

Classical Studies Newsletter

Fall 2024



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Letter From the Chair

Dear Colleagues, Graduate Students, Majors, Minors,
Alumnae, Alumni, and Friends of Classics,

This has certainly been a challenging semester to come on as Chair. We are facing two monumental departures of esteemed faculty: Carl Ruck, after being a steadfast member of our department, for 59 years(!), will retire in June, primed with his new-found "freedom" to work on numerous projects, and James Uden, our beloved colleague, will set off to Yale University in the Fall. We have been home for Carl and James for many years and shall miss both tremendously, even as we wish each of them joy and great success on their new paths. Avete atque valete. Even as we say goodbye, we warmly welcome Steven Smith, a renowned scholar of the Second Sophist and Late Antiquity, who will be joining our department as the new William Goodwin Aurelio Professor of Greek Language and Literature in July.



The graduate student strike has been big, too. We embrace the much-needed new benefits. Hallelujah! They are long overdue. But the sudden news of a pause in graduate admissions for '25 has come as a shock. I have been in continuous conversation with the powers that be and am confident that we shall come through this pause in solid shape, poised to welcome a new and spirited cohort of graduate students in 2026.

On a personal note, it has been a joy this semester, while Professor Kronenberg has been on sabbatical, that I have been able to sneak in a course on Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*. Without doubt, this has been the highlight of every week. There is so much to love in Lucretius' vibrant Latin as he unfolds before our eyes *Naturae species ratioque*, which I would gloss to mean "the outer appearance and hidden reality of the universe."

And alums – we would love to hear from each of you, how you are, what you are doing, and reminiscences of times here.

Best wishes to you all,
Steve

Stephen Scully
Professor and Chair
Department of Classical Studies



Departmental Updates

Professor James Uden

This semester was my return to full-time teaching after my term as department chair. Most exciting was our new undergraduate Roman Warfare course. Structured around Caesar's two accounts of his campaigns, the Gallic War and the Civil War, the course also attempted to reconstruct the everyday experience of Roman soldiers. It culminated in a diary exercise, in which students imagined themselves as soldiers, military wives, veterans, Gallic chiefs, and in one case, even an assassin of Caesar. (In an experiment in alternate history, the assassin was successful!). On the research front, I gave two papers (at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), one on Lucan and immunity, and the other on Lucan and mechanics. I look forward to combining all these interests in a graduate seminar on Caesar and Lucan in the Spring! Sending best wishes for the holidays to all of our department's friends, supporters, and alums.

Professor Stephen Esposito

I had another wonderful Fall semester as Coordinator for CC 101, with 17 faculty and 250 first year Core Curriculum students. And I also had a very fun reading seminar (CL 391/691) on Sophocles' Oedipus the King in which we read the entire play in Greek. And on YouTube my first Ted-Ed animated film entitled "What Really Happened to Oedipus" has had 750,000 hits in its first six months. And my next Ted-Ed Ed on "Antigone" has just gone into production and will be put on the Web in six months or so. And during my sabbatical in the Spring of 2025 I hope to finish my Oxford commentaries on Sophocles' Oedipus and Thucydides.

Professor Stephanie Nelson

A lovely semester back teaching Beginning Greek and also finally back in Core, teaching in the Social Science sequence. And I'm looking forward also to next semester and beyond, when I am going into a deep dive with Greek Drama, teaching a course on Aristophanes' Clouds and Frogs this spring, Greek Drama next fall, and in the Spring a brand new course with Becky Martin from History of Art and Architecture on Greek Drama in Text and Art. I plan to be spending a lot of time at the MFA, and finally learning what all those pots are really about!



Departmental Updates

Professor Loren J. Samons

Professor Samons taught Greek history and Greek civilization this fall with 160 students total. Asked how he differentiated between the two courses, he quipped that “The civilization course has more philosophy and fewer assassinations. I try to compensate for that by including as much about Alkibiades as possible. Students seem to love that guy. What a creep.” He is working on a book on Sparta and Athens (“A Love Story”) and continues to co-host a weekly radio program on WNTN 1550 AM with his long-time friend and fellow historian, Brendan McConville. The program features extensive discussions of the historical aspects of contemporary news and frequently features updates on breakfast foods, salmon fishing, and gardening. Samons has claimed that working with his old friend presents some challenges: “The man has never eaten an egg. Can you believe that?!” Samons’ other current projects include attempting to provide a coherent account of Periclean financial and foreign policy: “Pericles apparently really understood the Overton Window. I just wish that I did.”

Professor Tori Lee

I have had an exciting and busy fall semester! My article “The Haunting of Classics in the Dark Academia Aesthetic” was published in the October 2024 issue of Classical Reception Journal, and I’ve now turned back to working on the second chapter of my book project on ecofeminism and ancient pastoral literature. I ran a reading group for AAACC featuring a conversation with Kristina Chew, and guest-edited an issue of Res Difficiles, the Journal, “Re(Orient): Reception, Power, and Asian Experience” with the AAACC co-chairs. In recognition of my outreach work, I was honored to be chosen for the WCC Leadership Award; I’ll receive the award at the upcoming AIA/SCS Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, where I’ll be presenting new research on paratext and indirection translation as part of a roundtable on actor-network theory. I’m looking forward to returning to the classroom in the spring to teach Women in Antiquity and Intermediate Latin!



Departmental Updates

Professor Carl Ruck

This past Fall Semester will be my last actively teaching semester at Boston University after half a century. I want to express my thanks for all the wonderful students and colleagues who have made that stint a fulfilling experience of a lifetime. I will now devote my efforts to completing numerous ongoing projects involving the role of entheogens in the evolution of human consciousness and culture. One is a sound play (Psychoanalytic Session, being the consultation of Alcibiades with Sigmund Freud concerning his episode of alcoholism at the Symposium, as dramatized in Plato's account of the event), which I have written with Dorothy Abram, a former student of our Department, who just recently retired from Johnson and Wales, where she taught psychology and Classics. We may return in the Spring to present the premier performance for the Department, otherwise scheduled for later this Summer for the Freud Museum in London

Professor Leah Kronenberg

I have had a productive sabbatical year working on a book manuscript (topic: sexual personification and the erotics of poetry in Catullus), as well as some articles on pseudo-Tibullus and the very obscene Greek epigrammatist Marcus Argentarius. I also enjoyed attending some conferences in Italy this summer where I presented papers on pseudo-Virgil (the Ciris and Moretum). I am really looking forward to returning to department life in January and teaching intermediate Latin poetry and the Age of Augustus.

Professor Laurie Hutcheson

I had a busy semester of teaching this fall. I enjoyed teaching Latin Prose Composition for the first time. The course got me reading some authors I hadn't read in a while, such as Cato and Sallust, and the graduate students produced some great compositions (highlights included original letters in the style of Seneca and translations of texts by Abraham Lincoln, Edward Gibbon, Marilynne Robinson, and Ursula Le Guin). I also taught Greek Prose (Lysias, Xenophon, and Plato) and Beginning Latin.

Our conversation group in Latin and Greek continues (thanks to PhD candidate Joe Watkins for creating "Go Fish" in Greek), and our semester ended with some Greek and Latin skits (with pizza of course).

Fall 2024 Lectures

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

New Approaches to Classics Series



**PROF. LAUREN DONOVAN
GINSBERG**

Duke University

Lament for Oechalia: Pastoral's
Imperialist Complicity in The
Hercules Oetaeus



PROF. MARK THATCHER

Boston College

When the Athenians Came:
Rethinking the Sicilian
Expedition



PROF. VICTORIA WOHL

University of Toronto

Of Pigs and The Proper:
Philosophy and The Other in
Plutarch's Gryllus

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

BOSTON UNIVERSITY Arts & Sciences
African American & Black Diaspora Studies
Classical Studies
Core Curriculum

ARTSx Sciences
The Intersection of the Humanities and the Sciences

Black Classicism—Moving Forward Lecture Series

Monday
November
18
2024
5 pm

Virtual Zoom Lecture

Register to receive Zoom link and
reminder using the code below.



Kimathi Donkor
University of the Arts, London

Andromeda Africana Revisited

The Black Classicism—Moving Forward lecture series, focused this year on "Art and Institutions," is designed to engage with and critique the ancient world from the perspective of Black authors, artists, and thinkers. Join us in welcoming Dr. Kimathi Donkor whose "art re-imagines mythic, historical and everyday encounters across Africa and its global Diasporas, principally in painting and drawing."

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

Fall 2024 Events

GOREFEST 2024

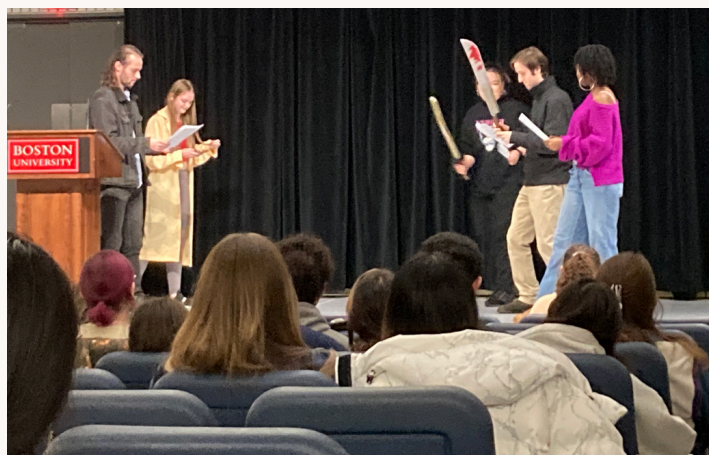
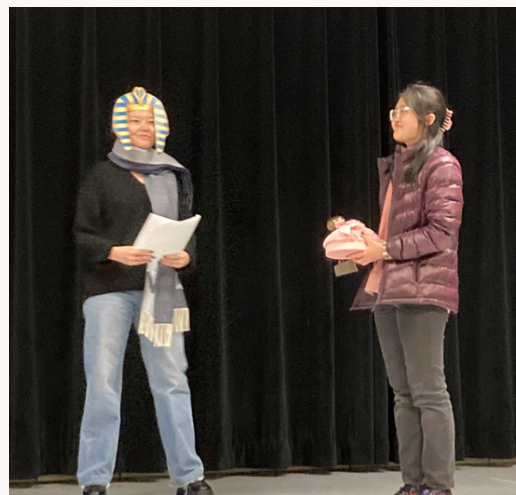


Fall Events

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 Fall!

Fall 2024 Performance

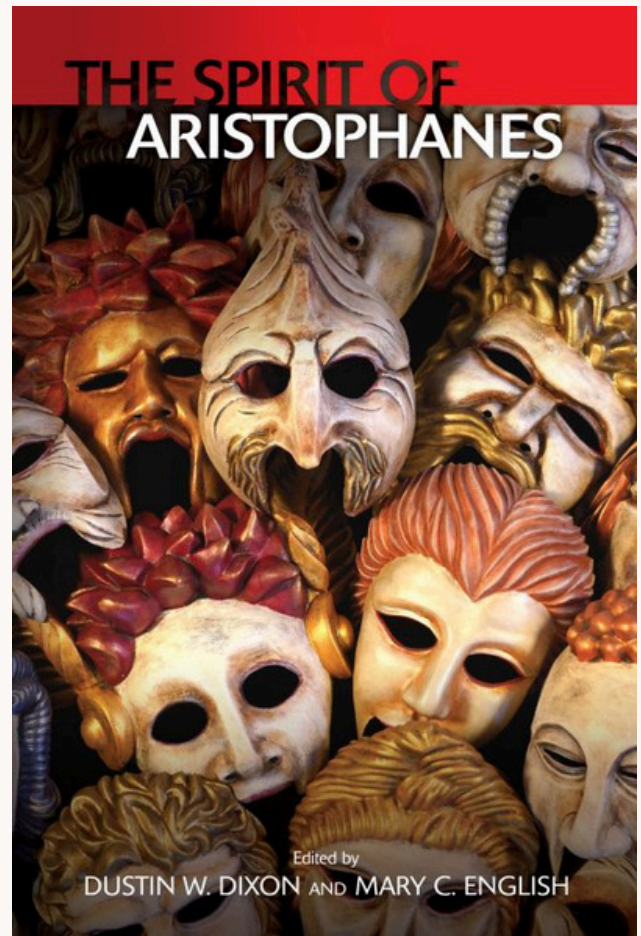


Publications



Issue 32.2 Fall 2024 of Arion is now available!

The BU contingent was especially active in Arion's fall issue, which includes a retrospective on Marcel Detienne with an essay by Professor Herbert Golder and translations from French by graduate student Philip Levine and managing editor Brandon Jones, as well as a translation of George Seferis' *Mythistorema* by alumnus Avi Sharon (PhD '93). Go to: www.bu.edu/arion/ to subscribe!



Published this past June, this volume of *The Spirit of Aristophanes* was edited by alumni Dustin W. Dixon & Mary C. English. This volume is also dedicated to Professor Emeritus Jeffery Henderson. Go to: www.edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-the-spirit-of-aristophanes to have a look!



Calendar of Upcoming Events

February

Tuesday, February 4th: Annual Greece vs. Rome Debate

Friday, February 21st: Lecture with Professor Grace Funster

March

Friday, March 21st: Boston Area Roman Studies Conference

Monday, March 24th: New Approaches to Classics Lecture #4

Monday, March 29th: Annual Graduate Studies Conference

April

Monday, April 7th: Black Classicism Lecture #2

Wednesday, April 9th: Giving Day 2025

Friday, April 11th: Spring Ancient Comedy Performance

Summer Study in Greece

Applications Now Open for The Summer Study in Greece Program 2025

Applications for the Summer Study in Greece program are now open for Summer 2025! This program is sponsored by The BU Philhellenes and has three primary goals:

1. To promote the appreciation of Greek culture and its continuous history from antiquity to the present day through cultural events at Boston University. Such events will encourage links between Boston University students and faculty, the Greek community of Boston, and the Boston community at large.
2. To promote Summer Study in Greece that will permit students to learn the Greek language and experience Greek culture.
3. To promote scholarships for the study of Modern Greek at Boston University.

If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to support our Summer Study in Greece Program for our students, please make your check payable to "Trustees of Boston University" and write "BUPh, #9300010861" in the memo line. Please send the check to:

Department of Classical Studies, c/o Nancy Geourntas, Department Administrator
Boston University, 745 Commonwealth Ave., Room 412, Boston, MA, 02215 .

All donations will be gratefully acknowledged.

