

MÉΛI NUCESQUE

A Newsletter for Classics at the University of Dallas

Integrating the Left and the Right Brain

How the natural sciences and the humanities

STEM from the same Classic tree

There seems often to be an opposition between the natural sciences and the humanities, but in reality, the two are not so at odds. The integrated man, made up of both body and soul, strives toward understanding of both the physical and the metaphysical. He is unlike the animals in that he looks up at the stars and also looks within himself, and he comes to the fullest understanding of the world by doing both.

Classics and Math: Complementary Approaches to the World

When I tell people that I am majoring in both Classics and math, I often get a version of the follow-up, “Do you find many similarities between the two?” While the connection between these two fields may not be readily apparent (even frequently to myself), I have come to see that my different majors are in fact complementary ways of looking at the world.

Classics is itself a blend of several different fields, all geared towards viewing humanity through the context of a particular range of history. It studies what has been left by past cultures (especially through the surviving written *λόγος*, whether in the form of philosophy, poetry, history, speeches, or even the structures of the ancient languages themselves). I am frequently surprised to see among the ancients the same questions that people still discuss to this day. This leads me to believe that the study of antiquity provides much to contemplate concerning human nature.

Mathematics, on the other hand, takes a more abstract look at the world humanity finds itself in. It does not look primarily at particular historical circumstances; it looks rather at a truth written into the very fabric of the world. Through mathematics, certain ideas are constructed by the human mind (often to answer some previous question), and then mathematicians use *λόγος* to play with these ideas and conclude what must be true about them. This process of reasoning helps underpin a greater understanding of the physical world.

Both fields combined contribute to a fuller view of the *λόγος* present in the world: in my mind, Classics and mathematics work together to allow the human mind to learn truths about both human nature and the world as a whole.

- Owen Embree, Senior Classical Philology and Math major



The architecture of the Louvre and the beauty of classical sculpture work together to illuminate the majesty of the goddess Nike. Photo credits: Maria Miller

Linguistics: Man's First Invention

Classics and STEM are totally different in their external characteristics, but it cannot be denied that they are fundamentally correlated. That is insofar as they are in relation to man. Classics is a subset of the study of language, and ultimately language itself was the first technological advancement of man as a social being. In this way, Classics is a study of the science of social interaction. It is this, and also a study of ancient cultures and the connection between their different time periods, customs, and languages. Therefore, Classics looks to the past, and it scientifically sifts through differing cultural aspects. STEM on the other hand looks to the future. It is necessary to progress, as the very acronym stands for all those pillars of human development. Throughout my time at college I have come to develop a stronger and stronger belief in this connection, and in how by rooting myself in the past while looking to the future I can truly understand the present time best. For this reason, I chose to major in Classics Latin while pursuing a concentration in Computer Science. Both surround the study of some language, with one looking to the past while the other looks to the future. In my own studies and experiences, I have attempted to mold the two so that when the years of college are bygone I might remember the continual timeline of human progress from the ancient time periods up to the present, and from here look to the future.

- Ronan O'Reilly, Senior Classics Latin major and Computer Science concentration

Departmental News

CAMWS

The Classical Association of the Middle West and South holds a yearly International Latin Translation Exam in which our students always perform well. Congratulations to our UD winners from the 2023-2024 Advanced Exam competition!

- **Cash Award Winners:** Bethany Kaufman and John Dougherty.
- **Book Award Winner:** Owen Embree
- **Certificate of Commendation:** Nicholas Walz

Eta Sigma Phi

Congratulations to Owen Embree, who competed in this year's Eta Sigma Phi Maurine Dallas Watkins Sight Translation Contest and received 1st Place in the Advanced Greek Exam and 3rd Place in the Advanced Latin Exam!

Karl Maurer Translation Prize Contest

Congratulations to Maria Miller, winner of this year's Karl Maurer Translation Prize Contest! Below is an excerpt of her winning translation of *Aeneid* II.199-249.

Lo! Twin serpents (I shake to tell) pressed o'er,
From Tenedos, through still deeps and the vast
Orb, equal stretched from open sea to shore;
Whose tall chests and sanguine crests did o'ermost

Tides and waves, the remaining portion swelled
Behind, tails curled in a furrow immense.
Sea resounds with froth; now sea's field beheld
Eyes burning with blood, and mouths recompensed

With fire licking hisses with tongues flashing.
We fled, blood from our faces receding.

The Karl Maurer Translation Prize poem this year is **Horace Ode 3.9**. It is his only poem written as a dialogue, in which two former lovers, Lydia and maybe Horace himself, try to best each other with their new beloveds but in the end remain open to a possible reunion. Playful and poignant at times it has been imitated or translated by many, from Ben Jonson to Francois Ponsard.

Students are encouraged to submit an artful translation by March 14, 2025. The prize is \$250 and a book of translated poetry.

Faculty News

We'd like to recognize Dr. Teresa Danze as this year's new Classics Department Chair with a warm welcome. Dr. Danze, herself a UD alumna, has been teaching for the University since 2012, co-founded our Karl Maurer translation prize contest, and has been an integral part of the life and mission of our department. Congratulations, Dr. Danze, and we look forward to many great years to come!

Back to the Source: News from Rome

Elizabeth Robinson is on sabbatical leave this Fall and has been busily working on a number of projects. In May, she submitted her chapter "Teaching Ancient Topography and Landscapes for Classics University Students" for the volume *Teaching and Learning Classics at University Level* to be published with Vernon Press in 2025. In July, she presented a paper entitled "Urbanism and Local Identity at Larinum in the 5th to 2nd centuries BCE" at the Celtic Conference in Classics in Cardiff, Wales. In September, she submitted the final version of her chapter "Origins and Development of the Appia Antica from Rome to Bovillae" for the volume *Ancient Bovillae* edited by Dr. Hatlie, to be published by the University of Michigan Press in 2025. That same month she also submitted a book review for the *Journal of Roman Archaeology* discussing a volume about the archaeology of a famous Samnite sanctuary: *Archeologia a Pietrabbondante: Fasi edilizie, oggetti di culto, materiali*. During her sabbatical she is enjoying investigating 'reusable print' in the Roman Empire. She is currently exploring the categories of "instrumenta domestica" and a series of brick stamps made by hand by legionaries at the Roman fort of Caerwent in Wales. She hopes to present her research on the Roman legionary brick stamps at the Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference in Britain in April 2025.

- Dr. Elizabeth Robinson

Peter Hatlie used his sabbatical year (2023-2024) to complete work on an existing project and initiate work on another. The existing project is an edited book called *Ancient Bovillae. History, Art and Archaeology of a Lost City in the Hinterland of Rome*. Due for release by the University of Michigan Press in the early months of 2025, this book is a collection of thirteen essays about one of the Latin people's oldest cities, a city of considerable wealth and political importance which came to flourish during the period 50 BCE -200 CE as the result of both its key location south of Rome along the Via Appia and considerable imperial patronage. The second project is a monograph about the monks and nuns, monasteries and convents of Constantinople during the period ca. 850-1200 CE. This book will function as a sequel to his earlier volume, *The Monks and Monasteries of Constantinople, ca. 350-850* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). Nearly 500 written sources underpin this study, along with considerable material remains that are found in museums, libraries and the city of Istanbul itself. Survey work in Istanbul is scheduled for the summer of 2025.

- Dr. Peter Hatlie

Alumnus Spotlight

By Richard von Weber-Hahnsberg, Guest Contributor

Richard von Weber-Hahnsberg attended UD from 1996-2000, and he has since taught Classical languages for over twenty years. He currently teaches Latin at Ignite Community School of Mesquite.



A Rough Country, But It Breeds Good Men: A Classical Education at UD

It is to two classes of person one must bear life-long gratitude and the cognizance of a debt incapable of repayment: parents and teachers. Education is the gift of both.

I had the immense good fortune to receive the greatest encouragement from my parents in regard to the study of Classics, to which was added the even greater of finding myself at the University of Dallas. What did I discover there? To this day I am continuing to count the benefits, but chiefest were the amazing faculty. These were the great days of Sweet, West, Maurer, and Davies – the most important influences on my life.

Our discipline of Classics is the oldest of the western academic endeavors. Never once in my Greek and Latin classes did I simply receive ‘language instruction’; instead, I was immersed in the rich traditions of our discipline, learned the names of Valla and Bentley, and introduced to the methods and pleasures of philology. The agony of Greek synopses and principal parts quizzes was more than offset by the goodness, truth, and beauty I found not only in classical literature but in the intellectual example set by my teachers.

Their instruction was painstaking and rigorous, but behind the course objectives rested a sincere interest in students as people. Near the heart of UD is the notion of flourishing, and that critical component of a good life was as much the subject of each class as scanning the *Menaechmi*. Too often the modern university is a center of research and ‘knowledge production,’ only secondarily a source of good teaching. My Classics professors were truly great teachers because they actively willed the good for us, endowing us with the first clumsy steps toward figuring out what a good life looks like. Every time we dissected a passage in great detail we were never doing busy work: we were learning that beauty is in the whole, but wonder in the parts.

Herodotus said that to read Homer is to be civilized – and how civilized our classes were! There was, of

course, Homer – lots of Homer – yet everywhere in the classical world, its successes and failures, its sheer glory was vibrantly alive. In the midst of reading the *Georgics*, we were treated to the methods of ploughing used by the Romans. In the Pre-Socratics, we meditated on the profundity of Heraclitus and Parmenides. How could such learning, such an environment not seep into one’s marrow? A Classics education at UD is transformative.

I have taught Greek and Latin for over twenty years now, from elementary to AP. While my technical proficiency is due to my excellent teachers, such merit as I have as a teacher in my own right is due to them at the absolute foundation: mentorship, sincerity, rigor, patience, wisdom. But most of all courage, the courage to show that the *bonus vir peritus dicendi et agendi* is a fit ideal for any student.

Were I to give advice to an undergraduate Classics major, it would be to cherish your four years. You will never have as much leisure to learn. When I was wading into advanced Greek, I purchased a commentary on a few of Pindar’s *Odes*, and did my best. It wasn’t long before I was foundering. I asked Dr. Sweet for help and before I knew it I was sat between Drs. Sweet and Maurer, being given the immense benefit of their learning – and this was not even a class, just something I was trying on my own.

Make the best of your time as an undergraduate. You have the best minds available to you, authors and teachers both.

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