

The School of Athens

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Classics

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Overview:

The School of Athens is for students interested in learning about the Classical Civilizations of Ancient Greece and Rome. One goal of this program is to bring Ancient Greek and Roman culture, language, and mythology to the greater campus of UVM. Because the Classics department at UVM is very small, we hope to branch out to the students, faculty, and community and share and receive knowledge about these great civilizations. According to the UVM Classics Department's website states that the Classics "is the original and quintessential liberal arts degree. The field is inherently multidisciplinary and provides access to a cultural continuum spanning over three millennia up to and including the present day." We believe that because the importance and influence of the Classical world is so pervasive in our culture, it should become a more prominent presence in the wider UVM and L/L communities. Another goal of the program is to be a line of support, mentorship, and encouragement for those interested in the often difficult field of Classics via tutoring and educational events. Although UVM already has a Classical Club, we feel that meeting for one hour a week to watch a Classically inspired movies is not at all adequate to meet the intense needs and passions of those interested in the Classics. We hope that our program will give a deeper and more meaningful experience to everyone involved, and that it will create a sense of "living and learning" about the Classical world rather than interacting with it from a purely academic standpoint. We also feel that the Classics is often thrown to the wayside in modern education, even though it is the oldest and most venerated major, the basis of all liberal arts education, and the origin of the modern fields of law, philosophy, literature, medicine, history, and even science and mathematics. Our fundamental goal is to "live the Classics" by hosting fun and engaging activities within L/L, hopefully allowing our program members and the L/L community to experience and re-imagine Classical studies as vital and useful in our modern lives, and that our appreciation of that influence is central to the understanding of our world and ourselves. To delve into the life of the Classical cultures provides the best medium to gain that crucial appreciation.

Learning Objective 1:

Each student will obtain, and share knowledge with the entire program through various methods.

Action Step A. (weekly)

At our weekly meetings, two members (on a rotation) will be expected to present, in-depth, to the rest of the program Classics-related facts, sayings, or stories they learned or researched separately. (entire year) Members will record in their journals (\$24 total) something new that they learned. They will then research further information to share with the program at our meetings. We hope by doing this, (researching, writing down, and presenting) that the members will obtain a better understanding of the material as well as sharing their knowledge with the program. Also at these meetings, we will discuss upcoming events share ideas for new events and maybe watch an occasional movie for bonding.

Action Step B. (once a semester)

Members will participate and help organize a once a semester Symposium. A symposium is a discussion that dives deeply into a particular subject (of the program's choice). We plan on hosting these events within the program and with members of the IHP, so as to create an intimate and rewarding discussion, which we feel would be impossible with large amounts of unprogrammed participants. Each member will make a speech to the room conveying their opinion on the subject. We hope that this will spread ideas and ways of thinking throughout the program and also in the IHP. We also hope that it will be fun to have a friendly and rewarding discussion among friends. (\$25 dollars for refreshments)

Action Step C. (all year)

If needed, members will request help/tutoring on a particular course or area of study. We will then pair the member in need with another, higher-leveled programmed student. They will then organize a time to meet and work together. We hope that this will be very beneficial to both parties.

Learning Objective 2:

Each member will help organize, set up, and run program events. We hope that though these programs we will invoke interest in other students in the Classics.

Action Step A. (middle of the 1st semester)

All members would help organize the event "reviving the dead languages." Members would team up and be in charge of different tables in the Fireplace Lounge and would teach a few different phrases in both Greek and Latin, ranging from informal conversational sayings to common Latin phrases used in English. Our main goal in hosting this event is to include members of the L/L community who have little or no previous experience with the Classical languages, and stimulate interest in them through beginner-level sentences, as well as demonstrate how many Latin phrases we (often unknowingly) use in day-to-day writing and conversation (e.g., i.e., vice versa, etc.). We hope to spread the interest in the Classical languages and encourage students to take Classical language courses. We will also serve refreshments at this event. (\$50 total)

Action Step B. (End of 2nd semester)

Every member would help organize, set up and run a Toga Party in the Fireplace lounge. Members will dress up and loan "togas" to people for this event. People will mingle and eat ancient-style foods that we have prepared. We hope that this event will get people to socialize and relax while eating great food, as well as to demystify the common frat-house image of the toga party. (We estimate the price for food and togas will be around \$300 and decorations will cost around \$100)

Action Step C. (middle of second semester)

Program members and professors would read/recite classical texts in both English, Greek and Latin to the greater L/L community (in the FPL). This will foster an appreciation for the beauty of the Classical languages and myths in the L/L community. We will have refreshments at this event. (total \$50)

Learning Objective 3:

Each member will gain more knowledge and meet new peers/professors by attending lectures and presentations.

Action Step A. (once a month)

Once a month, all members will attend a presentation/talk put on by a UVM professor (in an unused classroom). All members of the student body will be welcome, and program members will be responsible for advertising these lectures. We have many professors who have volunteered to lecture, free of charge. Although the topics of each lecture are ultimately to be determined by the professor, the following members of the UVM faculty who have volunteered (as well as their putative lecture topics) are as follows: Brian Walsh – Greco-Roman history, civilization, law; Angeline Chiu – mythology; Robert Rodgers – the joys of philology; Robert Nash – philosophy and storytelling; Phil Ambrose – Greek drama; Classics Chair, Mark Usher – Greek lyric.

Action Step B. (weekly)

We will encourage all members to attend the Goodrich Classics Club, so that they can meet fellow peers with similar interests. In these meetings, classics-related videos are watched, discussions are held and good times are had.

Community Service:

The School of Athens will spend time helping UVM as well as the community. Our major goal is to team up with the Fleming Museum and organize a short exhibit focusing on the classical civilizations. This exhibit will be opened for the public to enjoy. We also plan to do some of our own community service for an organization of our choice once a semester. Another way that we will help UVM and the community is that we will help/volunteer at UVM's Latin Day. This event hosts Vermont's high schools that teach Latin. The day is full of presentations, recitations, tests and more!

Program Advisor:

Professor Mark Usher, chair of the Classics Department, has already agreed to be the School of Athens advisor. We also have great support from Graduate Professor Robert Nash as well as the rest of the Classics department.

Special Facilities:

The School of Athens does not anticipate needing any special facilities other than an unused classroom in L/L for its monthly lecture series hosted by UVM faculty.

Housing:

Although we are a newly proposed program, we would like to request three suites. We have a large number of students interested in this program, and we

don't want to turn anyone away that would help our program. If three suites are not possible, we would then request two. We feel that our program would be an excellent fit in the Global Village community, as we plan to interface with many of the programs therein.

Collaboration with other L/L programs:

We plan on collaborating with the Chinese House in order to foster a cultural exchange between the most influential ancient cultures of the West and the East. We intend to hold an informal discussion over tea with the members of Chinese House, exploring the similarities and differences in the philosophies of Confucius and Socrates (and perhaps those of Laozi and Heraclitus) and the ways in which they influence modern culture. As the Chinese venerate their cultural and philosophical heritage so zealously, we want to share our knowledge and enthusiasm for our ancient figures and also learn from one another. Professor Tian Yingxuan has agreed to facilitate these discussions within the Chinese House.

We plan on presenting an informative lecture on Roman and Etruscan culture, art, and the influence of these cultures upon modern Italy to the Italian House. We believe that this will generate a more comprehensive understanding of the depth and breadth of Italian culture for the members of the Italian House, and also show them the extent to which the ancient cultures of Italy so profoundly shaped modern Italian culture.

We plan to a small banquet with the members of the Italian, French, and Spanish Houses entitled "The Mother of the Romance Languages", in which we will informally discuss the development of the Romance languages out of Latin, as well as present a few Latin words which share common roots in order to demonstrate the power of Latin as a tool for learning and/or enriching one's mastery of any Romance language.

In addition, we plan to work with the IHP during their first semester in the fields of Literature, History, and Religion by contributing to the lectures of Professors Simone, Sugarman, and Hutton on the subjects of Homer, Vergil, Sappho, and Thucydides. As we are both IHP alumni, we believe that this will encourage and inspire the students to pursue more courses in the Classics.

Marketing and Recruitment:

We plan to attend the Program Fair and promote and explain our philosophy of "living the Classics" to everyone who has an interest in these topics. We also plan to make this seemingly esoteric subject more palatable to the general public by means of informative pamphlets and flyers.

Budget:

From the events listed in our Learning Objectives, we estimate that our budget will be around \$550.