Greek

The major and minor in Greek is administered by the Department of Classics and Italian. Advisors for Greek: Professors Debnar (on leave Spring 2016), Sumi; Associate Professor Arnold.

Overview

The study of ancient Greek is a foundation stone of the discipline of classics. Many dialects of Greek were spoken in the eastern region of the ancient Mediterranean world—on the Greek mainland as well as the west coast of modern-day Turkey. Greeks invented most of the literary genres in the western literary tradition—epic, lyric, and elegiac poetry, tragedy and comedy, oratory and historiography. Greek literature begins with Homer, who composed his great epics, the Iliad and Odyssey, in the eighth century BCE, and reached its zenith in Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, when Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were writing tragedies for performance in the theatre of Dionysus, Herodotus and Thucydides were writing histories of the Persian wars and Peloponnesian war, and Plato and Aristotle posed the questions that philosophers still contemplate today. Alexander the Great’s conquest of the Persian Empire (331–323 BCE) spread Greek language, culture, and literature throughout modern-day Turkey and the Middle East. Even at the height of the Roman Empire (31 BCE–229 CE) Latin never supplanted Greek as the lingua franca of the eastern Mediterranean. Today, ancient Greek remains the source of much biomedical terminology.

The Greek major or minor is excellent preparation for advanced study in philosophy and religion.

The department offers courses in ancient Greek at all levels, as well as a wide array of courses (in English) approaching the culture and history of Greek antiquity from a variety of perspectives. Majors have the opportunity to spend part or all of their junior years abroad (e.g., in Athens or the United Kingdom).

The department offers four majors. The classics major is a 40-credit major combining the study of both ancient Greek and Latin with a variety of courses in ancient history, art, philosophy, politics, or religion. Students may also major in Greek or in Latin. These majors require 32 credits in one of the ancient languages and its literature. The broadest is ancient studies, a 32-credit major approaching the ancient civilizations from an interdisciplinary and inclusive perspective.

Contact Info

Kristin McMillan, senior administrative assistant
Geoffrey Sumi, professor of Classics

Requirements for the Major

Credits

- A minimum of 32 credits
- At least 12 credits at the 300 level in the language of concentration.
- After consulting with her advisor, a Greek major may count courses in Latin or Greek at the 200 level or above and/or choose from a variety of courses in art history, classics (in English), history, philosophy, politics, or religion at the 200 level or above.
- Courses at the 100 level normally do not count toward the major; however, in the case of second (or third) languages, 8 credits of Greek, Latin, or Sanskrit at the 100 level may count toward the major.

Requirements for the Minor

Credits

- A minimum of 16 credits above the 100 level in the Greek language, including at least 4 at the 300 level

Study Abroad

The department encourages study abroad. In recent years a number of students in the department have spent part of their junior years at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies (ICCS) in Rome. Some have pursued their studies at Oxford, Saint Andrews, and other institutions in Great Britain. Arcadia College and College Year in Athens both offer programs in Greece. Students who anticipate taking an advanced degree in archaeology, ancient art history, ancient history, or classics can also apply to summer sessions of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Course Offerings

GREEK-101 Elementary Greek: Homer’s Iliad

Fall
This course introduces the ancient Greek language and epic meter through the study of the Iliad. The grammar of the Iliad, originally an oral poem, is relatively uncomplicated, so that by the middle of the first semester students will begin to read the poem in Greek. By the end of the year they will have read a portion of Iliad, Book I.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
P. Debnar
Coreq: GREEK-101L.
Credits: 4

GREEK-102 Elementary Greek: Homer’s Iliad

Not Scheduled for This Year
An introduction to the ancient Greek language and epic meter through the study of the Iliad. The grammar of the Iliad, originally an oral poem, is relatively uncomplicated. By the middle of the first semester, therefore, students will begin to read the poem in Greek. By the end of the year they will have read a portion of Iliad, Book I.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
P. Debnar
Prereq: Greek 101.
Credits: 4

GREEK-222 Classical Greek Prose and Poetry

Not Scheduled for This Year
This course focuses on Attic Greek, the dialect in which the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the comedies of Aristophanes, Thucydides’ History, and Plato’s dialogues were composed. Each year the readings will focus on a particular theme as it is treated in prose and poetry, such as: Socrates (Plato, Xenophon, Aristophanes); Athenian law courts (Lysias, Plato, Aristophanes); Medea (Euripides and Apollonius); Alcibiades (Thucydides, Plato, Plutarch).
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
M. Landon
Prereq: Greek 201.
Advisory: Greek 201
Notes: Students who have not completed Greek 201 should consult with the professor before enrolling.
Credits: 4
GREEK-250 Tutorial
Fall
Studies in Greek lyric and elegy, pastoral poetry, the dialogues of Plato, the Greek novel, the use of myth in literature, or other authors, topics, or genres.
Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement
P. Debnar
Instructor permission required.
Advisory: jr, sr and permission of instructor
Credits: 2-4
Course can be repeated for credit.

GREEK-295 Independent Study
Fall and Spring
The department
Instructor permission required.
Credits: 1-4
Course can be repeated for credit.

GREEK-322 Classical Greek Prose and Poetry
Not Scheduled for This Year
This course focuses on Attic Greek, the dialect in which the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the comedies of Aristophanes, Thucydides’ History, and Plato’s dialogues were composed. Each year the readings will focus on a particular theme as it is treated in prose and poetry, such as: Socrates (Plato, Xenophon, Aristophanes); Athenian law courts (Lysias, Plato, Aristophanes); Medea (Euripides and Apollonius); Alcibiades (Thucydides, Plato, Plutarch).
Students in this course attend class meetings for Greek 222.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
M. Landon
Prereq: 2 courses of 200 level Greek.
Notes: Students who have not completed 2 semesters of intermediate Greek should consult with the professor
Credits: 4
Course can be repeated for credit.

GREEK-350 Advanced Tutorial
Not Scheduled for This Year
Studies in Greek lyric and elegy, pastoral poetry, the dialogues of Plato, the Greek novel, the use of myth in literature, or other authors, topics, or genres.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities
The department
Instructor permission required.
Prereq: Greek 222 or above.
Advisory: Greek 222 or above and permission of instructor
Notes: Can meet the Humanities requirement, but only if taken for 4 credits.
Credits: 2-4
Course can be repeated for credit.

GREEK-395 Independent Study
Fall and Spring
The department
Instructor permission required.
Credits: 1-8
Course can be repeated for credit.

See Also
- Ancient Studies
- Classics
- Latin