

CFP: AI & the Study of Antiquity

Abstracts due: 21 November 2025

Conference: 12–13 March 2026 at Rutgers University–New Brunswick

On the afternoon/evening of Thursday 12 March and all day Friday 13 March 2026, the Department of Classics at Rutgers–New Brunswick will host a central Atlantic regional conference on developments in AI (Artificial Intelligence) and the study of antiquity.

The Rutgers–based journal **Critical AI** aptly explains the current meaning of “Artificial Intelligence” as “a computer model’s ability to ‘optimize’ for useful predictions while ‘training’ on data,” a process known in short as “deep learning.” The application of AI to the study of antiquity is still in its earliest stages, but already it seems likely that the technology will be a routine partner in the humanistic study of the ancient world.

Three hallmarks of the shape of ancient evidence are its scale, its incompleteness, and its fragility. Recent innovations in AI seem well poised to offer a new generation of tools to tackle these challenges, to archaeologists, epigraphers, papyrologists, numismatists, philologists and conservators alike.

Some current applications in AI include transcribing handwritten texts; reading, translating and analyzing ancient textual corpora at scale; reconstructing degraded visual artifacts (including literary and non–literary texts); distinguishing typographical variations in material remains; monitoring shifts in the state of preservation of monuments; and remote sensing in landscape archaeology, detecting the likely presence of features invisible to the eye.

We are interested in short (15–20 minute) contributions that assess contemporary and potential contributions of AI to the study of the Old World (including Asia and Africa) through the end of the first millennium CE. Within those parameters, we welcome papers on any aspect of the reconstruction, preservation, classification, and analysis of the past through AI. We are especially glad to receive abstracts that focus on human–AI collaborations, where the aim is primarily to reshape the division of labor, freeing specialists for higher order interpretation of the past. Conversely, we also welcome contributions that address the limits of machine predictions in exploring the history, languages, literature, and archaeology of the ancient Old World.

Please send a PDF to armbruster@classics.rutgers.edu with an abstract (no more than 400 words) of a proposed contribution by Friday 21 November 2025, along with a short (ca. 100 word) biographical statement. Accepted papers will be notified by Friday 12 December 2025. Presenters will receive two nights accommodation, meals during the conference, and reimbursement for ground transportation.

Inquiries may be directed to T. Corey Brennan (tcbr@classics.rutgers.edu) and/or Serena Connolly (serena@classics.rutgers.edu)

With support from Rutgers University–New Brunswick School of Arts & Sciences Division of Humanities and Rutgers University Libraries.

Conference organizers: T. Corey Brennan, Kristina Chew, Serena Connolly (Rutgers Classics faculty), Francesca Giannetti (Rutgers University Libraries faculty, Digital Humanities Librarian), Christina Demitre (Rutgers ’25, post baccalaureate student in Classics).

Conference coordination: Katherine Armbruster (Rutgers Classics Program Coordinator).