Curriculum in Classics
In addition to completing the general requirements of the University, Classical Languages majors complete at least 36 s.h. of coursework, including either (1) three years of Latin and two of Greek (or vice versa) and a composition course in one language or (2) four years of one of the languages, a composition course, and 2-3 other relevant courses. Ancient Civilization majors complete 30 s.h. of coursework, including courses in ancient art, archaeology, history, philosophy, religion, and ancient languages or literature.

Socrates
Consider it in this way. If, as I was on the point of running away (or whatever it should be called), the laws and the commonwealth should come to me and ask, “Tell me, Socrates, what have you in mind to do? Are you not intending by this thing you are trying to do, to destroy us, the laws, and the entire state, so far as in you lies? Or do you think that state can exist and not be overturned, in which the decisions reached by the courts have no force but are made invalid and annulled by private persons?” What shall we say, Crito, in reply to this question and others of the same kind?

Plato Crito 50a-b

Is it true a Classics degree can help you get into Law School?
“Yes, it is true...it is one of certain majors that is a better preparation for law school.”

Collins Byrd, Assistant Dean of Admissions, UI College of Law

Although the American Bar Association does not endorse any one major as the best preparation for law school, the Pre-Law Committee of the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar notes that the traditional preparatory curriculum lies in history, literature, and philosophy. These are the central topics of all Latin and Greek texts, and of Classics courses in English.

Success in Critical Thinking

Courses in Latin and Greek are particularly successful at training students in analysis, problem-solving, critical thinking and the close reading and critical analysis of complex textual material. After even a year of Latin or Greek, students regularly report a significantly greater understanding of the use of English.

Language of the Law

Students who choose Latin will also reap the rewards of a deep knowledge of legal terms.

- *stare decisis*
- *habeas corpus*
- *prima facie*
- *res ipsa loquitur*
- *sub poena*
- *defenderemus*
- *judicis officium*
- *jure representationis*, etcetera

For two thousand years, the study of Classics was the preparation for law in the western world. Studies in language, history, philosophy, religion and art allow us to confront all aspects of the human condition. Those who have gone before have left us a legacy of their struggles with the very question of what it means to be human.

In the twenty-first century, Classics remains the core discipline of the humanities. It is the ideal major for developing the skills legal professionals will need: problem solving, critical reading, persuasive writing and speaking, listening, general research and task organization and management.

If you are interested in Classics for pre-law students, please contact our undergraduate advisor for more information:
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