Classics Department Handbook

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Selection of the Chair

Chairs serve on a rotating basis among tenured faculty members. The colleague who has served least recently normally succeeds to the chair unless scheduled for a leave in the upcoming year. The chair serves for three years unless a leave intervenes. Succession should be determined by early March to allow inclusion in the course catalog. The outgoing and new chair should consult with the ADC in May or June of the transition year.

Duties of the Chair

The chair:

Meetings and Administration

- Meets at least weekly with the ADC to discuss department business not addressed in ongoing email exchanges or personal contact.

- Sets agenda for department meetings, after consulting with department members and the ADC.

- Communicates with the provost about department business and concerns, and reports to members about the monthly chairs meetings.

- Makes recommendations about equipment and supplies, including major capital expenditures [see below under Finances].
• Consults with department members and collaborates with the ADC to plan department social events and meetings with department majors. [See Life of the Department on the website of the Office of the Provost]

**Finances**

• Consults with department members and drafts requested department responses to the administration or to faculty ad hoc and standing committees.

• Makes recommendations about equipment and supplies for purchase and approves transactions in Workday, in consultation with the Office of the Provost and in accordance with college policies. [Provost Office website]

• Oversees the budget and consults quarterly with the ADC about purchases or expenses (such as furniture, painting, or construction) over $500.

• May approve up to $250 per co-sponsorship to support guest speakers or events (see Co-sponsorship for more details)

**The Majors**

• Gives approval to students declaring the majors in Classics, Greek, Latin, and Classical Civilization in accordance with procedures set by the Registrar’s Office, and selects an advisor for the student in consultation with the student and with preferred advisor [see Advising].

• Monitors and reports to department members course enrollments, numbers of current and prospective majors, and students studying abroad or with intentions for such study.

• Meets upon request with prospective applicants to the college indicating an interest in Greek, Latin, or classical civilization.

**Supervisory**

• Supervises in collaboration with the ADC the on-boarding of new regular faculty, visiting faculty, and instructors of single courses in order assure that their needs are being met in terms of housing, office space, and IT and library support.
• Supports, if requested, members dealing with unfamiliar procedures under the student community standards (disciplinary) code [see Community Standards].

• Makes sure that all department members are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the college’s Title IX procedures [see Title IX].

• Makes sure that all members are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the college’s Statement of Academic and Expressive Freedom.

• Resolves, if requested, conflicts between individual members and students.

• Is available for and responsive to complaints about or perceptions of a hostile working environment from members or from the ADC.

• Makes sure that untenured colleagues are receiving the balance of support and autonomy that they find productive and makes sure that any questions about review procedures are fully answered for pre-tenure colleagues [see Mentorship Program].

• Organizes the annual review conversations for untenured colleagues at the end of the academic year and writes a memo of understanding to be approved by the person being reviewed.

• Coordinates classroom observation for pre-tenure faculty and, if requested, visitors.

• Coordinates reappointment and tenure cases.

• Coordinates discussion of FTE needs and writes FTE requests.

• Leads hiring searches, while assuring that all departmental participants are conversant with the college’s protocols in regard to interviewing applicants.

• Organizes, in collaboration with the ADC, the distribution of course teaching times in order to avoid time conflicts and to accommodate, if possible, the daily schedules of members with care responsibilities.

• Makes sure that responsibilities within the department are equitably distributed. (All regular members customarily teach the same distribution of introductory and advanced courses, and courses taught in translation. Senior thesis committees normally include all members of the department.)

• Makes sure, in consultation with the ADC, that problems are fully addressed about space limits, traffic, and environmental health in Grosvenor House.

Classics Department Handbook (Updated June, 2024)
• Coordinates, in collaboration with the ADC, student evening access to the department seminar room for study (Grosvenor 12), making sure that security arrangements are acceptable to other office occupants in Grosvenor House and to the campus police.

• Coordinates the annual award of the Harry de Forest Smith Scholarship on the basis of a competitive exam.

• Maintains liaison with the Classics departments at Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts.

Duties of the ADC

The ADC:

Curriculum and Major Support
• Provides information about the major in response to student or faculty inquiries and during Orientation.

• Tracks progress of all Classics majors.

• Assists in scheduling Classics courses.

• Updates course and department information in the course catalog.

• Shares Classics course information with other Five College Classics Departments.

• Assists as needed with course preparations such as e-reserves, video reserves, print reserves, course packs, Moodle, textbook ordering, and desk copies.

• Assists faculty and the chair in managing issues that arise with respect to student enrollment, major declarations, etc.

• Keeps records of department syllabi, course materials, enrollment numbers, etc.

• Provides list of qualified peer tutors, as recommended by department faculty members, to Office of Student Affairs.
Office Management

- Serves as the first point of contact in the Classics Department.
- Maintains inventory, supplies, and department common spaces.
- Grants access to Grosvenor 12 for majors in need of after-hours study space; keeps students’ contracts on file for annual renewal.
- Maintains department files and electronic resources, including confidential materials.
- Manages budget, processes invoices, and tracks expenses for department accounts.
- Supports student workers employed by faculty members or the department.
- Manages co-sponsorship requests.
- Maintains department website.
- Responds to departmental inquiries.
- Manages Grosvenor House copy machine, maintaining paper and ink supplies; charges Spanish and SWAGS departments quarterly for machine usage.
- Catalogs new additions to the Holloway Classics Library.

Administrative Support

- Serves as department liaison to the college community.
- Facilitates the transition between outgoing and incoming chairs, in part by maintaining a chair/ADC calendar for each academic year.
- Helps orient visiting faculty as well as new tenure-track faculty.
- Assists in faculty searches by coordinating search process logistics for candidate review, interviews, and communication.
- Assists in reappointment, tenure, and promotion cases by managing the course evaluation process for untenured faculty, maintaining comprehensive records, and assisting the department in preparing materials for review.
- Schedules, coordinates, and publicizes department events, including receptions, dinners, and visiting speakers.
- Manages Google group for Five College Classics events.
- Collaborates with the chair to plan department meetings and social events.
- Collaborates with the chair to design a budget proposal for the next academic year (usually in January or February).
- Supports faculty members and the chair with other administrative items such as equipment requests, external reviews, etc.
- Facilitates Classics Club organization and activities for majors, as interest dictates.
- Manages annual administration of the Harry de Forest Smith exam and the Collar Exam, and supports the department in determining eligibility for other department prizes.
- Solicits applications for the Anne Lebeck Fellowship in Classical Studies, organizes submissions for evaluation by the department, and requests payment to students.

Department Meetings

The department meets at the beginning and end of every semester and monthly thereafter, unless circumstances require additional meetings. Meetings are not typically held during the summer. The chair collaborates with the ADC to set and distribute the agenda in advance. Full-time visitors attend with vote. Faculty on leave are invited to attend in person or remotely if in-person attendance is not possible. All voting members of the department should be informed when upcoming votes will determine department policy or curriculum. The ADC attends when appropriate. The chair takes a minute of business transacted and decisions reached when the ADC is not present; this minute is shared with the ADC and archived in the department's electronic files. Decisions are normally reached by consensus or, failing that, by anonymous vote.
Faculty Leaves

The size of the department allows a cycle in which normally only one member is on leave at a time. Leave intentions should be shared at the start of the academic year preceding the year in which the leave is to be taken. Faculty members then must submit the online form Request for Sabbatical Leave by November 1. See Requesting a Sabbatical Leave or Leave of Absence on the website of the Office of the Provost.

Faculty Hiring

When a faculty member informs colleagues of impending retirement or of permanent departure from the college, the chair initiates discussion about formulating a request for a replacement FTE, full-time visitor, or one-course hires. The chair is responsible for drafting the FTE request letter or other requests to the Office of the Provost. See Faculty Hiring on the website of that office.

When single-course hires are necessary to support the curriculum, the chair will reach out to potential candidates early in the spring semester to make sure that courses will be covered in the next academic year. Single-course hires may teach anything in the department curriculum, lecture courses or language courses, although they usually do not teach First Year Seminars. They may teach two courses across two semesters, but may not teach more than one course per semester, as this teaching load would require changing their status to full-time.

Staff Hiring and Supervision

The chair, in consultation with the other members of the department and the office of human resources will determine ADC hiring procedures when the need arises.

The ADC works with the chair to formulate a regular work schedule that meets the needs of the department, while taking into account the ADC’s other responsibilities. If the ADC will be out of the office for any reason, then the ADC should inform the chair in a timely manner. The chair will inform other members should absence significantly affect the flow of work in the office. The chair approves the ADC’s weekly timesheets.
The annual performance review of the ADC is conducted by the chair, who solicits input from the other members. See Performance Management Process (PMP) on the website of the Office of Human Resources.

The ADC’s duties are laid out in the ADC’s job description (on file in the office of human resources). A more detailed list of duties is listed above under Duties of the ADC. If a new task or responsibility is being considered for the ADC, the ADC and chair should discuss the appropriateness of the task and its relationship to other priorities. If both parties agree that it should be included in the ADC’s responsibilities, then the ADC’s job description should be updated accordingly.

The chair meets weekly with the ADC to discuss department business. See Department and Program Chairs: Calendar/Tasks.

Finances

The chair reviews the budget and department expenses quarterly. The chair meets with the ADC annually to devise the budget for the next fiscal year per guidelines from the Office of the Provost. See Budget Process and Budget Monitoring. In the first department meeting of the year, the chair announces the departmental funds available, both in the annual budget from Amherst College for the fiscal year as well as in the Holloway Classics Fund. All members of the department have access to these funds. The Classics Fund is for use at the department’s discretion (this was confirmed in May 2024 with Kate Marantz in Advancement) and is one means to defray the cost of purchasing books for the Holloway Classics Library. The Classics Fund balance rolls over annually, but does not accrue interest (and thus they effectively loses value over time when unused). In recent years (since 2021) the Provost’s office has exerted pressure on the department to draw down this fund, in certain cases asking that additional funding via the Provost’s Office for class-related trips or research be paid for or matched by money taken from the Classics Fund. At a minimum, the Provost’s official policy is that class-related travel must now first use available departmental funds. Colleagues who anticipate needing additional funding for research-related travel may wish to apply for a FRAP, when feasible.

Department members regularly share any surplus student entertainment funds to help defray the costs of departmental events for students (e.g., end-of-semester gatherings).
Invited Lectures

Faculty who wish to invite a lecture should apply for funding to the lecture committee, requesting the full amount possible. If additional funding is required to cover, for example, an exceptionally high honorarium, the chair may, if the budget permits, offer $250 in addition to the maximum lecture committee funding. The chair may also offer up to this amount if asked by other departments to co-sponsor a lecture (see below). The department has traditionally covered the cost of additional entertainment expenses beyond the lecture committee’s award. All members of the department have typically been invited to the entertainment for invited lecturers (in addition to the public lecture).

External Reviews

We follow the procedures outlined by the Office of the Provost on their website. The most recent review was completed in Spring/Fall 2016. In light of the 10-year cycle for reviews, the department will begin crafting its report in Fall 2025 for the external committee visit in Fall 2026. See Guidelines for External Reviews.

Advising

The chair and the ADC assign new advisees in the major to department members, taking account of the student’s stated preferences, previous classroom experience with the faculty member, and the current number of advisees that the member has.

Co-Sponsorship

The department receives requests for co-sponsorship of events and speakers from other departments and from offices and programs in the college, the Five Colleges, and occasionally from external organizations. Normally the chair consults with members in a department meeting or by email. Events should be accessible to—and of interest to—Amherst College students.

Mentorship Program
“So [Telemachus] spoke in prayer, and Athena drew near to him in the likeness of Mentor, both in form and in voice; and she spoke, and addressed him with winged words . . . So spoke Athena, daughter of Zeus, nor did Telemachus tarry long after he had heard the voice of the goddess, but went his way to the house, his heart heavy within him” (Homer, Odyssey 2).

The chair will discuss with a tenure-track faculty member the desirability of a formal mentoring relationship with a member of the department’s tenured faculty as soon as the tenure-track colleague arrives on campus. Since the department realizes, however, that different personalities work differently, and that certain junior faculty members may prefer a less formal arrangement with a range of colleagues, no judgment will arise should the junior faculty member opt not to be assigned a formal mentor.

If the tenure-track faculty member opts not to be assigned a mentor, then all tenured members of the department will assume a de facto mentoring relationship with the tenure-track colleague. With or without an assigned mentor, the tenure-track faculty member is encouraged to approach any senior faculty member that the junior colleague feels appropriate for discussion, feedback, etc. This should naturally be commensurate with what is practicable within a small department.

The department may also provide formal mentoring to visiting faculty (wherever possible and appropriate).

Assigning and Changing Formal Mentors

If the tenure-track faculty member opts for a formal mentoring arrangement, the junior colleague will discuss options with the chair and provide two (unranked) names. The chair will then consult the two colleagues so identified in order to determine who will take on the role. The chair may, under exigent circumstances (e.g., lack of staff due to leaves, etc.), serve as a mentor but the role will normally be assumed by a different senior member of the department.

Formal mentors will ideally not be scheduled to go on leave within the first two years of the junior colleague’s appointment at the college, and will be able to make themselves available (within reason) to answer the junior colleague’s questions and concerns.
If/when the mentor does go on leave, the chair will ask the mentor whether the mentor is willing to continue the mentoring relationship during the period of the leave. If not, the chair will find a temporary mentor (to revert to the previous arrangement when the original mentor returns).

The formal mentor can be changed at the request of the mentor or the mentee. To initiate this procedure, either party should contact the chair.

Accountability

The formal mentoring relationship should be one of trust between both parties, and there will be no reporting of discussions between the formal mentor and mentee either to the chair or to other members of the department (unless both the mentor and mentee agree to it).

Meetings

Once the mentor has been assigned, the mentor will make contact with the mentee and set up regular times at which to meet. Good times to meet may include:

- The week before the beginning of the fall semester
- On or around October 15
- The end of December or January
- The end of the spring semester.

As a matter of collegiality, the mentor will ideally introduce the mentee to members of the college outside the department at social engagements, and possibly arrange such a social event him/herself. The mentor will also attend the mentee’s annual conversations with the remainder of the department.

Functions of the Mentoring Relationship
The role of the formal mentor (or the Department as a whole in loco mentoris if the junior colleague has opted out of a formal mentoring relationship) may involve the following items (grouped by category); it is not expected that the mentor will cover all of these.

Teaching, departmental life, the life of the college

- Answering any questions that arise from new faculty orientation meetings and events.
- Alerting the mentee about any college opportunities that the mentor notes.
- Discussing the balancing and streamlining of teaching and research.
- Visiting the mentee’s classes (on request).
- Exploring with the mentee the possibility of teaching First-Year Seminars.
- Demystifying the process of classroom visits and annual conversations to the mentee, and emphasizing that improvement in a given area is factored in when it comes to reappointment and tenure.
- Discussing with the mentee the process by which speakers are invited to campus, and encouraging the mentee to do so.
- Lending an ear to the mentee’s sources of anxiety about the tenure process (etc.) and giving guidance in this regard.
- Discussing grading conventions and expectations, as well as the types of assignment generally offered.
- Offering feedback on the mentee’s syllabi, etc.
- Guiding the mentee when it comes to the direction of senior theses and the advising process.
- Alerting the mentee (when appropriate—e.g., in the first year) about important upcoming dates such as preregistration, so that the mentee can make announcements in class.
• Providing guidance on the collection of informal feedback from students prior to the formal evaluations.
• Advising the mentee on the functions of the ADC and appropriate use of the ADC’s time.
• Reviewing student evaluations and discussing them with the mentee (on the request of the mentee).
• Discussing time management issues.

Research

• Discussing both the quantity and the types of publishing expected by the department and college for reappointment and tenure.
• Suggesting suitable venues for the submission of the mentee’s articles, books, and other writing.
• Reading of drafts and proposals to academic presses.
• Seeking funds from the Office of the Provost to provide an opportunity for the mentee to invite members of the mentee’s subfield to discuss and critique the mentee’s book project. The mentee may invite (but is not expected to) the entire department to attend this workshop. N.B.: According to college procedure, there will only be one such workshop per junior faculty member.

Teaching/Courses

New Courses

Faculty members who are considering teaching a new course (other than a change of reading in fixed courses with rotating authors, such as the 441 and 442 seminars) should discuss the course with the chair by the end of the fall semester before proposals are forwarded to the CEP at the beginning of the Spring term.

Single Course (and VAP) Requests to the Office of the Provost
The Chair has typically requested additional teaching for the coming year to cover its array of courses. Requests for teaching are usually due November 1. If a faculty member is on leave for the coming year, the department requests a full VAP; if for a semester, the department can request a full-year VAP, but the Provost has not typically granted the position for just one semester’s leave coverage, and the department can request additional single-course hires. Note that for single-course hires a visitor may only teach one course per semester.

Special note: For 2024-2025, the department came to a special agreement with Smith College and Mount Holyoke to host a full-time Five College Lecturer (Hans Hansen, whose home is in Amherst Classics). Hans will teach two courses for the department in Fall 2024. A full-time Five College lecturer is able to teach more than one course in a given semester without having a full-time teaching load at Amherst College (he teaches full-time across the three colleges). The Provosts of Amherst and Smith indicated their interest in continuing the arrangement in the coming years, possibly with adjustments to the course load.

First-Year Seminars

The department encourages participation in the program. However, current staffing levels in most years require approval of a one-course borrow by the Office of the Provost in order to staff core courses. Discussion of the course and application to that office should happen in the Fall semester. Traditionally, only those with multi-year appointments or considerable College experience have taught first-year seminars.

Language and Classical Civilization Courses

The department has a fixed structure of language courses in order to allow in all semesters introductory, intermediate, and advanced work in both Greek and Latin. The introduction to Greek (Greek 111) is taught in both semesters. The expectation is that the distribution of responsibilities across levels will be as equitable as possible. This has typically meant that faculty have taught one course at the 4xx level, one intermediate course (3xx or 2xx), and one course in the sequence of the first two semesters of language instruction. Each full-time member of the department is expected to teach one general-access survey course in translation each year in the Classical Civilization program.
Scheduling Courses

At the start of the preceding semester, the ADC distributes a list of the courses to be taught in a given semester, so that members may indicate their time preferences. When department members’ preferences coincide or overlap, the chair is responsible for negotiating an alternative arrangement that avoids scheduling conflicts. Preference is given to new colleagues and those with particular care responsibilities.

Course Preparation

The ADC will assist with e-reserves, video reserves, print reserves, book orders, course packs, and desk copies, if faculty requests are made in time to meet stated deadlines. With the Follett textbook program in place as of Fall 2024, all course texts, including course packs, must be submitted via Follett’s adoption form by November 1 for Spring and by April 15 for Fall.

Reappointment/Tenure Procedures

Classroom Visits

Each departmental course taught by a pre-tenure faculty member (or visiting faculty member) should be visited by a tenured faculty member, and preferably two, at least once a semester on a date chosen by the instructor of that class. If possible, the syllabus for the course should be shared in advance, as well as any materials for the particular course session.

After the class is observed, the tenured and pre-tenure faculty members have an informal discussion sharing impressions of how the class went. That discussion should, among other topics, address the instructor’s goals for the course, difficulties encountered in achieving those goals, effective elements of the course, areas needing improvement, and resources for making those improvements. A minute of that discussion is written by the tenured faculty member(s) and is shared with the pre-tenure faculty members. Copies of the final document are sent to the pre-tenure
faculty member and the ADC to be archived in the department’s records. The process is the same for visiting faculty.

The pre-tenure faculty member should be invited to observe the courses of the tenured members of the department, but should feel no pressure to do so.

Tenured members should visit pre-tenure members’ courses on a rotating basis, so that all tenured members have the opportunity to observe the pre-tenure faculty member’s teaching throughout the reappointment and tenure process.

End-of-Semester Evaluations

Overview

The ADC administers end-of-semester evaluations for tenure-track and visiting faculty members. IT administers end-of-semester evaluations for tenured faculty, unless the faculty member chooses otherwise.

Creating the Form

Department members are expected to use the Common Teaching Evaluation that the college has created (see Faculty Handbook III., D., 4.). About three weeks before the end of classes, the ADC will create online versions of this form for classes taught by tenure-track faculty. IT will communicate with tenured faculty about the evaluation forms for their classes.

Going Live

Once the evaluation forms are ready, the ADC emails faculty members a link to their course’s online evaluation form, so that faculty can share it with their students. The ADC schedules the evaluation forms to “go live” in the final week of classes. If a faculty member prefers a different “go live” date for their evaluation form, they can discuss that with the ADC. Access to the evaluation form is restricted so that only the students enrolled in the class can fill it out. The ADC usually closes evaluations on the last day of final exams. Only the ADC can view the submissions.
**Follow-Up**

The ADC retrieves a class list (excluding dropped students) for each class for which the ADC has created an online evaluation. Within the final days of the submission period at a point to be chosen by the ADC, the ADC reviews the list of students who have submitted evaluations, compares that to the class list, and emails the students in the class who still need to complete the evaluation. The ADC will send reminder emails several times up until the evaluations close.

**Reports**

Once the evaluations are closed, the ADC downloads the submissions for each evaluation form into an Excel document and merges it with a Word document of the evaluation in order to create the individual evaluations with the students’ responses, grouped by student. The ADC creates two versions, of which one includes student identifying information and is alphabetized by the students’ last name. The other has the student information removed, and the students are included in a random order. The ADC skims both documents to check completeness and ensure that the data is not being truncated accidentally. The second document is shared with the instructor of the course. The first document is shared with the chair and the instructor’s mentor. It may also be shared in preparation for the annual conversation and during the reappointment or tenure process.

**Annual Conversations**

All tenured members of the department in residence meet with the pre-tenure faculty member for an annual conversation to discuss the observations from classroom visits, the end-of-semester evaluations from that academic year, the pre-tenure faculty member’s scholarship thus far, and their goals for the future. Soon after the conversation occurs, the chair and tenured faculty member write up the results of the conversation (including the names of the attendees), and share it with the pre-tenure faculty member. The chair should make clear that this report is held within the department in order to inform the reappointment and tenure recommendation letters and is not included in the dossiers advanced to the Committee of Six for those reviews.
A copy is also emailed to the ADC to be saved in the department’s records. The chair notifies the provost in writing that the annual conversation has taken place. Annual conversations should also occur for full-time visiting faculty, though the provost does not expect formal notification. College-wide policy about the annual conversation can be found in the Faculty Handbook (III., D., 2.)

Retrospective Letters

Once the chair finalizes the student solicitation letter, the ADC emails the letter to students using Yet Another Mail Merge and the department’s email account (classics@amherst.edu). The ADC re-sends the letter to students as a reminder approximately once a month, increasing the frequency of the reminder emails in the month before the retrospective letters are due.

Reappointment and Tenure Recommendations

Timeline

The tenure committee, candidate, and ADC together create a list of internal department deadlines for all steps relating to the reappointment or tenure process.

Department Letter of Recommendation

Led by the department chair, all tenured members of the department collaborate on the department recommendation letter.

STUDENTS

Access to the Program

The welcome video on the department website pledges to incoming students to meet them where they are academically and to take them as far as they want to go. Some Classics Department Handbook (Updated June, 2024)
students enter the college with multiple years of both Greek and Latin; some have never had the opportunity to start the languages but are curious and interested; and for some that interest will be awakened only in their first semesters, often in Classical Civilization courses or First Year Seminars. For some, the Civilization courses will be one of their few engagements in the humanities in their four years; some hope to find our surveys of important early stages of western thought, art, and history helpful for cultural assimilation. To accommodate students from various faith communities, Greek 217 is always taught in tandem with Greek 215: Introduction to Greek Tragedy.

In response to this range of interests and preparations, the department is committed to providing multiple pathways through the two language programs and the four possible majors, and also to offering classroom pedagogies, workshops, and tutorial assistance that accommodate students with different aptitudes and backgrounds in language learning. The Classical Civilization courses are taught at the 100s level, without prerequisites and without the presumption of prior knowledge.

With an early start, it is possible to begin one or both languages and complete one of the three language majors (see below). A second introductory course for Greek is offered in the spring semester to allow a later start. Motivated students have also attained the intermediate (200s) level through intensive summer courses. Students who start later or whose interests are less linguistic and more broadly cultural may elect the Classical Civilization major, with a different balance of language courses and courses taught in translation.

For placement in the three levels of language instruction, students with previous experience are asked to consult with the chair or with the instructor of the course that interests them. This conversation regularly happens at the meeting to welcome incoming students.

The advanced (400s level) seminars change topics every semester, such that a student will never exhaust the options at that level. To avoid repetitions that would exclude a student, the department sets the topics for the coming year in consultation with students at the intermediate and advanced level who will be eligible to enroll in those courses. To broaden the range of academic opportunities, especially in history, archeology, and art history, the department encourages majors to study abroad in Greece and Italy in their junior year.
The Majors in Classical Languages (Classics, Greek and Latin)

The major programs in classical languages are designed to afford access to the achievements of Greek and Roman antiquity through mastery of the ancient languages. The department offers majors in Greek, in Latin, and in Classics, which is a combination of the two languages in any proportion as long as no fewer than two semester courses are taken in either. The Greek and Latin majors consist of eight semester courses, of which seven must be in the ancient languages. The eighth may be a Classical Civilization course, Philosophy 217, a First Year Seminar with a classical theme, or a course in some related field approved in advance by the department. Two classical civilization courses—one Greek and one Roman—are required for the Classics major, in addition to the seven language courses.

The statement of requisites given in the course descriptions is intended only to indicate the degree of preparation necessary for each course, and exceptions will be made in special cases. For students beginning the study of Greek the following sequences of courses are normal: 111, 212, 215 or 217, 318; or 111, 215 or 217, 212 or 318.

The Major in Classical Civilization

The major program is designed to afford access to the achievements of at least one of the two primary cultural groups of Greco-Roman antiquity through significant coursework in one language and a core group of courses in Classical Civilization.

The major in Classical Civilization consists of eight courses:

Four language courses, all in the same language (either Greek or Latin); one 400-level course or an alternative course that serves as a capstone experience (see below).

Four Classical Civilization courses, at least one of which must focus primarily on the civilization of the language courses (e.g., Roman History, Roman Civilization, or a similar course if the language is Latin; Greek History, Greek Civilization, or a similar course if the language is Greek). A 400-level course can also fulfill the capstone experience (see above).
It is also possible, in lieu of one Classical Civilization course, to take an additional course in either ancient Greek or Latin (e.g., four Greek or Latin and one Latin or Greek combined with three Classical Civilization courses, or five Greek or Latin combined with three Classical Civilization courses). Students who wish to take additional language courses in the second language are encouraged to consider the major in Classics.

Courses that are related or cross-listed with Classics and taught in another department will count towards the Classical Civilization course requirement (e.g., PHIL 217, EUST-121).
Capstone Experience

Students in all four department majors complete the Capstone Experience in their final year of study. It provides students an opportunity to reflect on their academic trajectory at Amherst in conjunction with faculty and fellow students in Classics. At the annual capstone reception, in the spring of the senior year, students can elect to give either individual presentations or a group presentation about their coursework in the major and their intellectual development while at Amherst. The Capstone Experience is intended to foster intellectual self-reflection as well as collegiality and community among students and faculty. Students graduating in December are normally invited to participate in the capstone reception in the spring prior to their graduation.

Pass/Fail Option

Students should not take more than one course for credit for any of the department’s majors using the P/F option. More than one course taken P/F will require departmental approval and will only be considered under exceptional circumstances.

Departmental Honors Program

The Honors Programs in the Classical Languages

The program of every honors candidate in Greek, Latin, or Classics must include those courses numbered 441 and 442 in either Greek or Latin. It will also include, beyond the eight-course program described above, the courses numbered 498 and 499. The normal expectation will be that in the senior year two courses at the 441/442 level be taken along with the 498/499 sequence. Admission to the 498 course is contingent on approval by the department of a thesis prospectus. Translations of work already translated will not normally be acceptable nor will comparative studies with chief emphasis on modern works. Admission to the 499 course is contingent on the submission of a satisfactory chapter of at least 2,000 words and a detailed prospectus for the remaining sections to be defended at a colloquium within the first week of the second semester with the department and any outside reader chosen.
In addition, honors candidates must in the first semester of their senior year write an examination on a Greek or Latin text of approximately 50 pages (in the Oxford Classical Text or Teubner format) read independently, i.e., not as a part of work in a course, and selected with the approval of the department. The award of honors will be determined by the quality of the candidate’s work in the Senior Departmental Honors courses, thesis, and performance in the language examination. The department will cooperate with other departments in giving combined majors with honors.

The Honors Program in Classical Civilization

The requirements for an honors thesis are the same as for the language majors, except that students are expected to take one 400-level language course (or an equivalent course that would serve as a capstone experience) instead of taking both 441 and 442 language courses in the senior year. For the honors thesis students may consider, in addition to the options for the language majors, a project that addresses either the classical tradition more generally or another relevant project.

Thesis Proposals

All majors who are considering writing an honors thesis should consult with members of the department during their junior year in order to define a suitable honors project and to determine whether a member of the department can serve as advisor. All resident members of the department read honors theses and exams and are, in addition to the designated advisor, available to offer advice during honors work. A list of past theses is posted on the department website.

Schedule for Honors Work

- Language Examination: written translation of approximately 50 pages of text (Greek or Latin) read independently, i.e., not as a part of coursework, and selected with the approval of the department
- Thesis
  1. A proposal and bibliography are due by the end of the first week of the first semester (within the add/drop period).
  2. Honors candidates meet with the department in the second week of the first semester to discuss the proposal.
3. The first chapter and prospectus are due by the end of the January interterm, before the second semester begins.

4. The department/student colloquium will be scheduled in the first week of the second semester (within the add/drop period).

5. Rough drafts are due during the second week of March.

6. Completed theses are due to the department on Monday of the second full week in April (one copy for each professor, not on acid-free paper, not bound).

7. Thesis defenses will be scheduled for the third week of April.

8. Theses are due in the registrar’s office on the Thursday before the last day of classes (unbound and printed on acid-free paper, with bound copy delivered to the department and a digital copy submitted to Frost Library; formatting should follow the guidelines made available by the college that year).

**Thesis Evaluation**

All resident members of the department meet with the honors candidate for the thesis defense and determine the level of Latin honors to be awarded. The thesis advisor assigns the grade for the student’s honors work.

**Submitting the Thesis**

The final corrected thesis, in bound and electronic form, should be submitted both to the Registrar’s Office and the Classics Department. A collection of theses is available for perusal in Grosvenor 12.

**Fellowships and Prizes**

The department awards a variety of prizes annually to students of Latin and Greek. All students who have taken a Latin or Greek course during the academic year are considered, regardless of language level or major status, although some prizes (e.g.,
thesis prizes) have particular stipulations that must be met. A current list of prizes is available on the Department of Classics website.

Classics students seeking funding for summer programs or other educational opportunities beyond the Amherst College curriculum may apply for the Anne Lebeck Fellowship in Classical Studies. The department hopes to award the fellowship to one or two students per year.