

GREEK

Overview and Contact Information

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.

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.

See Also

- Ancient Studies (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/ancient-studies>)
- Classics (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/classics>)
- Latin (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/latin>)

Contact Information

Ombretta Frau, Chair

Denise Falk, Academic Department Coordinator

112 Ciruti Center

413-538-2581

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/classics>

Faculty

This area of study is administered by the Department of Classics and Italian. Advisors for Greek:

Paula Debnar, Professor of Classics

Geoffrey Sumi, Professor of Classics

Bruce Arnold, Associate Professor of Classics, Teaching Spring Only

Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 32 credits:

At least 12 credits at the 300 level in the language of concentration	12
20 additional credits in approved courses at the 200 level or above. These may be courses in Latin or Greek and/or a variety of courses in art history, classics (in English), history, philosophy, politics, or religion. ¹	20
Total Credits	32

¹ These courses should be selected after consulting with her advisor.

Additional Specifications

- 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

A minimum of 16 credits:

12 credits above the 100 level in the Greek language	12
At least 4 credits at the 300 level in the Greek language	4
Total Credits	16

Course Offerings

GREEK-101 Elementary Greek: *Homer's Iliad*

Fall. Credits: 4

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

GREEK-102 Elementary Greek: *Homer's Iliad*

Spring. Credits: 4

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. Coreq: GREEK-102L.

GREEK-222 Classical Greek Prose and Poetry

Spring. Credits: 4

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. Possible topics: 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 or GREEK-250.

Notes: Greek 222 may be taken at the 300 level (see Greek 322).

GREEK-250 Intermediate Greek Tutorial

Fall. Credits: 2 - 4

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

G. Sumi

Instructor permission required.

Notes: Meets Humanities requirement if taken for 4 credits

GREEK-295 Independent Study

Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4

The department

Instructor permission required.

GREEK-322 Classical Greek Prose and Poetry

Spring. Credits: 4

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. Possible topics: 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-350.

Notes: Students in this course attend class meetings for Greek 222.

GREEK-350 Advanced Tutorial

Fall. Credits: 2 - 4

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

P. Debnar

Instructor permission required.

Prereq: GREEK-222 or above.

Notes: Can meet the Humanities requirement, but only if taken for 4 credits.

GREEK-395 Independent Study

Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8

The department

Instructor permission required.