

## **Undergraduate Assessment**

Department of Classics  
University of Wisconsin  
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Annual undergraduate assessment in Classics consists of three parts: 1) evaluation of our students' progress in learning the original languages, 2) consideration of their research skills in the capstone seminar, and 3) exit surveys of all graduating majors in Classical Languages and Literature, and Classical Humanities. As evidenced by faculty reports below, current Classics students are performing admirably across all three categories.

### *Course Sequences in the Language Programs*

A faculty committee consisting of Professors Patricia Rosenmeyer and James McKeown evaluated student progress in two intermediate language courses, Greek 306 and Latin 302 (as below).

#### *Greek 306: Fourth Semester Ancient Greek*

The class enrolled 10 students: one freshman, one junior, five graduating seniors, two graduate students associated with Hebrew and Semitic, and one auditor, a faculty member from the English dept. All the undergraduates enrolled are declared Classics or Classical Humanities majors. The class read all of Book 1 of Homer's *Iliad* and around 350 lines of Book 6. The students began with assignments of 10 lines per meeting and progressed to around 40 lines per meeting. They also read essays from *the Oxford Companion to Homer* and discussed larger issues, as well as spent a good deal of time on meter.

All the students except one (who stopped attending class before spring break for personal reasons) performed above expectations and will pass the class. Final grades consisted of seven As, two Bs, and one incomplete.

#### *Latin 302: Literature of the Roman Empire*

The Latin program is thriving as never before and looks to have a very bright future. The present 300-level students learned their Latin with Wheelock's textbook and whereas they are doing fairly well, the department anticipates that the recent introduction of a new textbook for introductory Latin will show even more impressive results in the next few years. During the past spring semester, 12 students enrolled Latin 302, taught by Lecturer Brian Lush. He expected over half the students to earn a grade of A, with all but one or two of the others earning A/B or B grades. Some of them are very good students who are taking Greek as well and most of them intend to carry on with Latin at the 500-level.

#### *Classics 591: Capstone Seminar*

A committee consisting of Professors Jeff Beneker and Max Goldman reviewed five randomly selected term papers from Classics 591, the Undergraduate Seminar, from the

spring semester, 2007. All of the papers took a comparative approach to the epic poetry of Homer or Virgil: four compared the ancient authors to medieval or modern poets (or in one case, to the author of Star Wars), while the fifth surveyed secondary scholarship on the physical evidence that appears to confirm a Trojan War. All the papers demonstrated good research and writing skills as well as familiarity with ancient literature that are expected of senior undergraduates in the Classical Humanities major. Moreover, a few stood out as beautifully written and especially insightful. It was determined that students in Classics 591 were performing at well above expectations for this course.

### *Exit Surveys*

Upon graduation, the Undergraduate Advisor, Professor Patricia Rosenmeyer, administered paper copies of a survey to seniors with a Classical Humanities or Classics major, asking them to evaluate overall program quality, ability to locate and register for courses, quality of instruction, quality of departmental advising, and to answer other appropriate questions. All students expressed satisfaction with their undergraduate experience in the Classics department. Suggestions for improvement included the desire for a more coherent curriculum, where classes are taken in sequence, and a broader selection of literature and culture courses in translation. Another requested more opportunities to study Classics abroad, which the department is addressing with a new three-week program in Rome, to complement its intersession course in Athens. It is expected that this survey will be distributed electronically in AY 2007-08.