Linguistics

Linguistics is the study of all aspects of human language: how languages make it possible to transmit ideas and feelings; how and why languages are similar and different; how we develop different styles and dialects; what will be required for computers to understand and produce spoken language; and how languages are used in everyday communication as well as in formal settings. Linguists try to figure out what it is that speakers know and do by observing the structure of languages, the way children learn language, slips of the tongue, conversations, storytelling, the acoustics of sound waves and the way people’s brains react when they hear speech or read. Linguists also reconstruct prehistoric languages, and try to deduce the principles behind their evolution into the thousands of languages of the world today.

Purpose of the MA Program

The goal of the MA program in linguistics is to provide students with sufficient knowledge of linguistics to enable them to work in industry and organizations where knowledge of linguistics helps in problem solving. The program also helps students determine in a relatively short time whether they want to make research in linguistics a lifelong career and prepares students who decide to do so to apply to the PhD program at CU or at other institutions.

The main component of the MA program is 30 credits of courses (at least 24 of them in linguistics). Students may also choose to write an MA thesis. Students on both the thesis plan and non-thesis plan must take and pass the comprehensive exam in the third or fourth semester of study in order to receive the MA degree. By meeting additional requirements, MA students may also obtain the MA with a certificate in cognitive science, human language technology or culture, language and social practice. Students enrolled in the MA program for TESOL professionals (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) have a course of study divided between general linguistics and TESOL, including a practicum. For more information, visit the department’s The MA Program in Linguistics for TESOL Professionals (https://www.colorado.edu/linguistics/current-students/graduates/ma-program-linguistics-tesol-professionals) webpage.

Purpose of the MS Program

The program is intended to provide students with a solid background in both theoretical linguistics and computer science. Graduates of the program will be specialists in the application of computers to the processing of natural languages, such as English, Chinese, Arabic and Urdu. The field of computational linguistics, also known as text analytics, natural language processing and informatics, is burgeoning and has become critical to the success of mainstream global businesses who compete for employees qualified to address these needs. The interdisciplinary nature of CLASIC is a significant market strength, because success in this developing field of natural language processing requires a strong background in both linguistics and computer science. The training will prepare students for careers in predictive text messaging, search engines, question-answering, interactive virtual agents and machine translation.

CLASIC students will complete a two-year degree (32 credits of approved graduate study in linguistics and computer science), including a 2-credit capstone project that will run in conjunction with an internship or CU based research project. As part of the capstone, students will be evaluated by their employer or industry project manager. Students will prepare a technical report on the completed project that the program directors and project leader will jointly evaluate. For more information, visit the department’s Computational Linguistics (CLASIC) MS (https://www.colorado.edu/linguistics/current-students/graduates/computational-linguistics-clasic-ms) webpage.

Purpose of the PhD Program

The goal of the linguistics doctoral program is to prepare graduates to design and conduct original, empirically based research within a theoretical framework. Doctoral students prepare for careers in academic research and teaching or applied work in industry or other organizations. We encourage doctoral students to begin engaging in research projects early, as these will contribute to developing the research program that will lead to the thesis project. Early projects not only lead to preliminary exam topics and/or publishable papers, but also enable students to pilot methods that will be usable for the dissertation project. Early projects may be extensions of coursework and may involve a faculty advisor other than the thesis advisor.

Doctoral students complete a core of required courses that provide a firm foundation in linguistic theory and methods. These courses are supplemented by advanced courses and individual work related to an area of specialization in a field where this department offers research strengths (e.g., description of Native American and Chadic (Central African) languages, sociolinguistics, interaction and grammar, computational semantics, psycholinguistics, first-language acquisition, phonetics, phonology, functionally-oriented syntax). Doctoral students may complete the CLASP or human language technology certificates. Additionally, students may apply to pursue a joint PhD in linguistics and cognitive science.

Course codes for this program are LING and ESLG.

Master’s Degrees

- Computational Linguistics - Master of Science (MS) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/interdisciplinary-programs/computational-linguistics-master-science-ms)
- Linguistics - Master of Arts (MA) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/linguistics/linguistics-master-arts-ma)

Doctoral Degree

- Linguistics - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/linguistics/linguistics-doctor-philosophy-phd)

Certificate

- Cognitive Science - Graduate Certificate (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/cognitive-science/cognitive-science-graduate-certificate)
- Culture, Language and Social Practice - Graduate Certificate (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/linguistics/culture-language-social-practice-graduate-certificate)
- Human Language Technology - Graduate Certificate (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/cognitive-science/human-language-technology-graduate-certificate)
Faculty

While many faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate students, some instruct students at the undergraduate level only. For more information, contact the faculty member’s home department.

Bell, Alan  
Professor Emeritus

Cowell, James Andrew (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_107090)  
Professor; PhD, University of California-Berkeley

Fox, Barbara (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_106066)  
Professor; PhD, University of California-Los Angeles

Frajzyngier, Zygmunt (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_104000)  
Professor; PhD, University of California-Berkeley

Hall, Kira (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_123111)  
Associate Professor, PhD, University of California-Berkeley

Hulden, Mans Elis (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_154602)  
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Arizona

Menn, Lise  
Professor Emeritus

Michaelis-Cummings, Laura A (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_105599)  
Professor; PhD, University of California-Berkeley

Narasimhan, Bhuvaneswari (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_144863)  
Associate Professor; PhD, Boston University

Palmer, Martha (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_138162)  
Professor; PhD, Univ of Edinburgh (Scotland)

Rood, David (http://www.colorado.edu/linguistics/faculty/rood)  
Professor Emeritus

Scarborough, Rebecca Anne (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_134741)  
Associate Professor; PhD, University of California-Los Angeles

Shay, Maire Erin Jean (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_110594)  
Asst Professor Adjunct

Taylor, Allan R.  
Professor Emeritus

Thomas-Ruzic, Maria L (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_143443)  
Senior Instructor

Courses

LING 5030 (3) Linguistic Phonetics  
Introduces practical and theoretical aspects of phonetics. Provides training in recognition and production of speech sounds, and instruction on fundamentals of articulatory, acoustic, and auditory phonetics.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 5200 (3) Introduction to Computational Corpus Linguistics  
Covers computer methods for doing linguistics with on-line corpora. Includes extensive introduction (with lab) to the Python programming language, UNIX corpus tools, concordance programs, syntactic treebanks, propbanks, and corpora for discourse and phonology research.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 5300 (3) Research in Psycholinguistics  
After a general introduction to issues and research methods in psycholinguistics (language production and comprehension, language and cognition, language acquisition), several major current research topics, such as models of speech production and theories of brain specialization for language, are explored.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  
Recommended: Prerequisite at least one graduate-level course in LING, PSYC or CSCI.

LING 5410 (3) Phonology  
Studies sound systems of language. Introduces both principles of organization of sound systems and major kinds of phonological structures found worldwide. Provides extensive practice in applying phonological principles to data analysis.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 5030.

LING 5420 (3) Morphology and Syntax  
Introduces principles of word formation and sentence structure. Covers major morphological and syntactic structures found in the world’s languages, and methods for describing grammatical structures, and includes practice in analyzing data from a variety of languages.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: LING 4420  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 5430 (3) Semantics and Pragmatics  
Explores fundamental concepts of semantics and pragmatics, including theories of communication and meaning, representation, conversational implications, speech acts, and discourse structure.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 5420.

LING 5570 (3) Introduction to Diachronic Linguistics  
Familiarizes students with terminology, methods, and theories dealing with phenomena of language change through time.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 5410.

LING 5610 (3) English Structure for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages  
Description of morphological and syntactic categories and structures of English.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: LING 4610  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 5620 (3) Teaching ESL Pronunciation  
Examines the phonetics and phonology of American English (including prosody) and explores techniques for teaching pronunciation skills to non-native speakers. Treats both general issues and specific problems for students from particular language backgrounds.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 3100 or LING 5030 and LING 5410.
LING 5630 (3) Methods and Materials for Teaching English as an Additional Language
Provides an overview of methods and materials for teaching English as an additional language, along with opportunities for students to observe, discuss and analyze these in relation to language teaching principles, linguistic considerations, and global and local contexts. Aimed primarily at the teaching of English to nonnative speaking adults, the course also addresses second and foreign language teaching generally.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Recommended: Prerequisite CSCI 5610 or LING 5620.
LING 5800 (3) Open Topics in Linguistics
Various topics not normally covered in the curriculum. Offered intermittently depending on student demand and availability of instructors. Contact the department office for information.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 3.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
LING 5832 (3) Natural Language Processing
Explores the field of natural language processing as it is concerned with the theoretical and practical issues that arise in getting computers to perform useful and interesting tasks with natural language. Covers the problems of understanding complex language phenomena and building practical programs.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: CSCI 5832
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
LING 5900 (1-3) Independent Study
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
LING 5910 (1-3) TESOL Practicum
Provides observation and supervised teaching experiences in classroom and other contexts involving the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, especially adults and young adult learners in settings outside K-12. Meetings provide opportunities to debrief and to consult on teaching practice; help students connect theory, methods and practice; and support a professional teaching portfolio process.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: LING 4910
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 4610 or LING 5610.
LING 6200 (3) Issues and Methods in Cognitive Science
Interdisciplinary introduction to cognitive science, examining ideas from cognitive psychology, philosophy, education, and linguistics via computational modeling and psychological experimentation. Includes philosophy of mind; learning; categorization; vision and mental imagery; consciousness; problem solving; decision making, and game-theory; language processing; connectionism. No background in computer science will be presumed.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: CSCI 6402 and EDUC 6504 and PHIL 6310 and PSYC 6200 and SLHS 6402
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Recommended: Prerequisite at least one course at the 3000-level or higher in CSCI, LING, PHIL, or PSYC.
LING 6300 (3) Topics in Language Use
Discusses current issues and research in a selected area related to language use and function. Sample topics include conversational interaction, language policy, language content, and sociolinguistic variation.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
LING 6310 (3) Sociolinguistic Analysis
Serves as an advanced introduction to the empirical and theoretical foundations of contemporary sociolinguistic analysis, with special emphasis on linguistic variation, diversity and change.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
LING 6320 (3) Linguistic Anthropology
Serves as an advanced introduction to the empirical and theoretical foundations of contemporary linguistic anthropology, with special emphasis on the ways in which culture and society emerge semiotically through language and discourse.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ANTH 6320
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
LING 6450 (3) Syntactic Analysis
Introduces the major constructs used by formal theories of syntax to capture the relationship between meaning and syntactic form and uses data from diverse languages to explore the universality of these constructs.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
LING 6500 (3) Issues in Indigenous Languages
Addresses socio-cultural issues concerning indigenous languages, including human rights, intellectual property, language endangerment and maintenance, identity, linguistic relativity, sense of place.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ANTH 6500
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
LING 6510 (3) Language Structures
Discusses current issues and research in a selected area related to language use and function. Sample topics include conversational interaction, language policy, language content, and sociolinguistic variation.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Recommended: Prerequisites LING 5410 and LING 5420.
LING 6520 (3) Topics in Comparative Linguistics
Students compare and contrast selected structures of languages treated from a typological, genetic, or a real perspective. No special prior knowledge of the subject language is required.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Recommended: Prerequisites LING 5410 and LING 5420.
LING 6560 (3) Language Acquisition
Theories and research methods in first-language acquisition of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Recommended: Prerequisites LING 5410 and LING 5420 and LING 5570.
LING 6940 (1) Master's Degree Candidate
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail
LING 6950 (1-6) Master's Thesis
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
LING 7030 (3) Phonetic Theory and Analysis
Provides students with the practical skills and the conceptual framework to do independent research in phonetics (or in other areas relying on phonetic data). Introduces current and traditional issues in phonetic research (both experimental and theoretical) and gives training in analytical methods.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisites LING 5030 and LING 5410.

LING 7100 (3) Field Methods 1
Introduces the process of discovering structure of a language from data obtained directly from its speakers. Emphasizes effectiveness in the field context, rapid recognition of structural features, and preliminary formulation using computational tools.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisites LING 5410 and LING 5420.

LING 7350 (3) Language and Gender in Cultural Perspective
Examines organizations of language and gender in a variety of societies and cultures from the perspectives of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and socially-oriented discourse analysis.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 7410 (3) Phonological Theory
Phonetic and morphophonological representations: distinctive features, segments, prosodic structures, morphological structures. Phonological processes and their interaction. Naturalness conditions.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisite LING 5410.

LING 7415 (2) Cognitive Science Research Practicum
Independent, interdisciplinary research project in cognitive science for advanced graduate students pursuing a joint PhD in an approved core discipline and cognitive science. Research projects integrate at least two areas within the cognitive sciences: psychology, computer science, linguistics, education, philosophy. Students need commitments from two mentors for their project. Department enforced prerequisites: CSCI 6402 or EDUC 6504 or LING 5420 or PHIL 6310 or PSYC 6200.
**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** CSCI 7412 and EDUC 6506 and PHIL 7415 and PSYC 7415 and SLHS 7418
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisite EDUC 6505.

LING 7420 (3) Syntactic Theory
Covers various topics in syntactic theory.
**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisite LING 5420.

LING 7425 (2) Cognitive Science Research Practicum 2
Independent, interdisciplinary research project in cognitive science for advanced graduate students pursuing a joint PhD in an approved core discipline and cognitive science. Research projects integrate at least two areas within the cognitive sciences: psychology, computer science, linguistics, education, philosophy. Students need commitments from two mentors for their project.
**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** CSCI 7422 and EDUC 6516 and PHIL 7425 and PSYC 7425 and SLHS 7428
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisite LING 7415 or PSYC 7415 or CSCI 7412 or EDUC 6506.

LING 7430 (3) Semantic Theory
Current developments in the theory of linguistic semantics. Topics include truth-conditional theories, generative linguistic theories, semantic theories of communicative competence and integration of these theories in development of a combined theory of semantics and pragmatics.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisite LING 5430.

LING 7570 (3) Advanced Diachronic Linguistics
Presents theories of language change. Discusses mechanisms of language change, its trajectories over linguistic categories and items and its relation to theories of grammar and of language variation.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.
**Recommended:** Prerequisites LING 5410 and LING 5420 and LING 5570.

LING 7775 (1) Topics in Cognitive Science
Reading of interdisciplinary innovative theories and methodologies of cognitive science. Students participate in the ICS Distinguished Speakers series that hosts internationally recognized cognitive scientists who share and discuss their current research. Session discussions include analysis of leading edge and controversial new approaches in cognitive science.
**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** CSCI 7772 and EDUC 7775 and PHIL 7810 and PSYC 7775 and SLHS 7775
**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 4.00 total credit hours.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 7800 (3) Open Topics in Linguistics
Various topics not normally covered in the curriculum; offered intermittently depending on student demand and availability of instructors. Contact the department office for information.
**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 7900 (1-3) Independent Study
**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.

LING 8990 (1-10) Doctoral Dissertation
All doctoral students must register for not fewer than 30 hours of dissertation credit as part of the requirements for the degree. For a detailed discussion of doctoral dissertation credit, refer to the Graduate School section.
**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 30.00 total credit hours.
**Requisites:** Restricted to graduate students only.