

Final Assessment Report

Classical Studies (MA)

September 2022

Executive Summary

External reviewers found that the Masters (MA) in Classical Studies delivered by the Department of Classical Studies was “on the whole excellent”.

“This is a small department but warm, vibrant, and especially hard-working one”. “All faculty members have very strong research profiles...”. “Students both former and current praised the department for its size, the warmth of its faculty members, and student-instructor engagement”.

A total of 11 recommendations were provided by the reviewers, regarding deployment of faculty, student recruitment, and a deep reorganization of the Master’s program. In response, the program created a plan outlining the specific actions proposed to address most recommendations as well as a timeline for implementation. The next cyclical review for this program is scheduled for 2027-2028.

Enrollment over the past three years

	Classical Studies MA
2021-2022	12
2020-2021	11
2019-2020	10

Background

In accordance with the University of Waterloo’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response of the MA program delivered by the Department of Classical Studies. A self-study (Volume I, II, III) was submitted to the Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs on July 17, 2020. The self-study (Volume I) presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the programs, including the data collected from a student survey, along with the standard data package prepared by the Office of Institutional Analysis & Planning (IAP). The CVs for each faculty member with a key role in the delivery of the program(s) were included in Volume II of the self-study.

From Volume III, two arm's-length external reviewers were selected by the Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs: Professor Lisa Hughes, University of Calgary, and Professor Kelly Olsen, Western University.

Reviewers appraised the self-study documentation and conducted a virtual site visit to the University on June 7-10th, 2021. An internal reviewer from the University of Waterloo, Professor Jochen Koenemann, from the Department of Combinatorics and Optimization was selected to accompany the external reviewers. The visit included interviews with the Vice-President, Academic & Provost; Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs; Dean of the Faculty of Arts; Associate Dean of Graduate Studies; Chair of the Department, as well as faculty members, staff, current graduate students, alumni and librarians.

Following the site visit, the external reviewers submitted a report on their findings, with recommendations. Subsequently, the program responded to each recommendation and outlined a plan for implementation of the recommendations. Finally, the Dean responded to the external reviewers' recommendations, and endorsed the plans outlined by the program.

This final assessment report is based on information extracted, in many cases verbatim, from the self-study, the external reviewers' report, the Program response and the Dean's response.

Program Characteristics

The [Master of Arts \(MA\) in Classical Studies](#) aims to prepare graduate students to continue on to academic studies in Classics at the PhD level, to engage in further professional training (e.g., teaching, information sciences, museum studies, restoration work, architecture, law), or to enter the workforce with improved communication and analytical skills. Students admitted to the MA complete either a thesis (50-75 pages) and 4 courses, or a Major Research Project (25-40 pages) and 6 courses.

Summary of Strengths, Challenges and Weaknesses based on Self-Study

Strengths

- High teaching standards and strong level of faculty engagement with students
- Strong research culture and productivity within the Department
- Student satisfaction with professional experience and training provided through TA and RA positions

Challenges

- Only 2 of 8 faculty members in the Department are female, one of whom is now Dean of Arts and effectively out of the classroom.

- Only 1 of 8 faculty members is a specialist in material culture.
- Physical space is limited, as for all departments in the Arts Faculty.

Weaknesses

- The mandatory methodologies course (CLAS 600) is not effectively meeting all students' needs
- The variety of courses offered annually is limited by the size of the MA program and faculty complement
- Limited opportunities for beginning language training in Greek and Latin at the graduate-level

Summary of Key Findings from the External Reviewers

Reviewers indicated that the Master's program is "on the whole excellent, although there is room for improvement". Reviewers also stated "It is a pleasure to enumerate the department's many strengths. This is a small department but warm, vibrant, and especially hard-working one. All faculty members have very strong research profiles and are successful in attracting both internal and external research funding. The department is able to offer an internship in the Canadian Institute in Greece (a very valuable experience for graduate students), and study abroad courses. The Waterloo Institute for Hellenistic Studies also contributes to graduate education and the quality of that education through lectures and visiting scholars. Students both former and current praised the department for its size, the warmth of its faculty members, and student-instructor engagement."

Response to External Reviewers' Recommendations

1. A new hire that reflects a commitment to EDI, either in material culture or in classical reception, race, or identity. As it stands, the makeup of the department (6 men, 2 women—both of whom will shortly be in the Dean's office) does not reflect the gender balance of the students either in the department or the Faculty of Arts as a whole. With a new hire, the department will also be able to increase and diversify its course offerings, resulting in more program students, both undergraduate and graduate.

Program Response

Improving EDI is a priority for the Department of Classical Studies, as indicated in their self-study, with respect to both their programs and faculty/staff-complement. Diversity is a known challenge for the broader discipline of Classical Studies, and they are striving as a unit to attract a more diverse group of students and scholars to the discipline. They agree with the reviewers that a new hire in material culture, reception, race, or identity, which reflects their commitment to EDI, would be of immense value to the department and improve the diversity and breadth of courses they can offer at both the undergraduate and graduate

levels. Classical Studies is open to an interdisciplinary hire, whose research and teaching connects with other interdisciplinary programs in Arts such as Black Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Cultural Identities. They would prefer an interdisciplinary appointment based 100% in Classical Studies but are open to a cross-department appointment, especially in areas such as reception, race, and identity; for example, a scholar of the reception of Greco-Roman antiquity, whose work connects substantially with other programs and departments on campus. A new hire would provide important mentorship and supervision for their students working in these areas. It is also worth noting that at the undergraduate level, they reach a large number of students in their high-enrolment 100- and 200-level courses (for example, CLAS 104 enrolment has approached 1200 in a single semester, and they offer this course all three semesters throughout the year).

Dean's Response

Arts is currently engaged in the creation of a strategic plan for the Faculty, which will also involve complement planning across the Faculty as a whole. At the moment, therefore, we are reserving judgement in the matter of the creation of individual faculty appointments. We recognize that the gender balance in Classical Studies is sub-optimal, and commend the Department on its commitment to EDI moving forward.

2. Right now 300/400/600 level classes are taught as split classes, which results in a higher workload for faculty. We recommend a three – two load or perhaps a few ‘floating’ courses which could be used to diversify departmental offerings. As the members of the department are already teaching what is essentially a 3-2 load, making it official would mean they receive credit for all the hard work that they do. Having stand-alone graduate courses is also important to MA students in terms of social and intellectual cohesion.

Program Response

In recent years, Classical Studies has regularly held together 3XX/4XX/6XX language courses and 4XX/6XX seminars in the department. They have done so primarily to ensure sufficient enrolment in these course offerings, as mandated by the Dean of Arts and in line also with recommendations of a previous review of their undergraduate program. Classical Studies recognizes that teaching the courses together presents some pedagogical challenges and increased workload for faculty. As a result, they make an effort to rotate these courses amongst the faculty year on year, so that no individual faculty member consistently bears the increased workload. Classical Studies respectfully disagree with the reviewers that holding these courses together amounts to a 3-2 teaching load and that they should move officially to a 3-2 teaching load in the department. Classical Studies is a research-intensive department in a research-intensive university. Their faculty members' research productivity is an important part of their graduate program. It would also be out of line with the rest of the faculty and university to have a 3-2 teaching load in their department. Classical Studies does, in fact, already have stand-alone graduate courses in the department –they offer at least one

graduate-only seminar every year, as well as a graduate-only methodology seminar. They have also found that there are additional benefits to holding some of their upper-division undergraduate and graduate seminar classes together, as this provides opportunities for their undergraduates to learn from their more advanced peers, and for graduate students to fill the role of student mentors for their undergraduates. On the whole, holding these courses together has been very positive in terms of the broader social and intellectual cohesion of their department.

Dean's Response

I agree with the Departmental response. Holding senior undergraduate and graduate courses together is a common practice in other departments. The course load in Classical Studies should remain 2-2 as aligned with most tenured and tenure-track faculty members in ARTS.

3. Seek creative ways to use existing faculty (adjunct, external-to-program) to deliver existing or create new courses in the event a new hire is not possible; look at courses external-to-the-department that might be brought to count towards the Classical Studies MA program.

Program Response

Classical Studies agrees with the reviewers that they should always seek creative ways to collaborate with faculty in other departments to enhance their course offerings. They will continue to explore such opportunities. Classical Studies is an inherently interdisciplinary program and already has strong relationships with programs such as French Studies, History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies (to name just a few) with whom they share cross-listed courses and/or collaborate.

Dean's Response

I agree with the Departmental response; this is the approach of many of the small departments in ARTS to ensure graduate students have a broad range of courses available to them, along with interactions with professors and graduate students in other disciplines. That said, the Department of Classical Studies has in fact proved itself able to deliver a sufficiency and wide variety of graduate-level courses, and it is not clear to me that the program stands in need of the development of more new courses (with the possible exception of offerings in the area of material culture).

4. Make an active effort to recruit new students through social media and online meet and greet sessions.

Program Response

Classical Studies agrees with the reviewers that they should make every effort to recruit students through social media and other online platforms. They already have a developed

social media presence and make many efforts to connect with future students. The development of online communication since 2020 has enhanced their digital recruitment efforts and they will continue to pursue these.

Dean's Response

I am very pleased with the program's efforts to recruit using digital tools. The graduate recruitment officer has also focused on assisting this graduate program with recruitment through Google Ads (in 2020 and 2021), Facebook ads (2019) and Twitter ads (2018). A graduate student profile was also added to the Classical Studies website in order to showcase the experiences of students in this program. I will continue to support diverse ways to recruit the best students to graduate studies in this department.

5. Extend the MA program to 5 terms, to bring it into line with other existing Canadian MA programs.

Program Response

Classical Studies recognizes that it would be ideal to extend their program to 5 terms, given that many of their students take longer than 4 terms to complete their degree, but they do not think this is feasible. Other Classical Studies MA programs in Canada offer 5-6 terms of funding, but it would be unusual in the context of Waterloo's Faculty of Arts to have guaranteed funding for an MA program extend beyond 4 semesters. They also do not expect more guaranteed funding would be possible in the current budget. The reviewers recommend that they try to enhance external funding for students, by supporting their applications for OGS/CGSM awards and through faculty research grants. They have been very successful in supporting students through these very mechanisms in recent years and will continue to do so. The reviewers comments that there were no RAs for the seven year period of the review, on the basis of Table 8 in the Self Study, which erroneously lists \$0 in RA support for students. Whereas, during this period, Andrew Faulkner paid \$12,551.18 to five different MA students for RA work.

Dean's Response

The Classical Studies MA is four terms, which is more than the usual three terms for many other graduate MA programs in ARTS. Classical Studies MA students do regularly apply for external funding through SSHRC, and when faculty members do have grant money, they are keen to support their graduate students through RAships.

6. Institute a guaranteed funding package for five terms. We realize this is not within departmental control; we suggested some methods in our report.

Program Response

See above under recommendation 5.

Dean's Response

See above under recommendation 5.

7. Provide new titles for graduate courses on the website. A list of 'past' and 'current' graduate courses (not just the generic ones found in the course calendar) would go a long way to exhibit the range of departmental offerings. More seminars based closely on respective faculty research profiles are also desirable. In addition, providing specific examples highlighting the specialized topics, class types, and teaching techniques might serve to attract students.

Program Response

Classical Studies agrees that they could bring greater clarity to their website and the description of their graduate courses. They will undertake a review of this and make appropriate changes.

Dean's Response

This is a good recommendation and I am pleased that the program will undertake a review and make changes where appropriate.

8. Institute a brown-bag lunchtime seminar series to highlight the research that is being done in the department by faculty and students.

Program Response

Classical Studies agrees that an initiative such as this would help to strengthen the research culture within the department. They will build a regular internal seminar component into their existing program of speakers and research seminars.

Dean's Response

Brown bag lunches are popular among faculty and students in many departments in ARTS. It is a chance for faculty members to talk about their research, but also for students to discuss their interests, give a conference paper presentation dry run, or to solicit feedback on their theses. I look forward to seeing this incorporated into the department's existing seminars and speakers' series.

9. Reinstate the language requirement for the MA program. The department is small and cannot be offering what is essentially two MA programs. If not, outcomes need to be reworded for non-language students.

Program Response

Classical Studies appreciates the emphasis the reviewers place on the place of language learning within the discipline. They agree that it is an essential component; nonetheless, they do not agree that they should reinstate the language requirement for the MA degree, nor that they have essentially two MA programs. Classical Studies at one time required students to have an advanced level of both Greek and Latin to enter their MA program, and complete advanced graduate seminars in Greek and Latin to exit. They removed this requirement several years ago to allow for more flexibility in their admissions process. This change reflected existing realities within their BA and MA degrees. For example, their students working on later Western antiquity do not always require Greek for advanced research, only Latin (they may instead require a knowledge of vernacular languages). The broader field of Classical Studies now also recognizes that language requirements for serious research are not absolute and that the level of language competence required depends upon the theoretical approach taken; removing the language requirement allows Classical Studies to admit and train a more diverse group of students. At the same time, they have continued to emphasize the importance of language learning for all their students, which they do through advising rather than program requirements. Classical Studies discussed this extensively as a department and reaffirm their commitment to language learning. It is notable that every single one of their graduating students since the changes were made to the program requirements has completed an advanced language seminar in either Greek or Latin, even when this was not strictly required. Classical Studies does note that they need to revise their formal program learning outcomes to reflect this change and they will undertake to review these.

Dean's Response

I agree with the thoughtful Departmental response to this recommendation. The question of language requirements has been a challenging one for Classics programs everywhere, and I believe that the Department's approach – that one size does not fit all – reflects the realities not only of our own students, but of the broader field and of the reasons why students pursue graduate work. I commend also the Department's commitment to provide continued support to students who do wish to advance further in their language studies.

10. Think carefully about whether departmental ideals of career outcomes align with what MA students want or need.

Program Response

In recent years, Classical Studies has given much thought to career outcomes for their MA students. While many of their students go on to enter PhD programs, others follow a variety of career paths. In recent years, they have emphasized discussion of career outcomes in their

student advising and they are making continued efforts to ensure that they are meeting student needs. also note that they maintain strong connections with their alumni.

Dean's Response

See also under Recommendation #9. As its response indicates, the Department has in fact put much thought into the matter of career outcomes for MA students. The Faculty of Arts as a whole has done the same. The flexibility of our graduate programs – exemplified in the CLAS model – is precisely intended to facilitate the varying needs of our master's and doctoral students, only a minority of whom go on to academic careers.

11. Implementing any of these changes will require a deep re-organization of the MA program as it now stands, and we encourage the department to take on this important work.

Program Response

Not selected for implementation (see below).

Recommendations Not Selected for Implementation

Note that the program responded in detail to the first 10 of the reviewers' recommendations listed in the report. The program respectfully declined to implement recommendation number two on pages 4-5, recommendation five (page 6), recommendation 6 (pages 6-7), and recommendation nine (pages 7-8). In addition, the program noted that the last (11th) recommendation is not a recommendation as such, but an evaluative summary of the previous recommendations, so it could not be answered directly.

Implementation Plan

	Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions	Timeline for addressing Recommendations
1.	New Hire	Request appointment from Dean	Chair	Request submitted to Dean Fall 2022
2.	Split language courses and change teaching load	Not Selected for Implementation	N/A	N/A
3.	Collaborate with other departments and programs	Continue to seek and expand collaborations with other departments on campus	Chair and Associate Chair	Will be addressed on an ongoing basis as opportunities arise.
4.	Increase social media presence in recruiting	Expand use of existing social media in recruiting.	Chair and Associate Chair	Immediate implementation for 2021-22 recruitment cycle. Active e-mail communication with students has increased with potential applicants (results demonstrate: 7 students admitted).

5.	Extend MA to 5 Terms	Not Selected for Implementation	N/A	N/A
6.	Extend Funding to 5 Terms	Not Selected for Implementation	N/A	N/A
7.	Revise Graduate Course Titles on Website	Undertake review of graduate website to ensure clarity.	Chair and Associate Chair.	The department has completed an internal EDI document and we are currently discussing it with the appropriate units/experts on campus.
8.	Introduce an internal research seminar for faculty and graduate students	Organize an internal research seminar for faculty and graduate students.	Chair and Academic Affairs Officer	Implemented in Fall 2022
9.	Reinstate Language Requirement	Not Selected for Implementation	N/A	N/A
10.	Review listed career outcomes to ensure alignment with student needs and realities.	Ongoing discussion of career outcomes in their student advising and they are making continued efforts to ensure that they are meeting student needs.	Chair and Associate Chair	Ongoing
11.	Implementing any of these changes will require a deep re-organization of the MA program as it now stands	Not Selected for Implementation. This is a statement rather than a recommendation.	N/A	N/A

The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for the Implementation Plan.

Date of next program review _____ **2027-2028** _____
Date

Signatures of Approval



October 10, 20203

Chair/Director

Date

AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (*For AFIW programs only*)

Date

Sheila Ager

31 January 2024

Faculty Dean

Date

Note: AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and

Jeffrey M. Coakle

July 11, 2023

Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
(For graduate and augmented programs)

Date