



Above: Professor Pamela Klasova

Antiquity Now

MACALESTER COLLEGE
CLASSICAL MEDITERRANEAN AND MIDDLE EAST DEPARTMENT
NEWSLETTER

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Classics Welcomes Professor Pamela Klasova

The Classics Department completed a search for a new tenure-track Arabic professor during Fall 2019. We are pleased to have hired Pamela Klasova for the position. She comes to us from Bowdoin where she has been the Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Arabic.

Professor Klasova is an Arabist and scholar of early Islam. In her research she has explored the role of public speech in building the Arabo-Islamic empire in the 7th and 8th centuries. She has widened the comparative scope of that study placing Arabic oratory side-by-side with other late antique rhetorical traditions (for example Greek and Syriac) in order to ask: What role did speech and rhetoric play at this pivotal moment in world history? Her book project is part of her larger intellectual endeavor to understand early Islam as part of late antiquity and to underscore the contact and cross-pollination of cultures, exposing Islam as multicultural, cosmopolitan, and diverse. Her research and teaching interests also include classical and modern Arabic poetry, Islamic magic and divination, and myth in Arabic literature. When she teaches Arabic she hopes “to make students as enthusiastic about it as I have been over the past decade and more.”

When our classes begin, we’re eagerly anticipating Pamela building a dynamic and robust Arabic curriculum in the coming years. Arabic courses in 2020-2021 will be Elementary Arabic I and Intermediate Arabic I in the fall semester. The spring semester will feature a broader array of courses, including the second semesters of Elementary and Intermediate Arabic, Advanced Arabic, and an exciting course-in-translation from Professor Klasova entitled “Migrants, Exiles, and Travelers in the Medieval Middle East.”

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ANTIQUITY NOW is an update and review of activities and opportunities in the Macalester College Classical Mediterranean and Middle East Department. Each edition shares student and faculty news in respect to publications, internships, new classes, study away and research abroad, and highlights alumni who continue to do important and interesting things around the globe.

Classics Abroad

Omrit

January in Rome



The archaeological project at Omrit, Israel, led by Professors Andy Overman and Nanette Goldman has been ongoing for over twenty years now, with the work shifting from excavation to conservation. The project is featured in [this news article on the Macalester web site](#).

Lanae Caldwell is one of the students who participated in the summer of 2019. She has shared [this album of Omrit photos with us](#).

January in Rome is a class that takes place in Rome. It is offered every other January, and led by Professor Beth Severy-Hoven, with the assistance of Professors Nanette Goldman, Brian Lush, and Andy Overman.

Beth wrote about the class, "As usual, among our 19 student participants we had a few experienced world travelers, at least one who had never left the US before, and folks from majors across campus. Each student gave a report on a site or object in the city -- you can see some of them in action in the photographs here [and [view the "Rome 2020 Photo Album" to see several more](#)]. We had many guests this year as well, including a colleague from the University of Puget Sound designing a program based on ours and an alum who graduated in 1999. We had spectacularly good weather, particularly on our full day outings to Pompeii and Ostia. The group left Italy on January 21; the Coronavirus was also traveling in Italy at the time, but as far as we know none in the program were affected. I am particularly pleased we were able to conclude this iteration of the course successfully, since it may be the only study away opportunity for the foreseeable future."



UPDATES AND EVENTS

Homer Students Talk SMAC

We are delighted to announce the publication of the latest issue of *Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity and Classics*, featuring articles by Charlotte Houghton and Ethan Levin. Students from the fall 2019 Homer class served as the Editorial Board, reviewing and commenting on submitted papers. Beth notes “Everyone should be proud of the superb work in the final issue, which you can now find online at <https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/classicsjournal/vol5/iss1/>.”



In February, Professor **Andy Overman visited Israel and Palestine** and got the chance to greet a newly admitted student, Malek Kaloti, and a group of junior students at the Ramallah Friends School.

Arabic House

Our department offers our students who study Arabic an opportunity to have an immersive language living experience at our Arabic House. Four students live in Arabic House, one of them a native speaker. Arabic House is on Vernon Street, in the neighborhood near Macalester’s academic buildings. Students who live in Arabic House have completed at least Elementary Arabic, and make a conscientious effort to speak Arabic at all times while in house.



Events

On February 13 the History and Classics departments hosted an “Open Doors Lunch” on the 3rd floor of Old Main, not realizing it would be our last in-person social event of the year. Here are a few pictures of us taking our proximity for granted at our “fun open house with hot soup on a (definitely!) cold day.”



Classics Responds to COVID-19

Bringing Our World to Students' Homes

In March, when our campus pivoted to on-line instruction, plans of all kinds were upended and revised. This unwanted and unprecedented turn of events has been an opportunity for new learning, sometimes about ways of learning. Our students, professors and staff scrambled to continue to work together in ways that had meaning. Some of the stories in this issue bear the imprint of this particular moment, as does this newsletter itself, largely being created out of the office, using moments made possible by technological tools that did not exist a few decades ago, and with reports collected from our scattered constituents, who have all needed to adapt multiple plans, and bear worries and disappointments. Here we share just a few of the adaptations Classics made to COVID-19 2020.

Staying in Touch/UPDATES

excerpted from a March 20 email written to our current students by **Andy Overman**

As Majors and Minors in Classical Mediterranean and Middle East we value you very, very much. I and my fantastic colleagues think the world of each and everyone of you. You mean so much to us, to our department, and to our college community. I am so sorry this strange episode has come upon us and you especially in the midst of your college career.

But we will all make it through this and we will be a stronger community as a result. Our department wants you to know we are here for you. Anything you might need, any questions you have, rumors you may have heard, and any other concerns you have, please reach out to any one of us. We are here and want to try to stand together and support one another in every way possible.

Let's stay in touch with one another and remain strong as a community.

We are here for you and we are all here for one another.

You all are amazing!

With a Big Hug and Elbow Bump!



Above: Professors Beth Severy-Hoven and Andy Overman, photo from our January in Rome class.

Where to Find our News

We've resurrected an old department news web page to be a place to post updates to our department community during the pandemic. [Find it here.](#)

We're posting somewhat more often on [the Friends of Macalester Classics Facebook page here.](#)



At left: Just before stay at home orders began, Beth Severy-Hoven, Andy Overman, Nanette Goldman, and Brian Lush gathered to record a video for admitted students, about the department.

Classics Videos

The admissions department asked our faculty to make department introduction videos.

Professor **Beth Severy-Hoven** created this ["Meet Your Professor" video focusing on the value of a humanities education.](#) **Nanette Goldman, Brian Lush, Andy Overman, and Beth Severy-Hoven** created [this video about the whole department](#) to share with admitted students

Taking our **Spring Sampler visits online**, Professors Brian Lush and Beth Severy-Hoven provided [this video introduction to the department for admitted students.](#)

SENIORS

In this [article about "Why Polio Still Exists,"](#) Classics major **Ikran Sheikh-Mursal** is interviewed about the research she did in the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) Program .

Nahla Almbaid and **Ikran Sheikh-Mursal** are both former Arabic House residents, and they both were named 2020 Macalester Global Citizenship Student Award recipients.

In January **Sophia Jones** presented at the Undergraduate Judaic Studies Conference at Barnard College. She presented a paper she wrote for advanced Hebrew entitled "Rediscovering the Qēdēšā: Beyond the Cult Prostitute Model." [This schedule for the conference](#) includes information on her presentation.



Sophia Jones Presenting at the conference



Honors Projects

Congratulations to our seniors who completed honors projects.

Franki Gillis and Charlotte Houghton completed their honors projects with Zoom defenses. Their uncommonly good events are captured in these now-all-too-common screenshots.



Above left: Screenshot from Franki Gillis' honors presentation on *Ancient Foodies: Modern Misconceptions, Alternative Uses, and Recipes for Food in Ancient Rome*. Above right: Screenshot from Charlotte Houghton's defense for her honors project, *Opinionated Poets, Opinionated Lovers: Callimachus and Martial on Social and Sexual Behavior*.

Seniors Prizes Please join us in congratulating our senior prize winners.

Charlotte Houghton	Virginia McKnight Binger Prize
Noah Wilkerson	Virginia McKnight Binger Prize
Ikran Sheikh-Mursal	Jeremiah Reedy Prize in Classics

ALUMNI REPORTS

Greg Suber '18 wrote, "Having graduated from the Classics Department in 2018, I was both prepared to enter the non-profit world, and driven to attain an even greater understanding of the people and cultures that make up the various parts of the globe. Focusing in on the Middle East primarily, the Classics Department helped hone my understanding and cultural awareness of this ancient land, propelling me towards studying abroad in Amman, Jordan in 2016. During my time there, I started cultivating my desire to work with and aid refugee populations. Upon returning to Macalester, I was fortunate enough to be able to intern with the International Institute of Minnesota, assisting refugees and asylum seekers with immigration and legal assistance. After my time at Mac, I still felt the need to do more, and help more people. This led to me joining AmeriCorps for a service year, where I was stationed in Columbus, Ohio, working with Columbus City School students on finding pathways to college, as well as opportunities that would be available to them post-graduation. After my service year was up, I enrolled in the University of Kentucky's Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce, where I will be getting my masters in Diplomacy and International Development. During my time at UK, I was able to secure an internship with The Borgen Project, which is a non-profit group based out of Seattle that prioritizes directing US foreign policy and aid to fighting global poverty. Once I graduate from UK, I hope to get a job with USAID or other organizations, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation or the UN, in order to be an advocate for those whose voices are not heard or, at times, actively suppressed. My time at Mac and in the Classics Department was the catalyst for all of this, and I am eternally grateful not only to Macalester, but to the hardworking and amazing faculty members that make up the Classics Department. I wouldn't be where I am today without all of you!"

Ella Heaton '16 has graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Masters of Heritage Studies and Public History.

At Macalester, **Jack Reece '16** researched the influence of Roman temple architecture on the development of Jewish and Christian religious structures in the Upper and Lower Galilee. He also worked for two field seasons as a conservator at Horvat Omrit, a Roman Imperial cult temple complex in the Golan region. In 2018, Jack joined the Anthropology department at the University of California San Diego

(UCSD) to begin working on his PhD. Jack's research has since transitioned to include Roman coastal activity in the eastern Mediterranean, especially the southern Levant, during the early Imperial Period (27 BCE – ca. 300 CE). Jack's MA thesis focuses on identifying one of the first documented examples of a Roman fish-processing facility in Israel, located on the Mediterranean coast at Tel Dor. His research methods include using geographic information systems (GIS), structure-from-motion (SfM) photogrammetry, and virtual reality (VR) 3-dimensional modeling for collecting, analyzing, and displaying archaeological data. Jack works with his advisor, Dr. Thomas Levy, as a researcher for the Scripps Center for Marine Archaeology (SCMA) and in UCSD's Levantine and Cyber-Archaeology Laboratory. Jack also works part-time as a teaching assistant in the college-writing program.

Duncan Griffin '16 has been accepted to the UMass Amherst Labor Studies MS program, and has been offered a TAship with tuition remission and stipend. He'll be starting in the fall.

Hannah Trostle '15 has completed their masters degree in urban planning at Arizona State University. A [story about their plans for what they will be doing next is available here.](#)



Greg, Suber,
while in Jordan

MORE ALUMNI REPORTS

Rebecca Moorman '14 tells us "I finished my PhD in Classics this spring at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In the fall, I start a three year appointment as an assistant professor of Classics at the University of Toronto Mississauga. If there are any Mac Classics alumni in the Toronto area, I'd love to hear from them!"

Grace Erny '12 is a PhD candidate at Stanford University. She has just published an article in *Field Archaeology* on her largely survey work in Greece, and she was awarded Stanford's Ann C. and Oliver C. Colburn Fellowship which will support Grace's research for her dissertation, entitled *Landscapes of Inequality: Social Differentiation in Geometric through Classical Crete*, at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens. Grace helps coordinate the Public Archaeology program in the department taking archaeology into the schools. Grace is also serving as the Senior Digital Humanities Graduate Fellow at CESTA, Stanford's Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis. An [article about the award can be found here](#).

Rick Lechowick '04 is a graduate student at the University of Exeter's Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, teaching courses on 'Peacemaking and Conflict in Israel/Palestine' and on 'Contemporary Politics and Economics of the Middle East', and would have taught one more called 'War, Violence and Revolution in the Middle East, 1800-2013' but tells us his visa would not allow him to work for more than 20 hours a week.

Madeline Bray '03 is Senior Archaeologist and a Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Specialist for The 106 Group, one of the oldest CRM firms in the country. The 106 Group is headquartered in St. Paul.

Rev. Anne Haselhurst '73 responded to our last newsletter, "I am very jealous! There seem to be so many more opportunities now than there were back when I was studying Classics (1969-'73). Archaeology!! In those days I was longing to be an archaeologist. Never happened. What I did become, eventually, was an Episcopalian priest, so the New Testament Greek was useful. Best wishes to all today's students."

Fall Class Schedule

At the moment, our Fall schedule plans are in flux. Classes are currently planned to begin on September 2nd. Our offerings will be adjusted to fit the newly devised structure.

Since 1886, Classics at Macalester

A classical education has been offered to Macalester students since Macalester College was founded. The Prospectus of Macalester College 1885-1886 provides a look at the courses of study available at that time. [Find that prospectus here](#).

The prospectus is the first item in the list of early college catalogs that can be found on [our archive's webpage here](#).

Opportunities in Classics

Our department is often asked to share information from other organizations. We consolidate that information on our ["Opportunity Updates" section of our website](#). The Opportunity Updates listings are the place to find calls for papers (C), internships (I), job opportunities (J), grad programs (G), volunteering opportunities (V), fellowships (F), research/project opportunities (R), scholarships (S), learning opportunities (L), networking opportunities (N), workshops (W), events (E), study away notices (A), and more. [Find opportunities by visiting Classics Opportunity Updates here](#).

Classics Senior Week Events

We had to adjust our senior week celebrations to comply with COVID -19 stay-at-home orders. We were physically distant, but socially together for two Classics celebrations. To honor our graduates during senior week, we hosted two video events: the Classics Senior Happy Hour and the Classics Senior Department Reception.

Senior majors and department members met on May 11 for **Classics Senior Happy Hour**, in place of the traditional dinner hosted by Herta Pitman. Because we weren't able to have dinner together, we sent little gift cards to the seniors and asked them to bring, but not buy their own B (berries, beverage, babka, borscht, bologna, brownies..., or even things that do not begin with B) to the party.



At left: Herta and Young Me (bust of Herta from the 70s) host the Classics Senior Happy hour.

At right: Classics graduates and department members, participate in the Scarving Ceremony, while the graduates guests look on.



The **Classics Senior Reception** on May 15 was for seniors and their guests. Before the event, Brian Lush delivered department scarves to each senior at their homes in advance of the first ever "Scarving Ceremony" which took place at the reception. Our seniors, their guests, and our department members all attended the reception via Zoom. Department chair **Brian Lush** donned regalia, emceed the event, and conceived of, created, and presided over the new ritual to mark the occasion, The Scarving Ceremony.

Brian extended the department's sincere gratitude to the family, friends and support-networks of our amazing graduates. He asked our graduates to "know that we believe in you. Even in these challenging and uncertain times, we know that you have wonderful things ahead of you, and we're confident in you. We believe in you even when you might not believe in yourself, and we're always here for you." Carrying on a tradition begun by Andy Overman, he reminded our graduates to "come back, but don't look back." Giving the message his own spin, he provided "an injunction against the nostalgia – the aching for home suggested by the Greek root – that can prevent us from moving forward at challenging moments in our lives. We want you to keep moving ahead, with the understanding that we're always here for you, we want to hear from you, and we'll be thinking about you even after you've left Macalester. You'll always have a home here, but there are other, as-yet-unimagined homes that await you too." He advised our graduates to draw upon the resilience, patience, strength resourcefulness, and even good cheer they demonstrated while at Macalester, and particularly this last year for self-confidence and encouragement in times ahead.

For the Scarving Ceremony, Brian explained, "the members of the department are very partial to the wearing of scarves, and this is a shared custom that reminds of our friendship, shared experience, travel together, and a bright future enjoyed in common. When we wear scarves, we think fondly and warmly of each other. We now wish to bring you into this special custom by giving you a scarf too, and inviting you to put on this scarf with us and to wear it as a continuing part of our departmental family." Each department member and graduate donned identical scarves with a label attached that reads "Magnificent Six." The scarves are a lasting memento to wear and cherish as a sign of our friendship, our collegiality, and our shared status as scholars, adventurers and intrepid travelers of the world.

Herta at the Heart, the First Twenty Years

I'm reflecting on the twenty years that I have worked in the same office. My rear-view mirror says "Objects In The Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear," but Meatloaf says "Objects in the Rear View Mirror May Appear Closer Than They Are." I say that both these things are true. In January, just as a new virus was starting to make news, I had a big anniversary. On a January day, 20 years ago, I interviewed with the acting chair of history, and the then-chair of Classics, Andy Overman, for a temporary job to serve as department coordinator for the rest of the semester. I got the job. And I've worked in the same room for 20 years, except for right now I'm working at home.

I remember telling my interviewers that my prior work experiences would combine to make me a good fit for this job. I was right. I didn't tell them that I couldn't type. I still can't. I remember telling another staff person early on, that I didn't take the job to make friends. I made many friends. My job has been everything I expected, and so much that I did not expect.

Even here in my lovely little nest-away workplace, I'm alternatingly: surprised, delighted, inspired, infuriated, distracted, amused, informed, proud; by/with/of my work, my co-workers, my co-students, and the world my work has opened to me.

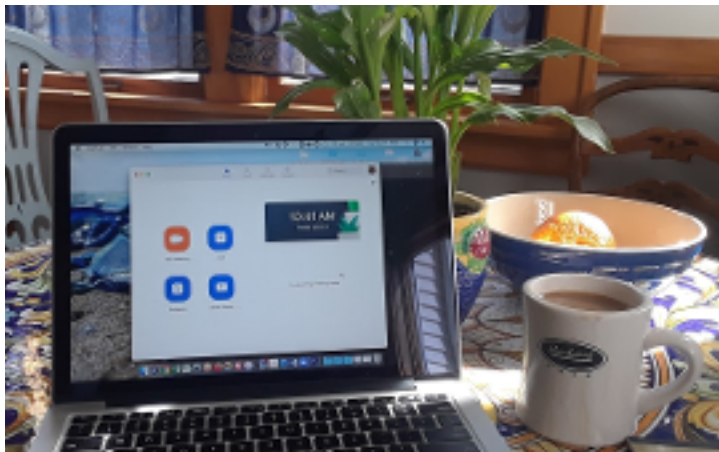
The pandemic has made me even-more-than-usually willing to flaunt professional convention, and say feelings; to offer and reach for comfort from one another; to be tender with you, and appreciate my own good fortune. I point to the past, and to our past, to see our way through this moment, and I try not to sound like an old windbag doing it, but sometimes I say things that I think are worth repeating. So I will tell you this again. Maybe you didn't hear it the first time.

Staying upbeat's hard to do, but it's easier when I think of those words to the tune of "Breaking Up is Hard to Do."

In case that's not enough wisdom for you, I provide a more thorough look at my historical insight with my [PeepsShow SlideShow](#).

This little history isn't an ending. I'm looking back, AND ahead. To the things we are hoping to do together again and soon. I've loved the first twenty years. I am not saying goodbye. I'm looking forward.

Auf wiedersehen,
Heart, Herta



At left:
One of the places I
work now.

At right:
Me, not at work, in
my natural habitat.

