https://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/

Degree Types: PhD

The Department of Linguistics offers a PhD program, providing students with a solid background in linguistic theory with an emphasis on empirical and experimental methodologies. After receiving training in basic linguistic theory, students have considerable flexibility in designing their own courses of study. We encourage students to pursue research topics that span more than one subfield of linguistics.

The active involvement of over 20 affiliated faculty (https://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/people/affiliated-faculty) in other departments and schools provides a wide range of interdisciplinary opportunities (https://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/graduate/interdisciplinary-programs) including courses, colloquia, and research involvement.

Degrees Offered

- Linguistics PhD (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/linguistics/linguistics-phd)

Linguistics Courses

LING 300-0 Topics in Linguistics (1 Unit)
Topics in linguistic theory. Content varies. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

LING 311-0 Child Language (1 Unit)
Introduction to first-language acquisition. How infants and children learn the grammar (structure of sounds, words, and sentences) of their native language. Innate and environmental factors in linguistic development. Emphasis on experimental and corpus-based methods of inquiry. Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 315-0 Experimental Approaches to Word Form Processing (1 Unit)
Experimental techniques and theoretical models for analyzing perception and production of spoken and written word forms. Access to the mental lexicon in perception and production. Prerequisite: LING 250-0 or consent of instructor. Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 316-0 Experimental Syntax (1 Unit)
Experimental methodologies and theories of sentence comprehension. Studies of syntactic structures in sentence comprehension. Prerequisite: LING 260-0 or consent of instructor. Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 317-0 Experimental Pragmatics (1 Unit)
Experimental methodologies for analyzing the role of context in utterance production and comprehension. Prerequisite: LING 270-0 or consent of instructor. Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 320-0 Sociolinguistics (1 Unit)
Overview of classic and contemporary work in sociolinguistics. How quantitative methods in linguistics can be coupled with social theoretic insights to engage questions in linguistic variation and change, stylistic practice, how language reflects, reinforces, or contests social inequalities.

Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 321-0 Bilingualism (1 Unit)
Cognitive, linguistic, neuroscientific, and computational aspects of the acquisition, representation, and processing of two or more languages in an individual’s mind/brain. Prerequisite: LING 250-0, LING 260-0, or LING 270-0. Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 330-0 Research Methods in Linguistics (1 Unit)
Methods of linguistic data collection, management, and analysis with an emphasis on the use of computational, experimental, and statistical methods. Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 334-0 Introduction to Computational Linguistics (1 Unit)
Hands-on introduction to computational methods in empirical linguistic analysis and natural language processing. Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 336-0 Words, Networks and the Internet (1 Unit)
Word networks and language on the Internet. Python tools for exploring spam, search engines, and social media. Prerequisite: LING 330-0, LING 334-0, LING 361-0, or equivalent background. Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 341-0 Language Typology (1 Unit)
A comparison of varying and universal features of the world’s languages. Prerequisite: LING 250-0, LING 260-0, or LING 270-0. Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 342-0 Structure of Various Languages (1 Unit)
Phonological, morphological, or syntactic structure of a particular language. May be repeated for credit with change in language. Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 350-0 Fundamentals of Laboratory Phonology (1 Unit)
Articulatory and acoustic phonetics. Syllable structure, phonotactics, morpho-phonological alternation, stress. Fundamentals of experimental design and data analysis. Prerequisite: LING 250-0 or consent of instructor. Natural Sciences Distro Area

LING 360-0 Fundamentals of Syntax (1 Unit)
Fundamental principles of theoretical syntax. Phrase structure, argument structure, movement operations. Emphasis on argumentation, hypothesis formation and testing, and analytic methods. Prerequisite: LING 260-0 or consent of instructor. Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 361-0 Morphology (1 Unit)
Issues in theoretical morphology. The internal structure of words. Linguistic and psycholinguistic findings about the representation and processing of word structures. Prerequisite: LING 250-0, LING 260-0, or LING 270-0. Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 370-0 Fundamentals of Meaning (1 Unit)
Theoretical approaches to the study of linguistic meaning. Topics include word meaning, argument and event structure, sentence meaning, truth conditions, and inference types (e.g., entailment, implicature, presupposition). Prerequisite: LING 270-0 or consent of instructor. Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 372-0 Pragmatics (1 Unit)
Introduction to extra-semantic meaning, focusing on the role of context in utterance production and interpretation. Topics include the semantics-
Linguistics

pragmatics boundary, implicature, presupposition, speech acts, reference, and information structure.
Prerequisite: LING 250-0, LING 260-0, or LING 270-0.

LING 373-0 Implicature (1 Unit)
An interdisciplinary approach to the study of extra-semantic meaning, drawing on primary readings from linguistics, philosophy, and psychology. Topics include conversational and conventional implicature, explication, implicature, and the semantics-pragmatics boundary.
Prerequisite: LING 370-0, LING 372-0, or consent of instructor.

Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 380-0 Spoken English for Non-Native Speakers (0 Unit)
Conversational English addressing all oral language skills; primarily for international graduate students who are nonnative speakers of English. Content varies.

LING 381-0 Written English for Non-native Speakers (0 Unit)
Written argumentation skills and all aspects of academic writing; primarily for international graduate students who are nonnative speakers of English.

LING 400-0 Seminar in Linguistics (1 Unit)
Theoretical issues of current concern to linguistics. Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

LING 450-1 Laboratory Phonology (1 Unit)
Prerequisite: LING 350-0 or permission of instructor.

LING 450-2 Laboratory Phonology II (1 Unit)
Prerequisite: LING 450-1 or permission of instructor.

LING 451-0 Proseminar in Sound Structure (1 Unit)
Detailed study of a particular empirical issue (e.g., intonation, syllable structure) or theory (e.g., Optimality Theory, Articulatory Phonology) in phonology/phonetics.
Prerequisites: LING 450-2 or permission of instructor.

LING 452-0 Seminar in Sound Structure (1 Unit)
Advanced topics in phonological theory.
Prerequisites: LING 450-2 or permission of instructor.

LING 460-1 Syntactic Analysis I (1 Unit)
Formal syntactic analysis within generative grammar, focusing on universal and language-specific properties, argumentation. Topics include phrase structure, sentential complementation, anaphora, island constraints, and the lexicon.
Prerequisites: LING 360-0 or permission of instructor.

LING 460-2 Syntactic Analysis II (1 Unit)
Continuation of LING 460-1.
Prerequisites: LING 460-1 or permission of instructor.

LING 461-0 Proseminar in Syntax (1 Unit)
Detailed study of a particular empirical issue (e.g., clause structure, ellipsis, pronoun/antecedent relations) or theory (e.g., the Minimalist Program, Lexical-Functional Grammar) in syntax.
Prerequisites: LING 460-2 or permission of instructor.

LING 462-0 Seminar in Syntax (1 Unit)
Advanced topics in syntactic theory.
Prerequisites: LING 460-2 or permission of instructor.

LING 470-1 Semantic Analysis I (1 Unit)
Formal analysis of linguistic meaning, with a focus on compositional and contextual aspects of interpretation. Topics include the syntax-semantics interface, quantification, intensionality, anaphora, and dynamic semantics.
Prerequisites: LING 370-0 or permission of instructor.

LING 470-2 Semantic Analysis II (1 Unit)
Continuation of LING 470-1.
Prerequisites: LING 470-1 or permission of instructor.

LING 471-0 Proseminar in Semantics (1 Unit)
Detailed study of a particular empirical issue (e.g., presupposition, quantification, aspect, conditionals) or theory (e.g., dynamic semantics, discourse representation theory) in semantics/pragmatics.
Prerequisites: LING 470-2 or permission of instructor.

LING 472-0 Seminar in Semantics (1 Unit)
Focused study of current issues in formal semantics and their implications for linguistic theory.
Prerequisites: LING 470-2 or permission of instructor.

LING 473-0 Seminar in Pragmatics (1 Unit)
Advanced topics in pragmatic theory.
Prerequisites: Permission of instructor.

LING 480-0 American Academic Culture for Non-Native Speakers of English (0 Unit)
This course explores effective academic communication in the American undergraduate classroom through observation, analysis, and practice. The emphasis is on developing students’ oral English proficiency while preparing them for success as instructors and teaching assistants. Students will explore communication skills such as: effective lecturing/presenting, leading classroom discussions, leading in-class activities, and presenting administrative information to students. More generally, students in this course will receive guidance in preparing for The Graduate School’s live teaching demonstration assessment. Those who earn a “satisfactory” grade in the course will be eligible to participate in this demonstration, which is one means of fulfilling The Graduate School’s English proficiency requirement.

LING 482-0 Individual Speech and Language Instruction for Nonnative Speakers of English (0 Unit)
Indicual language study with a trained tutor for the purpose of increasing nonnative speakers' ability to communicate effectively in English in academic and everyday contexts.

LING 483-0 Supported Online Speech Training for Nonnative Speakers of English (0 Unit)
Native Accent Speech Training for Nonnative Speakers of English. Online speech training for the purpose of increasing nonnative speakers' intelligibility in oral English.

LING 489-0 Applied Linguistics for English Language Teaching (1 Unit)
This course provides a theoretical and practical knowledge base for teaching English as a second or foreign language. Students will first read and discuss research from the fields of second language acquisition, applied linguistics, and second language pedagogy to become conversant with present and past issues in the field. Students will learn best practices for assessment of second language skills and create course plans for differentiated instruction in individual and group settings, using their own teaching materials and approach. They will observe group classes; lead discussions on current applied linguistics research; complete linguistic analysis and learning goals for individual adult English language learners; apply and present linguistic and pedagogical theory for presentation to non-linguists; develop and conduct group activities. During the SPEAK training sessions and lab sessions, students will become trained to rate English proficiency using the SPEAK test.
Prerequisite: LING 350-0.

LING 499-0 Independent Study (1-3 Units)
SEE DEPT FOR SECTION AND PERMISSION NUMBERS.

LING 500-0 Research Seminar (1 Unit)
Forum for presenting and discussing student research; for second-year graduate students in linguistics working on the research paper requirement. Pass/no-credit registration required.

LING 519-0 Responsible Conduct of Research Training (0 Unit)

LING 590-0 Research (1-3 Units)
SEE DEPT FOR SECTION AND PERMISSION NUMBERS.