

**The requirements laid out below will be valid for all Ph.D. students in Classics entering the program in Fall 2024 or later. All requirements not mentioned in this document remain the same. For any questions, please contact the Director of Graduate Studies.**

### M.Phil.

#### *General Course Requirements*

- Four 2-credit introductory courses taken P/F during the student's first year as follows:  
FALL: Latin Reading + Greek Reading + GRC  
SPRING: GRC

Another twelve courses taken for a letter grade. These must include

- Greek and Latin 4xxx (History of Greek/Latin Literature)
- Greek and Latin 5139 (Greek/Latin Prose Composition)
- four or more courses at 8000 level
- one or more courses at 6000 level

While students may be required, or choose, to take Greek or Latin Reading Courses beyond the first two (see above), these cannot be applied towards the overall course count for the M.Phil.

NB: The M.A. (30 credits needed) needs to be fulfilled by the end of the second year and needs to include: the four introductory courses, both Surveys and Prose Comps., five further courses, and one modern language exam.

#### *History Requirement*

Students are required to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of ancient history. This history requirement must be fulfilled in both Greek and Roman history.

To complete the requirement, students can opt to

- take a course in the field OR
- take an exam in the field OR
- (if this option is available) act as a TA for a history class in the field.

The History Examination Committee sets the exam or determines which classes taken or TA'd for fulfill the requirement.

Students must complete this requirement by the end of their sixth semester.

Should students come with demonstrable background in one or both of Greek and Roman history, substitutions may, at the discretion of the History Examination Committee, be allowed from related ancient cultures or periods.

#### *Modern Language Requirement*

A reading knowledge of German and either French or Italian, to be demonstrated by written tests as early as possible in the student's graduate career, and in no case later than the certification examination. This requirement includes competence in one language demonstrated as part of the work for the M.A. degree. It may be satisfied by the passing of an exam administered through the Classics Department, or by the relevant

language department. Students may also fulfill this requirement by getting a passing grade on an approved reading course in the relevant department.

Students who would like to take a modern language course in the summer to prepare for the fulfillment of the modern language requirement, may do so free of tuition by submitting the [Application for Summer Tuition Credit | Columbia GSAS](#).

### *Qualification Examination ("M.Phil. Exams" or "Reading List Exams")*

The qualification examination will be held three times a year: on the Friday of the first week of classes in the fall and spring semesters; and on the first Friday of the exam period in the spring semester. It consists of two three-hour examinations, usually taken in different semesters, in the translation of Greek and Latin texts chosen from the common reading list (<http://classics.columbia.edu/common-reading-list>). The examination in at least one language must be first attempted no later than the end of the student's second semester of residence, and at least one examination must be attempted at the beginning of every following semester. Students who fail a language exam at the summer or fall date are required to take the Reading Class in that language in the fall. Both exams must be passed by May of the third year. Students who do not pass both examinations by the required deadline will not be permitted to continue as candidates for the degree.

Each examination consists of six passages (three prose, three poetry) of about 100-150 words, of which the student must translate four (two prose, two poetry). The examination is designed less to test the student's ability to translate Greek and Latin (which is assumed) than his or her knowledge of the texts on the reading list. The passages on the examination are chosen so as to be representative both of the breadth of the list (expect passages from different genres and different periods) and of the works in question (expect passages that are typical for the content and style of a work and/or particularly significant for its interpretation). Students may use a dictionary but are advised to factor in the extra time it will take them to look up words.

Exams are graded anonymously. The identity of each candidate is known only to the Departmental administrator who administers the exam and is uncovered to the DGS and chair of the exam committee only once the result has been reported.

Each examination is administered by a three-person standing committee that is newly constituted each academic year; for the sake of continuity, chairs should ideally serve for two consecutive years. Each of those members will read the completed examination independently and assess each of the four completed passages on a percentage scale (see below). The total for each of the four passages will be calculated by each examiner, and then the scores of each examiner will be gathered by the committee chair and combined into a final score. A final score of 70 or above will constitute a Pass, of 59 or below a Fail. If the overall score falls in the 60-69 range, the committee will meet and discuss the result. A final decision will be taken by majority vote.

The committee chair will report the results to the DGS and DAAF. In the case of a fail, the committee chair will make themselves available to the student to offer feedback on the examination, drawing on the evaluations of all three examiners. Individual examiners' scores will be held in confidence by the examiners and committee chair.

### Percentage scale

90+: An impressive translation that very accurately conveys the meaning of every sentence, and is idiomatic and stylized in its wording.

80-89: A good translation that is generally very accurate, and shows a clear understanding of how complex syntactical structures fit together even if vocabulary is not completely known.

70-79: An acceptable translation showing a generally high degree of accuracy in translating a wide range of grammatical and syntactical structures, even if not all vocabulary is known and there are rare misunderstandings of major grammatical or syntactical phenomena.

60-69: A problematic translation that conveys the sense of the passage reasonably accurately but with several errors of grammatical and syntactical understanding, and also problems with vocabulary.

50-59: A mediocre translation that only partially captures the meaning of the passage and is inconsistent in its handling of complex linguistic combinations and vocabulary.

40-49: A poor rendering of the grammar and syntax of the original, with significant omissions, inaccuracies and misunderstandings that indicate that the student does not have a grasp of the passage in question.

### *Certification Examination ("M.Phil. Paper")*

Students are required to complete one written examination or extended research paper on a special author or field under the supervision of an adviser of their choice, who determines the appropriate format. The topic of the examination or paper may, but need not, be related to the proposed field of the student's dissertation. The student is expected to work closely with the adviser, having regular meetings on the model of a directed reading. The M.Phil. Paper will be double-marked by the adviser and another faculty member. The requirements of the Certification Examination **must** be completed by the end of the student's sixth semester.

### *Dissertation proposal defense*

Within one semester of the completion of all other requirements for the M.Phil. degree, and no later than the end of the fourth year of residence, a candidate for the Ph.D. must submit and successfully defend a proposal for the planned dissertation, to consist of a statement of the topic and a rough outline of the expected structure, of approximately 20 pages with a short bibliography (approximately 30 titles) of relevant scholarship.

Before working on the proposal, a candidate chooses as a dissertation sponsor a faculty member who is an approved Classics dissertation sponsor. The candidate works closely with the sponsor in preparing the proposal; since this process can take a considerable amount of time, students are advised to begin thinking about their dissertation topics no later than the beginning of their fourth year. Candidate and sponsor jointly choose two other faculty members to make up the committee. Ideally, these two additional committee members will remain the same throughout the candidate's work on the dissertation and will ultimately become members of the dissertation defense committee as well. However, this process is not fixed, and occasionally committees change over time as the dissertation develops and faculty become (or are no longer) available.

The proposal defense consists of an informal oral examination of the candidate by the three-person committee (typically 30-40 minutes). If successful, the committee certifies the candidate's passing of the proposal defense in writing.

The proposal must be defended no later than the September of the student's fourth year.

### Deadlines and Ideal Schedule

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Expected</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
M.A.	May Yr. 2	May Yr. 2
Exam 1	May Yr. 1	May Yr. 3
Exam 2	May Yr. 2	May Yr. 3
M.Phil. Paper	January Yr. 3	May Yr. 3
Proposal	May Yr. 3	September Yr. 4
Ph.D. defense	May Yr. 6	May Yr. 6 (can be extended beyond Yr. 6 only by exceptional petition)

#### **Year 1**

FALL: GRC, 2 reading classes, prose comp in one language, two other classes

SPRING: GRC, prose comp in the other language, Survey, two other classes, attempt first qualification exam

\*one modern language

#### **Year 2**

FALL: 3 more courses

SPRING: Survey on offer, 1 more course, attempt second qualification exam

\*second modern language, both history requirements; all M.A. requirements MUST be passed

#### **Year 3**

FALL: M.Phil. paper

SPRING: proposal

\*all M.Phil. requirements (incl. history, modern languages) except for proposal MUST be fulfilled.

#### **Years 4**

September: last date to defend dissertation proposal

#### **Years 4-6**

dissertation