature is so diverse, students interested in history, drama, poetry, political science, or philosophy, will find ample material to stimulate their curiosity. Moreover, students will develop the ability to read some of the most influential works of western literature in their original languages, and learn about cultures that are radically different from our own, yet at the same time provide the foundation of many modern ideas and institutions.

Since Classical Studies have traditionally played a central role in education they have left an indelible mark on the intellectual, political, and artistic development of Western Civilization. Countless authors, as diverse in time and place as Dante and Derek Walcott, have looked for inspiration to the classical tradition; political theorists and statesmen, including Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, developed their political ideals through a close reading of ancient historians such as Polybius and Thucydides. Understanding the reception of classical texts and the ways subsequent generations adapted and modified classical ideals will grant students a greater degree of proficiency in civic and cultural history, and help them better understand the cultural politics of their own world.

While not all Classics students wish to become classical scholars, a major in Classics is among the most impressive degrees to have when applying for a job in other fields. The work ethic required for success in the languages, the intellectually challenging nature of the grammar and syntax of Greek and Latin, and the interdisciplinary nature of the field are only a few reasons why Classics majors are highly respected and sought-after job candidates. Furthermore, because of the historical role of Classics in education many terms and concepts in various fields are derived from Greek or Latin. For these reasons, Classics majors often find employment in Law, Medical Sciences, Government/Politics, Writing and Journalism, and Education.

Why study Classics? To find a challenging and immensely rewarding field of study, and to explore the familiar yet foreign country that is our past.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify basic syntactic structures of their language of concentration
2. Acquire working vocabulary of several hundred words in their language of concentration

3. Read and translate simple texts in the language at sight in addition to more complex texts in that language (which will include both poetry and prose) with the aid of a dictionary
4. Describe/analyze the cultural context that produced the texts studied in Classics, incorporating Greek and Roman literary, political, and social history
5. Synthesize their close reading and analysis of texts to conduct research in the field, using the major research tools and methods used to study Greek and Latin

Major Requirements

Greek Emphasis

The Major in Classics with Greek Emphasis consists of 27 credits in Greek, with at least 18 credits coming from courses numbered 300 and above. Courses in Latin numbered 300 and above may be substituted up to a total of 6 credits. Courses from the approved list for Classical Civilization may be substituted up to a total of 6 credits with the approval of the Director.

Latin Emphasis

The Major in Classics with Latin Emphasis consists of 27 credits in Latin, with at least 18 credits coming from courses numbered 300 and above. Courses in Greek may be substituted up to a total of 9 credits. Courses from the approved list for Classical Civilization may be substituted up to a total of 6 credits with the approval of the Director.

College of Arts and Sciences Requirements

For all Arts and Sciences|Maxwell students, successful completion of a bachelor's degree in this major requires a minimum of 120 credits, 96 of which must be Arts and Sciences|Maxwell credits, completion of the Liberal Arts Core (<https://coursecatalog.syracuse.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#text>) requirements, and the requirements for this major (30 credits) that are listed above.

Dual Enrollments:

Students dually enrolled in **Newhouse*** and Arts and Sciences|Maxwell will complete a minimum of 122 credits, with at least 90 credits in Arts and Sciences|Maxwell coursework and an Arts and Sciences|Maxwell major.

*Students dually enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences|Maxwell as first year students must complete the Liberal Arts Core (<https://coursecatalog.syracuse.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#text>). Students who transfer to the dual program after their first year as singly enrolled students in the Newhouse School will satisfy general requirements for the dual degree program by completing the Newhouse Core Requirements.

Undergraduate University Requirements

The following requirements and experiences apply to all Syracuse University Undergraduate matriculated degree programs.

- IDEA Course Requirement (<https://coursecatalog.syracuse.edu/undergraduate/idea-course-requirement/>)
- First Year Seminar (<https://coursecatalog.syracuse.edu/undergraduate/courses/fys/>)