

College of Arts and Science

Linguistics Program

Linguistics, in the general sense, is the study of human language. It seeks to understand and explain the structural properties of human language in a clear and formal manner. It is also concerned with the study of language origin, history and use. Additionally, it deals with the social and psychological factors that govern language behavior. Linguistic issues permeate the workplace, the political arena, the sphere of education, our laws

and almost every facet of our society. A major in linguistics offers students a liberal education and prepares them for graduate study in linguistics or related fields. It provides the needed knowledge base and develops the verbal and analytical skills that are valuable in a wide variety of professional careers, particularly those related to the humanities and the social and behavioral sciences.

Our Strengths

MU offers an undergraduate major as well as a minor in linguistics. One of the major strengths of our program is its interdisciplinary nature. Many departments contribute courses to our linguistics program. Contributing departments in the College of Arts and Science include English, anthropology, communication, romance languages and literatures, philosophy and psychological sciences. In addition, the Department of Communication Science and Disorders in the School of Health Professions regularly offers core courses in the linguistics program.

Faculty members in our affiliated departments are nationally and internationally known for their research and significant contributions to their fields. In addition, many members of our interdisciplinary faculty have won some of the most prestigious awards given by MU and by their professional organizations. The linguistics program is always housed in one of the contributing departments: **currently it is with the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, where many of our students take classes.**

Personal Attention

The linguistics program is very accessible and centrally located. It provides one-on-one advising to all students interested in pursuing a degree in linguistics, or in combining linguistics with another field of study. Moreover, students will find in our affiliated departments experienced faculty who are more than willing to discuss particular areas of interest, undergraduate research projects, additional educational opportunities, work and career opportunities as well as graduate education. For example, our linguistics majors, thanks to faculty encouragement, have participated in the Linguistic Society of America Summer Institutes. The linguistics faculty is here to serve students, and it prides itself on always creating opportunities for students to excel and succeed.

Majoring in Linguistics

Students in our program take classes in all the core components of the field of linguistics. These include phonetics/phonology, syntax, language structure, historical linguistics, semantics and language variation (sociolinguistics, dialectology). This gives students a broad knowledge upon which they can build should they decide to pursue an advanced degree in linguistics or a related field. In addition, the combination of classes in these various subfields of linguistics familiarizes students with a wide range of interdisciplinary subjects, a familiarity that is essential to meaningful and productive participation in society.

Degree Requirements

The linguistics program offers an undergraduate major as well as a minor.

Major

Students must satisfy all general education, basic skill, and foundation requirements established for a bachelor of arts degree (BA) in the College of Arts and Science.

Students must have a minimum of 21 credits in linguistics. These must be distributed among the following categories:

- an introductory course
- a course in language structure
- a course in phonology or phonetics
- a course in syntax
- a course in semantics
- a course in language variation
- a capstone course

At least 12 credits must be in courses numbered 3000 or above.

Minor

Consistent with general guidelines for a minor, the minor in linguistics consists of 15 credits, including an introductory course, and at least 6 credits in courses numbered 3000 or above.

Honors

A program leading to a BA with honors in linguistics offers talented students the opportunity to study in depth an area of particular interest in theoretical or applied linguistics with an individual professor who is an expert in the student's chosen area. An honors thesis is required of students wanting to graduate with honors in linguistics.

Optional Double Major or Dual Degree

Because of its interdisciplinary nature, a degree in linguistics can be easily combined with a double major in the College of Arts and Science or a dual degree in another college. This allows students to design an overall program of study that matches several of their interests. Popular combinations include linguistics and anthropology; linguistics and a foreign language; linguistics and English; linguistics and communication and linguistics and communication science and disorders.

Advising

The program's chair provides academic advising to all majors and minors. This professor helps students plan their programs of study and their course schedules. In addition, he/she provides information about educational and career opportunities available to majors. The program's chair is available during posted office hours. Therefore there is really no need for students to wait and schedule appointments to discuss schedules, fill out forms, or get information about educational opportunities and study-abroad programs. In addition, general academic advising is also available through the College of Arts and Science, located in 107 Lowry Hall, and through the Student Success Center.

Value of a Degree in Linguistics

A degree in linguistics prepares students for a variety of options including graduate education and many different employment opportunities. Disciplines where a linguistics degree is useful include education, psychology, speech pathology, sociology,

anthropology, communication, law and politics. Because a degree in linguistics is firmly grounded in the humanities and the social and behavioral sciences, graduates have access to a wide range of employment opportunities in the private or government sectors, public services as well as in the foreign services.

Missouri Admission

The University admits students on the basis of their chances for success here. The main criteria are the high-school curriculum, test scores and class rank.

Applicants are expected to have followed a college-preparatory program with at least 17 units of credit as follows (one unit equals one year):

Four units of English

Two units emphasizing composition or writing skills are required; one unit may be in speech.

Four units of mathematics

Acceptable courses include algebra I, geometry, algebra II, pre-calculus/trigonometry/analytic geometry, calculus and math analysis. Courses such as computer math, programming, consumer math and accounting are not acceptable.

Three units of science

At least one must be a laboratory course, such as earth science, biology, chemistry or physics. Courses such as general science and agricultural science are not acceptable.

Three units of social studies

Examples are world history, American government and principles of democracy.

Two units in a single foreign language

One unit in fine arts

How to Apply

For information about linguistics, call, write or e-mail the program's chairperson:

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University of Missouri

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E-mail: CarstensV@missouri.edu

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For information about applying to MU, call or write:

Office of Admissions

230 Jesse Hall

Columbia, MO 65211-1300

Phone: 573-882-7786

800-225-6075 (toll free in Missouri and Illinois)

Fax: 573-882-7887

E-mail: mu4u@missouri.edu

Web: www.missouri.edu

The University of Missouri does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, disability or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era. For more information, call Human Resource Services at 573-882-4256 or the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights.

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