

Timothy Long

Professor of Classical Studies; Adjunct Professor of Continuing Studies

Tim Long was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1943. Like many high school students of his generation, he was introduced to Latin when he started his freshman year. At St. Xavier High School, ancient Greek came in the junior year. Long had already known since he was nine or ten, he says, that he wanted to be a college professor. His family regularly watched the television series *The Halls of Ivy*, in which Ronald Colman starred as a university president. From this evidence, Long decided that being a university professor was the life for him. Once he began to study Latin, he knew that he wanted to be a professor of languages, and when he started Greek he knew of which language he wanted to be a professor.

Long did his B.A. at Xavier University in Cincinnati, graduating in 1965. He received a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship that year to begin his graduate studies at Princeton University. After receiving his M.A. in 1967, he was awarded a Princeton University Traveling Grant to study in Germany. The German academy has, since the nineteenth century, been one of the centers of classical scholarship, and Long went to Tübingen University where he attended lectures and seminars with Wolfgang Schadewaldt, the last of the old guard, and Hartmut Erbse, one of the first of the post-World War II generation of German classics scholars. (Long points out that his time at Tübingen overlapped with the student years of the present pope, but that he is not aware that they were ever introduced.) When Long said to Professor Erbse that he was thinking of doing his dissertation at Princeton on Aristophanes, Erbse suggested to him that the play by that author titled *The Wasps* was the one that needed analyzing, a suggestion that proved to be invaluable.

Long returned to Princeton in 1968 with his dissertation on Aristophanes' *Wasps* about half written, and stayed at Princeton for that year finishing it. In March of 1969 when he was offered a position at Indiana, he left his dissertation at Princeton to be read by the committee and came to Bloomington, the last faculty member at Indiana to be hired by Norman T. Pratt, the chairman of classics at IU from 1947 to 1972. Long began teaching the beginning Greek course every year and offering upper-level Greek courses. Over the last 38 years, he has taught an unusually wide range of courses in the classics department, from Latin epic poetry for graduate students to Greek and Latin elements in medical terminology. Long has been acting chair of the Department of Classical Studies several times and was chair from 1992 to 1996, during which term he vastly increased the strength of the program both in the number of its majors and in the breadth of its degree programs. He has served on a wide range of academic committees and filled a number of service roles, from the university promotions committee to being the faculty adviser of one of the fraternities for the last 15 years.

Long has published two books, one on foreigners as they are treated in Greek comedy and another on the prose style of the historian Herodotus. He has enjoyed an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship (1977-1978) to work at the University of Cologne and was a

Fulbright Senior Lecturer at the just developing University of Essen in 1987–1988. In part as a result of the success of his courses there, that university shortly after decided to institute a professorship in classics.

One of Long's greatest strengths is his ability to engage a wide range of audiences through his lectures on the ancient world. Besides presenting research papers at the professional meetings of the American Philological Association and other organizations, Long has lectured on politics at the ancient Olympics to a joint meeting of IU and Purdue alumni over a catfish dinner and a Budweiser at Frank and Mary's Restaurant in Brownsburg, on the nihilism of Beavis and Butthead to Mini-University students, and on Greek and Roman ghosts to 500 high school students in Clowes Hall on Halloween. He has lectured almost every year for over 20 years at Mini-University on topics from the theories of Freud and Bergson about comedy to Roman food.

That is the largest part of Long. But there is another facet. Long claims that the most embarrassing thing he can say about himself is that when he was in high school and college he was a church organist. But Long's commitment to music evaporated one night during the summer between high school and college, when a high school friend invited him home to dinner and it turned out that the family had a pool table in the basement. Long has never recovered his innocence. He began playing avidly and studying the game, becoming the "college kid" at Mergard's, a Cincinnati billiard establishment. Jay Helfert, a major figure in American pool and billiards, was very recently asked to name the most interesting pool rooms he had ever played in. He named one in Oklahoma City, one in New York, one in Los Angeles, and then said, "My last pick is Mergard's in Cincinnati. It was a classic pool room full of players from Central Casting . . . Everybody had his role, and they all stayed in character the whole year I hung around." Long is not sure what role he was supposed to be playing, but he has not touched a keyboard in 25 years. He picks up a cue about every two days, and says that if pool were golf, he would be a six handicap. In his retirement Long plans to finish up two books and to pick up his cue every day.

Long's legacy to his department and IU is a substantial one, and not least in the way he has shared his passion for the classics with many thousands of students over the years. Whether working closely with a graduate student writing a doctoral dissertation or addressing hundreds of undergraduates in a large lecture hall, Tim Long has inspired his students to learn about the ancient world. He has been not only one of the most popular teachers in the department, but one of the most generous with his time in meeting with students at all levels. Wherever one goes in Bloomington (and not just in its pool halls), one encounters students, past and present, who speak with great appreciation of their experiences in Tim Long's classes.

Matt Christ