

Department of Classical Studies
University of Michigan
Bridge MA
Student Handbook
(updated July 2026)

Admissions

The Bridge MA is designed as a bridge to the University of Michigan Classical Studies PhD programs: Classical Languages and Literatures; the Interdepartmental Program in Mediterranean Art and Archaeology (IPAMAA); the Interdepartmental Program in Ancient History (IPAH). It is a twelve-month fully funded program whose overall purpose is to help students prepare to enter the PhD program in the Fall of the following academic year. As such, students will primarily work on their ancient languages, while they will also begin to develop their academic interests, work on their research skills, and enter the teaching profession through a GSI appointment in the Winter term.

Admission Requirements are a minimum of one year in one of the ancient languages; two years in another; outstanding academic record; and recommendations from three previous instructors. Bridge MA students must meet the [RMF requirements as outlined by the Rackham Graduate School](#). Students do not have to submit GRE scores.

Admission is by committee; the Bridge MA Committee serves as a nominating committee, which then forwards names to the admissions committees of the respective PhD programs. The PhD programs have a final say in who is admitted to the Bridge MA. No more than two students can be admitted per academic year.

Funding

Students admitted to the Bridge MA program receive funding support for twelve months. The funding will consist of a fellowship in the Fall semester, a teaching appointment in the Winter semester, and a Rackham stipend for the Spring and Summer half semesters. Students also receive health and dental insurance for the full year. The amount of this funding package is outlined in the student's offer letter.

Orientation and Fall Enrollment

Students are required to attend the Department orientation for all incoming graduate students and the GSI orientation for Classical Studies teaching before classes begin. These orientations take place the week before classes begin; the Graduate Coordinator alerts students to the exact day of these orientations well in advance. Prior to the start of the semester, students will take two diagnostic exams in Greek and Latin. In consultation with the Director of the Bridge MA (who is their advisor), these exams will help determine correct language placement. Students will meet with the Director to discuss language placement and enroll in courses for the Fall semester.

Advising and Coursework

Students will meet at least twice each semester with the Bridge MA Director, who also serves as their advisor. In the Fall semester, they will plan their coursework for the Winter semester. (Students are also encouraged to discuss their coursework and career planning with their mentor, see below). Students will select their courses in consultation with the Director following these meetings, with an emphasis on strengthening their overall language preparation in Greek and Latin for a PhD program. The Director will submit a report of the meeting to the student, copying the Graduate Coordinator. The Director will consult the student's instructors throughout the semester to monitor student progress.

During their Bridge MA year, students are required to take a total of 24 credits, distributed as follows:

Fall:

- 4 courses (3 language classes; 1 elective) = 12 credits
- Proseminar for respective PhD program (GREEK/LATIN 600 or ARCHAM 600) = 1 credit

Winter

- 3 courses (2 language classes; 1 elective) = 9 credit
- GREEK/LATIN 993 (GSI Training in Classical Studies) = 1 credit

In Fall or Winter: 1 credit independent study (to be arranged in consultation with the Director)

The Spring half semester is intended to be a study period to finish preparing for the translation language exam. In rare circumstances where there has been no other way for a student to complete the 24 credit requirement by the end of the Winter semester, the student may enroll in an independent study in the Spring half semester to complete the requisite credits. This option, however, is strongly discouraged and should not be used unless absolutely necessary. The Summer half semester is open-ended: students may wish to travel, study a modern language, continue to work on their ancient languages, or work on an archaeological excavation. The student will meet with the Director during the Winter semester to develop an appropriate summer plan tailored to their goals and interests.

Model curriculum based on typical offerings in Classical Studies:

IPAH:

Fall

GREEK 401 Greek Prose: Lucian

GREEK 470 Topics in Greek Literature: Plutarch's Lives

History 615 Intro. to Comparative Study of History

Latin 574 Later Latin Literature

Latin 600 Methods of Classical Scholarship (An introduction to bibliography, research, tools, and methods).

Winter

GREEK 402 Greek Drama

GREEK 462: Plato: Republic

GREEK 599: Independent Study (Supervised Reading in Greek)

Latin 506 Advanced Latin Composition

Latin 993 Seminar for Instructors (Graduate Student Instructor Training Program)

Lang & Lit:

Fall

GREEK 507 Second Year Greek I

GREEK 600 (An introduction to bibliography, research, tools, and methods). Latin 409 Augustan Poetry

Latin 505 Intermediate Latin

WGS 454 What is Marriage?

Winter

GREEK 402 Greek Drama

Latin 402 Imperial Prose

MIDEAST 438 Exhibiting Ancient Egypt

Latin 993 Seminar for Instructors (Graduate Student Instructor Training Program)

IPAMAA:

Fall

ARCHAM 420 Greece 3500 to 700 BCE

ARCHAM 600 Proseminar in Archaeology of the Ancient

Mediterranean GREEK 401 Greek Prose: Readings in Classical Greek Prose

GREEK 470 Topics in Greek Literature

Latin 574 Later Latin Literature

Winter

ARCHAM 440 Cities and Sanctuaries of Classical Greece

GREEK 462 Plato: Republic

GREEK 599 Independent Study (Supervised Reading in Greek)

Latin 402 Imperial Prose

Latin 993 Seminar for Instructors (Graduate Student Instructor Training Program)

Mentoring

After their arrival in the Department, students will choose a mentor in consultation with the Director. Typically this happens in early October, after students have had an opportunity to become familiar with faculty. It is arranged by the Graduate Coordinator. The mentor can be a faculty member whose research interests overlap with the student's, a faculty member a student has gotten to know in one of their courses, or the Director/DGS of the PhD program the student will move into the following year. Students who are already familiar with some of the faculty may request a specific mentor assignment.

It is important to acknowledge that the role of the mentor, like that of the Director, may go beyond academic advice and include assessment of resources for concerns in any area of student life, including finances, housing, transportation, mental health, community issues, and career advice in general. The Graduate Coordinator is also a great resource for non-academic queries and concerns.

Student Progress

Adequate progress is defined as maintaining an overall 3.3 (B + GPA) in classes; no incomplete grades except under the circumstances outlined in Rackham guidelines; participation in classes; progress in the languages; completion of all assignments in classes. Methods of evaluation in addition to the GPA: the Director will solicit feedback from the instructors in all courses twice each semester, specifically after midterms and after the final exam/assignment. The feedback report will describe language skills, written work, and oral presentations. The Director will share the reports with the student and Graduate Coordinator. The Director will review this feedback with the student and in deliberation with the Bridge MA Committee as a whole as needed. It is in the student's best interest for the Committee to be involved whenever academic or instructional concerns arise.

Streamlined Admission to the PhD

A student will be recommended for admission to a UM Classical Studies PhD program (i.e., Classical Languages and Literature; IPAH; or IPAMAA) who states their interest in the program, is assessed as having made adequate progress (as outlined above in the section "Student Progress") in the Fall semester, and has shown that there is a good academic fit for the PhD program. A student must confirm their interest in a particular PhD program (i.e., Classical Languages and Literature; IPAH; or IPAMAA) no later than the end of the Fall semester.

A recommendation for admission in a PhD program is to be expected no later than the second week of classes in the Winter semester. The Bridge MA Committee makes this recommendation after receiving confirmation from the appropriate PhD program's own Graduate Admissions Committee that the student will be accepted into that program the following Fall semester (provided that the student continues to complete all of the remaining Bridge MA requirements). The student recommended for admission will apply to the PhD program (as a program level change from MA to PhD rather than as an external application), under the

guidance of the Graduate Coordinator. Bridge MA applicants are not required to submit transcripts, GRE scores, or letters of recommendation.

Additionally, the student is required to complete the Bridge MA program, which means they must earn the degree by fulfilling all the Bridge MA program requirements (passing the translation exam, teaching, coursework) for advancement into the PhD program. Once the student has passed their translation exam, they will apply to graduate from the Bridge MA and receive their diploma (the Graduate Coordinator facilitates this process).

Teaching

The student will be appointed as a GSI in the Winter semester. For the Winter semester, the student is required to enroll in GREEK/LATIN 600: GSI Training in Classical Studies, a mandatory pedagogy course for all first-time GSIs. The Director will work with the faculty and staff who determine GSI positions for the Winter to find the best GSI position for the student, that is, a position appropriate for a first-time instructor and one in which the student will receive proper support from the faculty instructor as well as a GSM (a graduate student mentor). Attendance at the GSI orientation the week before the beginning of Fall semester is mandatory.

Translation Exam

The student must pass a translation language exam in Ancient Greek and Latin. The student may choose to take the graduate survey course for either or both of the Greek or Latin portions of the exam and in this way fulfill the language exam requirement for that language.

The student will take the language exam no later than the last day of the Spring half semester. Students may retake the exam by August 1 if the first attempt is unsuccessful. The point is to pass the exam and register completion of the degree in time for entrance into the PhD. One part of the exam will be for Greek; the other part for Latin.

Reading list:

Herodotus *Histories* Book 1

Homer *Iliad*, Books 1, 6; *Odyssey*, Books 6-9

Lysias Lysias 1 (*On the murder of Eratosthenes*) Plato *Republic* 1

Sophocles *Antigone*

Catullus Poems 1-17

Cicero *In Catilinam* 1

Livy Book 1

Ovid Amores 1; Metamorphoses 1

Vergil Aeneid IV

About the exam:

- I. The exam, which is set by two regular faculty members of the Department of Classical Studies, will consist of four passages, two in Greek (one poetry and one prose) and two in Latin (one poetry and one prose). No passages that are suspected of major corruption will be set. All of the passages will be taken from the reading list. There will be no sight passage. The passages will be roughly 120 words of poetry or prose depending on the author. The Greek and Latin portions do not have to be completed on the same day. Each portion should take approximately 1.5hr to complete.
- II. The translation must demonstrate command of grammar, syntax, and common vocabulary of the ancient language in question. Numerous errors in these areas with the result that the passage is substantially misrepresented are a basis for failing the exam. Failure to finish a passage constitutes a serious weakness in that passage.
- III. The exam is graded by two readers. In the case of uncertainty a third grader (not the Director) is to be consulted. The assessments of these graders are considered final and the exam cannot be re-graded by other graders.
- IV. While it is to be expected that the student will be able to produce a smooth English translation, a lack of polish or elegance will not be a basis for failing the exam.
- V. Students will receive a grade of pass or fail. There is no "low pass" but the Director can point out areas where continued improvement should occur. The exam will be returned to the student, who will have the opportunity to review the exam with the graders.

Tutoring

Bridge MA students may avail themselves of extra-classroom language tutoring that will be paid for by the Department, if the Director, in consultation with the Chair, determines that this is needed and that the work cannot be done in a course the student is taking. This provision depends on the availability of tutors and also expects that students will make use of office hours and available academic resources normally afforded by the program. The program also depends upon the willingness of faculty to spend time helping students in the Bridge develop the necessary skills, with the realization that students in the Bridge MA might not initially be prepared in the same way that students in the PhD programs have been.