

Dr. Kennedy,

I have an appreciation of what the University does. I began teaching college composition to UMaine's incoming freshman six weeks ago, and it has been elucidating to say the least. I am on the front line, as it were, in the struggle to ensure that the people who come through our door become thoughtful, clear minded individuals with the passion and ability to function in society. We give students Agency, President Kennedy. We give them personhood. If you cannot write, cannot relate, cannot think, cannot analyze, then you cannot participate and you are not enfranchised in this society.

The classical education is not the only course by which a young person can become a well-rounded thinker, but it is one of the very best. The challenging language requirements produce problem solvers with a penchant for convoluted and difficult texts. The culture one learns is the culture of the western world.

There is a culture, a discourse, an ongoing discussion which is twenty five hundred years old and whose language is Greek and Latin. Why shouldn't University of Maine contribute to this discussion? Why is my Alma Mater having to suffer the embarrassment of choosing to abstain? Latin will never have as many majors as Biology, but it will always attract from among the best and brightest young scholars and thinkers.

I implore you to make a commitment to the Classics, to maintain even just one faculty member who can teach Latin and Ancient Greek in the future. The entire scholarly community of the University will benefit, particularly the young students who stumble across this discipline. All around the world are scholars, lawyers, doctors, and, evidently MI5 spies (as reported in the Telegraph just this week), who swear by the classical education they received through their undergraduate years.

The Latin Major, and Classics in general, is a powerful interdisciplinary field, exactly of the sort rapidly becoming the big thing in education circles. It ties together philosophy, philology, linguistics, history and literature in amazing and dynamic ways. It is a major which could be made very attractive to a certain not-so-very-rare type of undergrad, who would otherwise go to philosophy departments or history departments and never be quite satisfied. Perhaps it is our fault in the classics community for failing to market it properly--forgive us this mistake and give us the backing to improve the major. The Classics student becomes an expert of many things, most of all, the classics student becomes a thoughtful, clear-

minded individual with a passion and ability to function in society--exactly what we're here to produce.

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