

The Politics of Greek Online Courses

There is no parallel to the opportunities that online courses offer for increasing enrollments in Greek language instruction. The Internet and LMS's (Learning Management Systems) eclipse other tools classicists have used for years in their efforts to reach that mystical 6, 10 or 12-student minimum for a course to run.

The online course format, with its enormous challenges in preparing and delivering curriculum, represents one component for increasing enrollment. Making students aware of the courses, linked to attractive reasons for students to enroll, represents another major challenge. This paper focuses on how to position Greek courses effectively within school curricula and how to attract students in schools and colleges outside the humanities and sciences. The paper begins by advancing two positions. First, faculty need to repurpose the value of learning Greek to make it marketable to the professionally oriented programs, business school programs, in particular. "Knowledge is to be sought for its own sake, irrespective of immediate and material gain," (Simmons 2014) is what we as Classics faculty hope students will understand, but in the current academic environment, such sentiment is the endpoint and not the starting point.

This paper's second position concerns strategies for targeting students and scheduling courses. Faculty need to make the courses available to this new market through the online (and in-class) format during times when the business and professional student can avoid course conflicts. The days of finding the English or philosophy major with a relatively conflict free schedule have long passed. There are simply not enough English and philosophy students who can afford the time needed. According to the *Digest of Education Statistics*, the number of declared business majors dwarfs all other majors except professional studies, which was about half the number (Digest of Education Statistics 2014). This paper also suggests that turning our

attention to the STEM students is no longer an attractive alternative. The requirements for science, math and engineering allow for precious few electives, especially in the classroom during those traditional MWF and TTh times.

The task of identifying and attracting students in the business majors can be clearly articulated. This paper offers such a discrete list with explanation and examples. Classics faculty need to begin by identifying the required components of the various majors. Which of these components are required and which are electives needs also to be identified. Additionally, at what time the courses—especially the required courses—are offered is essential information. With this information, faculty can begin creating a case for Greek as a way to fulfill either required components or electives.

The next group of tasks involves communication and discussion with those faculty and administration involved in the curricular process of the business programs. Here, arguments for the value of the Classics need to take place with these administrators. This paper will explain how 15-20 accounting students enroll in Greek or Greek history courses annually at the presenter's institution.

Thirdly, once a foothold in the business or professional schools has been established, courses need to be offered in a format that makes enrollment simple and easily understood. That format is the online format, and the structure is one that mimics the structure which business and professional students understand. Examples of the similarities and differences are also provided. Finally, once these courses are established, and often while they are being established, the department can and should identify the adult population to supplement enrollments from their day student population. This paper suggests several groups where marketing has proven fruitful.

The need to show practical applicability of Classical languages stretches back to the early twentieth century. Apologies for the study of Greek began even earlier. The advantage these earlier authors had was the general assumption that Classical Studies were fundamental to a proper education. We no longer have that assumption to rely upon. We do, however, possess the scholarship that described their methodologies. This paper offers ways that have proven successful with a new generation of students.

Bibliography

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