



University of Colorado **Boulder**

2016 Program Review

Department of Classics

Academic Review and Planning Advisory  
Committee Report

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth M. Wood".

06/19/17

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs : Date

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## Process overview

The review of the Department of Classics was conducted in accordance with the 2016 review guidelines. The Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) conducts and writes the final reviews of all academic units on the Boulder campus. The unit completed a self-study in December 2015. An internal review committee (IRC) of two CU Boulder faculty not affiliated with the department reviewed the document. The IRC found the report thorough and fair. An external review committee (ERC) consisting of a professor of Classics from outside the University of Colorado visited the unit on March 29 and 30, 2016, reviewed the relevant documents, and met with faculty, students, staff, university administrators, and ARPAC members. The external reviewer's comments and recommendations are cited at appropriate points throughout the report. This public document reflects the assessment of and recommendations for the Department of Classics as approved by ARPAC.

Academic Review  
and Planning  
Advisory  
Committee  
(ARPAC)

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Academic year 2016-2017  
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Jeff Cox, ARPAC Chair, Vice Provost and Associate Vice  
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## Unit overview

The campus' standardized description of the Department of Classics, and information regarding comparable units, can be found on the Office of Data Analytics' (ODA) website (<http://www.colorado.edu/oda/institutional-research/institutional-level-data/information-department/academic-review-and-0>). ODA updates the Department of Classics profile annually in the fall semester. This report cites the ODA data for Classics posted in October 2015, the most recent update available; these figures reflect the state of the unit in academic year (AY) 2014-2015. More recent data from the department self-study are cited where appropriate.

### Personnel and governance

As of October 8, 2015, the department had 11 tenured and tenure-track (TTT) faculty (four professors, five associate professors, and two assistant professors), two instructors/senior instructors, and two visiting professors. An additional 15 teaching assistants (TAs) and two graduate part-time instructors (GPTIs) teach for the department. Two staff members provide administrative support.

The tenure-track faculty elect the department chair on a secret ballot for a three-year appointment, renewable once. Instructors and senior instructors may also vote on appropriate matters. Other faculty governance committees include an executive committee, an undergraduate studies committee, and a graduate studies committee.

### Research, scholarship, and creative work

Standard ODA data provided to ARPAC on research productivity includes the average number of publications and/or creative works produced per TTT faculty member (as rostered on November 1, 2014), from 2008-2014. For purposes of comparison, these data are ranked with all academic units across campus and with those within this cycle (in this case, arts and humanities units). With

respect to TTT productivity numbers, the department ranks sixth of 16 units in its cycle. Average research productivity per faculty member during those seven years is based on self-reported publications in the annual Faculty Report of Professional Activity (FRPA) and includes 1.2 refereed books and monographs per TTT (ranking first of 16 units), 6.4 refereed articles and chapters per TTT (ranking sixth of 16 units), and 14.1 conference presentations and papers per TTT (11<sup>th</sup> of 16 units reporting these works). The department's grant expenditures per TTT for fiscal year (FY) 2015 are \$61,000 (ranking fifth among 12 units in the review cycle).

According to the external reviewer, "the full professors are nationally and internationally recognized scholars, and colleagues in ranks below show promise of achieving similar distinction." Department productivity statistics (provided by Academic Analytics and highlighted in the Classics self-study) are also relevant. The Academic Analytics statistics compare the department's research productivity to 104 US-based classics departments; to these, the department compares favorably. For example, the department's book publications per faculty are in the 82<sup>nd</sup> percentile, citations per faculty member are in the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile, and articles per faculty member are in the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile of 104 departments. These, and many other achievements included in the self-study, are important contributions to ARPAC's deliberations and are further discussed in the analysis section.

#### Undergraduate education

The Department of Classics offers three undergraduate major tracks (Greek/Latin; literature, culture and thought; and history, art and archaeology) and two minor tracks (Greek/Latin; classical studies). During AY 2014-2015, Classics awarded 22 bachelor's degrees (10<sup>th</sup> of 16 units in review cycle); this reflects a 47 percent *increase* over the past five years. Given the campus' interest in

student success and timely degree completion, it is particularly noteworthy that the median time to matriculation for Classics students entering as new freshmen is 3.67 years (shortest of 13 units in the review cycle). Classics had 83 undergraduate majors as of fall 2014—a 19 percent increase over the past five years. These data reflect a 22 percent increase in female students and a 22 percent increase in underrepresented students (African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American). Forty-one percent of Classics majors are associated with this unit as a second major (a 19 percent increase over the past five years). This percentage of second majors places them sixth of 16 units in the review cycle. Classics had 16 undergraduate minors as of fall 2014—a 45 percent decrease over the past five years. Student credit hour (SCH) production was 6,933 for AY 2014-2015 (12<sup>th</sup> of 17 units) a five-year increase (five percent). These upward-trending metrics are in contrast with national trends in the humanities.

Student credit hour production by TTT faculty decreased by 36 percent over the past five years; their share of Classics' SCH production is 39 percent (ranking Classics seventh of 17 units in this measure). Instructors and senior instructors taught 19 percent of SCH over the past five years (ranking Classics ninth of 15 units in this measure); this is a 290 percent increase over the past five years. Of course, language courses, which comprise a significant portion of the department's effort, usually are taught by non-TTT faculty, which has an impact on these numbers.

In spring 2015, the Office of Data Analytics conducted a survey of Classics seniors. The survey (with seven respondents) noted that 71 percent of the graduates were planning on full-time or part-time graduate school after graduation, ranking first of 10 units in the review cycle. The remaining 29 percent of the graduates were planning on full-time or part-time employment directly after

graduation, ranking 10<sup>th</sup> of 10 units in the review cycle. Ninety-four percent of seniors were satisfied with their major as a whole (first of 13 units in the review cycle), and 85 percent of seniors were satisfied with the effectiveness of Classics courses in providing a good general education (first of 13 units in the review cycle). Only 50 percent of students were satisfied with how well the University of Colorado Boulder prepared Classics students for the job market (10<sup>th</sup> of 13 units in the review cycle).

#### Graduate education

The Department of Classics offers five MA tracks (Greek, Latin, classical art and archaeology, classical antiquity, and Latin pedagogy) and one PhD track (classical language and literature). ODA reports 11 master's degrees awarded in AY 2014-2015, a 22 percent increase over five years, with a median time to degree of 1.7 years (ranking first of 13 units). The fall 2014 census indicated 25 students enrolled in these programs (a decrease of 11 percent in five years). Diversity in the graduate student body is somewhat less than in the undergraduate body, with 52 percent being women (a nine percent decrease over five years) and nine percent identifying as members of underrepresented minority populations. The department has no international students as majors (13<sup>th</sup> of 13 units in review cycle).

#### Budget

The department chair manages the budget. The department receives around \$27,000 per year in operating funds from the College of Arts and Sciences. It receives additional funding from teaching for the Division of Continuing Education and the Department of Art and Art History, with those funds amounting to an additional \$15,000 per year, on average. The department also has a number of generous donors that fund research and teaching efforts. As with other humanities units, Classics indicates its greatest need is for more graduate student support.



Space Classics is housed in Eaton Humanities along with three other humanities departments. The self-study describes a shortage of graduate student study and office space, with 25 students sharing the use of one room.

## Past reviews

The Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee last reviewed the department in 2009. At the time, ARPAC described a unit with multiple strengths but also recognized a number of avenues for improvement. Classics was encouraged to (1) continue efforts to improve department cohesion and cooperation, (2) decide whether scarce resources should be invested in new faculty lines or increased graduate student support, and (3) increase the number of PhD degrees awarded to the point where the department becomes eligible for national rankings. In its annual follow-up reporting, filed in 2010, 2011, and 2012, Classics indicated it was making progress on these matters, though, as this year's review suggests, there is still work to be done.

## Campus context

The Department of Classics is among the most vibrant humanistic studies programs on campus. The unit's scholarship on ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, and of the many peoples with which these populations interacted in central and eastern Europe, north Africa, Egypt, and the Middle East, offers the university community an important perspective on multiculturalism. Moreover, the unit's scholarship serves as an example of interdisciplinarity, routinely moving between research into literature, philosophy, material culture, history, and religion. The internal reviewers describe the department as "stellar [...] with an extremely productive research faculty who provide superior training for large numbers of undergraduate and graduate students."

## National context

The external reviewer noted that “the Classics Department faculty are a remarkably productive and indeed, an award-winning group,” applauding Classics as having a “top MA program.” The department’s faculty have received prestigious fellowships and awards such as fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, Dumbarton Oaks, Guggenheim, Humboldt, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Notably, a newly recruited Classics faculty was named as a 2015 MacArthur Fellow. In recent years, several BA and MA graduates have been admitted to prestigious PhD programs (Berkeley, Chicago, Michigan, Penn, Princeton, and Stanford). Meanwhile, Classics faculty salaries compare favorably with other American Association of University public schools: the CU Boulder average for full, associate, and assistant Classics professors is in the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile of this discipline.

## Analysis

The Department of Classics is recognized both at CU Boulder and beyond as a first-rate department, contributing to both research and teaching. Classics faculty are productive and nationally acclaimed. The self-study highlights an impressive set of research and scholarly accomplishments. Department faculty regularly publish with distinguished imprints, including Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press. Venues for their refereed journal articles include *Classical Quarterly*, *Historia*, *Ancient Philosophy*, *The American Journal of Archaeology*, and *Harvard Studies in Classical Philosophy*. Classics faculty also regularly present their work at scholarly conferences and invited lectures nationally and internationally. In order to make clear the significance of this record, it would be useful to have sharper comparisons with classics departments in peer or aspirational schools, either through Academic Analytics or some other tool.

While the department has been successful in recruiting some truly first-rate colleagues, reporting at all levels indicates the need for a Greek literature specialist. ARPAC supports granting the unit this position.

Undergraduate and  
graduate education and  
support

The external reviewer notes, “When enrollments in many other units in the Humanities have been declining, those in Classics at CU have remarkably been increasing, thanks in particular to the popular classes in classical civilization.” The reviewer adds further applause: “The Classics majors spoke warmly of the Department [...]. [T]hey remarked on the welcoming atmosphere of the Department [...] and the sense of inclusion that comes from receiving the Chair’s weekly update.” Suggestions for improvement included posting of faculty office hours on the department website and better advertising of honors degree opportunities.

The department is planning to create new courses on ancient science and technology. These courses not only will add to the department's multidisciplinary approach but also may further improve Classic's impressive ability to draw double majors from science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. In drawing such students, the department has given careful and strategic thought to the long-term professional needs of undergraduates by focusing, for example, on their communication skills. As the self-study puts it, "The interdisciplinarity of Classics makes it the ideal major (perhaps particularly as one of a double major) for today's students. The fact [that] we train our students in multiple disciplines and methodologies means [that] we equip them with skills and tools they need to consider a problem from multiple angles at once." Classics serves as an example of how a humanities unit can successfully recruit STEM students to complete a double major or a minor. Sometimes these students are looking for the particular skills that a humanities degree affords. Sometimes they have a real desire to major in a humanities field but may feel the need to pursue another major that is seen as more practical. In any event, Classics has shown the way to continue to attract students to the humanities.

Some humanities departments have also introduced internship opportunities into their undergraduate programs; these work-life experiences have been recognized as adding meaningfully to students' academic lives. Providing placement data and career mentoring can also convince students and their families of the value of a classics degree.

The campus should establish a web-based database to track student outcomes across majors. Such a database could be helpful in advising undergraduates (especially freshmen and sophomores) about the professional careers and graduate school

placements of students holding a particular degree. It would be helpful to track outcomes for three or four of the most recent undergraduate classes.

As noted earlier, Classics offers multiple MA tracks, reflecting the range of faculty specializations, but only a literature-focused doctoral program. It struck the external reviewer that few of the department's MA students continue at CU Boulder for their doctoral degrees. While admiring Classics' impressive MA placement record, the external reviewer says, "[T]he Ph.D. should not be neglected in the Department's prioritizing of enhanced funding for the M.A. degree. Even if few, successful Ph.D.'s will add to the stature of the Department and the University."

ARPAC likewise recognizes the the department's excellent MA program; however, the PhD program should receive priority, particularly when investing scarce student support funds. It is encouraging to note that Classics is collaborating with the Consortium of Doctoral Studies in Literatures and Cultures with the hope that it "will provide better funding, stronger cross-disciplinary education, and broader advice and support for the graduate students." Consortium funding should help the department recruit better PhD students, allow them to efficiently complete their degrees, and to place them.

#### Inclusive excellence

The department, as an interdisciplinary unit devoted to the study of ancient cultures, contributes to the university's exploration of a diverse, international world. The department is to be applauded for such efforts as its outreach to ethnically and culturally diverse populations in the high schools and its use of A&S diversity funds to recruit a broader group of students. The department should build on its past efforts and continue to participate in the campus' drive towards inclusive excellence.

- Space The department was particularly concerned about library space allocations for classics books and for research. They also requested additional graduate student spaces.
- Budget The department's main budgetary concerns, as with some other humanities units, focused on graduate support and library resources, both discussed elsewhere. The department also makes a case for either a department-level or college-level staff person to help with communication and outreach. The external reviewer recommended providing the department with a regular budget to support scholarship, including travel and guest speakers.



# Recommendations

The members of the Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) address the following recommendations to the Department of Classics and to the offices of the dean and provost. It is the committee's intention that the recommendations serve to benefit program improvement and development and to further the mission of the University of Colorado Boulder.

## To the unit

1. ARPAC recognizes the strong job Classics has done in sustaining and improving its undergraduate program. The committee urges the following priorities:
  - a. Focus on placement and career mentoring advice for Classics undergraduates (perhaps consider the example of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures);
  - b. Focus on developing meaningful summer (or academic-year) internships for Classics undergraduates;
2. Work with the Office of the Senior Vice Provost and the quality initiative leader to develop formal mechanisms for measuring student success;
3. Continue building on the department's nationally and internationally recognized research and scholarship. In order to make clear the significance of this record, it would be useful to have sharper comparisons with classics departments in peer or aspirational schools, either through Academic Analytics or some other tool;
4. Prioritize work with the Consortium of Doctoral Studies in Literatures and Cultures in order to enhance the doctoral

program and to aid doctoral students in the successful pursuit of their degrees and careers;

5. Continue the unit's excellent work in preparing MA students for further literary study. Think creatively (counseling students as they are admitted, internships, etc.) to train MA students for employment in non-academic fields.

To the dean of the College of  
Arts and Sciences

6. Consider supporting the unit in fostering continued leadership excellence;

7. Consider supporting the department's laudable focus on undergraduate success including building student communication skills;

8. Monitor the department's efforts to enhance undergraduate student placement;

9. Consider supporting the external reviewer's recommendation for an assistant professor hire in Greek literature;

10. Consider supporting the department's efforts to work with Consortium of Doctoral Studies in Literatures and Cultures to enhance their doctoral program;

11. Help devise metrics that compare unit's research and scholarship measures with that of classics faculty at peer or aspirational schools, either through Academic Analytics or some other tool.

To the provost

12. Look to Classics as a model for attracting students from STEM fields to the humanities—both students who have a real desire to study the humanities and those who seek the kind of education and skills provided by a humanities education. The

recent success of Classics in attracting students might serve as a model for broadening the skills of students in technical fields and for generating additional teaching opportunities for humanities units.

## Required follow-up

The chair of the Department of Classics shall report annually on the first of April for a period of three years following the year of the receipt of this report (i.e., April 1<sup>st</sup> of 2018, 2019, and 2020) to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the provost on the implementation of these recommendations. Likewise, the dean shall report annually on the first of May to the provost on the implementation of recommendations addressed to the college. The provost, as part of the review reforms, has agreed to respond annually to all outstanding matters under her/his purview arising from this review year. All official responses will be posted online.