

LATIN

Overview and Contact Information

Latin is alive and well in the many English words that have Latin roots and as the matriarch of the modern Romance languages—Italian, French, and Spanish. The study of Latin is a foundation stone of the discipline of classics. Latin was originally spoken only in Latium, a small coastal plain containing the city of ancient Rome, but spread throughout Italy and then western Europe along with the consolidation of Roman power in the Mediterranean world, first as the language of political administration and the army. Around this same time, in the first century BCE and first century CE, Latin literature reached its apex, featuring such authors as Cicero, Caesar, Catullus, Vergil, Horace, Livy, Ovid, and Tacitus, as these Roman authors mastered the genres of epic, lyric, and elegiac poetry, comedy and tragedy, as well as oratory and historiography. In Late Antiquity, when Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, and later in the Middle Ages Latin became the language of the church fathers. In the Renaissance and early modern period Latin was the language of humanistic scholarship, science, and medicine.

The Latin major or minor is excellent preparation for advanced study in English, religion, philosophy, and history. There are also many opportunities for teaching Latin at the middle and high school levels (see below on Teaching Licensure).

The department offers courses in Latin at all levels, as well as a wide array of courses (in English) approaching the culture and history of Roman antiquity from a variety of perspectives. Majors have the opportunity to spend part or all of their junior years abroad (e.g., in Rome 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. 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>)
- Greek (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/greek>)

Contact Information

Ombretta Frau, Chair

Denise Falk, Academic Department Coordinator

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

Faculty

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

Paula Debnar, Professor of Classics

Geoffrey Sumi, Professor of Classics

Bruce Arnold, Associate Professor of Classics, Teaching Spring Only

Mark Landon, Visiting Lecturer in Classics

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 or 300 level.	20
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	
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 Latin language	12
At least 4 credits in the Latin language at the 300 level	4
Total Credits	16

Teacher Licensure

Students interested in pursuing licensure in the fields of Latin and classics can combine their course work in Latin and classics with a minor in education. In some instances course work in the major coincides with course work required for licensure; in other cases, it does not. For specific course requirements for licensure within the majors of Latin and classics, please consult your advisor or the chair of the classics department. Further information about the minor in education (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/psychology-education/#minortext>) and the Teacher Licensure program (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/psychology-education/#teacherlicensuretext>) is available in other sections of the catalog, or consult Ms. Lawrence in the psychology and education department.

Licensure also requires a formal application as well as passing scores on the Massachusetts Test of Educator Licensure (MTEL) in both the literacy component and the subject matter component. Copies of the test objectives for the MTEL are available in the classics department and in the Department of Psychology and Education.

Additional information about the Licensure Program, including application materials, can be found on the Teacher Licensure Program website (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/teach>).

Course Offerings

LATIN-101 Elementary Latin I

Fall. Credits: 4

Offers study and practice in the grammar and syntax of classical Latin.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

M. Landon

Restrictions: This course is limited to first years, sophomores and juniors

LATIN-102 Elementary Latin II

Spring. Credits: 4

Offers study and practice in the grammar and syntax of classical Latin.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

G. Sumi

Prereq: LATIN-101. Coreq: LATIN-102.

Advisory: Students who have not completed Latin 101 should consult the department.

Notes: Students who have not completed LATIN-101 should consult the department.

LATIN-201 Intermediate Latin I

Fall. Credits: 4

Combines a thorough review of Latin grammar and syntax with an introduction to the life and literature of ancient Rome, based on the reading of selected passages of Roman prose and poetry.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

G. Sumi

Prereq: LATIN-102.

LATIN-207 The Slender Muse

Spring. Credits: 4

A study of the highly romantic poetry that launched a revolution in Latin literature, including such works as Catullus's *epyllion* on Peleus and Thetis and Vergil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, with attention to the new understanding of poetry shown in these poems and to their commentary on the social turmoil of the last phase of the Republic.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

B. Arnold

Prereq: LATIN-201.

LATIN-209 Vergil: *Aeneid*

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

A study of the *Aeneid* with attention both to its presentation of the classic conflict between Greek and Roman value systems and to its controversial portrayal of empire in the Augustan age.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

B. Arnold

Prereq: LATIN-201.

LATIN-210 Ovid: *Metamorphoses*

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

A study of Ovid's ambitious epic celebrating change and transformative forces, with attention to the challenges it poses to traditional Roman values and to conventional Roman notions of the work appropriate to a poet. In particular, consideration will be given to the way Ovid's poem subversively responds to Vergil's work.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

B. Arnold

Prereq: one 200- or 300-level Latin course.

Notes: Meets with Latin 310. Three meetings per week; timing of third to be arranged with students after registration.

LATIN-225 The Dido/Aeneas Story

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

Second-year level study of Latin with readings in prose and poetry focused around the Roman foundation myth of Dido and Aeneas, which can be read on many different levels: as a myth of the origins of Rome; as an historical allegory of the Punic wars and the later war against Cleopatra, Queen of the East; as a psychological analysis of romantic love; as moral and political philosophy; and as a classical tragedy with interesting allusions to several of the best Greek tragedies. Selections are from Vergil, Ovid, Livy and Pompeius Trogus. Offers further review of grammar and syntax.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

B. Arnold

Prereq: LATIN-201.

LATIN-295 Independent Study

Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4

The department

Instructor permission required.

LATIN-302 Cicero and the Enemies of the Roman Republic

Fall. Credits: 4

The career of the Roman orator and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero spanned the last generation of the Roman Republic, a period of political instability and civil war. As the leading orator of his day, Cicero often used his rhetorical skills to thwart those who he believed were bent on the destruction of the Roman Republic. In this course, we will examine the role of public oratory in the political process in this period with a close reading of Cicero's speeches and letters concerning one of his political enemies (Catiline, Clodius, or Mark Antony).

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

G. Sumi

Prereq: One 200- or 300-level Latin course

LATIN-307 The Slender Muse

Spring. Credits: 4

A study of the highly romantic poetry that launched a revolution in Latin literature, including such works as Catullus's *epyllion* on Peleus and Thetis and Vergil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, with attention to the new understanding of poetry shown in these poems and to their commentary on the social turmoil of the last phase of the Republic.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

B. Arnold

Prereq: Any Latin course above LATIN-201.

LATIN-309 Vergil: *Aeneid*

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

A study of the *Aeneid* with attention both to its presentation of the classic conflict between Greek and Roman value systems and to its controversial portrayal of empire in the Augustan age.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

B. Arnold

Prereq: Any Latin course at the 200 level or above.

LATIN-310 Ovid: *Metamorphoses*

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

A study of Ovid's ambitious epic celebrating change and transformative forces, with attention to the challenges it poses to traditional Roman values and to conventional Roman notions of the work appropriate to a poet. In particular, consideration will be given to the way Ovid's poem subversively responds to Vergil's work.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

B. Arnold

Prereq: one 200- or 300-level Latin course.

LATIN-312 Roma Ludens: Comedy and Satire in Ancient Rome

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

Could Romans be funny? Perhaps surprisingly, in a culture where seriousness (*gravitas*) and sternness (*severitas*) were praiseworthy attributes, Romans enjoyed theatrical productions adapted from Greek comedies - from raucous and ribald farces to more subtle comedies of manners. They also believed that satire, poetry that poked fun at the vices and foibles of human nature, was a truly Roman genre. Moreover, both comic and satirical elements appear in a wide range of Roman literature. Authors may include Plautus, Terence, Horace, Ovid, Martial, Juvenal, and others.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

P. Debnar

Prereq: LATIN-222 or LATIN-225.

LATIN-319 Power, Politics, and Scandal: Roman Imperial Biography and Historiography

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

Tacitus and Suetonius are the two principal authorities for understanding the impact of the Roman emperor's position and authority on the transformation of the political culture of the early empire from republic to monarchy. This course will focus on the content of Roman imperial historiography and biography—politics and the abuse of power, dynastic succession, scandal and court intrigue—as well as its form—source material, narrative structure and prose style—by reading closely selections from Tacitus' *Annals of Imperial Rome* and/or *Histories* and Suetonius' *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*.

Lives of the Twelve Caesars.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

G. Sumi

Prereq: LATIN-222.

LATIN-350 Junior/Senior Tutorial

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 2 - 4

Studies in Roman lyric, elegy, didactic poetry, the Roman novel, Roman use of myth in literature, or other authors or genres.

Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement

The department

Restrictions: This course is open to Juniors and Seniors.

Instructor permission required.

Prereq: 8 credits of advanced work in Latin.

Notes: Meets Humanities or Language requirement if taken for four credits.

LATIN-395 Independent Study

Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8

The department

Instructor permission required.