



Top 10 Answers to This Question:
“But What Are You Going To DO With A Classics Degree?”

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The Dreaded Question

- “What are you going to do...” is not the real question being asked.
- The real questions is “what is the value of a Classics Degree in 21st century America?”

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Organization of My Talk

- A little about the life of one Classics Major.
 - How did I answer the dreaded question?
- Then let's talk about how you plan to answer it.

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How Did I Answer The Dreaded Question?

- My Top 10.
- And the lessons I learned.

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Answer #1

- “Well, I think I might teach.”
- This is a very good answer.
- If you can, teach.
- You must give back – you are part of a long and honorable tradition.



Lesson Learned #1

- Good teachers are born, not made.



Answer #2

- “I think I’ll go to grad school and then figure it out.”
- A good answer, if you’ve got the drive and the persistence required.

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Lessons Learned

- Grad School is hard.
- You still have to figure it out.

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Answer #3

- “Since Classics improved my analytical skills, I think I’ll become a _____”
- This is the “skills transference” option
- In my case, “computer programmer”.



Lessons Learned #3

- It's never too early to do career planning.
- Studying math in college would have been helpful.
- And a surprise – college is better the second time around.



Answer #4

- “A degree in Classics will impress _____”
 - Potential employers
 - Strangers at cocktail parties
 - Potential mates

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Lesson Learned #4

- If you find an employer who even knows what the Classics are...
 - please call me at once.
- Don't go to cocktail parties.
- If you can find a compatible English major you may be in luck.



Answer #5

- “A degree in Classics will help my business career”

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Lessons Learned #5

- Training in writing and speaking is fundamental for success in business – or in any other profession.
- You can get a lot farther with good luck and a plan than you can with only a plan.
 - Paraphrase of A. Capone



These are all good answers...but

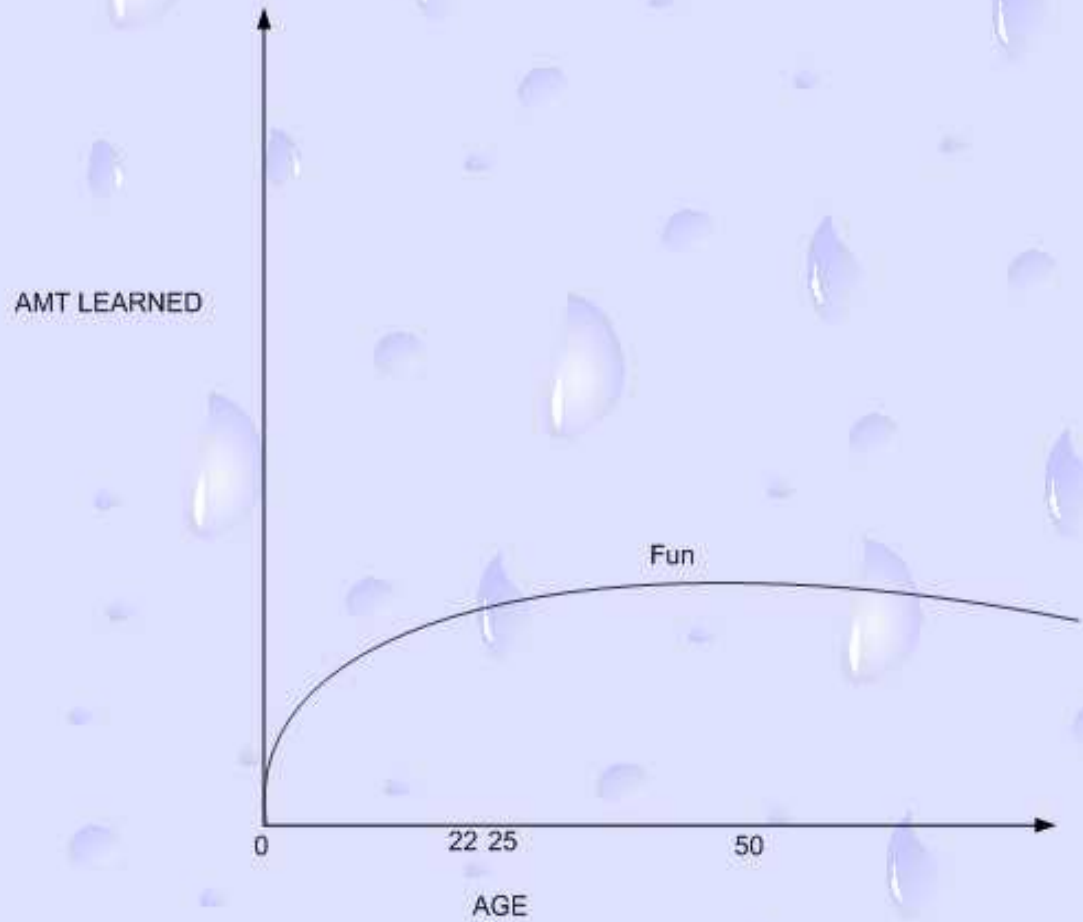
- All the benefits we have talked about are indirect.
- We still haven't talked about what makes Classics better than other liberal arts majors.
- What direct benefits will I get from a Classics degree?



So, Let's Do Some Career Planning

- It's never too early.
- There is a right way and a wrong way.
- The wrong way:
 - 1st Priority: Security
 - 2nd Priority: Fun

A Life of Quiet Desperation



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A Good Career Plan

- The Golden Rules

- Try to learn something each day.
- Give each endeavor six months.
 - If you haven't learned anything after six months..
 - you need to do something else.
- Never let down a pal.

A Life Well Lived

AMT LEARNED

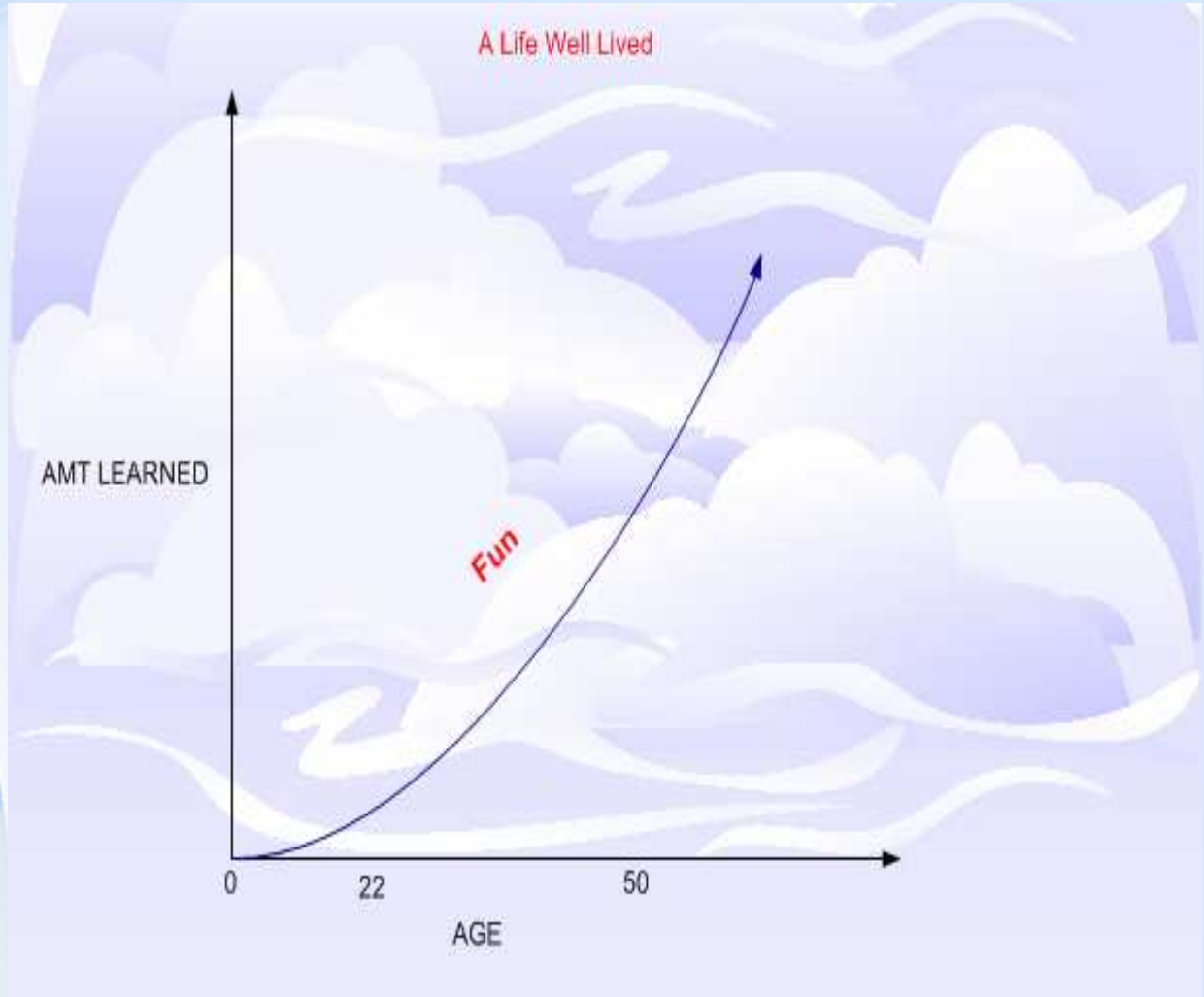
Fun

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AGE



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Career Planning for the Classicist

- Answer #6 comes from Euripides:
 - σκαιὸν τὸ πλουτεῖν κάλλο μηδὲν εἶδέναι

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Answer #7

- I will succeed by using the same tools I used at Iowa
 - Persistence
 - Attention to detail
 - Love of learning



There are no losers in this room



Answer #8

- My classical education taught me
 - To think clearly.
 - To write effectively.
 - To love the tradition that I am a part of.



Answer #9

- My classical education has convinced me that I can learn anything, anytime.



Answer #10

- The most important thing I can do because I have a classical education --



Final Lesson Learned

- What you have learned here at Iowa will help you live a life that engages both heart and mind.

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Thank you

- Dr. Finamore,
- Jean Frazer,
- Classics Department, and
- College of Liberal Arts;
- And thank you for your time!



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Your Questions and Thoughts...