

Classics, PhD

The PhD program in classics is intended for students who wish to pursue original research in the wide-ranging field of classics—Greek, Latin, Semitic languages, ancient Mediterranean religions and mythology, Mediterranean archaeology, ancient philosophy, and classical literature from Homer to Plato to the Bible to the Church fathers. Students are also trained to teach languages and literature at the university level. Many students bring their advanced education to such careers as law, counseling, publishing, library science, grant writing, nonprofit organizations, and university administration.

Learning Outcomes

Students are expected to demonstrate many, if not all of the following:

- understanding of the vocabulary and grammar of the classical languages they have chosen to study (e.g., Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Coptic) at an advanced level;
- broad knowledge of the ancient literature corresponding to their chosen languages of study;
- application of ancient concepts learned to modern problems;
- the ability to conduct original research in various subjects within the field of classics;
- the ability to conduct archaeological field research and teach it at the university level;
- facility with the writing skills necessary to publish articles and critical research volumes at the peer-review level, as well as popular articles in trade books, magazines, newspapers, and online publications; and
- facility with the public-speaking skills necessary to present research both in professional academic settings and in popular, public venues.

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy program in classics requires a minimum of 72 s.h. of graduate credit, including the courses listed below (16–18 s.h.). Students may count no more than 12 s.h. earned in courses numbered 3000–4999 toward the degree. Students must maintain a UI cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00 to earn the degree.

Students must also take precomprehensive and comprehensive examinations and write a dissertation.

Courses taken to complete the Postbaccalaureate Certificate in Classics do not count toward the degree.

Required Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
CLSG:4076	Greek Composition	2-3
CLSG:5001	Greek Survey I: Archaic to Classical Literature	3
CLSG:5002	Greek Survey II: Hellenistic to Late Antique Literature	3
CLSL:4076	Latin Composition	2-3
CLSL:5001	Latin Survey I: Republican Literature	3

CLSL:5002	Latin Survey II: Imperial to Late Antique Literature	3
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The remaining coursework is made up of Department of Classics courses and other courses with approval of the graduate advisor.

PhD Examinations

PhD students must take the foundations exam at the end of their first year. The remaining exams may be taken in any sequence during years two to four. Students must file a request for the fourth-year comprehensive exam at least three weeks before the date of the third and final field exam to be taken. Competence in reading two scholarly languages, such as French, German, or Italian, must be demonstrated by the end of the fourth year of study.

Foundations Exam

The foundations exam is based on a set reading list of broad themes in ancient Mediterranean history, literature, and culture. It consists entirely of take-home and open-book essay questions, which students have two weeks to complete.

Translation Exams

Students take two translation exams in either Greek, Latin, Hebrew/Aramaic, Coptic, or Syriac. Translation exams are scheduled on an individual basis, either one or two per semester, and are based on a set reading list. They are four hours each and taken in the department with dictionary access.

Field Exams

Students take three field exams in either Greek literature, Latin literature, biblical studies, early Christianity, Mediterranean history, Mediterranean archaeology, or ancient world digital humanities. Field exams are scheduled on an individual basis, either one or two per semester, and are based on a set reading list. They consist entirely of take-home and open-book essay questions, which students have two weeks to complete.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Career Advancement

The Department of Classics is recognized for the excellent program it offers for graduate study in classics. Most go on to teach at the college level.

Academic Plans

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

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Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
72 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; graduate transfer credits from an accredited institution allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. ^a		
Competence in reading two scholarly languages, such as French, German, or Italian must be demonstrated by the end of the fourth year of study. ^b		
Hours		0
First Year		
Fall		
CLSG:4076	Greek Composition ^c	2 - 3
CLSG:5001	Greek Survey I: Archaic to Classical Literature	3
Departmental Seminar ^d		2
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Hours		10-11
Spring		
CLSG:4076	Greek Composition ^c	2 - 3
CLSG:5002	Greek Survey II: Hellenistic to Late Antique Literature	3
Departmental Seminar ^d		2
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Foundations Exam ^e		
Hours		10-11
Second Year		
Any Semester		
Field Exams ^{f, g}		
Translation Exams ^{f, h}		
Hours		0
Fall		
CLSL:4076	Latin Composition ^c	2 - 3
CLSL:5001	Latin Survey I: Republican Literature	3
Departmental Seminar ^d		2
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Hours		10-11
Spring		
CLSL:4076	Latin Composition ^c	2 - 3
CLSL:5002	Latin Survey II: Imperial to Late Antique Literature	3
Departmental Seminar ^d		2
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Hours		10-11
Third Year		
Any Semester		
Field Exams ^{f, g}		
Translation Exams ^{f, h}		
Hours		0
Fall		
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Hours		6

Spring		
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Hours		6
Fourth Year		
Any Semester		
Field Exams ^{f, g}		
Translation Exams ^{f, h}		
Hours		0
Fall		
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Hours		6
Spring		
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Departmental Seminar ^d		3
Hours		6
Fifth Year		
Fall		
Prospectus Defense		
CLSL:7080	Latin Thesis	4
or CLSG:7080	or Greek Thesis	
Hours		4
Spring		
CLSL:7080	Latin Thesis	4
or CLSG:7080	or Greek Thesis	
Exam: Doctoral Final Exam ⁱ		
Hours		4
Total Hours		72-76

a Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.

b Other modern languages may be substituted with the approval of the student's faculty advisor and the department chair.

c Taken twice in consecutive semesters.

d Choose from CLSG or CLSL courses numbered 6011-6014, or CLSA:6100.

e Taken at the end of the first year, the foundations exam is a set reading list of broad themes exams in ancient Mediterranean history, literature, and culture. It consists entirely of take-home and open-book essay questions, which students have two weeks to complete.

f The doctoral comprehensive exam is the final field or translation exam undertaken by the student prior to the prospectus defense.

g Students take three field exams in either Greek literature, Latin literature, biblical studies, early Christianity, Mediterranean history, Mediterranean archaeology, or ancient world digital humanities. Field exams are scheduled on an individual basis, either one or two per semester, and are based on a set reading list. They consist entirely of take-home and open-book essay questions, which students have two weeks to complete.

h Students take two translation exams in either Greek, Latin, Hebrew/Aramaic, Coptic, or Syriac. Translation exams are scheduled on an individual basis, either one or two per semester, and are based on a set reading list. They are four hours each and taken in the department with dictionary access.

i Dissertation defense.