

LINGUISTICS

Degree Types: PhD

The Department of Linguistics (<https://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/>) 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.

Additional resources:

- Department website (<https://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/>)
- Program handbook(s)

Degrees Offered

- Linguistics BA/MA (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/linguistics/linguistics-bach-mast/>)
- Linguistics PhD (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/linguistics/linguistics-phd/>)

Learning objective(s)/Students should be able to...

- Develop original contributions to theories of human language to enable novel research projects
- Develop experimental methods
- Develop computational and statistical methodologies in order to acquire basic research skills
- Communicate their research outcome to the research community
- Articulate broader impacts of their research
- Create and communicate professional development plan

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 312-0 Experimental Sociolinguistics (1 Unit)

Experimental approaches to the social meaning of language. Discussion of sociolinguistic research questions best suited to the use of experimental methods. Investigation of theoretical and methodological contributions of experimental work to sociolinguistic theory. Social inferences based on language, social expectations' influence on linguistic perception, roles of experiences, stereotypes and attitudes on language, awareness and control in sociolinguistic perception.

Prerequisite: LING 220 or 250; graduate standing or consent of instructor.
Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity

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: any 200 level course in linguistics.

Advanced Expression Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl

LING 316-0 Experimental Syntax (1 Unit)

Experimental methodologies and theories of sentence comprehension. Studies of syntactic structures in sentence comprehension.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics.

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. Taught with PSYCH 460-0.

Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics 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.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics; graduate standing or consent of instructor.

Advanced Expression Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity

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: any 200 level course in linguistics.

Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl

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.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing or consent of instructor.

Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 331-0 Text Processing for Linguists (1 Unit)

A practical introduction to programming and the analysis of natural language text for students with little-to-no programming background. Students will learn Unix command line tools, basic programming in Python, concepts like abstraction and decomposition, how to clean and organize linguistic datasets, and methods from computational linguistics. In their final project, students curate and analyze a new dataset.

Formal Studies 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. Topics include language modeling, text classification, linguistic annotation, and computational semantics. Students will implement and apply computational models to real linguistic datasets, and conclude the course with a final project.

Prerequisites: COMP_SCI 110-0 or LING 331-0, or consent of instructor. Programming experience required.

Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 341-0 Language Typology (1 Unit)

A comparison of varying and universal features of the world's languages. Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing or consent of instructor.

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. Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing or consent of instructor.

Formal Studies Distro Area

LING 350-0 Fundamentals of Laboratory Phonology (1 Unit)

Sound patterns of diverse languages and their expression in articulatory and acoustic phonetics. Syllable structure, phonotactics, morpho-phonological alternation, stress. Fundamentals of laboratory methods and the quantitative analysis of speech data.

Prerequisite: any 200-level Linguistics course or consent of instructor.

Natural Sciences Distro Area Natural Sciences Foundational Discipline

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.

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: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing 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-pragmatics boundary, implicature, presupposition, speech acts, reference, and information structure.

Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics or consent of instructor.

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, explicature, implicature, and the semantics-pragmatics boundary.

Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics or consent of instructor.

Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area

LING 380-0 Spoken English for Nonnative Speakers (0 Unit)

Conversational English addressing all oral language skills; primarily for international graduate students and postdoctoral trainees who are nonnative speakers of English, or native speakers of an English dialect not commonly used in the 50 US states. Content varies.

LING 381-0 Written English for Nonnative Speakers (0 Unit)

Written argumentation skills and all aspects of academic writing; primarily for international graduate students and postdoctoral trainees who are nonnative speakers of English, or native speakers of an English dialect not commonly used in the 50 US states. Content varies.

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 420-0 Sociolinguistic Theory and Analysis (1 Unit)

Foundations of sociolinguistic theory and analysis. How quantitative study of linguistic variation can be coupled with social theory to engage questions in linguistic variation and change, indexicality and social meaning, stylistic practice, language and identities, language socialization, multi-modality of communication, and how language reflects, reinforces, or contests social inequalities.

LING 450-1 Laboratory Phonology I (1 Unit)

Sounds and sound patterns of human languages examined in terms of their cognitive representations, physical expression in speech articulation and perception, and in the cognitive processing of spoken words and phrases in speech production and perception. Topics considered from contemporary theoretical and experimental perspectives.

Prerequisite: prior coursework in phonetics and phonology, 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 450-0 or permission of instructor.

LING 452-0 Seminar in Sound Structure (1 Unit)

Advanced topics in phonetics and phonological theory.

Prerequisites: LING 450-1 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 Semantics and Pragmatics (1 Unit)

Analysis of linguistic meaning, with a focus on both compositional (semantic) and contextual (pragmatic) aspects of interpretation. Topics include quantification, focus, presupposition, and implicature. Topics are considered from theoretical, experimental, and psycholinguistic perspectives.

Prerequisites: prior coursework in semantics/pragmatics, 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 470-1 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 470-1 or permission of instructor.

LING 473-0 Seminar in Pragmatics (1 Unit)

Advanced topics in pragmatic theory.

Prerequisite: Consent 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)

Individualized language instruction: one-on-one appointments with an instructor to support the learner's 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)

Supported online speech and language training is provided through individual work with various software applications for language learning, and is supported by optional in-person drop-in sessions and feedback from the instructor.

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.