Panel title: Beyond Studying and Teaching—Becoming a Professional Classicist

       For several years the Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC) has organized a professional interest panel for the annual CAMWS meeting and this year's proposed panel includes five papers which address important aspects of being a "professional classicist " by going beyond the typical graduate student skills gained from classroom experience.

       The first paper focuses on what it means to become a "citizen" within a Classics department, going over professional behavior and duties outside research and teaching, essentially defining what it means to be a good colleague. As important as knowing how to be a good colleague, is knowing how to deal with students. The second paper aims to help us better advise and assist our students by reminding us that they come to Classics from a variety of avenues with a variety of goals which may differ greatly from our own. This paper will show us ways to encourage our students to become or remain Classics majors even if they do not wish to follow our own chosen path. The third paper focuses on a possible path of research which most classics graduate students may not have ever considered—second language acquisition. An increasingly popular topic in the modern languages, SLA research affects how Greek and Latin textbooks are written and how the classes are expected by administrators to be taught, but Classics has none of its own research to support the value of learning Greek and Latin. This paper hopes to persuade graduate students that SLA offers a significant and valuable opportunity for research that can help Classics survive. An important part of research, of course, is funding, and the fourth paper talks about how one goes about finding, applying for, and getting grants. The author speaks from personal experience both in making applications and advising applicants. Grant writing is not the only writing a professional classicist undertakes, however. The fifth paper, written by someone on the publishing side of academia, offers advice about a variety of writing including both research works like books and articles and also service-oriented items like referee's reports for journals.

       Each paper offers insight to ways in which one can become a "professional" classicist which are not usually taught in our graduate seminars and which will prove very valuable to graduate students.

Panel: Beyond Studying and Teaching—Becoming a Professional Classicist, Paper 1

Departmental Citizenship

What are the rights and responsibilities of citizenship for faculty members in a typical Classics department? This talk reflects upon the question with particular focus on the beginning phase of one's career.

Classicists are members of several, overlapping communities, starting with one's home department. All other things being equal, search committees tend to prefer a good citizen, someone who shows signs of pulling her or his own weight in the running of the department, someone committed to making the place better. The hiring unit is, in fact, extending an invitation to share in the project of building and maintaining a strong department. A new member is usually given some say in collective programmatic decisions and perhaps a vote on future hiring. Responsibilities outside of classes and research, on the other hand, may range from serving on committees to working with student groups like a Classics Club. The first task is to learn the culture of the department you are joining, and to respect it, even if trying to change outmoded ways and launch initiatives.

The exercise of departmental citizenship in the form of service is important but a beginning faculty member should not obsess about departmental service at the expense of scholarship and teaching.

Observe boundaries in dealing with colleagues. Many enjoy gossip, but this is best avoided when the subject is a colleague, no matter the philosophical or personal differences. In this and other respects, we are ambassadors for our departments and institutions, albeit unconsciously so.

Many traits of a good departmental citizen can be honed as a graduate student, as a member of the local community to which you belong in graduate school.

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Marketing Your Degree in Classics: Expanding Your Students' Horizons

The goal of this presentation, directed towards graduate students, is to consider ways to use a degree in Classics besides the obvious careers in teaching somewhere in the K-G (Kindergarten to Graduate School) continuum.
Some of the topics to be discussed include:
A.) a description of "typical" undergraduate classics majors: The main point to be made here is that there is no such "typical" animal. Classics undergraduates come into the field from a variety of directions and motivations. Most only discover the field in college and choose the major because they value what they are learning. Few are thinking about life beyond their degree.
B.) "thinking outside the classics box": Most Classics majors will not make connections between the field and career opportunities outside the Classics classroom without help and assistance from their teachers and mentors. For this reason, it is important for faculty to talk about "thinking outside the classics box" frequently both inside and outside the classroom. It is also important for the curriculum itself to make such connections, not subtly but obviously.
C.) what can you do with a Classics major: This section will include a survey of statements made by college professors and other resources available to increase student awareness of career choices.
D.) Some specific famous and not so famous examples of Classics majors outside the box: Ted Turner is the obvious example here but there are many less famous but exemplary models to follow.
D.) the importance of professional organizations: Classical organizations like CAMWS, APA, Eta Sigma Phi, etc. are becoming more and more important contexts for students to reflect on their career choices.

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Second Language Acquisition and Classical Languages

Over the last two decades a relatively new discipline, that of Second Language Acquisition, has grown astonishingly in prominence, size and influence. Few Classicists know about it, though those who now write textbooks depend profoundly on the research from this discipline. Thus, SLA has shaped our textbooks (with their increased emphasis on learning by reading and speaking, and the decreased emphasis on paradigms, grammar and syntax analysis, and straight written translation) and is already determining the quality, nature and focus of all language teaching in this country. My presentation will not be to invite a debate on the merits of this. It is too late for that.

The texts that arise from SLA research create constant friction between classical traditionalists and modernists. Yet few of us understand the research well enough to use it to argue for the value of Classics to their colleagues, students, and administrators. Do the new methods actually work better for Latin and Greek? Who knows? SLA is not currently in the least interested in languages that are primarily learned, discussed, and studied in writing and reading. Does their research apply to our languages? If so, how? Could their research illuminate the advantages of our languages better? We do not know, because Classicists do not do SLA.

We *know* that Latin students in high school consistently score higher on the SAT test than students in any other language – but no one has done any research on *why*. The assumption that administrators make is that Latin is the choice of good students – so (if necessary) Latin can be dropped because this same group will still be good students even if they study Spanish. They do not conclude that Latin makes good students. That Latin actually contributes to a more prepared student is regarded as cultural elitism. Though we have schools that teach underprivileged children Latin if not Greek, there has been no research at all as to the value it has for these children.

Research in SLA is the underpinning of educational policy. When principals, school boards, deans and presidents make decisions on which languages to preserve and support, and which to drop in bad economic times, proponents of the modern languages can bring to the discussion research that demonstrates the value of a second language.

We have excluded ourselves from a discipline that is critical to our survival. We have questions that require serious research to answer. My presentation will endeavor to persuade graduate students that SLA offers intellectually challenging research methodology which deserves to be explored by those who wish to make their mark in Classics.

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GRANT PROTOCOLS:

My own experience both in making grant applications and in advising others yields a schedule of considerations that my talk will amplify with examples:

1. The first point of advice I want to offer potential applicants is don't be discouraged. If your first campaign is unsuccessful, revise and resubmit. Grants are few and seekers are many but someone has to get them, so give yourselves a chance.

2. Why might you want a grant? For prestige and dossier enhancement of course, but practically speaking because research can take longer than anticipated and deadlines creep up sooner.

3. Begin early. As graduate students visit your university's grant office and scan websites for offerings both internal and external. Don't look only for the big grants that support a year of dissertation work, but also for smaller grants-in-aid that might offer that significant museum or library trip that will put your project on track. Practically speaking grants seem to breed grants; the small can lead to the large.

4. Choose appropriate competitions. Do background research and read the fine print carefully. Apply only for what suits your topic and time frame, note age requirements, time since degree, etc. but also the program parameters. For instance the Charlotte Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship offered by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation mandates a ethical dimension; you are unlikely to be short-listed for an American Academy Rome prize if you can't show the need to conduct your research in Rome.

5. Xairos: When is the right moment to apply? Some competitions are oriented towards incipient research, but for a full scale proposal you should be able to talk authoritatively and confidently about the content of your project, its goals and the progress you have made.

6. Recommendation guidelines:
a. It goes without saying that your recommenders should know you and your work, but preferably this project also. You might want to offer an advance copy of the proposal for comments and suggestions.
b. Know and observe all the courtesies: make your requests well in advance of the application deadline; supply all proper documents with sufficient lead time for writing; if you are making multiple applications supply a list of addresses and deadlines; Unless the letters will be submitted on-line, an addressed envelope is a good old-fashioned courtesy. Don't forget to let your recommenders know the outcome of your application, even if you didn't get the grant.

7. Writing the proposal:
a. Consider the audience and likely referees. Will they be classicists, as with the AAR or

the ASCSA, or scholars at large as with ACLS? You must decide what needs explanation.

B. Structure. Put right up front what you intend to produce. Book? Revised dissertation? A good opening paragraph needs only a thumbnail definition of the topic but it must be clear and compelling. For subsequent paragraphs use descending order: scholarly justification of the project and original contribution; previous scholarship; work plan and chapter divisions when possible; audience for the finished project including potential readership and book contract if you have one. These are always a good thing.

8. Make a clear and feasible budget, adequate but not sybaritic. Notice the limits of award $$$ if stated. Explain supplementary income sources if you have any. Think of everything. Do include estimated travel expenses; living expenses; materials.

9. Again, be optimistic but not easily discouraged. A revised application may give you a better defined, more mature project.

The Scholarly Writer

A position as instructor or professor requires considerable time and effort devoted to writing. This presentation looks at some of the common kinds of writing tasks required in academia; it offers suggestions how better to carry out those tasks, including finding time to write, recognizing the purpose of the task at hand, and avoiding common mistakes.

The kinds of writing required of teachers in classical studies commonly include those that are related to professional activity and those that are involved with service to the discipline, among others.

Service-oriented tasks typically include tenure evaluations, letters of recommendation, and referee's reports for journal and book publishers. In most of these cases, those requesting your help will have specific deadlines and forms they want you to complete - lists of questions, topics to touch on - as a way of ensuring that the final document can be compared to other similar files. Presses choose referees for specific reasons: being approached by one should be seen as an indication that you're perceived as a subject matter expert, and that the press is seeking your guidance on behalf of a waiting author who has already passed several hurdles.

Classicists are known in the publishing industry as writers of reports that by comparison are amazingly long and detailed. It can be challenging to find time for this aspect of community service, but one way to think about the task is that the author in question, who presumably is working in an area allied to your own, is a colleague you haven't yet met.

Professional writing tasks like articles and notes, or books and book chapters, are of course a more personal expression of your scholarly imagination since you're writing to your own requirements rather than those of an institution. At the same time, your unique work needs to fit into a framework manageable by your target publisher. Even at the start of a project it's worth familiarizing yourself with the submissions requirements of several possible publishers. This is particularly true if you anticipate your work will be atypical in length, illustrations, or other expensive element. Often there are possible solutions if you talk with a press or presses at an earlier stage: you may find you have two normal-length projects rather than one big one, for example.

When building a "publishing portfolio" younger scholars often want to publish their dissertation as a series of articles, and then want to publish the whole dissertation as a book too. Librarians are increasingly resistant to purchasing books that originated in dissertations, so authors already need to be careful when revising a dissertation into a book. If a project also has had important pieces previously published as articles, it is likely to be very difficult to find a publisher willing to consider the work.

Finding time to write longer pieces can be a challenge, especially for women, according to a recent MLA study called "Standing Still."(1) One source of time-management

techniques is websites and blogs devoted to creative writers, who tend to focus on efficient output. A common suggestion is always carrying a method of noting sudden article ideas to pursue later. Another common suggestion is to set aside time every day, although this can be hard to do if your home or work location involves frequent interruptions. Some find writing very early or late works; some aim for only 20 minutes a day, knowing that 20 will tend to turn into more. Some, at the end of each writing day, leave a sentence or paragraph incomplete, or leave themselves a couple short notes about where to pick up the next day. Some aim for a certain quantity per day, in pages or kilobytes. I've seen several groups of bloggers and net-friends set up month-long or summer-long challenges, some with little charts or icons to indicate progress.

A further component of a writing life is being able to keep track of what you've written. Especially at the start of a career, it's hard to imagine how much stuff you're likely to accumulate, and how long some of your documents may be useful (especially for teaching materials). Developing a sensible system of organization and especially file backup will save you time and effort later, and save you a few more minutes of writing time.

Life in the humanities means a pretty constant production of the written word, in many ways. Some thought and organization, and awareness of the big picture, will enable you to generate documents faster and more easily, and in a more professional way.

(1) "Standing Still: The Associate Professor Survey." New York: Modern Language Association, 2009. http://www.mla.org/pdf/cswp_final042909.pdf, p. 11