Linguistics

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Linguistics is the scientific study of human language. It seeks to understand and explain the properties of language in a clear and formal manner. Linguists document understudied and endangered languages, explore the consequences of language contact, measure language variation and change, investigate the structure of language, and analyze the construction of meaning.

Some of the main subfields of linguistics are phonetics (the physical properties of sounds), phonology (the grammar of sounds), morphology (the structure of words), syntax (the organization of phrases and sentences), semantics (meaning), and sociolinguistics (the interaction of language and society).

A Bachelor of Arts with a major in linguistics is available (with an honors option) as is a linguistics minor, both involving coursework in the various subfields.

The study of linguistics prepares students for careers which utilize insight into the workings of language including language instruction, translation and interpreting, speech pathology, anthropology, the reconstruction of prehistory, and computational fields related to the interaction of language and technology. Academic careers of linguistic research and teaching are also possible after further training at the graduate level.

In addition, a major in linguistics offers students a liberal education and develops verbal and analytical skills that are valuable in a variety of less directly related careers such as journalism, literary study, and the law.

The linguistics program is staffed by faculty from a number of MU departments. Supporting course work is offered in Anthropology, Black Studies, Classical Studies, Communication, Communication Science and Disorders, the College of Education, English, German and Russian Studies, Psychology, Philosophy, Romance Languages and Literatures, and South Asian Studies.

Although specialists in the field commonly know one or more foreign languages, such knowledge is complementary rather than essential.

Faculty

Professors: P. Weirich*, J. Zemke*, F. Zéphir*
Associate Professors: V. Carstens*, J. Goodman*, M. Gordon*, C. Horisk*, M. McGrath*, P. Robbins*, T. Kazic*
Assistant Professors: A. Alcazar*, M. Fagan*, J. Kramer*, M. Marlo*, M. Popescu*
Emeritus Faculty: L. Day*, N. L. Furbee*, D. E. Gulstad, B. L. Honeycutt, M-J Smythe, D. Watson, G. Youmans*

* Graduate Faculty Member - membership is required to teach graduate-level courses, chair master’s thesis committees, and serve on doctoral examination and dissertation committees.

Undergraduate

- BA in Linguistics (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/linguistics/BA-linguistics)
- Minor in Linguistics (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/linguistics/undergraduate-minor-linguistics)

Departmental Honors

A student wishing to graduate with honors in Linguistics must earn a 3.3 GPA in all courses and complete all the requirements for the BA in Linguistics. In addition, with the assistance of his/her honors thesis advisor, the student must develop, plan and conduct research on an independent project, normally while enrolled in LINGST 4991 (p. 1). A committee consisting of the thesis advisor and a second reader, to be selected by the advisor and the program chair, will examine the student on the resulting thesis of 25-40 pages in an oral exam held no later than the thirteenth week of the term during which the student expects to graduate. The second reader will be provided with a copy of the thesis at least two weeks before the examination. After completing any revisions that the exam committee recommends, the student will submit a final version of the thesis for linguistics program records and will then be recommended to the college of Arts and Science for a BA with Honors in Linguistics.

Graduate

- Graduate Minor in Linguistics (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/linguistics/grad-minor-linguistics)

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Chair of Linguistics: Vicki Carstens

A graduate minor in linguistics consists of at least 12 hours including two electives and two required courses: LINGST 7630 (Phonology) and LINGST 7640 (Syntax). Electives are to be drawn from our list of upper level linguistics classes (see linguistics.missouri.edu/courses).

Graduate degrees in linguistics are not offered but MA and PhD programs with emphasis in language and linguistics are available in some cooperating departments such as Anthropology, communication, English, Romance Languages and Literatures, and Philosophy).

The linguistics area program is staffed by faculty from various departments (see below). Supporting course work may be drawn from a range of units including Anthropology, Black Studies, Classical Studies, Communication, Communication Science and Disorders, the College of Education, English, German and Russian Studies, Psychology, Philosophy, Romance Languages and Literatures, and South Asian Studies.

Financial aid, when available, is arranged through the participating departments.
Cooperating Graduate Degree Programs

Anthropology (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/anthropology/#graduatetext)
Interested Anthropology and other graduate students may minor in Linguistics. Linguistics is an integral component of ethnographic research.

Communication (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/communication/#graduatetext)
In the Department of Communication, students learn to apply the study of communication to their professional and personal lives. Students may receive a MA, or PhD through this department.

Communication Science and Disorders (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/schoolofhealthprofessions/communicationscienceanddisorders/#graduatetext)
The discipline of Communication Science and Disorders encompasses the field of speech, language, and hearing science and the distinct but related professions of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. Students may receive a MA, or PhD through this department.

English (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/english/#graduatetext)
The English department offers MA and PhD degrees with an emphasis in English Language and Linguistics.

Philosophy (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/philosophy/#graduatetext)
Linguistics majors benefit by taking courses offered by the Philosophy Department and can focus on issues at the intersection of philosophy and linguistics.

Romance Languages and Literatures (http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/romancelanguages/#graduatetext)
The Department of Romance Languages and Literatures offers the MA with an emphasis on Language Teaching (MALT).