

## Proposal for Revisions to First and Second Exam Structure, Spring 2024

With this proposal, we aim to streamline our exam structure; align it with that of other Classics programs; and offer our students both a solid, skills-based foundation in Classics and flexibility in their content area expertise.

### First Exam:

*Objective:* Through the First Exam, students will demonstrate knowledge of both Latin and Greek language sufficient to pursue scholarship using sources in Greek and Latin and to teach courses in the respective languages.

*Logistics:* This is a written translation examination in two parts (Greek and Latin) that must be passed before the completion of 45 credits. The Greek and Latin components may be taken together or separately. Students will be expected to translate four passages -- two prose and two poetry -- in each language. The passages will be selected from the Readings Lists.

There will be Reading Lists for each specialization (Philology, History, Archaeology), with most of the material the same, but part differentiated for the different tracks.

*Evaluation:* Students' translations should demonstrate broad comprehension of the sense of each passage and its basic grammar and vocabulary; they are not expected to be perfect.

*Changes from current structure:* Students on the History track will be expected to pass both translation exams within 45 credits instead of one language exam and a written history exam.

*Rationale:* Language skills are critical for our curriculum and all students should focus on them at the start; they will also be able to teach a wider variety of courses, including language courses.

### Second Exam:

*Objective:* Through the Second Exam, students will demonstrate both mastery of their chosen area of inquiry (the Special Topic) and deep understanding of their broader field. The Special Topic will give them a grounding in the primary and secondary sources that may be especially relevant for their work on the dissertation. The remainder of the Second Exam will allow students to show the breadth of their knowledge of Greek and Roman culture; prepare them to engage as a scholar and teacher with a broader area of focus; and provide a foundation for designing a sequence of courses in it (e.g., for a Greek historian, Archaic and Classical History; Hellenistic History; Imperial Roman History; or for a Latin literature expert, Imperial Latin Literature; Late Antique Latin; Neo-Latin).

*Logistics:* In the semester after all courses are completed, students will choose a panel of three faculty members, including one, the adviser, who will also examine on the Special Topic. They

will work with the panel members to articulate their areas of study; the expectation is that they will cover a range of historical periods, genres, and topics.

Following the period of study, students will take the oral exam, which will be expected to last about 2 hours.

*Evaluation:* Students will be expected to identify major issues in the field; demonstrate critical thinking; and articulate how their area of inquiry fits into a broader trajectory.

*Changes from current structure:* Students on the **Philology** track will take one exam that analyzes Greek and Latin literature within its historical context instead of a written history exam and two oral exams. Students on the **History** track will take one exam that draws on literary as well as epigraphic and material evidence for the study of history instead of a written literature exam and an oral history exam.

*Rationale:* The new structure will offer students the content knowledge necessary to teach in their field as well as the critical thinking skills and understanding of scholarship required to write the dissertation. By streamlining the exam structure, students will also be able to complete the exams and make substantive progress on the dissertation before their funding runs out.

#### Implementation:

The proposed changes will be adopted on a pilot basis for one year. They will apply to all students admitted beginning in fall 2024 and those currently in the program who choose to adopt them; current students may alternatively follow the previous exam structure.

After a year, we will evaluate the changes and decide whether to adopt them more permanently.