

WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH A CLASSICS MAJOR AFTER SWEET BRIAR

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1. You can join the list of famous and/or successful Classics majors:

- * Ted Turner, founder of CNN, Turner Broadcasting, etc.
- * Jerry Brown, Mayor of Oakland (former Governor of CA)
- * William Cohen, Secretary of Defense during Clinton administration, author, former US senator
- * Jim Manzi, former CEO of Lotus Development Corp.
- * Dr. Charles “Chuck” Geschke, former CEO and co-founder of Adobe Systems
- * Lynn Sherr, correspondent, ABC-TV’s “20-20,” author
- * James Baker, former Secretary of State
- * Robert Graves, poet and author of “I, Claudius”
- * Willa Cather, teacher, journalist, critic, and author
- * Rita Mae Brown, animal enthusiast and author
- * W.E.B. DuBois, sociologist, co-founder of NAACP, and author
- * Toni Morrison, author and winner of Nobel Prize for Literature-1993
- * Gerda Lerner, pioneer in teaching women’s history and author
- * Sigmund Freud, pioneer in psychoanalysis and author
- * Jane Addams, social worker, founder of Hull House, winner of Nobel Peace Prize-1931
- * Betty Friedan, found of NOW and author
- * Nancy Vickers, president of Bryn Mawr College
- * Friedrich W. Nietzsche, philosopher and author
- * Garry Wills, cultural historian, professor of History at Northwestern
- * Teller of Penn and Teller, Magicians
- * J. K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter novels
- * Ben Bradlee, Executive Editor of the Washington Post
- * Karl Marx (wrote his 1841 graduate PhD dissertation on “The Difference between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature”)
- * Dorothy Sayers (author of Lord Peter Wimsey mysteries)
- * David Karp, Fruit Detective, researches exotic fruit and uncommon varieties of common fruit in California and overseas, reporting his findings to famous specialty stores (e.g., Dean and DeLuca in NYC) and writing columns for the LA Times and for Gourmet magazine.

2. You can do better than everyone else on the verbal section of the GRE:

On the website of the Educational Testing Service (and reproduced on the website for the department of Classics at the University of Puget Sound among other places) is a report (<http://ftp.ets.org/pub/gre/generaldistribution.pdf>) entitled the General Test Percentage Distribution of Scores Within Intended Broad Graduate Major Field, basically the mean GRE score for students in a given major field. The scores are based on the performance of seniors and college graduates who tested between July 1, 2000, and June 30, 2003. Of the 290 fields listed, “Classical Language” scored highest on the Verbal portion of the exam, with only one other field (History of Science) within even ten points of Classics. Note that all three majors contained in CPR are among the top scoring fields on the chart. Below are listed only

those fields that have a mean of at least 550 on the Verbal. (It might be noted that only 67 out of the 290 fields even manage to have a mean of 500!). These results are also strengthened by a similar study analyzing tests taken between 1996-1999. Classics once again had the highest mean verbal GRE score in all the fields covered. Classics also scores near the top in the Analytical section as well. Given that the GRE is a serious component in the admissions process for graduate school in a wide variety of fields, this data would suggest that Classics is indeed a practical major.

FIELDS WHOSE STUDENTS SCORED HIGHEST IN MEAN “VERBAL” GRE

Field	Verbal	Quantitative
Classics	613	600
Classical languages	610	621
History of Science	605	666
Philosophy	588	632
Semitic languages	585	616
Psycholinguistics	581	641
Comparative Literature	580	585
Russian	580	596
American literature	562	568
European History	561	566
English	561	550
Foreign Literature	554	582
Religion	553	581
Creative Writing	553	541

3. Pursue post-graduate education and employment in a variety of fields:

-- Graduate School in Classical Studies (e.g., Caroline Stark, SBC 2000, is in a PhD program for Classical and Renaissance Studies at Yale University; Becky Cefaratti, SBC 2002, is in a PhD program for Classical Studies at SUNY Buffalo; Jacquelyn Wilkins, SBC 2003, completed the Post-Baccalaureate Program in Classical Studies at the University of Pennsylvania in 2007).

-- Latin Teacher at the High School Level (e.g., Kathy Fowler, SBC 2002, teaches Latin at Fauquier High School in northern VA; Cole Shanholtz, SBC 2006, is teaching High School Latin in Georgia; Michelle Church, SBC 2003, taught High School Latin in Roanoke, VA; Jacquelyn Wilkins, SBC 2003, has taught Latin in Bedford and Amherst)

-- Law School (Sonya Truman, SBC 2002, 2005 J.D. from Loyola University in New Orleans; Howardene Garrett, Classics major and current Public Defender)

-- Graduate Degree in Historical Preservation: Sara Gredler, SBC 2004, received M.S. from University of Vermont in 2005 and is currently employed in Texas at an architecture and engineering firm in the historic preservation department)

-- Graduate Education in Psychology (Blathin MacMahon, SBC 2003, enrolled in a graduate Psychology program at Southeastern Louisiana University)

-- Graduation Education in Philosophy and Classics: why pick just one?! (Mindy Wolfrom, SBC 2005, earned a M.A. in philosophy at Boston College, and is now pursuing a M.A. in Classics also at Boston College and this summer will be participating in a competitive summer program

at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens)

-- Historical and Genealogical Research (Lisa Estes, SBC 2004)

-- Publishing and Editing: (Michelle Church, SBC 2003, now works at W.W. Norton Publishing)

4. Enjoy a wide variety of careers:

Classics majors the world over have successfully entered the worlds of academia, law, publishing and literary editing, computer programming and IT, library sciences, business, medicine (as much as 90% of medical terminology comes from Greek and Latin roots), journalism, public relations, civil service, Higher Education Administration, museum curating, historical preservation, political lobbying, archival work, interpreting and translating for the government, etc. As the list above indicates, you can even become a fruit detective!

Some Words Both Present and Past (Mostly) in Favor of a Classics Education:

“The person who is ignorant of the past remains forever a child” (Cicero).

“To read the Latin and Greek authors in their original is a sublime luxury...I thank on my knees him who directed my early education for having in my possession this rich source of delight” (Thomas Jefferson to Dr. Joseph Priestly, January 27, 1800).

“I did indeed – and unfortunately – forget a lot of the Latin and Greek that I learned as a high school student. But I never lost the esthetic and moral impulses which these studies gave me, the idealistic values, which they helped me form, the intellectual horizons which they opened up. ... If I could choose again between classical studies and the so-called “useful” disciplines, I would, without a doubt, choose for myself more or less the same kind of curriculum that I went through.”(Carl Schurz, Revolutionary hero, journalist, first German-American US senator, Secretary of the Interior under Rutherford B. Hayes, memorized all of Book 6 of Homer’s Iliad for his university entrance exams in 1847, quotation from *Lebenserinnerungen I*, Berlin 1906).

“It took Latin to thrust me into bona fide alliance with words in their true meaning. Learning Latin...fed my love for words upon words, words in continuation and modification, and the beautiful accretion of a sentence....” (Eudora Welty, *One Writer’s Beginnings*, p. 31).

“As far as my passion for writing, I have had the benefit of a classics education. What was called a liberal arts education which allowed me to have a sense of history and to study the classics, so that I might gain as much wisdom from studying the past that I might be a better person to deal with the future. That is what I have tried to do. To use words to help persuade one in an argument or on an issue is not inconsistent with being Secretary of Defense. It is a great asset to have” (William Cohen, From a press conference in Marrakech, Morocco, February 11, 2000).

“What employers appreciate is that Classics provides mental training in a whole range of different disciplines, and produces graduates of exceptional intellectual flexibility. In our world of rapid social and technological change, it is the capacity to react to new and unforeseen developments with flexibility which employers value most, and it is widely recognized that Classics and related subjects produce just the kind of graduate they are looking for, with an unparalleled capacity to adapt to new circumstances and learn new skills” (the Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford).

“Law schools report that by yardsticks of law review and grades, their top students come from math, the Classics, and literature - with political science, economics, “pre-law,” and “legal studies” ranking lower” (Harvard Magazine, May-June, 1998, p. 50).