LINGUISTICS MAJOR

Program Director: Tonia Bleam, Ph.D.

The Linguistics Department offers courses on many aspects of the scientific study of language and an interdisciplinary major leading to a Bachelor of Arts.

Research in linguistics aims to discover how a person's linguistic capacity is represented in the mind, how that knowledge is acquired, what aspects are innate, and how language is processed in the mind and brain. Students learn how to address these questions through various sources of evidence, such as descriptions of individual languages, patterns of grammatical variation and invariance, the development of language in children, the mental processes of language in use, computational models of acquisition and processing, and patterns of physiological activity in the brain.

The major in Linguistics is designed for students who are primarily interested in human language per se, or in describing particular languages in a systematic and psychologically plausible way, or in using language as a tool to reveal some aspect of human mental capacities. Such a major provides useful preparation for further research in linguistics and cognitive science, as well as for professional programs in world languages, language teaching, communication, psychology, speech pathology, and artificial intelligence. Because of the emphasis placed on analytic thinking, scientific reasoning, and evidence-based argumentation, the linguistics major also prepares students for a broad range of careers outside of the language sciences.

Program Learning Outcomes

The Department of Linguistics B.A. program seeks to expose majors to fundamental questions about the nature of the human mind, using Language as a vehicle for examining this issue. The program aims to cultivate strong empirical research skills, data analysis, application of scientific methodology, and the ability to communicate clear, logical arguments. Through their coursework, students are exposed to data from a broad range of languages and dialects, leading to an understanding that all varieties are equally complex and rule-governed. By the time students complete the requirements for the major, they can expect to have mastered the following measurable learning outcomes:

1. Students demonstrate the ability to apply scientific methodology to data analysis and to develop effective argumentation skills.
2. Students demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate proposals in the field.
3. Students incorporate scientific writing style in essays, review papers, and research papers.
4. Students effectively and persuasively defend an analysis of (Western and non-Western as well as prestigious and marginalized varieties of) a language's phonological system
5. Students effectively and persuasively defend an analysis of (Western and non-Western as well as prestigious and marginalized varieties of) a language's syntactic system
6. Students recognize how the values, practices and policies of a society may privilege some dialects over others (without linguistic justification and often with discriminatory and harmful results) and recognize that one's version of a language reflects both their personal and social identities.

REQUIREMENTS

A grade of at least "C-" is required in all major courses. An overall GPA of 2.0 in the major is required for graduation. The Linguistics major consists of 39 credits: 24 credits of Linguistics Core classes plus 12 credits from one of the Tracks, as specified below.

Course	Title	Credits
Core Required of All Majors		
LING200	Introductory Linguistics	3
LING240	Language and Mind	3
LING311	Syntax I	3
LING321	Phonology I	3
Select two of the following:		6
LING312	Syntax II	
LING322	Phonology II	
LING320	Phonetics	
LING410	Grammar and Meaning	
LING440	Grammars and Cognition	
LING444	Child Language Acquisition	
Three 3xx-4xx level LING electives		9
Track		
Select one of the following tracks:		12
Grammars and Cognition Track		
Language Track		
Total Credits		**39**

Grammars and Cognition Track

Course	Title	Credits
PHIL170	Introduction to Symbolic Logic	3
LING350	Philosophy of Language	3
or PHIL360	Philosophy of Language	
Select two approved electives in LING, PSYC, HESP, PHIL, or CMSC		6
Total Credits		**12**

Language Track

Course	Title	Credits
12 credits of a single chosen language [1]		12
Total Credits		**12**

[1] At least 3 of the 12 credits must be at or above the 2xx level.

There are no requirements for support courses for the Linguistics major.

Students pursuing the major should review the academic benchmarks established for this program. See: www.4yearplans.umd.edu (http://www.4yearplans.umd.edu). Students will be periodically reviewed to insure they are meeting benchmarks and progressing to the degree. Students who fall behind program benchmarks are subject to special advising requirements and other interventions.

Other Requirements for the Major

- LING200 followed by LING240 must be taken before any other courses in the major. These courses serve as a gateway to the major.

A grade of "C-" or better is required in both courses before taking further courses in Linguistics. However, a grade of "B" or higher in LING240 is a relatively good predictor of continued success in the rest of the major (as courses become more difficult). Both courses are offered every semester.

- A grade of "C-" or better is required in prerequisite courses.
- After LING240, students should take LING311 (Syntax I) and LING321 (Phonology I), as they are prerequisites for other required courses. These courses can be taken together in the same semester. These courses are offered every semester (fall and spring).
- No more than 1 independent study or lab course (3 credits) can be used towards the three 3xx-4xx level LING electives (part of the LING core).
- 3xx-4xx courses beyond LING311 and LING321 are generally offered just once per year. Check Testudo to see when these are offered in a given year (either fall or spring).
- Optional courses for the major are not necessarily offered on a regular basis. Students should check with the undergraduate advisor to find out which courses will be offered and when.
- For the Language Track, the "12 credits of a single chosen language" must be courses that focus on language (and not, for example, history, literature or culture taught in the language).
- The "structure or history of the language" course is no longer required for the Language Track but such a course can be taken to count towards the 12 credits of the language.
- Note that courses cannot be double-counted for different requirements in the major. All of the "boxes" must be filled in by different courses such that you reach the required number of credits with all of the categories fulfilled.
- Electives for the Cognition Track must be approved by the linguistics advisor.

GRADUATION PLANS

Click here (https://www.arhu.umd.edu/academics/advising/academic-plans/) for roadmaps for graduation plans in the College of Arts and Humanities.

Additional information on developing a graduation plan can be found on the following pages:

- http://4yearplans.umd.edu
- the Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-advising/#success) section of this catalog