

I. Program Mission.

- A. From the catalogue: “Classics is the area of scholarly study which investigates the Greek and Roman past in order to understand ourselves in relation to that past. This field includes the archeologies, histories, literatures, languages and cultures of ancient Greece and Rome from their neolithic origins to the end of the 5th century CE. The Department of Classics offers two types of undergraduate degrees, A B.A. in Classics and a B.A. in Latin, and two types of graduate degrees, an M.A.T. in Latin and an M.A. in Latin.” Please note that this update assesses the B.A. in Latin. The B.A. in Classics is a part of the Humanities Assessment update.
- B. The goals of our Latin program are three. In general we provide a traditional liberal arts degree that gives students analytical, oral and written skills, which in turn allows students to bring flexibility and versatility to a precarious job market. More specifically we are a pre-professional degree. Many of our students go on to law school, medical school, or graduate school. They find that a degree in Latin gives them an edge in a very competitive application process because it is so unusual. Latin learning also prepares them specifically for the MCAT and LSAT. Most specifically we prepare students for the teaching of Latin on the secondary and college level. Our degree requirements meet the standard set by the College of Education and Human Services for the Latin content area for teaching grades five through twelve. It also prepares students who are interested in pursuing an MA or PhD in Classical Philology. These goals accord with the mission statements of the College of Liberal Arts and Marshall University.

To these ends, each of the outcomes listed below aid in the preparation of our students both generically and specifically. Our primary emphasis is on the study of Latin literature in its literary and historical contexts. However, concomitant with this study is the emphasis on oral and written skills. We emphasize writing in most of our classes, and we expect our students to participate informally through daily work and formally through presentations. We also expect a high degree of technological expertise on the part of our students. Oddly enough for a discipline firmly situated in the past we require our students to be aware of the electronic resources for the study of Latin, and to use these resources in the learning and presentation of material.

II. Program Learning Outcomes and Data Collection:

We have the advantage of being a small department with a small number of majors and small classes. These factors allow us to know our students very well and to assess their progress in some detail. Much of their work involves oral presentation of translation of Latin literature in class and this emphasis on class work factors into their grades. Our data comes from upper-level Latin classes, CL 436 (when offered), and LAT 499 (our capstone experience) when we have a graduating senior, since these courses are required for the Latin major. We do not incorporate data from elementary and intermediate Latin classes because these classes are primarily general education courses and in general we do not have declared majors in these classes. In the comments on our assessment report from 2008, it was suggested that our benchmark of 80% of students receiving a B or above was too high. After discussion, we have decided to keep this benchmark, because we are assessing majors in the program, and at the 300- or 400-level these students should be receiving Bs or better in their

courses. We have a very high attrition rate in Latin learning largely because the learning is cumulative: on the elementary and intermediate levels, students absorb a great body of material over four semesters. Typically we begin with sixty students in 101 and end with twenty to twenty-five students in 204. Of these, five to ten continue for a minor or major in Latin. Language-learning self-selects and we are left with the best in our upper-level classes. Another comment was that we should break out one, two or three outcomes, and assess them in detail. We have chosen not to do that, again, because our program size enables us to assess all students all the time. Each of the three teachers has each of our majors in the course of the year. In addition to formal classroom assessment, we often have informal discussions that assess student progress. We know our students very well.

We gather our data from two sources. First, the teachers in the specific classes for a given academic year assess the Latin majors in that class according to the learning outcomes specified below. Their results are in our grid. Second, as part of assessment day 2010, the students themselves answered a series of questions based on our student outcomes. Their comments are included after the grid. Beginning this year we have changed our capstone experience from a portfolio that assesses a student's experience throughout the Latin program, to a 3-credit hour course that asks a student to revise an undergraduate paper in order to bring it up to a graduate-level paper. We have made this change in response to growing student interest in graduate school. In previous years, very few of our Latin majors have pursued graduate degrees in Latin. This climate, however, is changing, and we are changing student preparation accordingly.

IIA. Assessment:

OUTCOME	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	BENCHMARK	RESULTS/ANALYSIS	ANALYSIS/PLANNED ACTION
1. the ability to read and understand Latin language and literature.	Class work and written examinations that emphasize translation and grammar.	Grading criteria for oral and written class work, usually 20-50% of the total grade. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.	Upper-level Latin students performed very well in this area. All received B or above for class work.	We will continue to stress the necessity of classroom preparation and class work. In general, classes consist of translation and discussion of grammatical and literary points.
2. the ability to interpret Latin language and literature	Class work and written examinations that emphasize vocabulary and grammar as interpretive tools	Grading criteria for oral and written class work, usually 20-50% of the total grade. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.	All students received a B or above for this area.	We base interpretation on reasonably accurate translation (recognizing that there is room for a great deal of interpretation in the translations themselves), and on discussion of literary aspects of literature because these aspects lend themselves to a great deal of interpretation. We will continue to stress these points.

<p>3. the ability to understand and articulate the cultural, literary and historical contexts of Latin language and literature</p>	<p>Class discussion, written and oral assignments that place Latin literature in its cultural, literary and historical contexts</p>	<p>Grading criteria for oral and written class work, which take the form of individual or group presentations (as opposed to informal discussion in the preceding criteria). Written work often includes bibliographies of secondary sources. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>All students received a grade of B or above.</p>	<p>Oral presentations are done either individually or in groups. Written assignments can consist of annotated bibliographies, commentaries on the Latin, and/or formal essays. All of these stress the literary and, in some cases, the cultural contexts of Latin literature. The cultural contexts are also covered by courses taught in English, which are required for the minor and suggested for the major. We have recently added two courses, Roman law (CL 475) and the Rhetoric of Seduction (CL 472) to Roman Civilization (CL 436), as possible minor requirements.</p>
<p>4. the ability to engage in effective oral reading of Latin poetry and prose</p>	<p>Daily practice in class; class assignments that stress orality and performance.</p>	<p>Grading criteria for oral class work. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>This is part of class work, and all students received a grade of B or above.</p>	<p>This has been a weakness in our program. We feel there has been considerable improvement in this area.</p>
<p>5. the ability to communicate effectively in speech</p>	<p>Oral presentations and papers that analyze Latin literature and its context</p>	<p>Specific guidelines and grading criteria for oral and written projects. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>All students received a B or above.</p>	<p>Our students generally are adept at oral communication. In addition to oral presentations in class we encourage them to participate in the CoLA Undergraduate Research Conference.</p>
<p>6. the ability to write papers that incorporate strong thesis statements, comprehensive topic sentences, effective development that includes the use of primary and (where relevant) secondary sources, and a conclusion that does more than summarize; and the ability to write a paper that utilizes current conventions of style.</p>	<p>Written assignments that incorporate these criteria.</p>	<p>Specific guidelines and rubrics for formal written assignments. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.</p>	<p>All students receive a B or above.</p>	<p>. This is an area of strength for our program, largely because we teach nearly all of our non language courses as writing-intensive. Our students receive extensive training in writing, and our results are good. We often hear reports from other departments that compare our students favorably to majors in those departments.</p>

7. the ability to understand the connection between language and culture, and identify language and literature as the expression of ancient and modern cultural values and norms	Class discussion, oral presentations and papers that place Latin literature in its cultural and literary contexts	Specific guidelines and grading criteria for oral and written projects. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.	Students received a B or above.	This outcome is an expansion of #s 1 & 2 above. Because we focus on philology, we are very aware of the use of language in ancient cultures and our own.
8. the ability to exploit technological skills that will enhance the learning and teaching experience	Incorporation of technology, e.g., chat rooms, web pages, email, into daily work; inclusion of internet resources into specific assignments	Specific guidelines for inclusion of these technologies in class work and oral and written assignments. 80% of students should perform at the level of <u>B</u> or above.	All students received a B or above.	Some of us teach using this technology in a 'smart' classroom. All of us expect students to be adept in all areas of technology. We continue to subscribe (and pay for!) an important online bibliography.

IV. Overview of changes implemented in your program this past year based on results and planned action specified in last year's report.

Since our 2008 report, we have modified our outcomes to include technology, we have drastically revised our capstone to accommodate the change in student climate, and we have stressed oral recitation more in classes and have developed a course in conversational Latin. The revised capstone will be taught for the first time in Spring, 2011. The conversational Latin course has yet to be taught due in part to our commitment to university Honors and the new university core. As I reread student comments from 2008, I sense students are pleased with their progress.

V. Specify any changes/modifications made to your program based on Assessment Day activities.

- A. For assessment day, we had a town hall forum, and we asked students to fill out a questionnaire. Their comments are below. In the second section we ask them to assess the outcomes we have specified above.

Latin Assessment 2009—2010

Part I. General Questions.

Please answer the following questions as completely as possible.

1. In general, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the Latin degree?

I envision graduates as being great translators and as being really enthusiastic and passionate about Classics.

Strengths: class size. Weaknesses: low number of classes, few authors.

The degree's strengths largely consist of its faculty. The weaknesses are the lack of students and number of faculty.

Number of career choices are low. Grad school is stressed but not a profession. Small faculty number allows for a more mentor-based learning experience.

Strengths – get to translate w/smaller classes which helps the student get more chances to try and more attention from the prof. Weaknesses – there is not usually more than one option for an upper-level class b/c the #of majors is so small.

2. How does it compare with other undergraduate degree programs at Marshall?

I think the faculty is what makes me love the department the most

I am not qualified to answer this question.

Some other programs are concerned with pumping out large volumes of students into the professional world. The cost is that the students get a very generic education despite the University's struggle to form more rounded and dynamic students and an understanding of the world only within a narrow band of strict, paradigm-bound thinking. These are not the pitfalls of the Latin program. However, the limited size of the faculty makes getting more than the bare minimum of Latin classes (within 4 years) virtually impossible.

I think that it is better because the prof are invested and care about how their students do in an out of class. They are available to help. It also gives a wide area of challenges to help the students develop their skills.

3. If you could have anything added the program, what would it be?

I would add a requirement for a Roman history class.

Speaking Latin.

More poetry and less prose. Ancient geography. More on Persia. Other cultures included in Classics.

Team-taught Latin classes.

4. If you could have anything subtracted from the program, what would it be?

Nothing at this time.

Prose...not entirely subtracted, but reduced.

I don't think there is anything that needs taken out.

5. Recognizing that we are bound by such exigencies as minimum enrollments in courses, what realistic additions and subtractions would you suggest?

The history course and courses with a mix of authors.

More authors (like elegy).

More poetry, less prose. Concentration on ancient geography in Classics/Latin classes. But other cultures would be nice.

Courses, occasionally, in spoken and/or medieval/church Latin would be a good addition.

If at all possible, more emphasis on the types of works we are reading, as why poetry has certain things prose does not have. More detail on mechanics.

6. We have recently changed our capstone require from a zero-credit course that asks for a final portfolio that assesses your performance in all upper-level to a three credit course that will require you to develop one of your papers into a senior thesis. Reactions?

I like it. I think it'll help me realize how much I've learned and grown as a Latin student.

Good.

I like it. Of course, I haven't done that precise version, but the three hour capstone is a great idea.

Yes. This is good. It allows the development of paper-writing skills often neglected in other undergraduate programs. However, in one of my upper-level classes, there was no paper from which to write a thesis. This limits the choices I have when writing the thesis.

I think that this will better prepare the students for graduate programs. It also gives students a chance to make a paper better and also a higher level of awesomeness!

7. How will your Latin major contribute to your life and/or career after Marshall?

It'll still be a focus of my life, as I want to teach it.

The ability to understand two related languages will help me learn what I want about Greek, Hebrew, etc.

It has greatly enhanced my knowledge and will likely become my career.

By taking Latin and Greek at the same time, I have learned (beyond the aspects of the individual languages) how to learn to reason in a differently constructed language – in general. I hope to apply these modes of learning how to understand how a language works to learn Hebrew and Aramaic. Hopefully, these will help in the study of my faith, and provide an academic basis for my career in service to my faith.

I am hopefully going to teach it so it would help me learn it.

Part II. Assessment questions.

These questions form the basis of the assessment document we submit every year. Where applicable, please evaluate your abilities in these areas. If there are weaknesses, what suggestions do you have for improvement?

1. The ability to read and understand Latin language and literature:

I feel comfortable and capable of understanding Latin.

Reading hindered by lack of vocabulary. Vocabulary lists for beginners in upper level (like 80% list).

I feel that I am decent at Latin, but I'm perfecting the skill with every class. The only weakness maybe Wheelock.

In these area, I fell I am well prepared and learning at just the right pace.

I think over my years in Latin I have increased my ability to read/understand Latin. It gets better every year.

2. The ability to interpret Latin language and literature:

I'm excited to try upper-level Latin to be exposed/expose myself to a wider variety of Latin literature.

Good, much better after upper level classes.

I feel that I am learning more about historical context with each semester.

Depending on the setting (i.e. professor) I can aptly perform the interpretation of Latin literature.

I think we could use more time devoted to understanding the bigger picture of something we translate. I often get lost in the little portions of translation.

3. The ability to understand and articulate the cultural, literary and historical contexts of Latin language and literature:

I'd like to learn more about these aspects, but I still feel like I know much more than the average person.

Good.

See question #2.

The ability rose not out of Latin classes, but out of Classics classes. I would find it hard to believe a student understanding these ideas from the language elements along, unless they had also been exposed to a large volume of classical texts.

It keeps getting better the more I get to read different authors and works.

4. The ability to engage in effective oral reading of Latin poetry and prose:

I think the program has been great in this regard.

This could be better by more repetition in class.

I believe I am adequately trained in this beside Rhythm. This is one reason I suggested more poetry.

I lack in this area significantly. More oral-aural centered classes may solve this problem.

Gets better over time. I am so much better now than I was two years ago.

5. The ability to communicate effectively in speech:

Latin classes have helped me with this.

Good.

I am able to do this.

In English – has improved greatly simply from exposure to the literature and precise nature of the Latin language. In Latin – because of under-developed aural skills, my oral skills suffer.

I feel that I can do this well because of all my language classes.

6. The ability to write papers that incorporate strong thesis statements, comprehensive topic sentences, effective development that includes the use of primary and (where relevant) secondary sources, and a conclusion that does more than summarize; and the ability to write a paper that utilizes current conventions of style:

I haven't encountered this yet.

The last element has not been emphasized as the others have (current conventions of style).

I find this goal is more than adequately met. My writing has improved tremendously.

Current conventions of style is the only element that is not formally taught, but rather expected (thus I struggle in this element of writing).

This is something that I could not do until I became a CL/LAT major. My skills have greatly improved since I have got to work w/the prof in our dep. They are awesome.

7. The ability to understand the connection between language and culture, and identify language and literature as expressions of ancient and modern cultural values and norms.

This is probably why I love Latin the most: making intercultural connections. Marshall's program has only enhanced my ability to make these connections.

Good.

This is a large part of why I joined the Latin program. While I am satisfied, more is always good.

This I learned more from the Classics classes, see #4, Part II.

This I am able to do after being in this maj. I was taught how to separate the two so I could better understand both.

B. Reactions to their suggestions.

Much of the students' suggestion reflected the discussion that day. In a far-ranging discussion they suggested that we teach courses on Persia and Egypt, as well as history and Geography. Our response was that Persia and Egypt should be taught by specialists in the Near East—these areas are not part of Classics. Ancient History is taught by the history department on the 200-level. It is possible that a more concentrated course on Greece and Rome could be taught that incorporates history and geography. Some of that is part of our Greek and Roman Civilization courses. Students are correct that upper-level classes are limited to one per semester. However, they are incorrect when they say that the degree cannot be delivered in four years. With the advent of the 3-hour capstone, the degree is a four-year degree and can be delivered without independent studies. Of course, timely delivery relies on students declaring Latin as a major very early in their undergraduate career.