

# Classics and the Art of Writing

*An interdisciplinary study by Katherine Swanson*

Ever since I was a child and discovered that my father and uncle had studied Latin, I had wanted to learn the language. Although the idea of learning a non-spoken language perplexed my mother, I found it fascinating. When I realized that Hendrix offered it as a class, I could not wait to enroll. The more I learned the language, the more I fell in love with it. Even the small bits of history we learned in Fundamentals I and II intrigued me, which was surprising since I had never been excited about history. I decided to enroll in Classical Mythology and fell even more in love with the idea of the Classics—so much that I chose it as a minor only a few months later.

During this time, I experimented in other fields of study as majors, like Biochemistry/Molecular biology, Education, and Accounting, but never faltered from my path in Classics. I even considered an English major, but realized that I only truly enjoyed the poetry sections of English. Although I had been writing poetry on my own for years and had been told numerous times by my parents and teachers alike to be a writer, I pushed the idea out of my head and moved on to the next major. While exploring the previously mentioned options and still enrolling in Classics courses, the poet in me noticed that many of the writings we were learning and studying in my Classics courses had many poetic elements. With help from the explanations of Dr. Resinski, my previous background in writing, and my continuous study, I soon began to understand, in depth rather than at face value, more of what the writers were saying. Meanwhile, my career as an Accounting major was beginning to spiral downward and I questioned my choice of majors.

While discussing my next move as a student with Dr. Resinski I decided that my interest in the Classics and the writings of that time had finally become very apparent and we started to discuss Interdisciplinary Studies as an option for a major. It made perfect sense for someone like me to choose a major that encompassed both aspects of my interests. Therefore, the idea of a major in “The Classics and the Art of Writing” was born. I would be able to continue my studies in the Classics, but also incorporate my love for writing.

Classics and Writing (as majors) go together quite well in my opinion. Because Latin is a non-spoken language, most (if not all) of the Classics major/minor is the study of Classical texts, whether it be translating, reading, or analyzing. As a major in Classics and the Art of Writing, I hope to be able to better understand all of the texts no matter which type of study I’m doing at the time. I will not only be able to recognize the differences between today’s writings and the writings of antiquity, but I will also be able to analyze the texts from different perspectives of time (modern verses antiquity). I believe that by understanding the writings of both time periods, one will have a much better understanding of not only the context, but also how phrases and blocks of text are formed. I also hope to have a better grasp on true critiquing since I will be more experienced in all types of texts instead of just modern to slightly elder texts.

I am aware that this proposal is past the deadline, and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to submit my idea at this time. As stated before, I had attempted three other majors and was on the verge of giving up when I had my meeting with Dr. Resinski at the beginning of January. The idea of an Interdisciplinary Study was a life saver and I am very thankful for the chance to propose the major.

Previously taken classes

Lati 110      Fundamentals of Latin I  
Lati 120      Fundamentals of Latin II  
Lat 210        Readings in Latin Literature  
Phil 285      Plato and Aristotle  
Clas 200      Classical Mythology  
Engl 221      Poetry  
Engl 203      Creative Writing: Poetry

Currently enrolled

Clas 250      Etymology and Philology  
Clas 302      Roman Civilization  
Lati 312      Advanced Readings in Latin  
Engl 313      Shakespeare: Poetry and Drama

Future classes

Clas 301      Greek Civilization

300-Level latin    Catullus

Senior capstone as research portfolio in Latin 410

one more English course focusing on literature or creative writing