

# CLASSICAL STUDIES SENIOR PROJECT GUIDE

## WHAT DOES A SENIOR PROJECT IN CLASSICAL STUDIES ENTAIL?

Classical Studies is an interdisciplinary field of study encompassing the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome. We seek to understand the languages, literatures, histories, and visual and material cultures of the premodern Mediterranean world—from the Bronze Age to the dawn of the Middle Ages, from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to Saint Augustine, and from Greece, Italy, France, and Spain to North Africa, the Middle East, and the Greek-speaking kingdoms of the Indian subcontinent.

Senior Projects in the program can employ an array of methods and modes of analysis in pursuit of deeper understanding of Greco-Roman antiquity and its legacies: they may be **historiographic**, examining ancient historical texts and artifacts as well as the history of classical scholarship itself; they may be **literary critical**, offering analysis of Greek and/or Latin texts from one or more of various theoretical perspectives; they may be **philological**, involving translation of and/or commentary on Greek and Latin texts. Other projects may investigate problems of **classical reception**—the (re)use of ancient texts and artifacts in new or distinct cultural and historical contexts, extending even into modernity—**ancient philosophy**, **archaeology**, or **pedagogy**.

## JOINT PROJECTS

A significant number of students write “joint” projects with other programs, especially with Written Arts which is a natural fit for translation project, Literature for reception projects, and Historical Studies for historiographic projects. A joint project must be approved by the [College’s Executive Committee](#) in the last semester of one’s junior year, and it must fulfill the requirements of both programs.

## PREPARATION, PROSPECTUS, AND ADVISING

By the eighth week of your second semester in junior year, you will submit to the Director of Classical Studies a brief **prospectus**—usually no more than a paragraph or two—describing the texts, artifacts, and questions you would plan to make central to your senior project. You should suggest two faculty members as potential advisers for the project in your prospectus as well. Based in part on that prospectus, as well as the schedules and availability of our program faculty, the program will assign your adviser(s). Senior Project is a 4-credit class, taken in both subsequent semesters with your adviser(s). Before the end of your junior year, you should meet with your assigned senior project adviser(s). Different advisers have different advising styles, so it is a good idea to discuss expectations for the coming year.

## FORMAT

In Classical Studies the expectation is that the project will be at least 60 pages in length (12-point font, one-inch margins) and employ one or more methodologies represented by the field of Classics. For traditional argumentative theses, the project will typically include an introduction, two or three body chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography. For translations, the expectation is that the project should include at least 30 pages of critical analysis, expository writing, and/or commentary: grammatical, historical, literary, philosophical, etc. Classics is an interdisciplinary and international field; you may use any of the major citation styles (e.g., MLA, Chicago, APA) in use in Classics so long as you are consistent. See the [Classics Library Guide](#) and [Harvard Guide to Using Sources](#) for further help.

## **BOARDS**

**Midway:** Midway boards occur at the end of the first semester of senior year. These boards consist of two or three faculty members. Written work to be completed for the midway typically includes at least one chapter; bibliography; and a cover letter or outline describing the whole project. This writing should be circulated at least one week in advance of the board date. The midway is a valuable opportunity to receive feedback on the work you have done so far, as well as your conceptualization of the project.

**Final Board:** The final board consists of at least three faculty members. In cases of Joint Projects, typically the board is made up of two members from each of the relevant programs. The same faculty members who served on your midway board will often serve on your final board. At the beginning of the final board, you will be given the option of receiving a letter grade or a pass/fail/D grade for the project. You will learn immediately after the final board whether you have passed; if you choose to take the project for a letter grade, your grade will be communicated to you at a later date before graduation. The final board is an opportunity to elaborate on your argument, discover possibilities for further exploration, and reflect on what you have learned.

**Grading Criteria:** For the first semester, your adviser will assign a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Evaluations will be based on the two-semester process as well as the final project, including strength of argument and care with editing (spelling, grammar, etc.).