

Dear Friends of Saint Olaf Classics,

Greetings from all of us in the Saint Olaf Classics Department! This past Sunday we witnessed the graduation of thirteen Classics, Ancient Studies, and Medieval Studies majors with beautiful weather and a commencement speech by the President of Estonia. We are now in the midst of Reunion Weekend and are enjoying reconnecting with some of you on campus. Here we all are with graduating Ancient Studies major Opal Bussart.



The leitmotif in the Classics Department this year has been “Cake.” Anne Groton celebrated her 60th birthday in the Tomson Hall foyer to the good wishes of many students, colleagues, and friends, and with a delicious chocolate cake from Bon Appétit.



Jim May celebrated his appointment as the Kenneth O. Bjork Distinguished Professor at our annual Bacchanalia with a delicious ice-cream cake from Dairy Queen.



Interest in the ancient world remains strong among Oles: more students than usual began study of Latin (57) and Greek (34) this year, and we currently have 44 declared majors in Classics, Ancient Studies, and Medieval Studies. Our focus in the Classics Department continues to be on language instruction and philological training, and our Classics graduates are finding their way into top-notch Masters and Ph.D. programs in Classics. But our students seem very fond of material culture too, and several of our recent graduates have gone into library studies, museum studies, and archaeology. This summer our ancient historian, Tim Howe, will again conduct an excavation in Turkey with a number of Oles. Here are three of them – Morgan Wychor, Claire Yancey, and Lizzy Bews – working to uncover a large Roman mosaic.



We took students to several lectures in the Twin Cities this year, often with a meal together afterward at Christos Greek restaurant. The most engaging – perhaps because it happened right in the middle of a Minnesota winter – was Annette Giesecke’s “Roman Green: Ancient Roman Gardens and the Green Ideal.” We also hosted several visiting lecturers on campus: particularly memorable were Christine Thomas’ two lectures – one on illness and healing in the Roman empire, and the other on epigraphic evidence for shepherds and farmers in the Roman empire.

The social calendar for our Classics students was as busy as usual: Greek vs. Latin softball game, Classics vs. Ancient History Olympic games, National Archaeology Day, Latin and Greek Christmas caroling, Classics and Ancient History lamb roast, Bacchanalia, Eta Sigma Phi Latin and Greek translation exams, Groomis Latin and Greek translation exams, and Eta Sigma Phi initiation and events. Also, a group of Classics students shared dinner together almost every Monday and invited many fellow students, alumni, faculty, and staff to give talks during the meal. For the twentieth time Anne Groton directed a student production of an ancient comedy – this time Plautus’ *Miles Gloriosus*. The play was performed twice at St. Olaf and taken on tour to eight other schools.

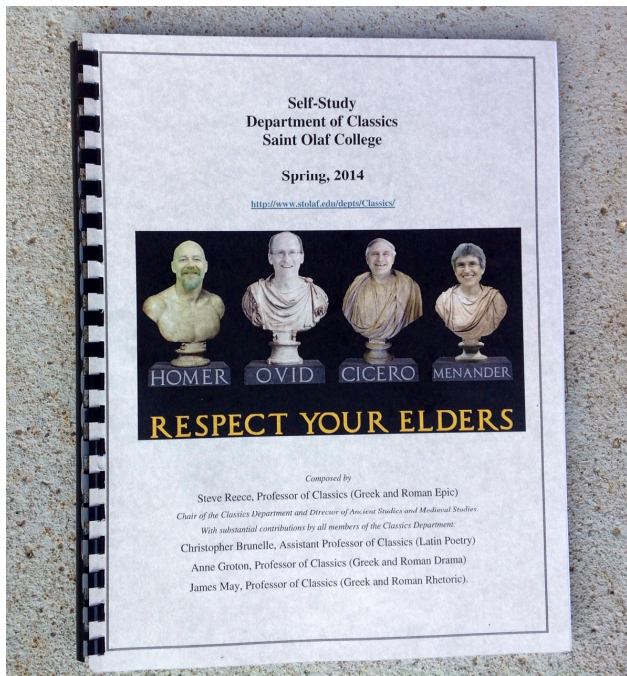


For the second time, Chris Brunelle and the students from his Interim course “The Neverending Myth” joined forces with others from around campus to read all fifteen books of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* aloud. The event began at 9 a.m. in Buntrock Crossroads and ended shortly before midnight in the East Lantern of Tomson Hall. Here are the giddy survivors: Jacob Smith, Leif McLellan, and Nick Gantt.



Two Classics students won honors in the national Maurine Dallas Watkins Translation Contests: Clemens Bart, an international student from Dresden, Germany, received second prize in Advanced Latin and second prize in Latin Prose Composition; Grace Koch, a junior Classics and Ancient Studies major from Cheyenne, Wyoming, received honorable mention in Advanced Greek. In other national honors, Grace Koch and Chance Bonar, a junior Classics and Religion major from Farmington, Minnesota both won \$1000 Manson A. Stewart Scholarships from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, and Rebecca Frank, senior Classics and Ancient Studies major, was awarded a prestigious fellowship worth \$250,000 from the Jefferson Scholars Foundation to pursue a Ph.D. in Classics at the University of Virginia. Rebecca also successfully defended her Distinction Project in Classics -- “The Hero vs. the Tyrant: Legitimate and Illegitimate Rule in Plutarch’s *Alexander-Caesar* Pairing” – the first student to graduate with distinction in our department since 2010.

The Classics Department conducted its 10-year Self-Study this year, culminating in the visit of two external reviewers in April. The process was tiresome, but we passed with flying colors!



Colleagues from other institutions seem to think that we are one of the best undergraduate Classics programs in the country, and we don't try too hard to disabuse them of that notion.

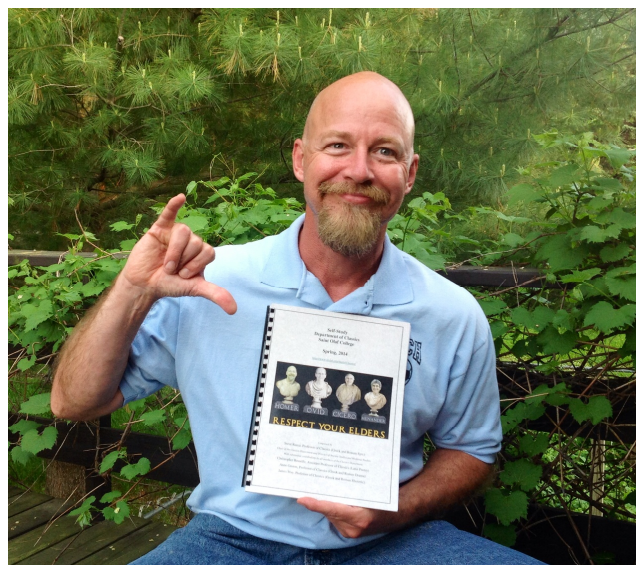
Several alumni/ae and parents of former students gave generous gifts to the Classics Department this year. These gifts have enabled us to give two need-based scholarships (\$4500), six translation awards (\$1200), two stipends for Classics-related summer projects (\$1000), and a full scholarship for one student to participate in the Interim in Greece (\$5000). Other donations funded transportation and meals for our Monday-evening Classics Conversation Table visitors and fieldtrips up to the Twin Cities to attend lectures and events.

If you would like to make a contribution to the Classics Department, here are some easy ways. You can be assured that your gift will go entirely and directly to enhancing the educational experience of our students. By credit card via phone at 800-733-6523. By credit card online at: <http://my.stolaf.edu/giving/online-giving-options> By check via mail: Donna Moen, Gift Coordinator, The St. Olaf Fund, St. Olaf College, 1520 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield MN 55057.

For more news and many more great photos please visit our Classics Department website at: <http://wp.stolaf.edu/classics/> You can catch up on news from other alumni/ae and even contribute an update of your own. Do keep in touch!

I will be taking a Sabbatical this coming year to work on a monograph on the letters of the apostle Paul. The discovery and increased accessibility of many hundreds of personal letters among the Egyptian papyri from the 1st and 2nd centuries give us an insider's view into the letter-writing techniques that were also probably shared by Paul.

I will hand the rudder of our ship over to the capable and experienced hands of Anne Groton for the 2014-2015 academic year and will look forward to touching base with you again soon.



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