Final Assessment Report of the Classical Studies program (BA)  
October 2012

**Review Process**
This was the third formal review of the undergraduate program of the Department of Classical Studies. The most recent review was in 2003. The self-study for this review was submitted 30 June, 2011; the site visit occurred 26 and 27 January, 2012; the review team report was submitted February 8, 2012; and the Department’s and Dean’s responses were received 18 July, 2012. The self-study was a group effort involving students, alumni, faculty members and one staff person.

**Characteristics of the Program**

**Historical Overview**

The Department of Classical Studies was created in 1975, when the Department of Classical and Romance Languages was separated into its constituent parts.

Although the 2003 review was very positive it did identify some concerns; such as the heavy teaching loads; the attrition from first-year language courses; the need to strengthen the Greek program; the need to consider pulling out of distance education or finding additional resources; and the need to explore more co-op opportunities or at least encourage experiential learning. The Department pulled out of offering a degree by distance education but is now embracing the idea of offering its mythology course online as part of a degree. The Department has involved students in working opportunities in Classics by: offering teaching assistantships (TAs); working on faculty members’ projects; promoting internships with the Canadian Institute in Greece; and offering the Classical Studies Abroad course.

The Department has increased from 5.5 faculty members in 2003 to 7 at the time of the review. The Department has worked closely with its counterpart at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) for many years but in the past two years the Classics faculty complement at WLU has dropped dramatically with the result that WLU is no longer able to support teaching senior undergraduate language courses. This teaching now has to be done by faculty members in the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Waterloo (UW), further increasing the work load.
The Department also manages the Medieval Studies program and a faculty member in the Department of Classical Studies is co-director of this program.

**Program Objectives**

The Department of Classical Studies defines its mission in the following ways:

In teaching – The Department strives to acquaint students with the historical forces, various philosophical contributions, aesthetic values in art and literature, ancient languages and social habits of the ancient Greeks and Romans as well as the other people with whom they interacted. The Department also seeks to educate students who will question, challenge and actively participate in the ongoing dialogue of social progress, and who will become engaged citizens in the fullest sense of the word.

In scholarship – the Department seeks to make scholarly contributions to contemporary- and future-centered discussions of culture and society by bringing the ancient paradigms to bear on the present.

The Department’s programs and courses are reasonably aligned with the OCAV UDLEs. However, certain gaps and areas have been identified to enhance students’ skills, viz. more team projects; more oral presentations; a greater understanding of methodologies; and the application of knowledge. The Department has started to address these and others through more interdisciplinary and team-taught courses; a Hellenistic specialization at the undergraduate level; and the development of an online course at the senior level.

**Academic Plans Offered**

- General Three-year BA degree in Classical Studies;
- General Four-year BA degree in Classical Studies;
- Honours Four-year BA degree in Classical Studies;
- Honours Four-year BA degree in Classical Studies (Languages Specialization);
- Honours Four-year BA degree in Classical Studies (Arts and Business, co-op or regular);
- Joint Honours BA degree in Classical Studies with Department X;
- Minor in Classical Studies;
- Minor in Greek;
- Minor in Latin;
- Certificate in Classical Studies;
- Certificate in Classical Languages

**Faculty**

Departments of Classical Studies in Canada average 6.3 faculty members although Toronto, the largest, has 22 faculty members. At the time of the program review the Department at UW had
7 full-time Associate Professors. None of these individuals will be retiring for at least a decade. In addition, there were 4 adjunct lecturers who teach most of the large first- and second-year courses e.g., CLAS 103 with 84 students; CLAS 104 with 219 students; CLAS 201 with 221 students; CLAS 202 with 216 students. Regular faculty members all teach extensively in the undergraduate program, with a teaching load of 5 courses, and the Department’s research and publication record is commensurate with this relatively heavy teaching load. Reduction of the teaching load to 4 courses would further facilitate faculty research and publication, and support more sustained exploration of external funding opportunities. Nonetheless, the reviewers emphasize that the scholarly profile of the Department is perfectly respectable in all areas of research endeavour.

The Department’s annual teaching load of 5 courses for regular faculty members, while sufficient for the delivery of the undergraduate (and current MA) programs, is higher than normal in the Faculty of Arts at UW and warrants reconsideration in the light of a number of factors: WLU’s withdrawal from the joint MA program (effective fall 2012); the (UW) Department’s new commitment to offer a stand-alone MA program; and WLU’s capacity and commitment, given their recent retirements, to continue the institutions’ shared delivery of upper-level language teaching. If the memorandum of agreement with WLU is to be maintained, decanal support at both institutions will be crucial; in this context, it may also be possible to consolidate second-year language offerings across the 2 institutions, at least in ancient Greek. Further consolidation of courses at the first-year level in the CLAS curriculum and in the upper years of language study would enable professorial faculty to reduce their annual teaching load to 4 courses without decreasing student numbers or diminishing curricular focus. A reduction in the teaching load would also enable faculty members to devote more time to research and publication, in recognition of the increased demands and responsibilities of their new roles as graduate instructors in the MA program and research associates in the Waterloo Institute for Hellenistic Studies (WIHS).

In 2010/11, there were over 2,000 student enrolments in CLAS/LAT (Latin)/GRK (Greek) undergraduate courses. Of these students, 1,000 to 1,200 were from Departments outside of Classical Studies in the Faculty of Arts, and a further 300 to 400 were from other Faculties in the University. The most popular courses were the ancient society survey courses and the mythology course.

Faculty members in the Department are considered good teachers. In fact, the reviewers noted that “The Classics program has identified fuelling students’ enthusiasm for the history and culture of the ancient and medieval world as a major priority.” The student course evaluations are higher than those in the Faculty of Arts as a whole. The average ratings for Classical Studies’ courses are in the 4.35 to 4.49 range out of a possible value of 5.

The Department’s research profile includes scholars of political, intellectual and social history, literature, language and material culture. Since 2003 faculty members in the Department have received 20 grants totaling $257,000 in research funding from agencies such as SSHRC, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Onassis Foundation University seminar program.
Faculty members have produced 4 monographs, 42 refereed articles and book chapters, 39 encyclopedia articles and book reviews, and 82 conference presentations.

Faculty members have acted as executive officers or board members of the Classical Association of Mid-West and South; Canadian Institute in Greece; Canadian Society of Medievalists; Ontario Classical Association, Societas Magica. In addition they have reviewed articles for many academic journals and for publishing houses.

The implementation of a new MA program 3 years ago (originally joint with WLU, but from 2012 a stand-alone program at UW) and the nearly simultaneous establishment of the WIHS have enhanced the quality of the undergraduate program in Classical Studies in a variety of ways. The WIHS library collection is available for undergraduate use in a newly renovated study space that is also well used by students. WIHS also sponsors lectures, conferences, and other events that have increased undergraduate exposure to, and participation in, scholarly research in classical studies. In addition, the new student and faculty exchanges that WIHS has begun to sponsor, through its partnerships with Edinburgh and Exeter, promise to enhance significantly the academic opportunities available to undergraduates in terms of both student experience and internationalization of the curriculum.

The Department participates in a host of advancement and outreach activities, e.g., through the co-op program, the distance learning program, and the WIHS, in addition to individual faculty members’ own commitments. However, their proliferation comes at the cost of considerable time to faculty members’ teaching and research commitments. In view of the importance of advancement to the support of the WIHS, and the Institute’s enhancement of the Department’s undergraduate and graduate teaching and research missions, it may be prudent for faculty members to focus their outreach activities on the Institute.

The students with whom the reviewers met were very enthusiastic about the undergraduate program as well as the teaching abilities of the faculty members and did not suggest any modifications. It is the impression of the reviewers that faculty members are deeply involved in student learning and strongly committed to teaching, which reflects very well on the quality and engagement of the students.

**Students**

Over the period, 2004/05 to 2010/11 inclusive, the annual average number of majors enrolled in the Department of Classical Studies was 134, ranging from a low of 113 in 2008/09 to a high of 160 in 2006/07. Only a handful of these were Arts and Business students. The annual number of students choosing Classical Studies after their first year in the Faculty of Arts averaged 10 over the period 2004/05 to 2010/11, 6 in Honours and 4 in General. The number of Honours students reached a high of 10 in 2006/07 and a low of 4 in 2007/08 and 2008/09. Most of the students who entered Classical Studies in year two entered University
from high school with grades in the 80 to 85% range, although prior to 2007/08 some students were admitted with grades below 75%. The number of co-op students in Arts and Business in the Department of Classical Studies has increased from 3 to 6 in the last 7 years. Even with these small numbers course scheduling is difficult.

The Department specifically expressed the wish to increase the number of students pursuing co-op, but also acknowledges the problems this would create for the faculty members, who would increasingly need to teach second-year language courses on overload. Currently, the number of students taking this option is 6, a number that works well. The review team sees the merit of such a program, but also sees the challenges for making it work for both students and faculty members, if the number of students in the program increases.

Discussion with undergraduate majors suggests that there is considerably less support for the co-op program among students than in the Faculty and Department. They were concerned that the co-op stream was diverting resources from their classical studies, and several of them expressed the view that the co-op stream should be closed. Administrators in both the co-op program and in the Department, however, regard the co-op program as a success: Classical Studies students who have completed the program in Arts and Business have done well, while participation in the co-op program assists the Department in undergraduate recruitment.

The curriculum in the Department of Classics underwent a significant modification a few years ago and both faculty members and students are happy with the outcome of this change. The students interviewed, however, expressed a concern regarding the variety of courses available in the upper-level CLAS, LAT and GRK curricula. They feel that a potential change of a 5-course teaching load to a 4-course teaching load for faculty members would negatively affect the variety of topics taught at the 300- and 400-levels. While acknowledging this concern, the review committee is of the opinion that in order to relieve the burden of teaching for faculty members the Department could combine more 300- and 400-level courses with courses taught on the graduate level, without negatively affecting the learning outcomes for students.

In the self-study, the Department expressed a desire to further develop distance learning, especially in order to enlarge the number of majors, but also noted that it could only do so if additional resources were made available. The review committee endorses this point of view but values this priority lower than others, such as the sustainability of the MA program, now that WLU has withdrawn its support of that program, and the proposed move towards a 4-course teaching load.

The review committee supports the continued cooperation with WLU on the undergraduate level, most notably regarding the teaching of GRK 202W. It acknowledges that decanal support to sustain this cooperation will be crucial for the integrity of the curriculum, especially in view of the proposed move to a 4-course teaching load. Class sizes vary from 100 to over 200 in first year to less than 10 in many third- and fourth- year courses. Over the period, 2003 to 2010 inclusive, the annual per cent of Classical Studies’ students on the Dean’s Honour Roll was 31%, ranging from a low of 8.3% in 2004 to a high of 50% in 2010. Funds are shrinking for student bursaries to travel to the annual international conference in medieval studies at Kalamazoo, MI...
and to the Mediterranean to participate in CLAS 390, a capstone course the Department offers triennially. Support for these travel and course opportunities should be a priority for funding from the Faculty and Central Administration, as they enhance the student experience profoundly, especially in the areas of experiential learning and internationalization of the curriculum.

A Classical Studies’ degree is very versatile and equips graduates for careers in a wide variety of professions – skills imparted include oral and written communication, critical thinking, analyzing, problem solving and the ability to apply these skills to new domains outside the discipline. Many graduates proceeded to graduate school in areas as diverse as Classical Studies, Library and Information Science, Rural Planning and Archaeology. The students would appreciate it if the Department could bring in alumni to discuss job opportunities with them. The Department is also considering career counseling for their students, which is to be commended, but the review committee feels that it would put another strain on the Department’s already limited resources.

Surveys of alumni and current students, as well as student focus groups, indicated that students and alumni were satisfied with the Classical Studies Department. Students indicated that their experience at UW had assisted them in:

- acquiring a broad general education;
- writing clearly and effectively;
- analyzing problems; learning effectively on their own;
- thinking critically and analytically;
- understanding themselves.

However improvements that students would like to see are:

- more variety of upper-year courses;
- integrating courses better;
- integrating research into courses;
- reducing scheduling constraints;
- increasing opportunities to work effectively with others;
- experiencing the opportunity to be involved in more oral projects and presentations;
- making the connection with the real world.

**Concerns and Opportunities for Improvement**

In summary, the reviewers recommend the following:

**Recommendation 1**: The Department should move towards the implementation of a 4-course teaching load for full-time professorial-stream faculty, through:

- consolidation of course offerings in the CLAS 1xx stream, with
  - the cancellation of CLAS 103, and
ii. a reduction in the annual number of offerings of CLAS 104;
b. more sustained use of adjunct faculty to staff multiple sections of LAT 101/102;
c. renewed commitment to the Memorandum of Understanding already in place between the UW Department and the WLU Department of Archaeology and Classics, to facilitate the joint offering of courses in the upper-level language programs;
d. exploration of the possibility of UW/WLU jointly offering GRK 201/202; and
e. consolidation of upper-level and MA language course offerings (i.e., beyond the consolidation of GRK/LAT 3**/4** and GRK/LAT 4**/6**, into GRK/LAT 388/4***/6**), commensurate with provincially-mandated standards of graduate instruction.

Response: Overall, the members of the Department are in favour of a reduced teaching load, but with the important caveat that we do not want to compromise the quality of either the undergraduate or the graduate education that the Department offers. That said, we are certainly open to suggestions about how to reduce our regular teaching load down to 4 courses.

One means of doing so, which we ourselves had identified (the reviewers did not address this), is through reducing the number of 300-level courses we offer. We have in the past offered too many CLAS 3xx in the same term, with the result that we split the audience and end up with low enrollments across all the 3xx courses. In future, we will be careful not to do so. We may also be able to coordinate with WLU on this front, allowing both institutions to reduce their 3xx offerings and at the same time maintain healthy enrollments in these courses.

The cancellation of CLAS 103. We are open to this suggestion, especially as CLAS 103 this past Winter term (2012) had lower than usual enrollments (84 out of a cap of 104 – not horrendously low, but usually the course fills to capacity). We would like to run it again in the coming year to see whether this year’s enrollment was an anomaly (and was perhaps affected by the concurrent offering of CLAS 104: see next point). If enrollments continue to be weak, we will consider withdrawing this course.

A reduction in the annual number of offerings of CLAS 104. This we will certainly do. CLAS 104 does draw the student interest – it is an extremely popular course and generally fills to its limit of about 350 – and we are particularly keen to maintain some degree of commitment to the kind of service teaching represented by this course. Nevertheless, we do not need to run it in every term.

More sustained use of adjunct faculty to staff multiple sections of LAT101/102. This we have been doing and will continue to do. We need to balance such a measure against other factors: (i) the availability of sessional monies to cover the offering of courses by adjunct instructors; and (ii) the need for quality control. Some of our core faculty members are superb instructors of first-year Latin, and while we have one adjunct faculty member who is also a very good language instructor, it would be counter-productive to take our excellent Latin teachers out of the first-year classroom. These faculty members have taught students who have gone on to
graduate work at places like Oxford and Harvard, and we are regularly told by the University of Toronto that our students who go there for graduate work are particularly well prepared in the languages. We are moreover committed in principle to the notion that first-year students should have the experience of being taught by regular faculty members.

Renewed commitment to the Memorandum of Understanding already in place between the UW Department and the WLU Department of Archaeology & Classics, to facilitate the joint offering of courses in the upper-level language programs. Discussions have begun with both WLU and Guelph to make the language offerings sustainable for students at all three institutions. It is important to note that WLU does not require languages for its program in Ancient Mediterranean Cultures (it no longer has a Classics program *per se*), though it does have an ancient language option; Guelph still requires languages for an Honours degree in Classical Studies. We would like to explore the possibility of electronic classrooms as a method of language delivery for the upper-year courses. UW representatives have already met with Dean Carroll of WLU and a WLU faculty member to discuss the possibility of further sharing of resources. For the future, provided it does not suffer any more dramatic financial problems that would necessitate a re-negotiation, WLU is prepared to offer GRK 202 and a GRK 4xx/6xx every second year. Both institutions are now investigating ways of sharing certain CLAS courses as well.

Exploration of the possibility of UW/WLU jointly offering GRK201/202. Please see previous point. Consolidation of upper-level and MA language course offerings (i.e., beyond the consolidation of GRK/LAT 3xx/4xx and GRK/LAT 4xx/6xx, into GRK/LAT 3xx/4xx/6xx), commensurate with provincially-mandated standards of graduate instruction. Members of the Department expressed concerns about trying to teach languages simultaneously to graduate students and to students who have only completed their second year in the language. We were assured by one of the reviewers that the University of Toronto follows this approach and has found it to be successful. Although we still have doubts about this, we are not against making the experiment; but it should be noted that our current scheduling of languages (undergraduate and graduate) already maximizes efficiency (i.e., there would be no further gains from employing the 3xx/4xx/6xx combination).

**Recommendation 2:** Department members should consolidate their outreach activities to support the advancement initiatives sponsored by the WIHS.

**Response:** This is something we are already doing: in the winter term of 2012, for example, the Institute offered a “course” in the Hellenistic World to the Third Age Learning group (average attendance 300). We do intend to continue our commitment to activities that support our research and teaching mission (for example, engaging in high school recruitment through inviting high school classes onto the campus). These activities do not constitute a drain on our resources.

**Recommendation 3:** The Faculty should provide significant new funds in the form of student bursaries to support the Department’s ongoing commitment to the enhancement of student
experience and the internationalization of its curriculum both through curricular offerings, e.g., in CLAS 390, and through extracurricular activities, e.g., participation in the International Congress on Medieval Studies held annually at Kalamazoo, MI.

Response: The Faculty of Arts is currently in the process of creating a strategic plan. One of the priorities of this plan is student experience and travel, and we hope that Classics students along with other Arts students will have enhanced opportunities for international experiences.

Recommendation 4: The Faculty and Central Administration should support the program’s commitment and research aspirations of the Department by authorizing at least one new faculty appointment. The top priority is in the area of material culture (ancient art and archaeology).

Response: As part of its strategic planning process, the Faculty of Arts is undertaking a complement review. We hope that one of the results of such a review could be an incremental position for the Classical Studies Department. We feel that such an investment would be particularly worthwhile in assisting Classics at UW in its continuing mission to be a Canadian and international leader in the area of Hellenistic Studies. In the interim, we are already exploring the possibility of creating a continuing lecturer position as one way of reducing the teaching load for regular faculty members. We plan to advertise a definite-term position for 2013/14 as an initial step towards the identification of an individual who would be suitable for a position as a continuing lecturer.

Recommendation 5: The University should expand the space available to the Department and its associated Institute when the new Arts Building is built, either by expanding the Department’s space allocation in its current site or by moving the Department into the new Arts building.

Response: A space plan is also part of the Arts strategic planning process. We are confident that increased space for the Department and for the Institute will be found when the new Arts building is built.

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<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Primary Recommendation</th>
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<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Resources Required</th>
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<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>4-course teaching load for all regular faculty members.</td>
<td>Consolidation of course offerings</td>
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<td>Funding for additional position and/or sessional monies.</td>
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<td>Use of adjunct faculty for LAT</td>
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<td>Funding for additional position</td>
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<td>2012/13</td>
<td>Renewed cooperation with WLU in language offerings.*</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>Consolidation of UG and G language offerings (3xx/4xx/6xx).*</td>
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<td>Consolidate outreach activities to support WIHS.</td>
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<td>2012-2015</td>
<td>Enhance financial support for student experience, esp. international</td>
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<td>Expand space available to Department and to WIHS</td>
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*Indicates recommendations (whether primary or secondary) that may not be feasible or fully feasible for reasons given above.