

# Classics, BA

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## Program Description

The B.A. in Classics (CLSS) is designed to give students a thorough grounding in the culture, history, literature, and intellectual accomplishments of ancient Greece and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Renaissance.

The Classics degree is divided into two tracks. The Literature and Language track has a traditional focus on Latin and Greek languages. Students choose to specialize in either language but are encouraged to take both. Students will be able to read and enjoy the great texts of classical antiquity (Homer, Herodotus, Plato, Cicero, Virgil, the New Testament, etc.) in the original languages, and to critically understand their cultural and historical context.

The Classical Civilization track focuses instead on the history, beliefs, and material culture of ancient Greek and Roman civilization. Students will be able to describe and analyze different historical, political, cultural, and religious aspects of ancient Greek and Roman civilization.

## Outcome 1 – Intercultural Knowledge

Demonstrate competence in ancient Greek or Roman culture in the student's area of specialty, namely, literature, history, or archaeology, by showing an adequate understanding of the complexity of classical culture and society.

### Measure – Intercultural knowledge- Final Course

**Data Collection:** In order to accumulate enough data points, the assessment officer (DUS) is collecting the final exam and/or project that classics majors write in their capstone seminar CLAS 491 over a period of three academic years, ending in the Spring 2022. Data will be gathered each semester by asking the instructors of record of CLAS 491 to share the artifacts produced by the classics majors enrolled in the course. For consistency, the artifacts will be evaluated all at the same time after the three years gathering period.

**Methodology or data analysis strategy:** The artifacts collected are going to be evaluated by a committee of faculty members using the "Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning" consisting of a 4-point scale ranging from 1 ("Benchmark") to 4 ("Capstone") for the category I of "Intercultural Knowledge" ( Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks). [See rubric under *Supporting Documentation*.]

## **Target**

90% of students will achieve a score of at least 3 in the evaluation of their CLAS 491 final exam and/or project on the "Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning" consisting of a 4-point scale ranging from 1 ("Benchmark") to 4 ("Capstone") for the category I of "Intercultural Knowledge" (Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks).

## **Finding: Not Met**

After the CLAS 491 final projects were collected for three years, and those projects were assessed by a faculty committee using the "Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning," only 88.89% of students achieved a score of at least 3 in the category of "Intercultural Knowledge." The goal was that at least 90% of students would achieve a score of at least 3 in the category.

Although the target was not met as originally set out by the faculty, the fact that the average score in the "Intercultural Knowledge" category was 3.41 was seen as positive progress toward meeting the PLO.

## **Outcome 2 – Critical thinking: Issues, evidences, context**

Demonstrate competence in ancient Greek or Roman culture in the students' area of specialty, namely, literature, history, or archaeology, by showing ability to critically analyze texts and evidence, interpret issues in their cultural and historical contexts.

### **Measure – Critical thinking: issues, evidence, context**

**Data Collection:** In order to accumulate enough data points, the assessment officer (DUS) is collecting the final exam and/or project that classics majors write in their capstone seminar CLAS 491 over a period of three academic years, ending in the Spring 2022. Data will be gathered each semester by asking the instructors of record of CLAS 491 to share the artifacts produced by the classics majors enrolled in the course. For consistency, the artifacts will be evaluated all at the same time after the three years gathering period.

**Methodology or data analysis strategy:** As discussed and agreed upon by the classics faculty, all of the artifacts collected are going to be evaluated by a committee of faculty members using the "Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning" consisting of a 4- point scale ranging from 1 ("Benchmark") to 4 ("Capstone") for the categories I-III of "Critical Thinking" (Explanation of issues, Evidence, and Influence of context and assumptions). Based on the evaluation, the committee will consult with the classics faculty on what further

steps to implement. [See rubric under *Supporting Documentation*.]

### **Target**

90% of students will achieve a score of at least 3 in the evaluation of their CLAS 491 final exam and/or project on the "Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning" consisting of a 4-point scale ranging from 1 ("Benchmark") to 4 ("Capstone") for the categories I-III of "Critical Thinking" (Explanation of issues, Evidence, and Influence of context and assumptions).

### **Finding: Not Met**

After the CLAS 491 final projects were collected for three years, and those projects were assessed by a faculty committee using the "Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning," only 88.89% of students achieved a score of at least 3 in the category of "Critical Thinking." The goal was that at least 90% of students would achieve a score of at least 3 in the category.

Although the target was not met as originally set out by the faculty, the fact that the average score in the "Intercultural Knowledge" category was 3.43 was seen as positive progress toward meeting the PLO.

### **Use of Results**

In the immediate term, the faculty in the Classics program identified increased communication with regard to expectations and evaluation of written projects as an action that can be taken to improve student learning outcomes. Starting with students enrolled in CLAS 491 this academic year, faculty in the Classics program will include in their capstone courses more information about how students' papers can and will be assessed using rubrics and other methods. It is anticipated that this additional focus will cause students to be more reflective about their approach to their final project topic, specifically how they present and defend their central claims/arguments.

### **Status Update on a Previous Action**

Since the department has moved to collect assessment data in the Classics program in three-year periods, it is not yet possible to provide a detailed update on curricular changes or content-based action from program assessment reports from the last two years (the first assessment report from this first three-year period will be submitted in the fall of 2022). Referring, however, to the Academic Program Review of the Department of International Studies that was submitted in January of 2019, an update can be provided on one of the action plans identified at that time. The Academic Program Review set as a goal the establishment of an in-person peer tutoring program within Classics that would help students improve their written communication, analytical skills, and achieve the learning outcomes set forward in the

current Classics assessment plan. Although the implementation of the new tutoring program was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restructuring of the Department of International Studies into the Department of Global Languages and Cultures, the Classics faculty are optimistic that tutoring can begin in the upcoming academic year.

## Supporting Documentation

**Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning**  
 Department of International Studies, Texas A&M University

### INTS 481 Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning

	<b>Capstone 4</b>	<b>Milestones 3</b>	<b>Milestones 2</b>	<b>Benchmark 1</b>
<b>CT: Explanation of issues</b>	Topic is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full consideration. Demonstrates full understanding of audience.	Topic is stated, described and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions. Demonstrates some understanding of audience.	Topic is stated, but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined and/or backgrounds unknown. Demonstrates partial understanding of audience.	Topic is stated without clarification or description. Demonstrates limited understanding of audience.
<b>CT: Evidence</b>	Information is taken from sources with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of sources are questioned thoroughly.	Information is taken from sources with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned.	Information is taken from sources with some interpretation/evaluation but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are mostly taken as fact.	Information is taken from sources without interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
<b>CT: Influence of context and assumptions</b>	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa)	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.

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**Rubric for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Intercultural Knowledge and Global Learning**  
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<b>CT: Student's thesis (perspective/hypothesis)</b>	Thesis is imaginative, organized in a coherent fashion; takes into account the complexities of an issue and limits of thesis. Others' views are synthesized in thesis.	Thesis is organized in a coherent fashion, and takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are synthesized within thesis.	Specific thesis acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Specific thesis is stated but is simplistic and obvious.
<b>CT: Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)</b>	Conclusions and related outcomes are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints, related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified
<b>WC: Control of syntax and mechanics</b>	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the written sample has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.
<b>IK: Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks</b>	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy or beliefs and practices.	Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy or beliefs and practices.	Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy or beliefs and practices.	Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy or beliefs and practices.

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<b>IK: Cultural self-awareness</b>	Articulates insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g. seeking complexity; aware of how experience have shaped these rules and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in shift in self-description)	Recognizes new perspectives about own cultural rules and biases (e.g. not looking for sameness; comfortable with the complexities that new perspectives offer)	Identifies own cultural rules and biases (e.g. with a strong preference for rules shared with own cultural group and seeks the same in others)	Shows minimal awareness of own cultural rules and biases, even those shared with own cultural group(s) (e.g. uncomfortable identifying possible cultural differences with others)
<b>GL: Cultural diversity</b>	Adapts and applies a deep, analytical understanding of worldviews, power structures and experiences of multiple cultures in historical or in contemporary contexts	Analyzes substantial connections between the worldviews, power structures and experiences of multiple cultures in historical or in contemporary contexts	Explains and connects two or more cultures historically or in contemporary contexts with some acknowledgement of those cultures' power structures, experiences and worldviews	Describes the experiences of others historically or in contemporary contexts primarily through one cultural perspective, demonstrating some openness to varied cultures and worldviews
<b>GL: Understanding global systems</b>	Uses deep knowledge of the historical and contemporary role and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems to communicate an informed view of complex problems in the human and natural worlds	Analyzes major elements of global systems, including their historic and contemporary interconnections and the differential effects of human organizations and actions to pose elementary solutions to complex problems in the human and natural worlds.	Examines the historical and contemporary roles, interconnections and the differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems within the human and natural worlds.	Identifies the basic role of some global and local institutions, ideas and processes in the human and natural worlds.