

# **Annual Planning Report and SWOT Analysis Department of Classics Fall, 1996**

## **Mission Statement**

The goal of the Classics Department is to expose the Monmouth College student body at large to the issues, ideas, culture, and language of the ancient Greeks and Romans. In order to accomplish this goal, the department offers a variety of courses which are open to all M.C. students, not just majors and minors. Indeed, there is no course offered in the department which is exclusively taught for majors or minors. While some courses require some competency in reading Latin or Greek, this level of proficiency can easily be reached by students who will not be majors or even minors.

While the department offers a personalized, broad, and rigorous program to meet the specific who wish to majors or minors in Latin, Greek, or Classics, a variety of student constituencies are also served through the department, especially through the general education program. The department views its mission as serving the college at large while, at the same time, meeting the needs of the occasional "serious" student which crosses its threshold.

A glance at the curriculum offered by the Classics Department illustrates a broad spectrum of courses offered, in language, literature, history, art, sport, urban planning, and other topics. Assignments in Classics courses are designed to take advantage of the unique skills, interests, and background of individual students. Students often have the option of submitting artwork and original writing instead of formal term papers and reports.

## **I. SWOT Analysis**

### **A. Strengths:**

1.) **an innovative, nationally-recognized Classics curriculum**

The triad courses in Classics, Latin, and Greek were designed specifically for Monmouth College and the special mission of Classics at the institution. This curriculum enables a small number of faculty to generate sufficient course variety for majors in Classics, Latin, and Greek.

2.) **flexible, caring, and inclusive curriculum**

The department has consciously designed a curriculum which de-emphasizes a graduated course program. (Only language courses have prerequisites and these are kept at a bare minimum.) The goal of the department is to offer as many courses as possible which are attractive to and useful for any student enrolled at Monmouth College.

3.) **integration of the Classics curriculum into the college's general education program**

Nearly every course offered by the Classics department serves not only the

needs of majors and minors but also various aspects of the general education program. The only Classics course which fulfills no gened requirement is CLAS224 Word Elements.

4.) **healthy enrollments**

Courses offered by the Classics Department continue to have solid enrollments patterns. CLAS/HIST240 Ancient Societies and CLAS230 Classical Mythology regularly close enrollment at 35 or 40 (depending upon the classroom available). Either of these courses could be offered twice a year instead of once and still have healthy enrollments. CLAS210 Ancient Literature tends to attract slightly fewer students (c.15), but this is still a healthy size for a course of that type. Language classes are thriving. For a school of this size, enrollments in elementary and advanced language classes, especially in Latin, are comparable to those at much larger institutions.

5.) **high visibility among high school Latin programs**

Several factors make the Monmouth College Classics program well known to high school teachers in Illinois and in other parts of the country: a.) Tom Sienkewicz' involvement in the Illinois Classical Conference (ICC) and in the Classical Association of the Middle West and South (CAMWS); b.) the Fox Writing Contest, which typically attracts hundreds of entries from high school students all over the country; c.) departmental hosting, at least once every four years, of the Illinois Latin Tournament, which brings several hundred high school students on campus; and d.) the recently established Latin Performance Scholarship.

**B. Weaknesses:**

1.) **staffing**

a.) Staffing changes in other departments have made the staffing/curriculum ratio in Classics very tight and more difficult to manage. The sole Classicist receives curricular support only from the History Department. Even the streamlined triad program can not effectively be offered without some additional staffing support. Specifically, the department needs to regularize the offering of Elementary Greek, which has been offered in recent years only sporadically. When it has been offered, enrollments in Elementary Greek have been impressive when compared with national statistics and illustrate continuing student interest in this language. If Greek were offered every other year, it is more than likely that enrollments would actually increase at least modestly.

b.) Despite annual resolutions to the contrary, Tom Sienkewicz continues to teach overloads every year (25-26 semester hours). This situation is not healthy for the instructor, the institution, or the students and simply cannot continue indefinitely. Increasing demands upon the time and responsibilities of departmental chairs only acerbate this overload problem.

2.) **technological limitations**

Most, if not all, comparable Classics programs at small liberal arts colleges are already using in the classroom a powerful interactive computer program called *Perseus*. Monmouth College does not. Because of technological limitations, the department is also unable to introduce into the classroom other computerized teaching tools like *Transparent Language*. The Classics department needs to be able to use material from

World Wide Web in the classroom on a daily basis.

3.) **decreased access to funds for professional and student travel and for on-campus programming**

In the transition to the new budgetary process, department travel and lecture funds were pooled. In the process, Classics has faced more limited resources to do the variety of things it had done regularly for many years. In particular, the department no longer has travel funds to take students to the national convention of Eta Sigma Phi. In previous years the department provided ground transportation and students paid their expenses. Attendance at such meetings is important for classics majors and minors who need to meet other Classics students and to realize that there are, indeed, other people like them out in the world. Education and English majors need no such reinforcement.

C. **Opportunities**

1.) **curricular additions**

The need for college wide electives encourages the department to consider curricular additions like a course entitled Scientific Terminology designed to assist students in scientific fields in vocabulary comprehension and retention.

2.) **the addition of an anthropologist**

The hiring of an anthropologist could support the classics program provided that the department were invited to participate in the writing of a job description and position search for an anthropologist with some interest in Old World archaeology.

3.) **State Latin Tournament 1998**

Every three or four years the Classics Dept has hosted the Illinois Latin Tournament, which brings on campus c.200 high school students whose performance in regional competitions has made them eligible to compete at the state level. Hosting this program gives the college excellent visibility among high school Latin students and their teachers and is an excellent recruitment tool, not so much for Classics, which is not going to attract large numbers of majors, but for the college in general.

D. **Threats:**

1.) **the College's new mission statement**

The emphasis in the college's new mission statement on service learning and international studies make continued integration of a traditional Classics curriculum extremely difficult.

2.) **general education revisions**

The department is currently so involved in almost all aspects of the college's general education program that **any** modification would have serious implications on the department's offerings and its enrollments.

3.) **institutional emphasis on major programs**

The curriculum of the Department of Classics is specifically designed to address equally the needs of general students and majors/minors, yet, in order to justify programs and budget requests, more and more emphasis is being placed at Monmouth upon the number of majors.

4.) **internationalization of the M.C. curriculum**

The growing and legitimate concern to insure that M.C. students develop a sense of the international and global community often fails to recognize the role Classics can play in such a curriculum. Curricular conversations concerning international and foreign language studies do not but should include the Classics Department.

5.) **politicization of the faculty**

Current political interests of the faculty and of the institution appear to have excluded Classics from a variety of conversations in which it ought to be included, not only internationalization of the curriculum (see d. above), but also issues like language laboratory teaching, the hiring of faculty in collateral areas (thus insuring some curricular overlap with other departments), etc. The anthropology position is a case in point. Classics did not even know that such a position was under consideration until the budgetary process was nearly completed. Yet, there are significant intersections between the fields of anthropology and Classics. In particular, the fields often share an interest in archaeology, which, in recent times, is only taught in classics courses. Conversations about feminism and multiculturalism have not recognized the specific curricular contributions of Classics in these areas.

6.) **institutional emphasis on modernistic perspectives**

In the last few years the college has begun to reflect a disregard for events and issues which precede the twentieth century. Very few courses on campus provide a long historical vision and place multi-cultural issues in a wider historical context. For example, no text used in Freshman Seminar dates before 1899. This creates a serious lacuna in the student's experience.

7.) **low memberships in the archaeological society**

The Western Illinois Society of the Archaeological Institute of America sponsored five events on campus in 1995-1996. These were well attended and often integrated into a variety of courses in art, classics, history, and comparative societies. These lectures are subsidized in large part by memberships in the local society. The national organization, which arranges many of these lectures, has expressed concern in writing about the small number of memberships in the local society. Unless membership increases, this valuable resource may be lost to the college.

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## II. Summary of 1995-1996 Issues and Achievements

### A. The Academic Year (1995-96) At a Glance:

FTE:	1.08
Number of Student Hours Generated:	Fall 305.00* Spring 150.00
Number of <b>General Education</b> Student Hours Generated:	Fall 220.00* Spring 147.00
Number of Students Enrolled in Classics Courses:	Fall 83 Spring 52
Number of Students Taught by Classics Staff:	Fall 87* Spring 56
Number of Advisees:	Fall 18 Spring 10
Number of 1995 Majors Graduating:	0
Number of 1995 Minors Graduating	0
Entries in Fox Classics Writing Contest:	363
Number of high schools participating	61
Number of states represented	23
Number of lectures sponsored by Classics Dept.:	
*includes Freshman Seminar	

### B. Significant Events

1. Elementary Latin Language Credit. In the fall of 1996 the department began teaching elementary Latin and elementary Greek as four-credit hour courses. This change puts Latin in line with all the other foreign language courses and enables the students to have more classroom contact with the instructor. Positive results are already being noticed in these courses.
2. Elementary Greek. Elementary Greek is being offered in the fall of 1996 for the first time in three years. Eight students are enrolled.
- 3.) Participation in Freshman Seminar. The department is pleased to continue its participation in the freshman seminar program, provided that funds are provided for Virginia Hellenga to teach Elementary Latin 101. The advantages of this arrangement are summarized in the 1995 AWOTS report.
- 5.) Classics Lectures. The department sponsored a number of public lectures in 1995-1996. These lectures are offered as part of the department's mission to bring the Classical world to the college community at large. They also enhance the curriculum and expose Classics students to broader perspectives and more diverse points of view than a small staff can generate by itself. Most notable lecture was the Eleventh Annual Fox Classics Lecture in September, 1995, presented by Professor Albert Watanabe of Memphis State University and a former instructor in the department. Entitled "Into the Woods: the Symbolism of the Forest, " Professor Watanabe's lecture was designed to complement the Classical Mythology course offered that fall. Another major Classics lecture was offered in the spring to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Gamma

Omicron Chapter of Eta Sigma Phi, the National Classics Honorary Society. This lecture, presented by Dr. Leslie Day of Wabash College, was entitled "From Scattered Sherds to Family Values: Reconstructing Family Structure in Dark Age Crete."

During the 1995-1996 academic year the Western Illinois Society of the Archaeological Institute of America sponsored seven events, five of them on the Monmouth College campus. Attendance at these events is typically over forty. Several instructors incorporate these events into their syllabi and either encourage or require students to attend.

In addition the department rededicated a photograph of the Roman Forum, originally donated to the college by Delos Wylie Hogue MC'95, and now on display in the Capron Classics Room. In March, students enrolled in CLAS210: The Ancient Novel held a public reading of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* attended by approximately sixty people, including a large number of Knox students and their professors.

## 6.) Tom Sienkewicz' Professional Activities

### Book published:

*World Mythology. An Annotated Bibliography.* Salem Press, 1996.

### Articles:

"All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes," "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," "Maya Angelou," and "Poetry of Maya Angelou" in *Issues and Identities in Literature*, forthcoming with Salem Press.

### Review Essays:

Mitchell, William J. *City of Bits. Magill's Literary Annual 1996* (Salem Press), 112-115.

Lefkowitz, Mary R., and Guy MacLean Rogers. *Black Athena Revisited.* Forthcoming in *Magill's Literary Annual 1997.*

### Papers read at professional meetings:

"Taking Students Abroad," panelist, Illinois Classical Conference, Champaign, Ill., 1995.

"Teaching Comparative Mythology: Some Practical Considerations." Classical Association of the Middle West and South, Nashville, 1996.

"Classical Sculpture in Florence", an illustrated lecture, at the annual meeting of the American Classical League in College Park, Maryland, June, 1996

### Professional Meetings Attended:

Illinois Classical Conference, Classical Association of the Middle West and South, American Philological Association, American Classical League.

### Invited Lecture:

"Classical Sculpture in Florence," Knox College, May, 1996

### Work in Progress:

*Classical Sculpture in Florence: A Walking Tour*, in manuscript

*Theories of Myth: An Annotated Bibliography* for Salem Press, in manuscript

*The Sunjata: A Literary Study of a West African Oral Epic in Multiform*, in manuscript  
editor of *A Festschrift in Honor of Charles Speel*. Forthcoming in 1996.

translation of the Latin passages for an English translation (with commentary) of *Histoire naturelle des Animaux, des Plantes, et des Minéraux qui entrent dans la Composition de la Thériaque d'Andromachus* by Moïse Charas (Paris, 1670). In collaboration with Bernardine Paulshock and Anne W. Sienkewicz, in manuscript

### Professional Service at MC:

faculty secretary, 1994-present

coordinator of Western Illinois Society of the Archaeological Institute of America

member of Information Systems Sub-Committee, 1995-present

member of General Education Task Force, 1996-present

### Professional Service outside MC:

President Emeritus of the Illinois Classical Conference

Chair of ICC Endowment Committee

Regional Vice-President of CAMWS  
Discipline Specialist for the Illinois Academic Foreign Languages Content Standards Committee  
of the Illinois State Board of Education.



### **III. Plans, Goals, and Initiatives, 1996-2000**

The department anticipates no change in its mission to offer a Classics program which serves all the students in the college, not just majors and minors. The small number of majors or minors in the Classics Department will not increase, but a wide variety of student constituencies will be served through the department, especially through the general education program. While the department views its mission as serving the college at large, at the same time, it continues to strive to meet the needs of the occasional "serious" student which crosses its threshold.

The department also plans to continue its traditional outreach to high school teachers and students, especially through involvement in the Illinois Classical Conference and the Classical Association of the Middle West and South. In 1998 the department will host the Illinois State Latin Tournament which will bring on campus several hundred high school students from around the state.

The department also would like to continue its support of the Western Illinois Society of the Archaeological Institute of America, which brings several lectures on campus each year. These lectures enhance and support various aspects of the Monmouth curriculum. They also provide some context for students interested in pursuing a career in archaeology. These archaeology lectures are also attended by members of the public, some of whom travel from as far away as Peoria, Macomb, and the Quad Cities.

The department is also eager to continue its participation in the Freshman Seminar program, provided that additional staffing support is available.

One curricular addition is planned in the near future. During the current academic year the department will petition the Curriculum Committee and the Faculty to add a course entitled Scientific Vocabulary. Tom Sienkewicz taught a course like this several times at Howard University. Such a course would be of great use to students pursuing various scientific careers. The college must be prepared to deal with the staffing implications of such a course.

Elementary Greek (GREK101/102) presents continuing concern. The department plans to request funding to offer these courses on an alternate year basis.

In the next five years the department is eager to increase its use of computerized educational resources in the classroom. The college already owns some excellent Latin resources in software called *Transparent Language* as well as the electronic *American Heritage Dictionary*, but the department can only use this material effectively if it can be brought into the classroom. The department would like access to equipment necessary to use this software in the Capron Classics Room. This activity requires the purchase of the computer hardware listed in Part IV.

If such hardware is purchased, then the department would also like to purchase the *Perseus* computer program mentioned in Part I. Supplementing this program are a variety of laserdisc images. With the ability to use *Perseus* in the classroom, the Monmouth College Classics Department will be on equal technological footing with other ACM schools like Knox, Lawrence, and Beloit, all of which use *Perseus* regularly in teaching contexts.

IV. Projection of Budgetary Implications for 1997-1998.

- A. instructor for Elementary Latin I (LATN101) so that Tom Sienkewicz can teach Freshman Seminar.
- B. instructor for Elementary Latin II (LATN102) so that Tom Sienkewicz can teach a second section of CLAS224 Word Elements or a new course entitled Scientific Terminology. See Part III for more details.
- C. funding to host the Illinois Latin Tournament in 1998 (monies for materials, meals and programming)
- D. purchase of computer hardware necessary for computerized instruction in the Capron Classics Room. It is recommended that this equipment be mobile so that it can be used in other classrooms. Such equipment includes:
  - 1.) a MacIntosh computer with monitor and CD-ROM;
  - 2.) equipment to project the computer image onto an overhead projector;
  - 3.) laser-disk player and hook-up to computer;
  - 4.) a cart to move this equipment from room to room

Purchase of a projection screen would not be necessary for use of this equipment in the Capron Classics Room.

In addition, the department would like to purchase the following software:

- 1.) the *Perseus* Classics computer software;
  - 2.) a variety of laser-disks with images of Classical artwork, artifacts, and sites
- E. Funding to support the continued presence of the Western Illinois Society of the Archaeological Institute of America on the Monmouth College campus.
 

As noted under Threats, the small number of memberships in this society jeopardizes the existence of this organization which brings nationally known speakers on campus at small cost.

The department will request college funding to support \$1000.00 worth of memberships in this society on an on-going basis.

Respectfully submitted,

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