

Some Comments on the Value of Studying STEM and Classics
by applicants for the CAMWS Fauci Award in STEM and Classics

Whether it be the loving eulogy chiseled into a wife's tomb by her husband or the game board buried with care in the grave of a child pharaoh, I am constantly reminded of the millions of ways humanity—despite its glaring track record of ills—will turn to sympathy and love. And through the lens of ancient history, I find the answer I'm looking for. I want to be a doctor to continue to curate care in the world. My classics studies remind me daily that people have always been people: choosing to move through history with kindness. Becoming a classics student has armed me with compassion, and I will be a better physician because of it.

Melanie Atkinson, pre-med and history
University at Albany '22

I am incredibly grateful that I have spent my time in college learning from two very different academic perspectives. STEM has given me a strong foundation in understanding human processes and diseases. Classics have given me the ability to understand and seek out information on why culture does what it does. As the world goes on and more Public Health issues come to light I am appreciative of the tools my academic career has given me to solve them.

Kira A. Banks, biology and public health and classics
Augustana College '23

Th[e] intersection of a Classical and STEM education allows me to focus on issues that have impacted both ancient civilizations as well as contemporary society. Dating to ancient times, health has always been an important aspect of human existence, and learning how ancient societies approached health and disease may offer revelations into issues affecting contemporary well-being. I have developed a particular interest in the philosophies of Greek physicians like Hippocrates who radically proposed that disease resulted from biological processes rather than punishments from deities

Alexander P. Cabulong, biology, chemistry and classical
languages
Case Western Reserve University '22

Latin is crucial to my foundation as a scientist because it grounds me with the stories and virtues that make humans exceptional.

Claire Calhoun, biochemistry and Latin
Loyola University Chicago '23

Classics has taught me that sometimes fragments are all we have, while Statistics has acquainted me well with uncertainty and possibility. I know that many people would be inclined to associate Classics with antiquity and Statistics (and STEM at large) with modernity. However, my experience in both fields reveals a liminality between past and present that speaks to a longer history of human innovation.

Suh Young Choi, statistics and classics
University of Washington '23

Classics helps me see patterns, and physics helps me understand the world around me. The way I approach problem solving is dependent on the two working together. I have the ability to communicate complex technical concepts in layman's terms. I thrive in the formulaic procedure to decline nouns. Both Latin and physics have stitched the two parts of my soul together. Although the two fields are vastly different, the effect of studying STEM and Classics together is synergistic. This pairing is the core of who I am and the foundation of my future contributions to arts and science.

Caitlin Dolt, physics, classics, math
William & Mary '22

I have found biology and Classics to be interlocked through a rich, shared history, similar communities of scholarship, and complementary skill sets. One of the best benefits of receiving a liberal arts education is the breadth of academic areas to which you are exposed. To drive positive, scientific change in the present, understanding the past is a great place to start.

Henry Elsenpeter. Biology, chemistry, classics
Macalester College '22

My dual major studies have taught me to combine belief with science, accepting that some things may always be unknown. My job as a scientist is not to have all the answers, but instead to ask the right questions that will solve the puzzle.

Alicia Bea Feichtenbiner, neuroscience and
classical studies
University of Washington '23

The Classics have given me a way to start considering the question of what it takes to be a good human being and a good physician, and for that, I will always be grateful.

Isaac Hoskins, medical microbiology,
immunology and medical humanities
University of the Sciences '22

Studying classics has been helpful in STEM by making new situations easier to adapt to. It has also shown me that it is essential to continuously analyze the way we think and the parameter in which we constrain our scientific research to ensure that the science being done is accurate. Finally, classics demonstrated the importance of accepting other cultures even if you don't understand them. These qualities have been advantageous in my education, but more importantly, they will aid me far beyond my college days.

Bradley Johnson, biology and classics
Wabash College '23

Latin has. . . challenged me to think critically and creatively. . . . Many of my STEM assignments consist of applying or even regurgitating information with little room for personal expression whereas Latin assignments allow my voice to shine through. Pushing myself to think outside of the box and to break from a black-and-white thought process has been especially helpful in quantum mechanics because so many of the concepts are incredibly abstract.

Mac Johnson, biochemistry and Latin
University of Virginia '23

Studying Classics has enhanced my experience in biology. . . by granting me a larger and more inclusive worldview. By interacting with materials that differ spatially and temporally from us today.

Thomas Kay, global health, biology, classics
Wabash College '23

Classics has trained me to be a better thinker and a better scientist. It has transformed my thinking into more story-like structures rather than discrete trains of thought, and I find that appealing because not only can I relate the information better, but also I've become better at recognizing patterns at large. Many fields, including scientific research and medical diagnostics, rely on both expertise and pattern recognition. With all the unique ways people learn to think, Classics has been one of my most influential teachers.

Jiayu Ma (Renate Ma), classical studies and
chemistry
Wake Forest University '22

I want a college education that prepares my mind to tackle challenges in the frontiers of scientific discovery and equips me to live fruitfully in society. My scientific attention to detail has enhanced my experience in classics and—even more—my classical education has sharpened my mind and made me a highly effective scientist.

Brison A. Shira, biochemistry and classics
College of Charleston '23

Classicists' ability to interpret ancient texts and relay past stories of humans seamlessly translates to STEM and medicine. The most successful and engaged medical professionals, such as Dr. Anthony Fauci, are scientist communicators because their foundation in Classics fosters their ability to understand, extract and translate. Their expertise in science is balanced with the keen aptitude of communicating scientific information effectively whilst understanding people and their unique narratives.

Maria Theodore, classics pre-med
Harvard University '23

Classics has . . . benefited me by teaching me to think in a unique manner to extrapolate information visually from archaeological evidence. Regarding the academic side of medicine, this skill in critical thinking has helped me achieve great success in all of my premedical courses. . . . [I]t has also helped me succeed in the research I conduct in virology at the University of Tennessee, where I have become adept at figuring out what could have [gone] wrong when results were abnormal.

Cyrus Yoshimoto, classics pre-med
University of Tennessee Knoxville '22

[M]y education has shown me that the barrier between me and knowledge is like the membrane around a cell, fluid and dynamic. Science is not Sisyphus pushing a stone up and down a hill but rather like Lucian traveling to the end of Hercules' Journey and then going to the moon.

Roz Zucker, chemistry, classics and ancient
Mediterranean studies
Knox College '22