

MAJORS

Classical Studies

Sample Courses

Cicero's *De Finibus* and Hellenistic Ethics

Cicero's dialogue *De Finibus* (*On Ends*) is his attempt to sort out the ethical theories of Epicureanism, Stoicism, and the "New Academy." It thus provides students with a solid introduction to the major ethical theories of the Hellenistic period.

Ancient Views of the Economy

This course shows what the writers of the Grecian Classical and Hellenistic periods or Roman Republic can teach us about their economic worlds, starting with Herodotus and moving on to Thucydides, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, Polybius, Livy, and Cicero.

Roman Visual Culture

This survey of Roman material culture uses archaeological and literary sources to delineate the development of Roman society from the Early Republic through the first sacking of Rome. Students discuss urban planning, public monuments, and political imagery.

Roman Novel

This course is a reading of Apuleius's novel, *The Golden Ass*—including the story of Cupid and Psyche and the initiation into the cult of Isis—in the context of the ancient novel. Students also examine Apuleius as a magician and philosopher.

Byzantium and Islam

This lecture and discussion course covers Byzantine-Islamic diplomatic, military, economic, cultural, and religious relations from the emergence of Islam in the 7th century through the mid-11th century. Readings include modern scholarly interpretations and primary sources in translation.



Photo by Zach Wehrwein, AB'11

Classical studies majors at the University of Chicago have an exceptional opportunity to acquire both proficiency in Greek and Latin and a broad knowledge of the Greco-Roman world.



Photo by Marcella DeLaurentis, AB'11

Department research and travel awards and the University's Study Abroad program offer rich opportunities for classical studies students to explore ancient sites.

The major in classical studies offers a comprehensive approach to all aspects of Greco-Roman antiquity. The curriculum is taught by a large and diverse faculty, currently numbering 15, and organized to balance the study of languages and the study of culture. At least one Greek and one Latin course are offered quarterly at every level from the introductory to the advanced. Advanced courses are taught on a three-year cycle that covers the major works of Greek and Latin literature.

The language side of the curriculum is complemented by courses on Greco-Roman literature, archeology, history, philosophy, and religion that are based on readings in English. Students of classics at the University of Chicago also have access to an unusual wealth of courses in their field offered outside the Department of Classics, through the Departments of Art History, Philosophy, History, and Political Science,

and the Divinity School. They have an exceptional opportunity to acquire both proficiency in Greek and Latin and a broad knowledge of the Greco-Roman world.

Classes in the Department of Classics usually range in size from as many as 22 students at the introductory level to between 5 and 20 at the advanced level. Students majoring in classical studies (of whom there are about 45) can choose a program that



emphasizes languages or one that emphasizes culture. They can pursue the study of ancient Greece and Rome jointly or focus on one to the exclusion of the other. It is also possible to combine a major in classical studies with another major or to elect a minor concentration in classical studies.

Writing is an important component of the major in classical studies. All majors produce a short research paper in their third year in preparation for a longer BA paper in the fourth year. After outlining a research problem, and in consultation with a faculty supervisor, seniors work with a preceptor and with one another over the course of a two-quarter-long BA paper seminar to develop an effective argument.

Social Ambience

Although the major in classical studies is varied and full, it remains small enough for people in it to know one another. Apart from meeting in class, in the dorms, and in the library, students come together at organized events. The department sponsors one event per quarter that is planned just for undergraduates—a movie, a talk, or an excursion to a museum or a show downtown, for example. A banquet is held in the spring for graduating seniors at the faculty club. On their own, students in classical studies have organized a classics club as well as the Classical Entertainment Society, which stages productions about twice a year.

Travel to the Classical Homelands

All University of Chicago students with an interest in the classical world are encouraged to explore modern Greece or Italy at some point during their undergraduate career. The Study Abroad program of the College offers courses that allow them to live and study in the center of Athens or Rome for three months during the second or third year. The syllabus in both locales combines readings with visits to classical sites and monuments. These courses are planned by University of Chicago instructors exclusively for University of Chicago students. The Athens Program and the Rome Program may be used either to satisfy a three-course civilization requirement in the College or to satisfy requirements of the major in classical studies.

The Department of Classics also funds a half-dozen awards for individual projects that students themselves design for study or exploration in Italy and Greece during the summer. Past projects supported by these awards have included retracing the route of the Argonauts from Greece to Colchis, researching the topography of ancient Sparta, and studying Roman pottery at the American Academy in Rome. Details about the awards are available at classics.uchicago.edu/undergraduate.

Resources

The University of Chicago Library's classics collection is housed in Regenstein Library, which holds over 4.5 million volumes. The recently opened Joe and Rika Mansueti Library, directly adjacent to Regenstein, is designed to store the equivalent of 3.5 million additional volumes. The University Library continues to set a high priority on the acquisition of new materials in both print and digital form. Its classics collection is one of the largest and best in the United States. It is supervised by a classics bibliographer who, in addition to expanding traditional media, has created a sophisticated website with links to databases and other electronic resources within and beyond the library. Students of classics have their own reading room where they are able to work and to consult a large, noncirculating collection of texts, translations, commentaries, and reference works.

The journal *Classical Philology*, published by the Department of Classics since 1906, employs students in various roles that provide inside experience of scholarly publication in the field of classics.

