

Nashville Parthenon Trip Write up

On April 5, 2025, the Classics Undergraduate Advisory Board (CUAB) successfully completed a day trip to visit the replica of the Athenian Parthenon located in Centennial Park, Nashville, TN. Ten students from the CUAB, alongside two faculty members (Prof. Eisen and Prof. Campos-Muñoz) participated. Before departing for Nashville, all participants attended a seminar led by Prof. Eisen on the Athenian Parthenon in order to learn about the original building, its historical and situational context, its engineering and art historical significance, and how the building was used in antiquity for various religious, social, and political goals. The following discussion questions were also introduced during the seminar to consider in comparison to the Nashville replica during the trip:

- The Parthenon in Athens is a religious building: how/ does this translate to Nashville?
- Consider the importance of cultural memory integrated into the Parthenon's creation: how important do you think this is for the Greek building, and how does this translate to Nashville?
- How/ does this civic pride and Athenian identity translate to the Nashville context? If not, what takes its place?
- City planning and relationality to other buildings were extremely important to the creation of the original building: what are the differences between the two settings (Athens and Nashville)?
- The erection of the Parthenon replica in Nashville was part of a concerted effort to (re)define the city as the "Athens of the South." What ideas of "Athens" and "the South" are at play in this form of self-branding?
- How has reception of the Classics in America factored into the building of this replica, both when it was initially built, and today over 100 years from its first creation?

This trip also presented an opportunity to collaborate with Classics colleagues at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Chiara Sulprizio, a Senior Lecturer in Classical and Mediterranean Studies and a docent at the Nashville Parthenon, graciously led our group on a tour through the temple and the attached museum, where students learned about the history of the building's construction, The Nashville Centennial Exposition (1897), and the modern reception of the replica building. Afterwards, the students walked to Vanderbilt University campus and participated in a seminar-style discussion about both the monument and the reception of classical antiquity more broadly with undergraduate students from Vanderbilt, led by Dr. James Zainaldin, an Assistant Professor in Classical and Mediterranean Studies. We hope to establish an ongoing collaboration with Vanderbilt Classics as a peer institution and in the future welcome a reciprocal group of Vanderbilt students to explore the reception of Classics in Chicago's cityscape.



Students in front of the Nashville Parthenon.

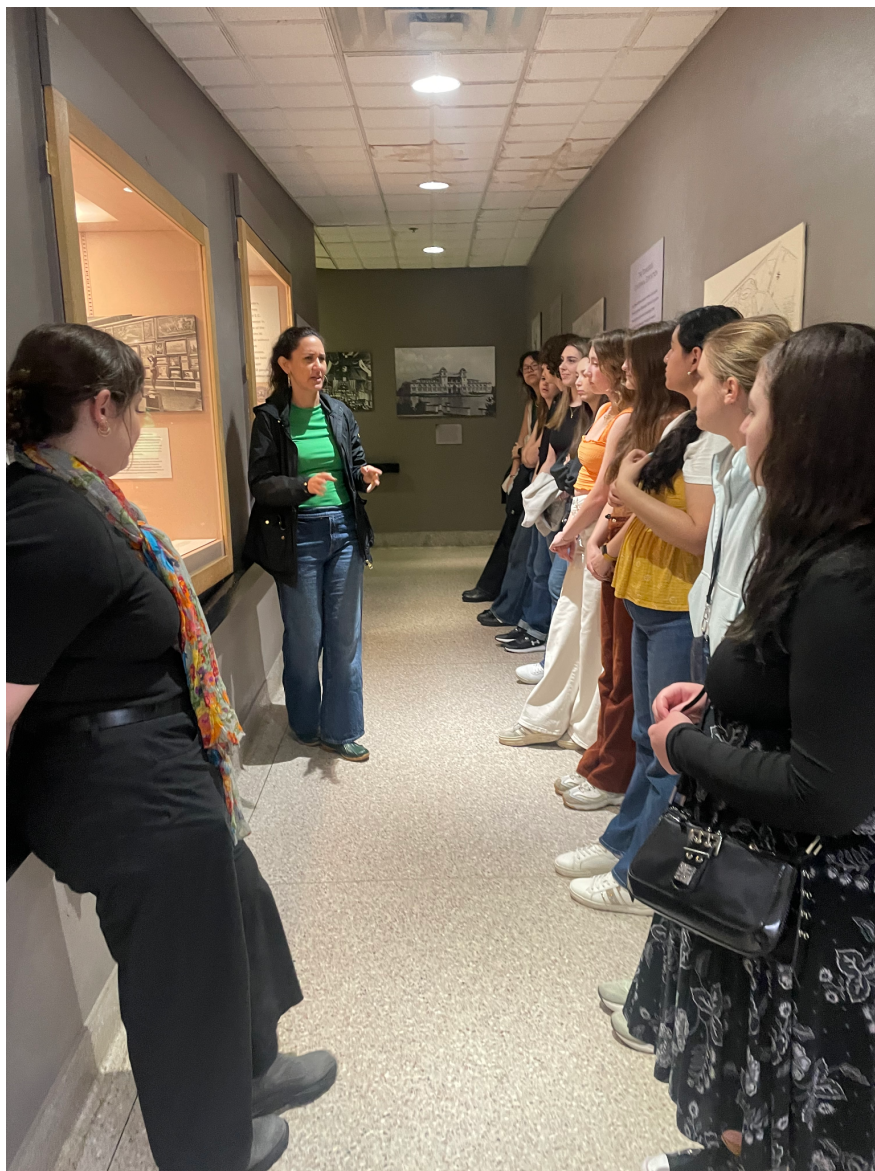
From L to R:

Amber Constantine, Natalie Cheng, Faith Magiera, Lizzie Ferrazza, Amber Flowers, Grace Richards, Sophie Pong, Alisa Vazgryna, Quinn Kennedy, Brookelyn Slonaker.



Students in front of the scale-replica of the cult statue of Athena Parthenos, Nashville, TN. April 5, 2025. From L to R:

Quinn Kennedy, Lizzie Ferrazza, Faith Magiera, Sarah Eisen, Sophie Pong, Grace Rochards, Brookelyn Slonaker, Alisa Vazgryna, Natalie Cheng, Amber Constante, Germán Campos-Muñoz. (not pictured: Amber Flowers).



Students listen to Dr. Sulprizio as she discusses the Tennessee Centennial Exposition (1897) in the museum, alongside photographs and artifacts from the event.