About the Department

The pioneer of the interdisciplinary approach, the field of classics encompasses the languages, literature, philosophy, and history of the Mediterranean from the second millennium BC to the fifth century AD. The Classics Department presents as wide a range of courses as possible in this diverse but fundamentally unified field.

In each of the course offerings in the Classics Department students explore cultural phenomena that lie at the root of our own experience. Modern Western languages, literature, philosophy, and history have carried within them the deep grain of a classical past, which is at once surprisingly familiar and intriguingly alien. In courses in ancient history, culture, and literature based on texts in translation, students use a wide range of sources and methods to work towards an understanding of the ancient Mediterranean, both on its own terms and in its relation to later cultures.

The Classics Department also offers courses in Latin and ancient Greek each year. Students learn the sounds and structures of the language and a basic reading vocabulary in introductory courses; in intermediate and advanced courses students develop their fluency and accuracy in reading and deepen their appreciation of style, rhetoric, and nuance. In all Latin and Greek courses, students also use the languages as a way of entering the heart of the vibrant world of classical antiquity. As an added bonus, students should gain from their study of either language valuable insights into the substance and structure of English and the modern European languages.

Students who complete a major or minor in Classics will progressively build a more complex and comprehensive understanding of the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome by studying them from a variety of angles, and by bringing a growing body of knowledge to bear on their studies. Students who major in Classics learn to conduct research and to develop a sustained argument on a focused topic informed by a broad understanding of the field.

General Requirements for the Major or Minor

General university degree requirements stipulate that 1) at least four units of the major or three units of the minor be taken in residence at Puget Sound; 2) students earn a GPA of 2.0 in courses taken for the major or the minor; and 3) all courses taken for a major or minor must be taken for graded credit. Any exceptions to these stipulations are indicated in the major and minor degree requirements listed below.

Requirements for the Major

Students considering applying to graduate school in Classics or a related field should consult with a member of the Classics faculty as soon as possible. Such students are strongly encouraged to choose the Language track and to take additional units of Greek and Latin.

I. Classical Languages Track: (10 or 11 units)

Six units of either Greek or Latin

OR

Five units of study in one language and two units in the other;

CLSC 200, 201, 210, or 231;

CLSC 211 or 212;

One additional course in Classical Civilization (see list below) numbered 299 or above;

Senior Thesis (CLSC 490), to be taken after both the required 200-level Classical Civilization courses and Latin or Greek 201 or equivalent have been completed. In the semester prior to registration for CLSC 400, students must complete a Thesis Proposal Form and submit it for approval to their thesis advisor and the Classics Chair. For more information on the thesis and the approval process, contact the Classics Chair.

At least five major units must be completed at Puget Sound.

Note: Since the Greek or Latin Language track requires at least five terms of Greek or Latin, students who begin the study of classical languages at Puget Sound must normally begin by the first semester of the sophomore year in order to complete the major by the end of their fourth year. Students who enter Puget Sound with some Latin or Greek should consult with the Classics Department about placement.

II. Classical Studies Track: (10 units)

CLSC 200, 201, 210, or 231;

CLSC 211 or 212;

CLSC 280 or ARTH 360 or 361;

Three courses in either Greek or Latin;

Three additional courses in Classical Civilization (see list below), Greek, or Latin, at least two of which must be numbered 299 or above;

Senior Thesis (CLSC 490) to be taken after both the required 200-level Classical Civilization courses and Latin or Greek 201 or equivalent have been completed. In the semester prior to registration for CLSC 400, students must complete a Thesis Proposal Form and submit it for approval to their thesis advisor and the Classics Chair. For more information on the thesis and the approval process, contact the Classics Chair.

At least five major units must be completed at Puget Sound.

Note: Classical Studies Majors may meet no more than one unit of their Classical Studies requirements with coursework from a minor or second major. Majors may satisfy no more than one Classical Studies requirement with coursework from the university core.

Requirements for the Minor (6 units)

Three courses in either Greek or Latin;

Three courses in Classical Civilization (see list below), Greek, or Latin, two of which must be numbered 299 or above;

Note: A student may use no more than one unit from his/her major field or another minor field to fulfill the requirements of the Classics minor.

Minors may satisfy no more than one Classics minor requirement from university core requirements.

Courses in Classical Civilization

ARTH 360 Art and Architecture of Ancient Greece

ARTH 361 Art and Architecture of Ancient Rome

CLSC 200 Introduction to Classical Literature

CLSC 201 Ancient Tragedy

CLSC 210 Classical Mythology

CLSC 211 Greek History

CLSC 212 Roman History

CLSC 231 Greek and Roman Epic

CLSC 280 The Archaeology of the Mediterranean World

CLSC 304 The Ancient Novel

CLSC 308 Ancient Cities
CLSC 309 The Roman Revolution
CLSC 310 Theories of Myth
CLSC 311 Ancient Comedy
CLSC 318 Greek and Roman Religion
CLSC 325 Sex and Gender in Classical Antiquity
CLSC 334 The Archaeology of Power
CLSC 339 Sci-Fi, Fantasy, and the Classics
CLSC 375 Special Topics in Classics
CLSC 390 Late Antiquity and the “Fall” of the Roman Empire
CONN 377 PTSD in the Ancient World
PHIL 215 Ancient Philosophy
PHIL 361 Aristotle
PHYS 299 The History and Practice of Ancient Astronomy
PG 340 Democracy and the Ancient Greeks

Course Offerings
Unless otherwise specified, each course carries 1 unit of credit and is offered at least once each academic year. Please see “Frequency of Course Offerings” on page 10.

Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry. See Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry in the Core Curriculum section of this Bulletin for course descriptions (page 10).

CONN 377 Caesar in Vietnam: PTSD in the Ancient World
SSI/SSI 103 Alexander the Great
SSI/SSI 106 Cleopatra: History and Myth
SSI 131 Athens, Freedom, and the Liberal Arts
SSI 131 Social Justice and Radical Politics in Early 20th Century America

Other courses offered by Classics Department faculty. See Connections in the Core Curriculum section of this Bulletin for Connections course descriptions (page 24).

HON 211 Metamorphosis and Identity
  Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.
HUM 210 Power and Culture in Periclean Athens and Augustan Rome
  Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.
HUM 304 Ancients and Moderns

100 Classics Proseminar 0.25 activity unit  Students become familiar with the range of sub-specialties and sub-disciplines within the field of Classics, share their own thesis research, and comment on that of others. The proseminar is open to all levels, but junior and senior majors and minors are especially encouraged to enroll in the course.  Offered every semester. May be repeated for credit.

200 Introduction to Classical Literature This course is a true survey—a dizzying whirl through first Greek, then Roman writings. A central and unifying concern will be how the various works we read in part react to the earlier Homeric material as well as how they expand and/or contradict Homeric notions of heroism, right action, knowledge, poetic ambition, the roles of gods, women, and slaves, authority, justice, etc. Texts from the time of Homer to the late Roman Empire will be studied with an eye to how they echo and reshape the world of ideas within Homer’s Iliad to speak to their own time period. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered every other year.

201 Ancient Tragedy This course explores the nature and meaning of ancient Greek and Roman tragedy. It begins by examining the social, political, and physical contexts in which tragedies were performed in classical antiquity. Students then read and discuss select plays by the three great surviving tragic dramatists of fifth-century Athens (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides) and the only surviving dramatist of Imperial Rome (Seneca). Attention is given to understanding how these plays might have been performed and interpreted within the Athenian and Roman cultures in which they were produced. Throughout the course students also discuss modern critical approaches to the plays and attempt to generate their own approaches. Thus this course aims to raise a greater understanding of both ancient drama in its historical context and its imaginative and transformative potential in the modern world. Satisfies the Artistic Approaches core requirement. Offered every other year.

209 History of the Ancient Near East This course will study the growth and development of the ancient Near East with particular focus on the two great cultural empires, Mesopotamia and Egypt, as the foundations of the ancient Mediterranean civilizations. The ancient Near East produced the oldest written texts in the world, and these provide a window into the ways of life, rituals, beliefs, hopes, and fears of people living 2,500 to 5,000 years ago. Students use these texts to explore some of the most fundamental transformations in human history: the emergence of cities, the invention of the state, the creation and destruction of empires, and, overlooking it all, the gods who brought hope and terror to the inhabitants of the ancient Near East. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.

210 Classical Mythology This course explores myths and legends from classical antiquity and the light they cast on ancient conceptions of men and women, civilization, nature, and the divine. The embodiment of myths in ancient literature and art is the central focus of the course, as is the role of myth in Greek and Roman religious ritual and belief. The course also takes note of the subsequent life of Greek myths in Roman, medieval, Renaissance and modern literature, art, and society and examines some of the principal modern theoretical perspectives on myth in general and Greek myth in particular. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered every other year.

211 Greek History This course makes an odyssey through Greek political, social, cultural, and economic history from the Bronze Age (c. 1200 BCE) to the death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE). The emphasis is less on the chronicle of events than on understanding the changing nature of Greek society during this period. Major topics to be explored include the development of the city-state as a political unit; notions of equality in ancient Greece; and the simultaneous flourishing of the arts and building of an empire at Athens under Pericles. Students learn to use both archaeological remains and literary texts, including histories and poetry, to reconstruct the nature of Greek society. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.

212 Roman History How did a small farming village on the banks of the Tiber River become mistress of an empire stretching from Britain to Egypt? This course explores the political institutions, social structures, and cultural attitudes that enabled Rome to become the world’s only superpower at the time. One theme of the course is how that rise to power affected the lives of the Romans and how the Romans affected the lives of all those they encountered. Roman constitutional developments, the religions of the Roman world, and the connection between Roman culture (including art, literature, and popular entertainment such as gladiatorial games) feature prominently among the topics covered. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement.

231 Greek and Roman Epic This course introduces the epic genre in Greece and Rome. The course concentrates on a selection of ancient epic poems including Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey and Vergil’s Aeneid. Students consider each epic as an individual cultural and artistic prod-
uct, but also how later epics draw upon and respond to earlier ones. The gradually more complex understanding of the epic genre built into the class allows students to investigate how the Greek and Roman epics combine cosmology and human narratives in order to explore the place of human beings in the universe; the relationship between gods and mortals; and the connection between moral, social, or historical order and cosmological order. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Offered every other year.

280 The Archaeology of the Mediterranean World  This course introduces students to the field of classical archaeology, both describing “how to do” archaeology (that is, the techniques of locating, retrieving, and analyzing remains) and reflecting upon how the nature of these techniques influences our understanding of the past. Students discuss specific archaeological sites in their historical, social, anthropological, economic, religious, and architectural contexts. Students explore these sites not as monuments to be admired, but as a means to understand archaeology as a discipline. Attention is given to issues relevant to classical archaeology today, including the looting of ancient sites, issues of cultural property, and ethics in archaeology. Students thus gain an appreciation of the complexities of present-day archaeological research and to both the benefits and limitations of the role of archaeology in creating our images of the past. Offered every other year.

304 The Ancient Novel  This course explores the Greek and Roman ancestors of the modern novel. Ancient prose fiction opens many windows onto ancient attitudes towards gender, love and sexuality, religious belief and practice, and social relations. The ancient novels also happen to be fun to read, full of hairbreadth escapes, wide-ranging travel, intense and often conflicting emotions, complex and surprising events, and humor, sometimes delicate, sometimes shocking. Offered every third year.

305 Race and Ethnicity in the Ancient World  Students in this course explore ancient Greek and Roman ideas about race and ethnicity and reflect upon how that thinking remains influential today. Students investigate how categories of race and ethnicity are presented in the literature of the Ancient Mediterranean through reading such authors as Homer, Herodotus, Aristotle, Vergil, Caeser, and Tacitus and through examining visual evidence. They study concepts such as racial formation and origin; ancient theories of ethnic superiority; and linguistic, religious, and cultural differentiation as a basis for ethnic differentiation. They also examine ancient racism as seen in such social processes as colonization, migration, assimilation, and imperialism. Students have to consider the impact of a number of divergent factors on conceptions of race and ethnicity, including: power (who defines the categories?); source (do all authors treat these terms the same way?); and context (in what ways do identities shift due to historical events and changing political or social contexts?).

308 Ancient Cities  This course examines the history and architecture of the central institution of the Greco-Roman world, the city. The course focuses on the archaeological remains of cities throughout the Ancient Mediterranean and addresses issues of the use of space in ancient town-planning and the political and ideological statements made by urban art and architecture. In addition to tracing historical changes in urban development, major topics of study include the city as an institution, the effect of urbanization on the lives of the inhabitants, and the interpretation of material remains. Offered every third year.

309 The Roman Revolution  This course explores the period encompassing the disintegration of the Republic and the emergence of autocracy in the Roman world (133 BCE – 14 CE). Students study some of the most powerful personalities of Roman history (Sulla, Caesar, Cicero, Antony, Augustus) and some of its most tumultuous events (civil war, rebellion, riot, reigns of terror, and assassination). Students not only acquire a solid understanding and knowledge of the narrative of the period but also become familiar with its basic controversies, including the relative importance of both individuals and groups in the breakdown of the Republic and the problem of consolidation and institutionalization of autocracy. Offered every third year.

310 Theories of Myth  This course examines classical, world, and contemporary mythologies, with a particular emphasis on the history of theories used to study mythology. The course starts with Greco-Roman theories for analyzing classical myths, then analyzes in detail theories that have arisen since the end of the eighteenth century: comparative approaches, linguistics, psychology, structuralism, religion and ritual, class-, race-, and gender-based approaches. It is recommended that students have previously taken a course in myth or literary/gender theory (e.g., CLSC 210, ENGL 370, QOS 201, etc.). Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, and Power graduation requirement. Offered every three years.

311 Ancient Comedy  This course surveys the surviving plays of Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus, and Terence. The class discusses the structural features of Old Comedy (such as the chorus and the parabasis), the canonical definitions of Old, Middle, and New comedy, as well as the revolution of style and taste that differentiates Menander from Aristophanes. In the mythic world of tragedy, mortal trespass results in tragic consequences. In comedy, on the other hand, the mortal realm—flawed, confused, and rudely physical—arrives at the curtain both victorious and fecund. The class looks at the ways in which comedy transgresses social norms and the role of the carnivalesque in ancient culture. Students need not know Greek or Latin but must be willing to perform in front of their classmates. Offered every other year.

318 Greek and Roman Religion  Students examine the religions of ancient Greece and Rome and the ways in which these religious systems functioned within the context of their societies. “Religion” meant something very different to the Greeks and Romans than it does to modern Americans: it penetrated daily life, politics and law in ways that can seem foreign to us. The course utilizes literary, archaeological and artistic evidence to understand religious practices from the time of the Greek city-states to the establishment of Christianity as the Roman state religion. Topics covered include Greek and Roman conceptions of divinity, temples and sanctuaries, rituals, personal or family religion, gender roles within ancient religion, and the existence of mystery cults. Students read both primary and secondary works to understand Greek and Roman religion as a system of “things done” (ritual) and “things said” (prayer, myth, etc.) and discuss the extent to which it is proper to add the phrase “things believed.” Offered every three years.

325 Sex and Gender in Classical Antiquity  This course examines sex, gender, and sexualities in ancient Greece and Rome. Building upon foundational readings in feminist and queer theory, this course examines critically both historical evidence for and representations of love, gender, sex, & sexuality in a wide range of ancient literary texts, as well as epigraphic, art historical, and archaeological sources. Through this combination of using both Greek and Roman primary sources and modern gender theory, this course aims to make sense of such topics as women’s lives, marriage, prostitution, sexual violence, medicine, pederasty, sex manuals, and non-normative or ‘Other’-bodied (e.g., transgendered) individuals. This course has no pre-requisites, but it is strongly recommended that you have taken at least one 200-level course in Classics or a course on gender theory (e.g., QOS 201). Offered every three years.
334 The Archaeology of Power This course takes a large-scale approach to the archaeological remains of empires and states in the Mediterranean and Near East in the first millennium BCE. In this course, students learn, through studying material remains of various states and empires, how to (1) outline and investigate the diverse configurations, enactments, and experiences of power in human history, and (2) situate the development of the Greek city-states and the Roman Empire within larger Mediterranean and Near Eastern imperial systems. Cultural groups to be considered include the Greeks and Romans as well as the Assyrians, Babylonians, Lydians, Phrygians, Persians, Egyptians, Israelites, Etruscans, and Phoenicians. Sources to be examined include the development and layout of cities as they relate to social stratification and power structures, funerary monuments, art and symbolism and their intersections with ideologies of power, the materiality of violence and resistance, and primary written sources in translation. As well, various theoretical approaches to imperialism, colonialism, identity, and resistance are considered and evaluated. Overall, students will practice analyzing and evaluating both primary and secondary sources for the purposes of understanding state and empire formation in the ancient world.

339 Sci-Fi, Fantasy, and the Classics This course examines the ancient history of the future and the might-have-been—the role of Greco-Roman antiquity in modern science fiction and fantasy. This course begins with discussion about definitions, histories, and theories of ‘science fiction’ and ‘fantasy,’ with emphasis on their roots in and relations to ancient classics. Students then focus on representative modern texts in various media (e.g., short stories, novels, films, comics); such texts may include Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, Franz Kafka’s Metamorphosis, J. R. R. Tolkien’s The Hobbit, episodes of Star Trek, the works of Ridley Scott, or J. K. Rowling’s Harry Potter novels. Students focus on themes of perennial human significance (e.g., the uses of history, technology, fantastic voyages, metamorphosis, knowledge/wonder, etc.) and consider critical approaches that may help us understand more deeply the similarities and differences between classical and speculative thinking. To engage in this work, students will learn the basic concepts, tools, and research techniques of studies in the ‘classical tradition’ and ‘classical reception,’ a still-emergent but increasingly important field within the discipline of Classics.

375 Special Topics in Classics This seminar involves an in-depth examination of selected topics in the classical world. A different topic may be selected each time the class is offered in accord with the interests of the students and the expertise of the faculty. Relevant theoretical approaches and current research are explored. Students are responsible for research papers and presentations under close supervision of the faculty. Prerequisite: two Classics courses numbered 200 or above, or permission of the instructor. Offered every third year or as needed.

390 Late Antiquity and the “Fall” of the Roman Empire This course explores the world of Late Antiquity and the problem of the “fall” of the Roman Empire. Students encounter a variety of perspectives on this period, but examine in some detail the impact of Christianity on the Empire, the Germanic invasions into the Western Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, and the place of “moral decadence” in theories about the fall of the Empire. Offered every third year.

490 Senior Thesis This course is to be taken after both the required 200-level Classical Civilization courses and Latin or Greek 201 or equivalent have been completed. In the semester prior to registration for CLSC 490, students must complete a Thesis Proposal Form and submit it for approval to their thesis advisor and the Classics Chair. For more information on the thesis and the approval process, contact the Classics Chair.

495/496 Independent Study

Greek

101 Introduction to Ancient Greek I This course is an introduction to the classical Greek of Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE and is primarily designed to provide students a foundation for reading Greek tragedy, philosophy, and history in the original. Special emphasis is placed on the sound of Greek. Students also become familiar with some of the fundamental characteristics of Greek civilization. Successful completion of this course and Greek 102 satisfies the university’s foreign language requirement.

102 Introduction to Ancient Greek II This course is a continuation of 101. Students further their study of the basic grammar and vocabulary of classical Greek with the aim of reading Greek tragedy, philosophy, and history in the original. Special emphasis is placed on the sound of Greek. Students also become familiar with some of the fundamental characteristics of Greek civilization. Successful completion of this course and Greek 101 satisfies the university’s foreign language requirement. Prerequisite: 101 and 102 are sequential courses; 101 with grade of C- or higher or permission of the instructor required for 102.

201 Intermediate Greek Review of grammar, readings of ancient authors. Prerequisite: GRK 102 or permission of instructor. Offered Fall term only.

301 Advanced Greek Reading Students read substantial selections from ancient authors. The majority of class time is spent on the study of the syntax, semantics, and stylistics of those readings in order to build students’ speed and accuracy in reading Greek, and to facilitate appreciation of the texts. In addition, students become familiar with the cultural contexts of their readings through discussion, brief lectures, secondary readings, and student reports and papers. Reading selections vary: they may be centered on the production of a single author, or organized around a cultural theme, literary genre, or historical event. Authors and topics are changed each semester; contact the professor for specifics. Prerequisite: GRK 101, 102, and 201, or equivalent. May be repeated for credit.

Latin

101 Elementary Latin I This course is an introduction to classical Latin (particularly as spoken, written, and read in the first centuries BCE and provides students a foundation for reading Roman poetry, drama, oratory, and history in the original. Special emphasis is placed on the pronunciation of Latin. Students also become familiar with some of the fundamental characteristics of Roman civilization. Successful completion of this course and Latin 101 satisfies the university’s foreign language requirement.

102 Elementary Latin II This course is a continuation of 101. Students further their study of the basic grammar and vocabulary of classical Latin with the aim of reading Roman poetry, drama, oratory, and history in the original. Special emphasis is placed on the pronunciation of Latin. Students also become familiar with some of the fundamental characteristics of Roman civilization. Successful completion of this course and Latin 101 satisfies the university’s foreign language requirement. Prerequisite: 101 and 102 are sequential courses; 101 with grade of C- or higher or permission of the instructor required for 102.

201 Intermediate Latin This course is a continuation of first-year Latin. After a brief grammatical review, students read selections from...
ancient authors. Prerequisite: LAT 102 or permission of instructor.

Offered Fall term only

301 Advanced Latin Reading Students read substantial selections from ancient authors. The majority of class time is spent on the study of the syntax, semantics, and stylistics of those readings in order to build students’ speed and accuracy in reading Latin, and to facilitate appreciation of the texts. In addition, students become familiar with the cultural contexts of their readings through discussion, brief lectures, secondary readings, and student reports and papers. Reading selections vary: they may be centered on the production of a single author, or organized around a cultural theme, literary genre, or historical event. Authors and topics are changed each semester; contact the professor for specifics. Prerequisite: LAT 101, 102, and 201, or equivalent. May be repeated for credit.