

Going beyond the Text: Incorporating Experiential Learning in Classics Courses

In this panel, presiders will discuss their planning and activities they have designed to promote inclusive and experiential education, with the goals of increasing student engagement as well as presenting the Greco-Roman world to a broader audience. Presiders will discuss course design and specific activities that move well beyond traditional approaches but use contact time in innovative ways.

Several presentations address teaching through interaction with artifacts as well as incorporating experimental archaeology. One will describe experiences in teaching students to spin and dye wool – both everyday activities for people in the Greco-Roman period as well as subjects for extended analogies in Greco-Roman literature. Another encourages students to consider divisions of time and labor in the creation as well as use of objects in order to understand social context more completely. A third engages students to reconstruct context through careful examination of artifacts. Finally, a very successful activity that has Latin students examine medieval manuscripts and then reflect on the experience is described.

Other presentations will address pedagogy more generally – moving beyond instructor-presented words and texts to online platforms incorporating multiple means of engagement as well as flipped classrooms. A primary means of engaging students for these presentations has involved applying technological developments, in particular online environments as well as TILE classrooms. Face-to-face interactions remain valuable in bringing students to engage in ways that go well beyond the text. Flipped classrooms for language instruction in an online environment provide opportunities for independent student learning facilitated through instructor-driven video tutorials.

Overall, the goal of this panel is to provide a means to discuss pedagogy designed to extend beyond traditional methods and audiences, especially to engage students with whose interests and backgrounds have not historically aligned with traditional Classics pedagogy.