

## Mission Statement

In recent years classicists have become increasingly aware that students from ethnic backgrounds other than white European and Asian are underrepresented in the study of Latin and Greek. Among those less likely to pursue these languages are particularly African-Americans, but the group also includes those of Hispanic and Native American descent.

An essential part of the solution to this problem lies in locating obvious role models, past and present, upon which these students can pattern themselves. This brochure is designed to help teachers, parents, students and administrators grapple with this important issue.

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# Classica Hispana:

The Influence of  
Classical Studies on  
People of  
Hispanic Descent



BY

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### **Don Enrique de Villena**

(1384-1434) made the first translation of Vergil's Aeneid into a vernacular language.

### **Antonio de Nebrija**

(c. 1441-1522) a brilliant humanist, wrote the best Latin/Spanish and Spanish/Latin dictionaries of their time. He also wrote a Latin grammar entitled *Introductiones Latinae*.

### **Luis Vives**

(1492-1540) philosopher humanist, was the author of many texts in Latin including *In Pseudodialecticos*, *Ad Sapientiam Introducto*, and *De Tradendis Disciplinis*.

### **Luis de León**

(1527-1591) a great poet of Spain, was a professor of theology at Salamanca. Known as the Christian Horace, he also wrote religious works in Latin, such as *De Spe*, *De Fide*, and *De Caritate*.

### **Miguel Antonio Caro**

(1843-1909) rivaled Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo (1856-1912) in his love of Latin letters. His contributions to Latin studies include *Virgilio en España* (1879) and original poems and translations in Latin, *Versione latinas* (1951) and *Carmina Latina* (1993).

### **Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo**

(1856-1912) the greatest scholar of the 19th century, was a student of the Roman poet Horace and published *Horacio en España* in 1877.

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Statistics forecasting trends in the demography of the United States in the twenty-first century predict a substantial growth among Spanish-speaking peoples. The impact of this shift in population will be, without a doubt, both wide and deep. Thus it is prudent for educators in the field of classical studies to stay current, and respond by incorporating some new approaches into our programs.

A pioneer in this regard is Professor Edward V. George (Texas Tech University, ed.george@ttu.edu) who has worked over the past several years to create such a nexus by highlighting features that Latin and Spanish share in the classroom. On the high school level one result has been the invention of SPLAT-a program developed by Donalee Harris and Susan Robertson (Wolfforth, TX) that conjoins the two languages, and at the same time builds better skills in English. When established as a natural bridge to the Romance languages, such an approach is also of service on the university level in attracting students to study classical languages. For Spanish and Hispanic culture has been deeply influenced by its Graeco-Roman heritage. Important figures in the Roman world such as the writers Quintilian, Martial, Seneca and the emperors Trajan and Hadrian hailed from the Iberian peninsula. In the coming century, classicists and Hispanists alike have a worthy goal in cultivating this common ground.

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### **Miguel de Unamuno**

(1864-1936) Spanish philosopher, was professor of ancient Greek at Salamanca. His writings are pervaded with classical learning.

### **Leopoldo Lugones**

(1874-1938) Spanish-American modernist, studied ancient Greek culture and published *Estudios helénicos* in 1924, and *Nuevos estudios helénicos* in 1928.

### **Afonso Henriques de Lima Barreto**

(1881-1922) Brazilian journalist and novelist, gave a contemporary setting to Plutarch's account of Numa, the second king of Rome, in his novel *Numa e a Ninfa* (1915).

### **Jorge Luis Borges**

(1899-1986) found Latin to be one of his chief subjects at Collège Calvin in Geneva.

### **Guillermo Cabrera Infante**

(1929- ) professor of theology at Salamanca, has a multilingual style with a distinctly Latinate quality rather like Petronius.

### **José Triana**

(1933- ) the Cuban dramatist, based his play *Medea en el espejo* (1959) on Euripides' Medea.

### **Luis Antonio de Villena**

(1951- ) respected Spanish poet and literary critic, made a special study of Catullus, *Catulo* (1979).