

Department of Classics
Monmouth College
Annual Report
1988-89

In general the academic year 1988-89 has been a good one for the Classics Dept. Overall enrollments and student enthusiasm were high and the department sponsored a wide variety of programs.

The Academic Program.

Enrollments were up significantly from previous years. In Elementary Latin 7 students completed 101 and 8 completed 102. In previous years there had been some difficulty in finding an appropriate time for this Latin course, a time which did not create impossible conflicts in scheduling. The 8 A.M. time slot used this year is not ideal. There was a lot of student grumbling about the early hour and class attendance was never very good, but the enrollment was reasonable and there were no more scheduling difficulties between first and second term. No one dropped between first and second term--a rare occurrence in any elementary language course--and, in fact, the class roll was increased by one of last year's Latin 101 students who had been unable to register for Latin 102. With reluctance the department has decided to retain this time slot for elementary Latin, at least for next year.

There was a particularly noticeable enrollment increase this year in advanced Latin courses. While in previous years no more than six students took any advanced Latin there were 10 students this year, a year in which enrollments ought to have decreased because two of the Latin students were away on the ACM London/Florence Program for one term! The department attributes this increase directly to the 1/2 credit course called Directed Readings (Latin 201). Without the availability of this course, students would generally not have the "give" in the schedules to enroll in advanced Latin courses.

The ancient history courses offered by Dr. Urban continue to be very popular. There were 28 students enrolled in History of Rome this year. The most dramatic increase in class enrollments, however, occurred in the translation courses. There were 23 students in Classical Mythology, 15 in Word Elements, 26 in Ancient Family, 19 in Sport and Recreation, and 8 in Ancient Literary Genres (Love Poetry). The increase in Mythology can be directly linked to the faculty's decision to remove the 15 student cap on enrollments in Thought and Belief courses. There is no doubt that Mythology could be offered once a term instead of once a year with large enrollments but the department does not have the staffing to do so. Enrollment in Ancient Family was also

higher. This course had been offered twice before, but never with such a large enrollment.

Most exciting, however, was the enrollment of 19 in Sport and Recreation in the Ancient World. This is a 250 experimental course offered for the first time. Since the subject matter was well outside Dr. Sienkewicz' academic and personal interests, there was some trepidation about offering this course. These fears proved ungrounded, however, for this course turned out to be one of the academic highlights of the year for the department. Student enthusiasm and work was very high in this course. It was wonderful to see students read and talk intelligently about sport themes in Homer and in Pindar. Especially rewarding were the Monmouth College Olympics, which the class had to organize for a group grade. Dr. Sienkewicz was impressed with the organizational abilities of the class and its successful efforts to involve non-class members in the project. The department plans to offer the Sport and Recreation course again in the fall and then to propose it to the faculty as a permanent part of the curriculum.

Both Ancient Family and Sport and Recreation fulfill the General Education requirement in Smaller Human Societies (Micro). There has been some talk in the faculty about changing these requirements "because the Macro/Micro sequence makes no sense." The Human Societies courses offered through the Classics Dept. however, suggest a sound relationship between Macro/Micro courses. The History of Greece and History of Rome courses offer a broad view of the ancient world while the Ancient Family or Sport and Recreation courses focus on mores specialized areas of ancient societies.

Enrollment in Classics 210 (Ancient Literary Genre), however, continues to be a disappointment. While students who take the course are enthusiastic, the department would like to see twice as many students in this course, which should be the core course of the department. It is possible that the current title of the course is somewhat discouraging to students. Therefore, next year the department intends to propose a title change rather than a substantial content change. Perhaps simply "Ancient Literature" would work better than "Ancient Literary Genres"!

Dr. Sienkewicz also taught Freshman Seminar again this year. This is always an enjoyable and rewarding experience and the department is eager to participate in this program. Unfortunately, the impending calendar change from terms to semesters will mean that the Classics Department will no longer be able to contribute any staff to this program. This is not good either for the department or for the college.

One disappointment this year concerned Greek. Elementary Greek 101, scheduled for the spring term, was cancelled because only one student had pre-registered. This decision was not a good one for the Greek program, which will only flourish if it can be offered on a regular basis. Since Dr. Sienkewicz cannot do this himself, the department is very excited that Dr. Amy has agreed to offer the Elementary Greek course in the future.

The department was also encouraged by the decision of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department to offer a separate course on Ancient Philosophy, which the Classics Dept. has decided to accept as partial satisfaction of a Classics major.

Dr. Sienkewicz also collaborated with members of the Modern Foreign Language Dept. to teach a methodology course for two students majoring in modern foreign languages. This collaboration, started two years ago, generally works well for both students and faculty and is the type of academic arrangement which the college should encourage more often. In order to do this, however, such work must somehow be recognized as part of the faculty member's teaching load.

Classics Students

The department was fortunate this year to gain Sylvia Zethmayr as the college's first Classics (as opposed to Latin) major. Sylvia is the type of student whom the department can serve best. She came to Monmouth determined to become a veterinarian and originally majored in Biology. As a freshman, however, she took both Elementary Latin and Elementary Greek and continued to take both Classics and Latin courses as a sophomore. This year she changed majors and has decided to pursue a career in Museum Studies. For this reason she was encouraged to attend the ACM London/Florence, where she spent the spring term along with Kimberly Haley, another good Latin student from Monmouth.

While the off-campus experience was rewarding for them, it was difficult for the department to have both of these students off campus. Kim was awarded departmental honors at Honors Convocation in May and Sylvia was the winner of the Ralston Classics Essay Contest.

Kim is neither a Classics or a Latin major and the department does not expect her to become one. However, she illustrates an important interest of the Classics Program--to encourage students to take courses in Classics or in Latin even if they do not intend to become majors. Two other students illustrate this. One is Kamden Dollinger, who was first

introduced to Classics through the General Education Program, and continued to take courses in the department as electives. This year, as a senior majoring in Psychology, Kami took 3 1/2 credits in the department, including Latin, and graduated with enough credits to have a Classics minor. Another student worth commenting upon is Edward Malter, a junior majoring in biology. Like Kami, Ed first took Classics through the General Education Program and continues to take any course he can fit into his schedule. In the fall he even intends to take Elementary Latin.

It would be nice to have 10 majors in the Classics Dept. Perhaps someday we will, but students like Kim and Ed are also ones the department can serve well. It can only do so, however, if it can offer a traditional major/minor sequence and, at the same time, participate in the general education program. With the impending calendar change, this is another area of concern for the department, which simply cannot offer general education courses which do not also fulfill departmental requirements.

Eta Sigma Phi.

The following students were inducted this year into Gamma Omicron Chapter of Eta Sigma Phi, the Classics Honor Society: Percy Bennett, Karen Bjorkman, Gregory DeKoster, Kami Dollinger, Dawn Fordyce, Kimberly Haley, Kimberly Mortimer, and Ken Schaeffer. Sylvia Zethmayr, prytanis of the chapter, provided visibility for the chapter by introducing this year's Fox Classics lecturer. Unfortunately no one was able to represent the chapter at the national convention, held this year in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Other Campus Activities.

For several years an important goal of the department has been to foster a variety of formal and informal academic projects. For example, every year Dr. Sienkewicz contributes a unit to Dr. Urban's History of Rome/Greece course and this has worked out well. This year Dr. Urban and Dr. Speel also taught units in the Sport and Recreation course and Dr. Sienkewicz presented a lecture on the issue of free speech in the ancient world to one of Dr. Wallace's advanced speech classes. Miss Bernice Fox has also been a valuable resource. She has several times visited classes, including Elementary Latin and Word Elements, and the students are always pleased to have the opportunity to meet her.

In May Dr. Sienkewicz also gave an International Luncheon talk at the college. This slide presentation, entitled "Oh, no, Daddy, not ~~another~~ Roman Bath!" was about his travels last summer in western Europe.

During the week of October 17-22 the department co-sponsored Foreign Language Week with the Modern Foreign Language Dept. During this week members of the department participated in several ways. Dr. Sienkewicz was a member of a faculty panel discussion entitled "Foreign Language Use in Many Fields of Study" and later gave a slide presentation entitled "Roaming in Rome: 1988." Miss Bernice Fox also gave a short talk entitled "The Spider Who Learned Latin", about her English translation of E. B. White's Charlotte's Web. Latin students contributed enthusiastically to a foreign language festival. Sylvia Zethmayr prepared some ancient Roman desserts for this affair and recited a poem of Catullus in Latin and the Elementary Latin students sang several songs in Latin.

The departmental bulletin board in Wallace Hall and its Classics Challenges continued to provide visibility for the department and classical learning for members of the college community, including students, faculty and staff.

This year the department also benefited from a generous gift of hundreds of Classical cartoons to Dr. Sienkewicz from Dr. Edith Kovach, a retiring professor at the University of Detroit. This cartoons will not only be invaluable as classroom resources, but have also served as the subject of Classics Challenges and as professional talks for Dr. Sienkewicz. The department is also serving as a lending library for the Kovach Cartoon Collection--a service which will provide the department and the college with a lot of contact with high school teachers in Illinois and in other states.

The 1988-1989 Fox Lecturer was Dr. Andrew Adams, a former student of Miss Fox. The subject of Dr. Adams' presentation was "Off the Beaten Track in Rome." The lecture, scheduled appropriately in winter term when History of Rome was being taught, tied in well with the academic program. Attendance at this function, which was co-sponsored by the Western Illinois Society of the Archaeological Institute of America, was very high, including many students and faculty as well as the general public. At least one person with no other college ties drove all the way from Chicago solely to hear this lecture.

The Classics Essay Contests

The Ralston Essay Contest this year offered a prize of \$100.00 for the best essay on any topic related to Classical antiquity. The winner was Sylvia Zethmayr. All six entries in the contest this year were good quality and it was difficult for the judges to make a decision.

The topic for the Fifth Bernice L. Fox Essay contest, open to any high school student in the United States, was "Cave Canem: Discuss the role of animals, domesticated and wild, in the life of the ancient Greeks and Romans." The winner of the \$100.00 cash award was Ursula Musser of Culver Girls' Academy in Indiana. Honorable mentions were awarded to Thomas Egan of Marist High School in Chicago and Brent Roalson of Marquette High School.

Since the number of entries in both contests was not as high as the department would like, the focus of the contests will be modified next year. In order to attract more students both will be writing rather than essay contests next year. Students will then be encouraged to submit more original work, such as poetry, short stories and character sketches, as well as essays.

The Western Illinois Society of AIA.

The department continues to sponsor the Archaeological Institute of America in western Illinois. A faithful group of paid members support the society financially and a larger group of individuals, including students, faculty, and the general public, attend these programs. The society is grateful to the Public Affairs Committee of the college for sponsoring one of the lectures this year. In general, however, these programs are arranged with little or no cost to the college, but, at the same time, provide the college with favorable visibility off-campus.

The following programs were sponsored by the archaeological organization. On October 17, 1988 Professor William Fash of Northern Illinois University spoke on "Classic Maya Archaeology in Copan, Honduras." In conjunction with this lecture the department arranged to have a Central American Dinner in the Student Center. On February 6, 1989 Professor Jan Bouzek of Charles University in Prague, Czechoslovakia, gave a presentation entitled "Greece and Barbarian Europe in the Early Iron Age (100-688 B.C.)." On March 13, 1989 Dr. Sidney Guralnick, Perlstein Distinguished Professor of Engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology, gave a talk at Western Illinois University on Roman engineering and the Pantheon. On March 14 Dr. Guralnick gave a convocation at Monmouth College entitled "Contributions of the Ancient Romans to Structural Engineering." On April 11, 1989

Professor Stephen Fineberg, Professor of Classics at Knox College, gave a presentation entitled "Satyrs, Dionysos and Childhood in Archaic and Classical Athens." This lecture also fit in well with Professor Sienkewicz' course on the Ancient Family. Finally, on April 26 Professor Lawrence Conrad of the Archaeological Research Lab at Western Illinois University gave an illustrated archaeological tour of the middle Ohio valley. The department is particularly glad that it has been able to encourage collaboration this year with several area institutions in this way.

Off-Campus Activities.

The department has continued to maintain a high profile outside the college. At Octoberfest, a conference sponsored by the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Dr. Sienkewicz gave a slide presentation entitled "Classics in Cartoons." He gave a totally different version of this talk at the annual meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South (CAMWS) in Lexington, Kentucky, in April, 1989. At Winterfest, also sponsored by the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, he gave a talk called "Non-punitive Grading in Language Class."

The department continues to be active in the Illinois Classical Conference. Dr. Sienkewicz, who served as vice-president and program chair through October, was elected president at the annual meeting, held in October at the University of Chicago. Other Monmouthians at the meeting included the outgoing president LeaAnn Osburn, '72; Mary Ryder, '72, who presented a talk which was a variation on her Fox Lecture of the previous year; and Andrew Adams, '66, who talked about the Getty Museum in Malibu, California.

Dr. Sienkewicz continued to speak at high schools throughout the state this year. Some of these visits were also follow-ups for the 1987 Summer Institute on "The Teaching of Roman Civilization in High School" funded by the Illinois Humanities Council. This was his schedule of visits for 1988-89: Trinity High School in River Forest, on November 4, 1988; Libertyville High School, St. Ignatius High School, Bogan High School and Ted Lenart Gifted Center in Chicago, March 2 and 3, 1989; Notre Dame High School in Peoria, May 1, 1989; Bloomington Community High School and Normal Community High School on May 16; Pekin Community High on May 18; Batavia High and Barrington High on May 24; and Sacred Heart Academy in Chicago on May 25.

Summary.

In many ways this has indeed been a good year. The Classics curriculum put in place in 1985 has reached an equilibrium and students are showing enthusiastic support for the program. The department has found a variety of ways to bring the Classics outside the classroom. Even with only one major the department could look back on this year's activities with satisfaction. The future, however, does not hold as much promise. The transition to the semester system, mandated for 1990-91, will require hard choices for the department, which may not be able to maintain its balance of departmental and general education courses. Much of the academic progress made by the department during the past five years is now in danger of being lost, unless there surfaces in the difficult times ahead the type of institutional support for Classics which created an endowed chair earlier in the decade.

Respectfully submitted,



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Capron Professor of Classics