

# Linguistics, MA

Graduate programs in the Department of Linguistics emphasize theory and research. Students interested in non-university careers also may take courses in applied linguistics and other fields as an option in the MA program.

The University of Iowa Department of Linguistics has particular strengths in phonology, syntax, and second language acquisition (SLA).

The phonology curriculum emphasizes current theoretical perspectives, including optimality theory, and the collection, description, and interpretation of novel phonological and phonetic data. Courses feature extensive work in data analysis and problem solving, focusing on construction and evaluation of phonological theories, particularly in light of new empirical data.

The syntax curriculum includes the dual emphases of empirical and theoretical perspectives. It offers a variety of foundational courses that build analytic and argumentation skills, as well as specialized coursework on current issues in syntactic theory. The courses consist of intensive work in problem solving. They combine discovery and description of new linguistic data with exploration of the implications of such facts in testing and constructing syntactic theories.

The curriculum in second language acquisition includes courses that provide an overview and analysis of current SLA research. Work focuses on experimental research investigating the influence of the first language, environmental and contextual factors, and related topics.

## Learning Outcomes

The master's degree in linguistics is intended for two different student groups. The MA with the Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) focus is intended for students who wish to work as TESL professionals at the college or community college level. The MA degree targets students who want to pursue a PhD in linguistics or are interested in linguistics-related professional areas. Unless otherwise stated, the student learning outcomes are for both the MA degree and the MA degree with a TESL focus.

Students are expected to:

- be familiar with the basics of theoretical linguistic approaches to phonology and syntax, be able to analyze linguistic data using formal theoretical linguistics approaches, and be familiar with the basics of applied phonetics and approaches to multilingual language acquisition research;
- be familiar with the basics of empirical research in linguistics and be able to use appropriate software and methods to understand original research;
- be able to write a formal research paper in syntax and phonology demonstrating a critical evaluation of a particular problem or issue they have investigated;
- be familiar with the basics of multilingual language acquisition from a theoretical and empirical perspective;
- formulate a research project by the end of their third semester if they have articulated the goal of continuing to a PhD program in linguistics;
- possibly explore course options in areas related to their professional development if they are not planning on continuing to a PhD program in linguistics; and

- be able to teach English as a second language (ESL) to adult learners and understand the theory and practice behind ESL teaching and evaluation if they are TESL trained.

## Requirements

The Master of Arts program in linguistics requires a minimum of 37 s.h. of graduate credit. A student's advisor must approve all courses that count toward the degree. Students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.75.

A student with a linguistics background may waive up to 6 s.h. of coursework if the department determines that the student completed comparable work before enrolling in the program.

## Core Courses

All MA students complete the following set of required core courses in phonetics, phonology, syntax, and language acquisition (total of 22 s.h.).

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
LING:3005	Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics	3
LING:5000	Proseminar: Morphosyntax	1
LING:5010	Introduction to Syntax	3
LING:5020	Introduction to Phonology	3
LING:6010	Syntactic Theory	3
LING:6020	Phonological Theory	3
LING:6080	Topics in Second Language Acquisition	3
One of these:		
LING:6040	Linguistic Structures	3
LING:6050	Language Universals Linguistic Typology	3

## Electives

Students also complete 15 s.h. of Department of Linguistics coursework, which may include a 9 s.h. focus (e.g., teaching English as a second language).

## Admission

Applicants to the MA program in linguistics must submit an application to the Graduate College, including three letters of recommendation. Applications for admission should be submitted as early as possible for the following academic year.

Applicants whose first language is not English must submit official test scores to verify English proficiency. Applicants can verify English proficiency by submitting official test scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

## Financial Support

Applications should be received by Jan. 15 for the following academic year in order to have priority in consideration for financial aid. Applications received after Jan. 15 are

considered for remaining aid. Early submission of an application is strongly encouraged.

Applications for awards are considered only for students whose application for admission is complete.

## Career Advancement

A master's degree with teaching English as a second language (TESL) emphasis qualifies graduates to teach English as a second language in the United States or overseas. Unique teaching opportunities worth exploring include those with the Peace Corps and Teach For America.

A number of companies, such as Microsoft, Xerox, Apple, Hewlett-Packard, and other high-tech firms, regularly hire employees with linguistics degrees. Opportunities also exist for government work, for example, as a special agent linguist for the FBI.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.

## Academic Plans

### Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

### Linguistics, MA

Course	Title	Hours
<b>Academic Career</b>		
<b>Any Semester</b>		
37 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; all coursework including up to a maximum of 6 s.h. of graduate transfer credits require approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. <sup>a</sup>		
<b>Hours</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>First Year</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
LING:3005	Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics	3
LING:5000	Proseminar: Morphosyntax	1
LING:5010	Introduction to Syntax	3
Elective or Focus course <sup>b</sup>		3
<b>Hours</b>		<b>10</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
LING:5020	Introduction to Phonology	3
LING:6010	Syntactic Theory	3
Elective or Focus course <sup>b</sup>		3
<b>Hours</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Second Year</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
LING:6020	Phonological Theory	3
LING:6080	Topics in Second Language Acquisition	3
Elective or Focus course <sup>b</sup>		3
<b>Hours</b>		<b>9</b>

### Spring

LING:6040	Linguistic Structures	3
or LING:6050	or Language Universals Linguistic Typology	
Elective or Focus course <sup>b</sup>		3
Elective or Focus course <sup>b</sup>		3
<b>Hours</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>37</b>

<sup>a</sup> Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.

<sup>b</sup> Complete 15 s.h. which may include a 9 s.h. focus. Work with faculty advisor to determine coursework and sequence.