

Linguistics, MA

The Master of Arts in linguistics emphasizes theory and research. It prepares students for academic and non-academic careers.

The Linguistics program in the Department of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures, and Cultures has particular strengths in phonology, syntax, and language acquisition.

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 the 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 the discovery and description of new linguistic data with the exploration of the implications of such facts in testing and constructing syntactic theories.

The curriculum in language acquisition includes courses that provide an overview and analysis of current second language acquisition 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 students who want to pursue a PhD in linguistics or are interested in linguistics-related professional areas.

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 articulatory and acoustic 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, phonology, or second language acquisition while demonstrating a critical evaluation of a particular problem or issue they have investigated;
- be familiar with the basics of multilingual language acquisition from both theoretical and empirical perspectives;
- 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; and
- explore course options in areas related to their professional development if they are not planning on continuing to a PhD program in linguistics.