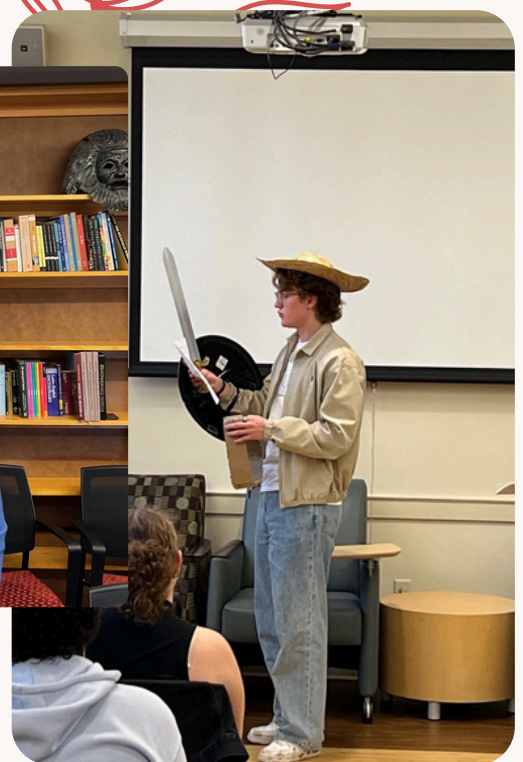


Classical Studies Newsletter

TO OUR WONDERFUL ALUMNI...

Spring 2024



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Message From the Chair

Dear friends, colleagues, and alums,

As I write these words, the academic year has come to an end. Earlier in May, we watched our wonderful Classical Studies majors and minors walk the stage at graduation, and faculty and graduate students are now scattering to all parts of the world for the summer. As for me, my three-year term as department chair is coming to an end, and I will be handing the reins back to the very reliable hands of Professor Stephen Scully. Before I go, though, let me tell you about some of the exciting things that have been happening on Commonwealth Ave since our last newsletter.

Spring 2024 was full of events. Nowadays we invite our graduate students to vote upon the final speaker in our department lecture series, and they voted for Prof. Stephen Hinds (University of Washington), who delivered a fantastic lecture in March, then had dinner with almost our entire graduate student community! Alumnus Seth Holm returned to campus to tell us about the important work he is doing as the Founding Director of AESOP Afghanistan (<https://aesopafghanistan.org/>), accompanied by the celebrated writer and activist Homeira Qaderi. I also want to extend my thanks to our fantastic Undergraduate Classics Association, who not only continued to have regular meetings this Spring, but even coordinated a bake and book sale on Giving Day to support the department. Thank you for your efforts!

This year also saw the revival of our BU Philhellenes Summer Program. This summer, Prof. Polychroniou will be introducing a new group of undergraduates to the experience of being in Athens. In the meantime, our fantastic administrative team of Nancy Geourntas and Joseph Knapik will be holding down the fort on the fourth floor of STH. We all love to hear from alumni and friends, so please be in touch! Please let us know if you want your email to be added to an email list for regular updates or follow us on our social media pages on Facebook ('Classical Studies at Boston University') and Instagram.

I wish everyone a happy and healthy summer ahead.

James Uden
Professor and Department Chair





Departmental Updates

Professor Loren Jay Samons

Professor Samons taught Warfare in Antiquity and second semester humanities in the Core Curriculum this semester. In Warfare, he had the experience of teaching two students who were the sons of one of his previous students. Samons called this “an appalling development, reflecting my superannuated status and inability to inspire sufficient fear and loathing. I shall redouble my efforts.” In other developments, the incredibly wet and cool spring postponed trout fishing by at least a month. In order to compensate, Professor Samons bought three guitars and actually played one of them occasionally. He will spend part of the summer in Greece and part of August in Arkansas, a schedule which he claims “maximizes Arkansas’ famous humidity.” This fall he will teach Greek history and Greek civilization once more and continue to work on a book on the rise of classical Athens, in which he will seek to prove that democracy, tragedy, imperialism, and Platonic philosophy all resulted from the ancient Athenians’ unusual addiction to stories about “that second-rate hero, Theseus. I mean, seriously. How lame is that?”

Professor Stephen Scully

This has been a year of contrasting semesters in the classroom. In the Fall, there was the pure delight of reading epic poetry in Greek, both in an undergraduate class on the Homeric Hymns to Demeter and Aphrodite and a graduate seminar on the Iliad. In the Spring, everything was in English, from the endlessly engrossing subject of Greek and Roman Mythology to a capstone course on “Englished Homer,” with readings from George Chapman’s *Ilias in roaring fourteeners* (1611) to Caroline Alexander’s *Iliad* (2015), Emily Wilson’s *Odyssey* (2018) and *Iliad* (2023), and the bold reimagnings of Homer in Christopher Logue’s *War Music* (1981-1994), Derek Walcott’s *Omeros* (1990), and Alice Oswald’s *Memorial* (2011). I see the summer mostly in New England, working on Iliad articles, hanging out in my cabin, and walking our sweet, lady hound from South Carolina whom we call Amber.



Departmental Updates

Professor Leah Kronenberg

I have been enjoying having time to focus on my Catullus book this semester thanks to a sabbatical (with generous funding from the BU Center for the Humanities), though I have also appreciated the many opportunities for remaining connected to everyone in the department thanks to 4 successful dissertation defenses, exciting guest lectures, the excellent graduate student conference, and our lovely departmental graduation (with our record-breaking 5 PhD graduates!). This summer, I will attend two conferences in Italy and give papers on the pseudo-Virgilian *Ciris* and *Moretum*. I have one more semester of sabbatical in the fall and look forward to returning to the classroom in January 2025!

Professor Brandon Jones

Brandon Jones was joined by nine intrepid graduate students this spring for what may have been the world's first graduate seminar on Cassius Dio. What a delight! With Professor Golder he also enjoyed preparing more issues of *Arion*, including one honoring the bicentennial of Lord Byron's death. The same issue features a new translation from Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* by BU student John Griffin. Jones will again take 18 high school students around Sicily in the early summer and will look forward to some dedicated time with *Arion* upon his return.

Professor Zsuzsanna Varhelyi

I began a three-year term as NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor, and I am super excited to be able to teach in the Core program. I also had a lovely experience meeting old (and new) friends at the 50th anniversary meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians, which took place at Harvard this April. Can you imagine over a hundred ancient historians in a room? :) I am looking forward to a restful summer and to return to my fall classes, on Greek and Roman Religions, and, of course, *The Good Life*!

Professor Rebecca Moorman

I've really enjoyed my first year at BU: I taught Latin classes on Apuleius, Petronius, and Plautus, and I was able to finish up several different writing projects, including an edited volume on "impoverished aesthetics" in Latin literature that's currently under review. This summer, I'll be working on my monograph, a study of disgust in Latin philosophical literature, and looking forward to teaching my first graduate seminar in the fall, a survey of Neronian literature.



Departmental Updates

Professor Laurie Hutcheson

It's been a busy spring in our language programs. We continued our tradition of performances from first- and second-year students at the end of the semester. This time, our performers presented Plautus, Horace, Herodotus, and more. We continued weekly conversation groups in Greek and Latin, and our peer tutoring program flourished, with 80 visits this semester! Clearly, students enjoy working on their language skills together in the Lindsay Arrowsmith library. It's wonderful to see how our vibrant undergraduate community continues to thrive.

Personally, I've enjoyed teaching second-semester Latin and Greek, reading the many great dissertations that were completed, and doing some writing of my own. This July, I'll be back in Rome with a big group of high school students, reading Latin among the ruins.

Professor James Uden

I had a rewarding Spring 2024 semester. Alongside my regular tasks as department chair, I was honored to deliver the George B. Walsh Memorial Lecture at the University of Chicago, which I gave on the topic of grief in the Aeneid. I also delivered a paper to a research colloquium at Chicago on a more recent fascination – Roman 'declamation'; that is, the strange habit of Romans to act out fictional scenarios to train themselves in the art of persuasion. This summer, I am mostly looking forward to my travel: I will be back in Australia to visit my parents, will spend a week returning to some favorite spots in my beloved Japan, and then my partner and I will visit Taiwan for the first time. I will see everyone at BU again in the Fall!

Professor Stephen Esposito

The Spring semester was a tricky one in the teaching of CL 101; due to the graduate student strike I lost all 3 of my excellent TFs (Colin Lacey, Caroline Spurr, and Lauren Brown) who taught the five discussion sections for our 85 students and ran all the classroom AV presentations. But before they departed, the TFs were kind enough to set up tricky Blackboard stuff for the rest of the semester and I'm very grateful for their kindness in doing that, esp. to Caroline Spurr who led the charge. After 8 months in production, my TED-Ed film presentation on "Oedipus" will soon be put on the Web. I'm now beginning another TED-Ed presentation on "Antigone".

Spring 2024 Lectures

This Spring we had a wonderful line up of lecturers visit the department.

New Approaches to Classics Series

PROF. STEPHEN HINDS

University of Washington

Latin Poetry Across Languages:
Micro-Negotiating Classical Tradition
with Joachim Du Bellay
and John Milton



Learn more at <https://www.bu.edu/classics/news-events/new-approaches/>

Black Classicism - Moving Forward



PROF. SAMUEL AGBAMU

University of Reading

Putting the 'Human' in Humanism:
Unsettling the Coloniality of Antiquity

Learn more at <https://www.bu.edu/classics/news-events/black-classicism-lectures/>

Spring Lectures

Conferences & Panels

This Spring we had a our yearly Graduate Student Conference and a new panel discussion!

Women's Literacy in Afghanistan Panel

Featuring:



DR. SETH HOLM

BU Classical Studies Alumnus,
Teacher of Latin and Ancient Greek,
Director of AESOP Afghanistan Inc.

DR. HOMEIRA QADERI

Writer in Residence at Yale University
& Founder of The Golden Needle Literary
Association





Spring Lectures

2024 Graduate Student Conference: *From Life to Literature: Genre and Performance in Hellenistic and Roman Literature*

On April 27th 2024, the BU Classical Studies department hosted its 15th annual graduate student conference, with this year's theme being *From Life to Literature: Genre and Performance in Hellenistic and Roman Literature*. One of the most debated and divisive topics in the study of Hellenistic and Roman reception is the degree to which the new book culture preserved the performative elements of earlier literary forms and how much was instead lost in moving from performance to literature. We attracted papers from both Hellenists and Latinists that explored how later authors engaged with the original performative elements that originally characterized their respective genres. We had hoped that case studies of allusions in any genre could contribute to a fruitful conversation of this general issue, and we were not disappointed.

We were honored to be joined by Professor Emeritus Richard Hunter, Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge University until 2023, who has published widely on Hellenistic and Roman literature, and whose work has inspired and influenced most of the still ongoing scholarly conversation on the literary reception of archaic genres and their performative aspects. His keynote address, entitled "Performing Genre? From Homer to Horace," provided numerous insights into the Hellenistic poet Theocritus and the Latin poetry of Horace while offering a perfect closure to the discussion which was prompted by the previous talks and Q&As. We also enjoyed papers from graduate students from Brown University, the Catholic University of America, UNC Chapel Hill, and the Jagiellonian University of Poland.



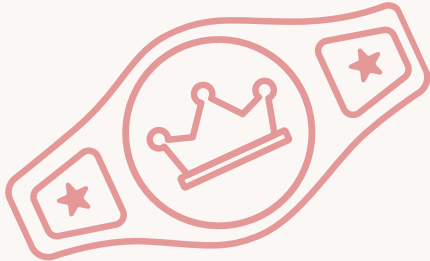
Spring Lectures

These students presented on a wide range of topics and authors, including the Hellenistic poet Bion, the Roman poets Catullus and Horace, and the fabulae crepidatae of Roman theater. Each paper engaged closely with our theme and allowed us to expand the ongoing conversation on the relationship between genre and performance context. All presentations were followed by a rich and much participated discussion which offered feedback to further the conversation and which benefited from the various interests and expertise found in the audience. At the end of the conference, we concluded the event with a round table discussion to bring the thoughts and questions raised after each graduate student's paper and the keynote address at once, providing an opportunity to wrap up the event with the general conclusions that could be drawn at the end of such enriching discussion. We were thankful to have so many engaged listeners in the audience and even more so to have received the economic and academic support to continue to host this conference this year.

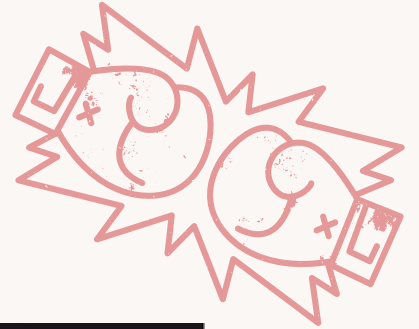


Spring 2024 Events

GREECE VS ROME DEBATE 2024



WINNER:
GREECE



UNDERGRADUATE CLASSICS ASSOCIATION PRESENTS...

GREECE VS ROME DEBATE

P1 P2

GREECE
NELSON

VS

ROME
MOORMAN

FEB 21 5-7 PM
STH B23

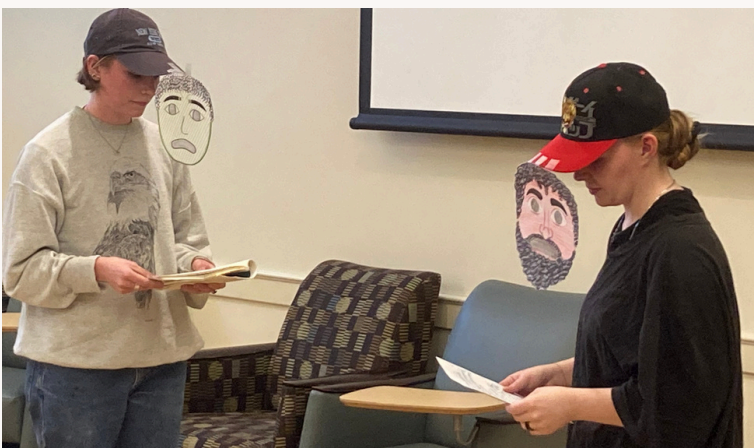
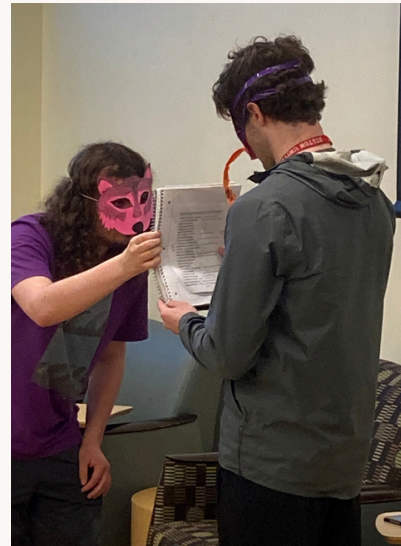
A vertical poster for a debate event. The top section is black with white and red text. Below is a red and blue diagonal split background with a white lightning bolt. The left side (red) features a photograph of the Parthenon in Greece. The right side (blue) features a photograph of the Temple of Mars Ultor in Rome. The names of the debaters, Nelson for Greece and Moorman for Rome, are printed below their respective images. The date and location are at the bottom.

Spring Events

Class Performances: Ancient Greek & Latin Skits

At the end of each semester we hold performances where our undergraduates perform skits in Latin and Ancient Greek. Here are the highlights of this Spring's!

Spring 2024 Performances



Convocation 2024

Bachelor of Arts

Brianna Bourne

*Majors - Classical Civilization, Psychology
Minor - Emotional and Behavioral
Challenges in Schools*

Vivian Dai

*Major - Ancient Greek and Latin
Minor - The Core Curriculum*

Sophia Fruehauf

*Majors - Classical Civilization, Archaeology
Minor - The Core Curriculum*

Aarohi Goel

*Major - Ancient Greek and Latin
Minor - Biology*

Elizabeth Goldberg

*Majors - Classical Civilization, English
Minor - Psychology*

Sydney Jessup

*Major - Classical Civilization
Minor - English*

Hector Killick

Major - Classics and Philosophy

Sophie Klemmer

*Majors - Classical Civilization,
History*

Kit Houg Li

Major - Ancient Greek and Latin

Ryan Hin Phan

*Majors - Classical Civilization,
History*

Sofia Podgorski

*Major - Classical Civilization
Minor - History of Art and
Architecture*

Elizabeth Sprague

Major - Classics and Archaeology

Reagan Taylor

*Majors - Classical Civilization,
Biology*

Kin Tai Wong

*Majors - Classical Civilization,
History, Philosophy & Religion
Minor - Global Medieval Studies*

Doctor of Philosophy

Victoria Burmeister

Maya Chakravorty

Matthew Kelley

Peter Kotiuga

Alicia Matz



Photo by: GradImages



2023-2024 Awards & Recognition

Undergraduate Student Awards

Departmental Awards

Meyer Reinhold Prize: *Sofia Podgorski*

Ann Vasaly Prize for Excellence in Classics: *Vivian Dai*

Fragoudakis Memorial Award: *Spiridon-Iosif Capotos & Artemios Kayas*

College of Arts and Sciences Award

College Prize: *Kit Huong Li*

BU Center for Humanities Award Winners

The Dean Elsbeth Melville Latin Prize: *John Griffin*

The John Oddy Memorial Award:

- *Sophia Fruehauf*
- *Sydney Jessup*
- *Eleanor Moran*

Graduate Student Awards

Departmental Awards

Excellence in Classics Teaching: *Caroline Spurr*

Graduate School Awards

Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award: *Hannah Kloster*

Faculty Awards

The Gitner Award for Distinguished Teaching in the Arts & Sciences: *Leah Kronenberg*



Interview with Maya Chakravorty

Last Spring, Maya Chakravorty ('24) defended her dissertation and received the honor of Ph.D. from the Boston University Classical Studies department. Maya also recently received the Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellowship (CFD) at Bowdoin College. We were lucky enough to sit down with her and ask her a few questions about her new position and what it means to her.

Q: So, Maya, we want to have a better idea of what your position entails. Would you mind outlining some details?

A: Sure! My position is a two-year post-doctoral fellowship with the Consortium for Faculty Diversity at Bowdoin College in Maine. I will be teaching a class on the erasure of Indigenous voices, which compares ancient Italic peoples (i.e., the Etruscans and Sabines) with the Dakelh and Gitksan peoples who live along the Highway of Tears in northern British Columbia. The department has given me a lot of flexibility with designing the course, which is absolutely fantastic! I am looking forward to converting my dissertation into a manuscript for my first book, as well as revisiting some old ideas for articles!

Q: So exciting! Could you tell us what you're most excited about for this position?

A: There are many things! First, I am really excited to be joining such a warm and friendly department! While I love Boston, I'm also excited to live in a new place. Since Bowdoin is not too far from Boston, I still get to enjoy the northeast. Bowdoin also has a museum that I look forward to visiting – I'm actually going to be using their new exhibit on Etruscans in my upcoming class. I'll also have some flexibility in my course load, so I can resume some research projects that I was working on before my dissertation.



Interview with Maya Chakravorty

Q: Great! Could you give us some background on why you chose Classics and your area of interest?

A: I started studying Latin in 7th grade and stuck with it through high school. My experience at the University of Toronto (U of T) was incredible, and a class on Roman history made me really interested in Republican heroes like Cato the Elder.

Professor Uden's seminar on Roman satire, my first seminar at BU, really blew my mind, and a paper I wrote for his class on Imperial memories of the Republic was the impetus for my dissertation. That developed into an interest in depictions of early Roman culture in imperial Latin, particularly aristocratic families and the implications of passing down these heroic traits from generation to generation.

I also have an interest in studying the propagandistic elements of ancient coinage. A really new interest is the moral valences of food and plants in the ancient Classical world.

Q: What an array! Is there a specific memory that you cherish the most from your time in the department?

A: There are so many. From dropping in on undergraduate teas with the UCA, to attending events like the performances with the entire department: grad students, faculty, *and* the undergrads. The Greece vs. Rome debate is also always a must!

Q: Similarly, what will you miss most about living and working in Boston?



Interview with Maya Chakravorty

A: I have spent most of my life in and around Boston, so I will really miss it. Luckily, since I will still be in New England, I won't have to miss out on the seasons, foliage, and things like that; but I will certainly miss the Boston skyline and the cityscape overall. That said, I think that I'll miss this department the most. Everyone, especially the students, really inspire me to stay curious. I'll also miss our tight-knit community and my incredible support system here.

Q: *Finally, I wanted to ask about your previous experiences that you feel have prepared you for this new position? This can be general life experiences or educational.*

A: My experiences at U of T were absolutely essential to my academic development. I also have to thank my friends and the faculty of the Rutgers Classics department for an unforgettable and amazing introduction to grad school. I would be nowhere without my high school Latin teacher, Maggie Rogow, who always pushed me to do my very best.

Finally, the support and guidance I have received from the Classical Studies department here at BU, where I began teaching and dissertating, has been unparalleled. I really can't imagine having done all of this anywhere else. My colleagues have been an incredible support-network. One of many examples: They were always available for coffee breaks and to share ideas and thoughts.

On behalf of the Classics department, Thank you for your time, Maya, and congratulations on your new position at Bowdoin!

Interview conducted by Elizabeth Sprague (CAS '24)

Publications



Issue 31.3 Winter 2024 of Arion is now available!
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