

Yes, There Are Benefits to Studying Latin

Is the study of classic literature and languages like Latin and Greek dead?

Many would answer that question with a yes. After all, it's cooler to have a degree in woman's studies – or at least some type of diploma that can land a person a decent paying job.

But recent developments at the University of Montana suggest that instead of dying, the study of Latin, Greek, and their corresponding literature is actually experiencing a resurgence.

According to the [Missoulian](#), the University of Montana hosted its first “Classics Day” for high schoolers last week, generating much more interest than anticipated. That same enthusiasm is reflected in the fact that enrollment has doubled this year in the University's elementary Latin course.

What's driving this resurgence? According to University of Montana professors, the answer to that question is “relevance.” Professor Barbara Weinlich noted:

“What we need more than ever are the humanities and the classics.... It helps us understand why we are the way we are.”

Professor Matthew Semanoff added:

“We explore the ancient world and connect it with the modern world. Many of the same things we're on a quest today to do ... they're the same themes in the Odyssey.

These fears, dreams and aspirations that are so human to us today. Those have not changed since the development of western civilization.”

Indeed, these viewpoints are not simply those of a few professors alienated from life in the real world. Other sources recognize that knowledge of classical languages and literature gives students a better foundation for careers such as [law and medicine](#), while also [expanding knowledge](#) of the English language, literature, and Western Civilization in general. Furthermore, [studying the classics](#) “teaches [students] to think critically and formulate arguments,” a component [sorely lacking](#) in today’s education system.

We’ve pushed classical languages and literature aside in recent years on the grounds that they no longer equip our students with the tools they need to succeed in the modern world. But is it possible that in doing so, we have actually deprived them of one of the foremost tools with which they can understand history, culture, and themselves?

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