To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Medieval and Renaissance Studies concentration faculty and students, we would like to very warmly endorse the Classics Department’s request for a tenure-track position focused on field archaeology and/or the material culture of the ancient world with other areas of expertise open. Archaeology has been a very important element of MARS course offerings since the early days of the concentration, with many students taking the archaeological methods course and often the capstone and some double-concentrating in MARS and Archaeology. Likewise, approaches in medieval and Renaissance studies that actively employ visual or material evidence (often, but not always, derived from archaeological contexts) continue to grow in importance and have changed the ways in which faculty in other MARS disciplines, especially history and art history, teach. Having a colleague thoroughly versed and actively researching in these areas would provide excellent support for the wider community and for our students, who could then take their methodological training and apply it across the curriculum. This approach—with methods and theoretical considerations at the core and then opportunities for application—has been a successful strategy employed by the archaeology concentration over the years for maximizing the benefit from curricular resources and for showing students the relevance of archaeology in many different areas. It has certainly worked well for our MARS students.

Locating this position in Classics makes very good sense from the point of view of MARS for several reasons. First, the worlds at the center of Classical Studies, namely those of the Mediterranean Basin, continue to be those that centrally, albeit not exclusively, occupy our faculty and students. The potential course offerings from such a position, therefore, would not only provide vital methodological training but also provide content directly relevant to other MARS curricular offerings. Second, the problems and techniques involved in understanding ancient sites are identical to those raised by medieval sites; indeed, many medieval archaeologists and historians of medieval material culture began their training and careers as scholars of the classical world. The opportunities for collaboration and complementarity in curriculum and faculty interactions are many and organic.

Finally, MARS is pleased to support this position because it will strengthen Carleton’s faculty who actively employ Greek and Latin in their teaching and research. These languages are crucial to the disciplines that comprise medieval and Renaissance studies and having strong language programs in these areas allows those of our students who wish to go on in their studies, to receive language training that will allow them to be competitive applicants to MA and Ph.D. programs nationally and internationally. MARS
concentrators have successfully applied to the most competitive Classical Studies, Medieval and Byzantine History programs in the country, and it is in no small measure due to their robust language training at Carleton that they have had this success (and success in an increasingly competitive environment in grad admissions).

For all of the above reasons, the MARS concentration is pleased to offer its strong endorsement of this application for a tenure-track position in archaeology/material culture and would look forward, if this application is successful, in supporting the Classics Dept in appropriate ways in their search and then collaborating actively with the successful candidate.

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Dear Bev and members of the FCPC,

The Classics department seeks approval for a tenure-track search in the fall of 2013 to hire a full-time specialist in archaeology and/or material culture. We will outline briefly below our reasoning, but we welcome the opportunity to talk with you more extensively about the position.

The Need

Historically, the department has had 3.3 FTE; at the 6 course teaching load this allowed us to offer on average 18 or 19 courses per year, and 19 is our assigned “number” from the Dean’s office. To staff both languages requires 12 (or, at a bare minimum, 11) courses: the 4-term language-requirement sequence in each language, with the addition of two upper-level Latin and one upper-level Greek course per year. Thus we generally have been able to offer six or seven Classics courses each year in addition to the language courses.

It is chiefly the Classics courses we are able to offer beyond those in the languages where we are able to engage the larger community. Our Classics courses are strongly enrolled, and while they are crucial for giving our majors a wider look at the classical world than they can get at their level of reading in the original languages (110 and some of the history courses are required for our majors), they are dominated by non-major enrollments. In 2011-12, when we were unusually generously staffed, we were able to offer eight Classics courses to close to two hundred students. These courses satisfy requirements for Women’s and Gender Studies (114), History (227, 228, 229), Theater and Dance (116, 224), ENTS (222), and English (112, 125). Of the new graduation requirements, they satisfy Arts Practice (116, 224), Humanistic Inquiry (110, 114, 227, 228, 230, 231), Literary/Artistic Analysis (111, 112, 125) and International Studies, as well as the Argument and Inquiry Seminar requirement. In addition, many are offered as WR courses, and even some QREs (222, 230, 173).

With the retirements of Nancy Wilkie and Jackson Bryce, our continuing staff has dropped to 3 FTE (Clara Hardy, Kathryn Steed and Chico Zimmerman), and with the shift to the 5-course load this puts available departmental offerings at 14 (assuming a course release for the department chair). Through 2015 this will be further reduced to 12 courses because of Clara Hardy’s service as faculty president. The college has been supporting our program in the short term with temporary hires, for which we are grateful, but we believe it is in the best interests of both the department and the college to hire a permanent position,
and it is clear to us that this should be in the area of material culture and/or archaeology.

**Why Material Culture/Archaeology**

Nancy Wilkie’s retirement focuses attention on the uncertain future of the Archaeology concentration at Carleton generally, and in particular the essential place of the study of material culture in our major. To anticipate to some extent the findings of our current department review, our own discipline is evolving in the direction of more emphasis on material culture, and our department needs to respond. In our current hiring for a one-year position, we were struck by the number of extremely well-qualified young classicists with extensive experience in archaeological methods and the analysis of material culture. These candidates would be capable of teaching archaeological methodology for students interested in all areas of the world, but they would also offer content specifically useful for areas where our department (and the college) currently has gaps (ancient art, religion, architecture).

The Archaeology concentration remains very popular—Nancy had 24 students in the Methodology course (ARC 246) last term and our visiting Benedict professor has 28 students in her course on Pompeii and Vesuvius (CLAS 119). (Another new course on the ancient environment (CLAS 222) also has 25 students enrolled). Many different disciplines, however, favor a strong archaeological presence in the curriculum, including History, Art History, Geology, Religion, ENTS, and SOAN. In our conversations with several of these programs, they expressed strong support for the proposal we are making.

**Why Now**

We believe that by bringing someone with expertise in archaeology to campus this coming fall, we will further increase the demand and desirability of courses that focus on material culture in the college’s curriculum. Recent initiatives in visuality, quantitative reasoning, and geo-spatial reasoning have stimulated new courses, new ideas and new connections for faculty and students. The environment on campus, therefore, is particularly favorable to a permanent position in these areas.

Such a position also opens up possibilities for research collaboration with other faculty and students. We note particularly the desire our students have for hands-on experience excavating at actual sites. We anticipate that a tenure-track hire would greatly facilitate this possibility for our students. Furthermore, graduate programs are educating a new generation of archaeologists who are
able and eager to engage in public scholarship. This allows them to bring the benefits of archaeology to a broader audience by studying the local material culture and to provide further research opportunities for our undergraduates in the community.

We are open to further conversations about the most desirable profile for this position. But no matter how the position is ultimately described, we believe that it is crucial for the continued vitality of the Classics department and the contributions we are able to make to the college as a whole.