



April Ross

Classics Teacher

Degree(s):

BA Joint Classical Studies/Geography, University of Waterloo
M.St. Greek and Latin Language and Literature, Oxford University
MA Latin, University of Toronto

Current Position: Classics Teacher at a secondary school in the UK

Post-graduate study: I did a year-long master's degree at Oxford, which was a formative experience! I continued my post-graduate studies at UofT, before deciding that I preferred to teach secondary school rather than pursue a position in post-secondary academia.

Crucial and useful skill(s) learned through your studies:

Humanities subjects involve a great deal of research and essay-writing. Not only does this develop your critical analysis skills, where you evaluate the relevance of your sources and the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments, but your writing will become more fluent and compelling. These skills are critical in the work-place, especially in any roles that involve research and written communication.

The study of Latin and Ancient Greek is not immediately useful in the sense that one uses those languages everyday (obviously I'm an exception, since I teach them). However, they offer a wide range of transferable skills, not least of which is understanding the fundamentals of grammar and syntax - these are essential to any language, and certainly helped me to be a better writer in English. The study of Latin and Greek also relies on recognizing patterns and following sets of syntactical rules, not unlike computer programming. I recently met with a software developer who studied Ancient Greek at university rather than Computer Science - there's a reason they're call programming languages!

What career advice would you give to your younger self when you were studying ancient cultures?

Spend time in the lounge with your classmates - living on-campus I had a tendency to head back to my dorm and hang out with people from different majors, but it is also important to make connections with the people with whom you will be sharing classes for four years. Study what interests you, but keep an eye on your future career. How will the skills you learn be applicable to what you want to do? Use the resources at the Careers Centre to develop your resume, go to networking events, and try to find internships or summer jobs that will lead into your chosen career.

What is a detail about you that all must know?

I actually started in the Co-op program! It's a great way to pay for school and to gain experience. I spent one term teaching cross country skiing at an outdoor education center (it was related to my Geography degree...). I learned how to tap a maple tree and many other useful skills!