Linguistics, M.A.

The Department of Linguistics admits students for the Ph.D. degree in linguistics, and awards a master of arts degree to students in a UW–Madison Ph.D. program upon the completion of the M.A. requirements. Students admitted to the linguistics Ph.D. program must attend the department orientation and must consult with the chair in person by the beginning of classes. All students proposing to minor in linguistics must also consult with the chair, who is the minor advisor, prior to beginning the minor.

The department focuses on research in formal theories of language (encompassing cross-linguistic studies in syntax, phonology, and morphology) and American Indian languages. Other specializations, including historical-comparative linguistics or articulatory and experimental phonetics, may be created by means of interdepartmental study. Students consult with their graduate advisors in establishing their areas of specialization and in working out a coherent program. Applied linguistic studies such as the theory and practice of language teaching or the history and structure of a particular language or language family are handled in other departments, or may be assembled as a program of individual study.

The department maintains a phonetics laboratory for teaching and research in experimental and acoustic phonetics, and also maintains a specialized library collection in the Graduate Reading Room, 1151 Van Hise Hall.

The linguistics graduate student handbook is available online on the program’s website (http://vanhise.lss.wisc.edu/ling/?q=node/15).

FUNDING

The department currently supports teaching assistantships for LINGUIS 101 Human Language, usually awarded to graduate students after their first year of study. Project assistantships are often available from both inside and outside the department. Advanced Opportunity Fellowships are possible for targeted students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. A small number of fellowships are available and are administered through the Graduate School. TA appointments in other departments, for instance in language departments or in the English as a second language program, are sometimes possible based on a student’s skill set, since being a student in those departments is not a condition of employment.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.A.

MINIMUM GRADUATE DEGREE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

30 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE RESIDENCE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

16 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE COURSEWORK (50%) REQUIREMENT

All linguistics courses must be completed in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle). This will be a total of at least 24 credits out of 30.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: GRADUATE WORK FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 9 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree or earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNDERGRADUATE

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 9 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED

Four 300-level linguistic courses; two 500-level linguistics courses; Linguistics 800 Research Methods and Materials; one additional 500+ level linguistics course; and two additional approved courses. Contact program for list of specific courses.

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT

Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0.

OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS

Students must maintain a GPA of 3.67 in substantive courses taken in the Department of Linguistics after the third semester. Student must complete the required courses with a GPA of 3.25 to earn the M.A. degree.

PROBATION POLICY

Probation is a warning to a student who is not making satisfactory progress in the graduate program of the linguistics department. Departmental probation for grades or failure to make satisfactory progress lasts for one academic year (two consecutive semesters), while probation for an unsatisfactory prelim paper or unfinished Incompletes lasts for one semester.
If a student on probation clears up the problem that led to probation within the time period allotted, nothing else happens, and the student can continue with the program.

If the student does not resolve the problem (e.g. raise the GPA or successfully complete a prelim), the student is dropped from the program at the end of the probationary period.

**ADVISOR / COMMITTEE**

Every graduate student must have an official faculty advisor. New students are usually assigned to the chair by default, unless they come with the intention of working with a particular faculty member. By the end of the first year, students must decide whom they would like to work with, and must ask that person if they are willing to serve as advisor. If the faculty member agrees, the student is responsible for having the faculty member sign the blue advisor agreement form, and for making sure that it is placed in the student’s file. All permanent faculty members in the department (including affiliated faculty but excluding visiting faculty) may serve as advisors. Faculty from other departments may not serve as official advisors, even though they may co-chair committees.

Every faculty member has the right to refuse to become a student’s advisor. Every graduate student has the right to choose any faculty member as advisor, so long as the faculty member agrees. Students should also feel free to change advisors at any time, without fear of offending a faculty member. If a student changes advisors, a new advisor agreement form must be signed and filed, and the previous advisor must be notified by the student in writing.

The advisor guides the student in the choice of appropriate courses, in the planning of prelims and the dissertation, in choosing prelim committees and the dissertation committee, and in other professional matters. Students are reminded, however, that the fulfillment of departmental requirements is ultimately the student’s responsibility.

Each semester, the student must consult in person with the advisor about courses for the following semester. Registration is blocked until this is done, and is only unblocked when the student turns in the relevant form to the department, signed by the advisor.

**ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS**

Submit and defend on prelim paper by the end of the fourth semester. Contact the program for further details.

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

The prelim paper must be completed by the end of the fourth semester.

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

Knowledge of two languages is required. One must be English. The language requirements can be satisfied in multiple ways and the program should be contacted directly for further details.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Articulates, critiques, or elaborates the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry or schools of practice in the field of linguistics.
- Identifies sources of data and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of linguistics.
- Demonstrates understanding of linguistics in a historical, social, or global context.
- Selects and/or utilizes the most appropriate methodologies and practices.
- Evaluates or synthesizes information pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of linguistics.
- Communicates clearly in ways appropriate to the field of linguistics.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

- Recognizes and applies principles of ethical and professional conduct.

**PEOPLE**

**Faculty:** Professors Li, Macaulay, Macken, Raimy (Chair), Valentine