

# Outcomes Assessment Plan

## Department of the Classics

### I. Undergraduate Programs

Undergraduate majors in the Department of the Classics are required to elect one of the following five options: Classical Archaeology, Classical Civilization, Classics, Greek or Latin. The first two options (Classical Archaeology and Classical Civilization) do not require majors to undertake a study of one of the classical languages, although such study is strongly encouraged. The remaining options (Classics, Greek and Latin) require study of one or both of the classical languages. For this reason, methods and procedures for assessing outcomes have been separated for those options that require and those that do not require the study of one of the classical languages (see below). All undergraduate majors, however, regardless of their option, will be required to complete a departmental Senior Survey. The Senior Survey will be developed and, over the course of time, modified and refined by the Department's Committee on Undergraduate Study, which Committee will be responsible for all assessment of undergraduate majors and for reporting their assessment annually to the Head of the Department.

#### A. Classical Archaeology and Classical Civilization Options

These options do not require the study of one of the classical languages, although majors in these options are advised to satisfy the college foreign language requirement by studying either Greek or Latin. Rather, students pursuing the Classical Archaeology option and the Classical Civilization option are expected to acquire a broad understanding of the historical, social and cultural development of the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome, from the Bronze Age to the end of antiquity; to understand the nature and the limits of the material, documentary and literary evidence available for the study of those civilizations; to be able to assess and evaluate that evidence by being made familiar with the approaches that have been developed by the various disciplines that concern themselves with the ancient world (history, archaeology, art history, literary studies, religious studies); and to present their assessments and evaluations in the form of clear, coherent and articulate arguments that are based on rigorous application of recognized academic method. Inasmuch as the ancient Greeks and Romans were themselves masters of argumentation and self-expression, and inasmuch as the curriculum of humanistic studies at modern universities can ultimately be traced back to the practices of the classical world, there can be no excuse for students who major in the Classics to be deficient in either critical thinking skills or communication skills. In order to assess student achievement in these areas, the Department will implement the following assessment review, to be considered in conjunction with the results of the Senior Survey (above):

- In the Spring semester of every odd-numbered year the members of the

Committee on Undergraduate Study will evaluate the performance of all Junior and Senior majors in the Classical Archaeology and Classical Civilization options.

- In anticipation of this evaluation, all majors in the Classical Archaeology and Classical Civilization options will be informed by their adviser that they are required to maintain a Portfolio of written work submitted in four of their required courses. The four courses may be of the student's choosing, but they must comprise one course at the 100 level, one course at the 200 or 300 level and two courses at the 400 level.
- All Portfolios will be evaluated by the members of the Committee on Undergraduate Study, for the purposes both of assessing progress made from the 100 through the 400 level and of identifying areas of instruction that may require adjustment and modification in order to ensure that students are attaining the required level of competence in the areas identified above.
- The members of the Committee on Undergraduate Study will then prepare a report to the Head of the Department, assessing the performance of undergraduate majors in the Classical Archaeology and Classical Civilization options, comparing that performance with results obtained in previous assessments and making specific recommendations to the Head for changes and improvements in undergraduate instruction, advising and curriculum.

## B. Classics, Greek and Latin Options

These options require mastery of either the Greek or the Latin language or, in the case of the Classics option, both Greek and Latin. The desired learning outcomes, therefore, for these options, are concerned primarily with competency in reading and understanding literary texts in Greek and/or Latin, although a broad understanding of the historical, social and cultural development of the civilizations of ancient Greece and/or Rome, as reflected in the requirement for supporting course-work, is also necessary to supplement mere linguistic proficiency. The Department has identified two fundamental stages in student achievement. The first stage represents the transition from elementary and intermediate (100- and 200-level) language instruction to advanced (400-level) courses in reading and composition. Characteristic of this stage is mastery of the basic grammar and vocabulary of the Greek and/or Latin languages; the ability to translate passages from standard authors into correct and idiomatic English; a general understanding of the conventions of the various literary genres that characterize classical writing; and an ability to translate simple English sentences into correct Greek and/or Latin. The second stage represents high competency in Greek and/or Latin, that is, a level of competency that is sufficient to enable the student to pursue study of one or both of the languages at the graduate level. Characteristic of this stage is an appreciation of the stylistic peculiarities of a variety of authors in both prose and verse; an ability to translate extended passages of English prose into Greek and/or Latin; a familiarity with the meters

of ancient Greek and/or Latin verse and with the various literary dialects of Greek; and a general understanding of the historical development of Greek and/or Latin literature. In order to assess student achievement at these two levels, the Department will implement the following assessment review, to be considered in conjunction with the results of the Senior Survey (above):

- In the Spring semester of every even-numbered year the members of the Committee on Undergraduate Study will evaluate the performance of undergraduate students in Greek 202, Latin 302 and all 400-level Greek and Latin courses.
- In April of every even-numbered year the Committee will obtain from the American Classical League copies of the ACL/NJCL National Greek Examination and the ACL/NJCL National Latin Examination. The former will be administered to all students in Greek 202 and the latter to all students in Latin 302. The exams will be administered by the instructor of the course during regular class session, but will be graded and evaluated by the members of the Committee on Undergraduate Study.
- The Committee on Undergraduate Study will obtain from their instructors copies of the final examinations taken by all undergraduate students in 400-level Greek and Latin courses in the Spring semester and will evaluate the examinations.
- The members of the Committee on Undergraduate Study will then prepare a report to the Head of the Department, assessing the performance of undergraduate students at the first stage of competency (Greek 202 and Latin 302) and at the second stage of competency (400-level Greek and Latin courses), comparing that performance with results obtained in previous assessments and making specific recommendations to the Head for changes and improvements in undergraduate instruction, advising and curriculum.

## **II. Graduate Programs**

The Department of the Classics offers programs leading to the MA and the PhD. The PhD is offered only in classical philology, which requires advanced work in both Greek and Latin and which prepares graduates to engage in research in the Classics and to secure positions as instructors of the Classics at the college or university level. The MA may be taken in Classics with a specialization in both Greek and Latin, or a specialization in Greek, or a specialization in Latin. These degrees are either preparatory to more advanced graduate study in the Classics or serve as adjuncts to further graduate study in such related fields as archaeology, history, English, linguistics, art history, library science or religious studies. In addition, the Department offers an MA in the Teaching of Latin, which prepares graduates for a career in secondary-school instruction in Latin.

Fundamental to all these graduate degree programs is rigorous instruction in and knowledge at an advanced level of the Greek and/or Latin languages; ability to carry out detailed analysis of the language, style and content of individual works of Greek and/or Latin literature; a familiarity with the printed and electronic resources available for the study of the classical languages and literatures; and an understanding of the ways in which classical texts have been transmitted through the centuries down to our own time. In addition, students at the PhD level are expected to demonstrate an expert knowledge of the history of Greek and Latin literature as well as of the relevant secondary work on those subjects; an ability to engage in and present effectively the results of original scholarly research; an ability to teach the languages and literatures of ancient Greece and Rome in an effective manner; and familiarity with the recognized professional and ethical standards of the field. Evaluation of the progress of candidates for graduate degrees in the Classics will be undertaken annually by those members of the Committee on Graduate Study who are not also members of the Committee on Undergraduate Study. To assist the Committee in its evaluation, the Director of Graduate Studies will appoint annually a Greek Committee and a Latin Committee, with each Committee consisting of three members.

- The Greek Committee and the Latin Committee will assess, respectively, all the Greek preliminary examinations and all the Latin preliminary examinations taken during the year and will report the results to the Committee on Graduate Study.
- The Director of Graduate Studies will compile the results of the ICES questionnaires that are required of all graduate Teaching Assistants and will report annually to the Committee on Graduate Study.
- Every candidate for the PhD degree will submit to the Director of Graduate Studies prior to the defense of her or his dissertation a detailed curriculum vitae, to include a listing of all graduate courses taken and all grants and awards received; full citation of all publications and papers presented orally; details of all courses taught, with a summary of ICES results, and any other scholarly and professional activity deemed relevant by the candidate.
- All recipients of terminal MA degrees and all successful candidates for the PhD degree will be expected to present themselves for an exit interview by the Director of Graduate Studies, who will give a report annually to the Committee on Graduate Study summarizing the results of the exit interviews. The Committee on Graduate Study will be responsible for framing and, periodically, modifying the list of questions to be addressed to degree candidates during the exit interviews.
- The Department will maintain an address file for all recipients of terminal MA degrees and PhD degrees. Each graduate will be contacted at five-year intervals and asked to supply the Committee on Graduate Study with a current curriculum vitae and to respond to a survey designed to

elicit information regarding career advancement, professional satisfaction, publications, etc. The Committee on Graduate Study will be responsible for framing and, periodically, modifying the list of questions to be included in these surveys.

- The Committee on Graduate Study will conduct an annual assessment, taking into account all of the above assessment measures. This assessment will include an evaluation of all candidates for the MA in Classics with a specialization in both Greek and Latin from the point of view of their potential for successful entry into the PhD program. At this time the Committee will formulate specific recommendations to the Head of the Department for changes and improvements in graduate instruction, advising and curriculum.

revised, May 2008