

ISABEL K. KÖSTER

Department of Classics
University of Colorado, 248 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309

isabel.koster@colorado.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2025–	Associate Professor of Classics, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO
2016–2025	Assistant Professor of Classics, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO
2015–2016	Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics, The College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA
2014–2015	Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics, Lawrence University, Appleton, WI
2012–2014	Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA
2011–2012	Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics, Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN

EDUCATION

2011	Ph.D. in Classical Philology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA Dissertation: “Roman Temple Robbery” (Advisor: Kathleen Coleman)
2005	A.B. <i>summa cum laude</i> with highest honors in Classics, Smith College, Northampton, MA Minor: History

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Roman history and literature, especially of the Republic and early Empire; Greek and Roman religion; Roman epigraphy; literary and cultural responses to Roman imperial expansion; crime and punishment in the Roman world

PUBLICATIONS

BOOK

- [2026] *Stealing from the Gods: Temple Robbery in the Roman Imagination*. University of Michigan Press [available from Jan. 7, 2026]

ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS

- [submitted] “Valerius Maximus’ Catiline: A Useful Villain” to appear in *Exemplary Representation(s) of the Past: New Readings of Valerius Maximus’ Facta et dicta memorabilia*, edited by T. Itgenshorst *et al.* Brill
- 2025 “Sepulchral Inscription with a Petition for a Deceased Spouse” (introduction, translation, commentary of CIL 3.7436) in *Prayer in the Ancient World Online* (general editors: D. Falk and R. Werline; area editor: E. Orlin). Brill
- 2025 “Reading about Nymphs and Roman Soldiers with and without Frazer” in *A Century of James Frazer’s The Golden Bough: Shaking the Tree, Breaking the Bough*, edited by S. Budin and C. Tully, 207–217. Routledge.
- 2024 “Thieving Pilgrims between Rome and the Middle Ages” in *Pilgrims in Place, Pilgrims in Motion: Sacred Travel in the Ancient Mediterranean*, edited by A. Collar and T. M. Kristensen, 143–157. Aarhus University Press

- 2022 “Making and Unmaking Roman Landscapes in Cicero and Caesar” in *The Impact of Empire on Roman Landscapes*, edited by N. Hächler and M. Horster, 283–296. Brill
- 2021 “Flamingos and Perverted Sacrifices in Suetonius’ *Life of Caligula*.” *Mnemosyne* 74: 299–317
- 2020 “Rome’s Sicilian Disaster: Invective and the City in Cicero’s *Verrines*” in *Urban Disasters and the Roman Imagination*, edited by V. Closs and E. Keitel, 73–92. De Gruyter
- 2017 “Sacred Objects, Material Value, and Invective in Cicero’s *Verrines* II 4” in *Gods, Objects, and Ritual Practice in Ancient Mediterranean Religions*, edited by S. Blakely, 151–167. Lockwood Press
- 2014 “Feasting Centaurs and Destructive Consuls in Cicero’s *In Pisonem*.” *Illinois Classical Studies* 39: 63–79
- 2014 “How to Kill a Roman Villain: The Deaths of Quintus Pleminius.” *Classical Journal* 109: 309–332

BOOK REVIEWS

- 2025 Review of T. Blank. *Religiöse Geheimniskommunikation in der Mittleren und Späten Römischen Republik. Separatheit, gesellschaftliche Öffentlichkeit und zivisches Ordnungshandeln* (Franz Steiner Verlag, 2024) *Sehepunkte* 25.1
- 2023 Review of J. Kenty. *Cicero’s Political Personae* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). *Classical Review* 73: 502–504
- 2021 Review of C. Beltrão da Rosa and F. Santangelo, eds. *Cicero and Roman Religion. Eight Studies* (Steiner, 2020) *Sehepunkte* 21.1
- 2020 Review of T. Boll. *Ciceros Rede cum senatui gratias egit. Ein Kommentar* (De Gruyter, 2019). *Exemplaria Classica* 24: 329–332
- 2019 Review of H. I. Flower. *The Dancing Lares and the Serpent in the Garden: Religion at the Roman Street Corner* (Princeton University Press, 2017). *Phoenix* 72 (for 2018): 182–183
- 2017 Review of L. Grillo. *Cicero: De provinciis consularibus* (Oxford University Press, 2015). *Classical Review* 67: 389–391
- 2015 Review of C. J. Fuhrmann. *Policing the Roman Empire: Soldiers, Administration, and Public Order* (Oxford University Press, 2012). *Classical Bulletin* 86 (for 2010): 208–210
- 2014 Review of V. Sauer. *Religiöses in der politischen Argumentation der späten römischen Republik. Ciceros Erste Catilinarische Rede— eine Fallstudie* (Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013). *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2014.02.10

MISCELLANEOUS

- 2013 Entries on “adytum,” “Byrsa,” “desecration,” “Dodona,” “Lesbos,” and “Samothracia” in *The Virgil Encyclopedia* edited by R. Thomas and J. Ziolkowski. Wiley-Blackwell
- 2005 [with J. Gregory] Translation of B. Seidensticker. “Dithyramb, Comedy, and Satyr-Play” in *A Companion to Greek Tragedy* edited by J. Gregory. 38–54. Blackwell

RESEARCH FUNDING

- 2024 Faculty Fellowship, Center for Humanities and the Arts, CU Boulder, to be held Spring 2026

- 2024 CU Boulder Open Monograph Fund (awarded to University of Michigan Press to support open access publication of *Stealing from the Gods*)
- 2020 Margo Tytus Summer Residency Fellowship, University of Cincinnati [held in May/June 2022 due to COVID-19]
- 2016 Research Scholarship for Young Researchers, Fondation Hardt pour l'étude de l'antiquité classique, Vandœuvres, Switzerland

CONFERENCES AND PUBLIC TALKS

INVITED PUBLIC TALKS AND CONFERENCE PAPERS

- [5/2026] [Title TBD]. University of Belgrade, Serbia
- [3/2026] "Expiating Mutiny with Sacrilege: The Cost of Roman Order in Tacitus *Annals* 1.49–51." To be presented at Classical Association of the Middle West and South presidential panel, Mobile, AL
- 4/2024 "Valuing Crime and Punishment in Roman 'Prayers for Justice.'" Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX
- 3/2024 "Getting Justice with the Roman Gods: Divine Punishment from Cursing to the Courts." Duke University, Durham, NC
- 4/2023 "The Temple Robber's Itinerary." Cicero Awayday, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

CONFERENCE PAPERS BY REFEREED ABSTRACT

- [5/2026] "Toleration Through Fear: A Priest and his Crown Visit Rome." To be presented at "Religious Toleration in Classical Antiquity," University of Groningen, Netherlands
- 9/2025 "Professionalism vs. Brute Force: The Working Methods of the Roman Temple Robber." "The Shady Trade of Hermes: Theft, Thieves and Thievery in the Ancient World," University of Warsaw, Poland
- 3/2025 "Illustrating Villainy: Tullia and her Father's Corpse at Livy 1.48." Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Urbana-Champaign, IL
- 4/2024 "Adding Flattery to Insult: Caesar and the Underworld in Cicero's *Pro Marcello* and the *Letters to Atticus*." Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, St. Louis, MO
- 1/2024 "How to Suppress a Secret Cult: Invective and Perverted Rites in Cicero's *Catilinarians*." Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL
- 2/2023 "Reading about Nymphs and Roman Soldiers with and without Frazer." "Shaking the Tree, Breaking the Bough: *The Golden Bough* at 100," online conference sponsored by the University of Melbourne, Australia
- 12/2022 "Valerius Maximus' Catiline: A Useful Villain." "Exemplary Representation(s) of the Past: New Readings of Valerius Maximus' *Facta et dicta memorabilia*," University of Fribourg, Switzerland
- 4/2020 "Teaching Gender and Ethnicity in the Roman World with Bernardine Evaristo's *The Emperor's Babe*." Association of Ancient Historians Annual Meeting [on Zoom]

- 6/2019 “Making and Unmaking Roman Landscapes in Cicero and Caesar.” “The Impact of Empire on Roman Landscapes” (14th “Impact of Empire” Workshop), Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany
- 4/2019 “At Home with the Ciceronian Villain.” Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Lincoln, NE
- 7/2018 “How to Write a Roman Sacred Landscape.” Celtic Conference in Classics, University of St Andrews, U.K.
- 4/2018 “Nepos’ Hannibal as a Trickster.” Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, NM
- 9/2017 “The State vs. Religion: Case Studies in Roman Temple Robbery.” “Religion and the State in Classical Greece and Rome,” Princeton University, Princeton, NJ
- 5/2017 “Thieving Pilgrims between Rome and the Middle Ages.” “Comparativism and the Study of Ancient Mediterranean Pilgrimage,” Third Emergence of Sacred Travel Symposium, Aarhus, Denmark
- 6/2016 “Collecting Greek Art in Cicero’s *Verrines* and the *Letters to Atticus*.” Celtic Conference in Classics, Dublin, Ireland
- 3/2016 “Pompeians as Temple Robbers: Greek Custom and Roman Invective in Caesar *Bellum Civile* 3.33 and 3.105.” Classical Association of New England Annual Meeting, Northampton, MA
- 4/2015 “A Roman Local Foods Movement?” Classical Association Annual Conference, University of Bristol, Bristol, U.K.
- 3/2015 “Making Guilt Visible: Cicero’s *Against Piso* and the Language of Curse Tablets.” Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Boulder, CO
- 3/2014 “Against Cargo Culture: Pliny the Elder’s History of Painting and Martial’s *Xenia*.” “Cargo Culture: Literary and Material Appropriative Practices in Rome,” Stanford University Department of Classics, Stanford, CA
- 11/2013 “The Religious Life of Roman Plunder.” “The Religious Life of Things,” Midwest Consortium on Ancient Religions conference, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
- 3/2013 “Interacting with Sacred Objects in Cicero’s *Verrines II* 4.” “Gods, Objects, and Ritual Practice in Ancient Mediterranean Religions,” Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions Annual Conference, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
- 3/2012 “How to Kill a Roman Villain: The Demise of Quintus Pleminius.” Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Baton Rouge, LA
- 1/2012 “Vergil’s Dido in Appian’s Carthage.” American Philological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA
- 3/2011 “Livy’s *Verrines*.” Classical Association of New England Annual Meeting, South Hadley, MA
- 3/2010 “Sulla and Delphi in Plutarch’s *Life of Sulla*.” Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Oklahoma City, OK

- 3/2009 “Feasting Centaurs and Destructive Consuls in Cicero’s *Against Piso* 22.” Classical Association of New England Annual Meeting, Boston, MA
- 6/2008 “‘I Did Not Come Here to Quarrel’: Verbal Violence in Liz Lochhead’s *Medea*.” “Violence in the Reception of Ancient Drama,” Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama and Royal Holloway, University of London Postgraduate Colloquium, Oxford, U.K.

CONFERENCE SESSIONS ORGANIZED

- 1/2016 [with C. Bishop] “Cicero Across Genres.” Organizer-refereed panel at the Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA
An expanded three-day version of this panel took place at the Celtic Conference in Classics, Dublin, Ireland, 6/2016
- 6/2013 “Blogs in the Classroom.” The Humanities and Technology (THAT) Camp, Center for History and New Media, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

OTHER CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS

- 3/2025 Presider, “Roman History and Latin Historiography II.” Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Urbana-Champaign, IL, 3/2025
- 4/2016 Response to Tara Mulder “Female Trouble in Terence’s *Hecyra*,” Massachusetts and Connecticut workshop for junior faculty in Classics (MACTe), Amherst College, Amherst, MA
- 1/2016 Introduction to “Cicero Across Genres.” Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA

TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

- Bread and Circuses: Society and Culture in the Roman World (introductory undergraduate lecture)
- Paganism to Christianity (introductory undergraduate lecture)
- Rise and Fall of Rome (introductory undergraduate lecture)
- Roman Republic (mixed graduate and advanced undergraduate lecture)
- Roman Empire (mixed graduate and advanced undergraduate lecture)
- Roman Gender and Sexuality (introductory undergraduate lecture)
- Roman Law (mixed graduate and advanced undergraduate lecture)
- Seminar in Classical Antiquity: Roman Religion and Magic (advanced undergraduate)

LATIN

- Intermediate Latin 2 (selections from Virgil’s *Aeneid*)
- Introduction to Latin poetry: Elegy
- Introduction to Latin prose: Roman Letters
- Introduction to Latin prose: Cicero’s *Catilinarians*
- Introduction to Latin Prose: Livy

Topics in Latin Prose: Tacitus' *Annals*

Topics in Latin Prose: Caesar

Epigraphy (graduate seminar)

INDEPENDENT STUDIES SUPERVISED

Roman law and religion, 1 graduate student

Polybius, 1 graduate student

The Gracchi, 1 graduate student

War and migration in Ammianus Marcellinus, 1 undergraduate student

PH.D. DISSERTATION COMMITTEES

Committee member for S. Kindick (2020) "Ovid's City: Rome in the *Ars Amatoria* and *the Fasti*"

Committee member for T. Denton (2019) "*Monumenta* and Historical Method in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*"

M.A. IN TEACHING OF LATIN TEACHING PROJECTS DIRECTED

K. Johnson (2021), "Epic Tradition: The Supernatural in Lucan and Vergil"

M.A. IN TEACHING OF LATIN TEACHING PROJECTS COMMITTEE MEMBER

E. Sterling (2020) "The Poet in the Underworld: Orpheus, Eurydice, and the Augustan Poets"

B. Boseovski (2018) "Polyphemus: The Man and the Monster"

S. Frank Harris (2017) "Conqueror, King, and Emperor: Bringing Einhard's Charlemagne to the Classroom"

UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESES DIRECTED

M. Cheung (2017) "The Good, the Bad, and the *barbari*: A Comparison of the Foreign Tribes in the Eastern and Western Empire of Ammianus Marcellinus"

J. Danahey (2017) "Roman Family Structure and Early Christianity: Deconstructing Familial and Gender Norms through the *Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis*"

UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER

S. Senseman (History, 2024) "Along the Shatt: An Environmental and Cultural History of Development in British Iraq, 1908–1932"

J. Christine Hines (English, 2023) "Old Myths through New Eyes: A Feminist Re-Appropriation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*"

SERVICE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Society for Classical Studies

Legate for Colorado, 2021–2024

Committee on Career Planning and Development, 2017–2020

Classical Association of the Middle West and South

Vice President for Colorado, 2023–

Subcommittee on Summer Travel Awards, 2025–

Association of Ancient Historians

Diversity Committee, 2020–2022

Program Committee for 2023 Annual Meeting, 2022–2023

Article referee for *American Journal of Philology*; *Classical Journal*; *Classical Quarterly*; *Phasis*; *Syllecta Classica*; *TAPA*

SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY

Boulder Faculty Assembly Libraries Committee, Fall 2017– Spring 2023

SERVICE TO THE CLASSICS DEPARTMENT

Associate Chair of Graduate Studies, Fall 2021–Spring 2022

Graduate Studies Committee, Fall 2016–Spring 2019; Fall 2020–Spring 2023

Lecture Committee Fall 2023–Spring 2025 (chair)

Library Committee Fall 2023–Spring 2024

Website Committee, Fall 2016–Spring 2018 (chair)

Latin Curriculum Committee, Fall 2016– (chair Fall 2018–Spring 2020)

Fountain Symposium Organizing Committee, Spring 2017

McClanahan Graduate Essay Prize Committee, Fall 2016; Fall 2019; Fall 2020

Search committee for a tenure-track Latinist position, Fall 2018– Spring 2019

Department screening committee for nominees for the Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellowship, Fall 2017

OUTREACH PRESENTATIONS AND WORK WITH K–12 STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

“How to Run a Roman Consular Election,” workshop for the Colorado Classics Association, 4/2025

Participant in a session on Greek and Roman culture for students from The Logan School, Denver, CO
11/2024; 4/2025

Consultant for a student at Shelton Elementary, Golden, CO for a project on Hannibal, 3/2024

Interview with a student at Compass Montessori, Golden, CO for a project on the Roman Republic,
2/2024

Expert consultant for a Classical Honors Program capstone project St. Paul’s School, Concord, NH,
Spring 2023

Roundtable participant, “What can you do with a degree in Classics?,” Colorado Classics Day, University
of Colorado Boulder, 9/2021

“A day at the Roman Circus,” session for Latin students in middle and high school, Colorado Classics
Day, University of Colorado Boulder, 9/2020

Interview with a student at Fairview High for a project on the Roman Empire, 5/2019

Interview with a student at Boulder High for a class project on Virgil’s *Aeneid*, 4/2019

“How to Make a Roman Temple Robber: Rhetoric and Abuse from Ciceronian Rome to Lord Elgin,”
McClanahan lecture series, University of Colorado Boulder, 9/2018

“Life as a Gladiator,” session for Latin students in middle and high school, Colorado Classics Day, University of Colorado Boulder, 9/2017 and 9/2019; Classics Day at Boulder High, 9/2018

“Write like a Roman,” session for Latin students in middle and high school, Colorado Classics Association/Colorado Junior Classical League event, University of Colorado Boulder, 9/2016

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

CU Art Museum summer pedagogy workshop, University of Colorado Boulder, 8/2022

Leadership Education for Advancement and Promotion (LEAP), University of Colorado Boulder, 2021

New Assistant Professor Program Certificate of Completion, University of Colorado Boulder, 2017

Ohio State University, Center for Epigraphical and Palaeographical Studies, Columbus, OH
International Summer Course in Epigraphy, July–August 2009

MODERN LANGUAGES

German (native speaker); reading knowledge of French and Italian; basic Modern Greek

REFERENCES

[available on request]

Last updated: 11/2025