ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Department of Classical Studies offers courses in the languages, literatures, history, art, archaeology, mythology and religions of ancient Greece and Rome — two cultures that provided the intellectual, social, political, legal, scientific, philosophical and artistic origins of Western civilization. Undergraduate students are afforded a great variety of choice, since the field is wide and deep and may be explored through traditional and interdisciplinary approaches. Through classical studies, students gain a detailed knowledge of life in the ancient Mediterranean, the Near East, northern Europe and North Africa over a period of more than 4,000 years (3,000 B.C.E. to 1,000 C.E.).

What makes the program distinctive?

Classical studies is flexible and vibrant, changing constantly from new discoveries, methodologies and interpretations. Students can learn from the great literary works in the original languages, Greek and Latin, or in translation (literary theory and genre studies). They also can learn from the historical and archaeological records of these cultures, including iconic monuments and the concerns of everyday life.

FAST FACTS

Current number of majors and minors: 45
Number of faculty: 7
Can you minor in this program? Yes
Emphasis within the major: archaeology, art, history, language and literature
Popular second majors: anthropology, biology, fine arts, history, language and linguistics, math, music, Near Eastern and Judaic studies
Website: brandeis.edu/departments/classics
In bestowing the 2016 Award for Excellence in Teaching upon Professor Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow, chair of Classical Studies at Brandeis and known to her students as Prof. AOK-O, the Archaeological Institute of America wishes to acknowledge and applaud the invaluable service she has given the archaeological community as an educator.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Hands-on research
The Classical Studies Artifact Research Collection at Brandeis provides interns with training in archival and museum collection management, archaeology and publications.

Classical studies and social justice
The ancient Greeks were the first people in the West to try to define justice and what it means in social, political and philosophical terms, and the Romans were the people who invented the fundamental concepts that survive in the British and American legal system. In this major, close exposure to social justice is a given, and students often become committed to it and to learning for service.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Excellence in teaching
Three of the five full-time faculty of classical studies have won major teaching awards either from inside Brandeis or on the national stage, including the American Philological Association (now the Society of Classical Studies) National Award, the Archaeological Institute of America’s National Award, the Lerman-Neubauer Prize for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring, the Louis Dembitz Brandeis Prize for Excellence in Teaching and other on-campus teaching awards. In addition, many of our faculty members are widely recognized for their scholarship, pedagogy and impressive research agendas.

AFTER BRANDEIS

Diverse career fields
Aside from its aesthetic, spiritual, moral and intellectual value, classical studies has practical uses as well: The study of Latin is a proven key to communication skills in English and the Romance languages, and both Latin and Greek have long been and continue to be sources of technical concepts and vocabulary in all fields of study, from cybernetics to political economy. Classical studies enhances preparation for a number of professional fields, including business, education, government, law, library science and medicine, in addition to graduate study in literature, history, fine arts, archaeology, anthropology, philosophy, religion and classics itself. The major provides students with the knowledge, ethics and critical thinking necessary to function as informed citizens in our complex, global society.

Real jobs
Recent classical studies alumni have gone on to become a doctor of internal medicine at California Pacific Medical Center; the editor-in-chief of New York Press; a consultant at Random Walk Computing; a photographer; the communications coordinator at the American Federation of Arts; and a professor of classics at the University of Texas, San Antonio.