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.

The major in linguistics is useful for careers involving cognitive science, computer science, psychology, international business, language teaching, advertising, publishing, law, documentation and social media. Double majors and minors are encouraged with language, computer science, psychology, communication, sociology, anthropology, international affairs, philosophy and education.

The core of the major is a set of courses, taught in the Department of Linguistics, on the nature of language. In addition, the major requires language courses offered by other departments (except for fluent speakers of languages other than English).

The undergraduate degree in linguistics emphasizes knowledge and awareness of:

- the fundamental architecture of language in the domains of phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax and semantics and pragmatics;
- the diversity of languages structures;
- the main interactions between language, culture and society, including the role of language as a cultural institution and the social functions of language diversity; and
- the approaches to the study of language that are used by a discipline other than linguistics.

In addition, students completing the degree in linguistics are expected to acquire the ability and skills to:

- demonstrate proficiency in a second language equivalent to the third-year university level;
- infer language structures from the analysis of data from unfamiliar languages; and
- give coherent general interpretations of common language phenomena in terms of language structure and language use.

Course codes for this program are LING and ESLG.

Study Abroad

Language study and some courses in the major may be completed in university or university-affiliated study abroad programs, and such study is recommended. Students interested in doing part of their major work in a study abroad program should discuss the matter with their advisor before going abroad. For information on study abroad programs, consult the Education Abroad office.

Graduation with Honors

The honors program in linguistics offers the opportunity for highly motivated undergraduates to undertake a deeper and more individualized study of linguistics than is provided by the regular BA curriculum. Linguistics majors with an overall grade point average of 3.30 or higher are eligible to participate in the program. Honors that may be earned are cum laude (with honors), magna cum laude (with high honors), and summa cum laude (with highest honors).

Students interested in pursuing departmental honors are encouraged to consult with the departmental honors advisor by the beginning of their junior year to ensure that they will be able to meet the requirements for departmental honors before graduation.

Bachelor’s Degree

- Linguistics - Bachelor of Arts (BA) (catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/linguistics/linguistics-bachelor-arts-ba)

Minor

- Linguistics - Minor (catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/linguistics/linguistics-minor)

Certificate

- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages - Certificate (catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/linguistics/teaching-english-speakers-other-languages-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, Chair; 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 Warsaw (Poland)

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

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

Menn, Lise
Professor Emerita

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

English as a Second Language

ESLG 1130 (2) Pronunciation for International Graduate Students
Designed for international graduate students who want to polish and refine their spoken English skills. The course emphasizes producing increasingly accurate English stress, rhythm and intonation, and vowels and consonants. Students participate in listening and speaking activities targeting specific pronunciation features, prepare recordings, and deliver short presentations related to their field. Students receive weekly individualized feedback.

Requisites: Restricted to International Graduate students.

ESLG 1140 (2) Public Speaking for International Students
Designed for international graduate students to improve oral communication skills for effective academic, professional, and social interactions. Specific attention is given to presenting, explaining and clarifying ideas, negotiating, interrupting, hedging, and responding to questions. Students deliver short formal presentations and impromptu speeches, and lead and participate in group discussions. Students improve active listening skills, non-verbal communication and English pronunciation.

Requisites: Restricted to International Graduate students.

ESLG 1210 (2) Academic Writing for International Graduate Students
Designed for international graduate students who would benefit from academic and professional writing instruction and practice. This course addresses development of paragraphs and full-length papers, reports and proposals. Focus areas include organization and style, grammar and vocabulary, and using source material effectively. Assignments are customized to students’ disciplines with extensive instructor feedback to improve fluency, clarity, and accuracy in writing.

Requisites: Restricted to International Graduate students.

ESLG 1222 (2) Advanced Written Composition for Foreign Students
Continued practice in academic writing, including incorporating the ideas of others and citing sources appropriately. Extensive instructor feedback provided. Preparation, writing, and revising of a full-length academic term/research paper or work on chapters for a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation. Does not fulfill humanities or major requirements.

Recommended: Prerequisite ESLG 1210.

ESLG 1410 (3) Integrated Academic English Skills for Undergraduate International Students
Designed for international undergraduate students who want to improve oral and written English communication skills. Students build confidence and accuracy through interactive reading, writing, listening and speaking activities. Students gain insight on U.S. academic culture and conventions by giving short presentations, collaborating on team projects, and writing academic papers using source materials. Course also emphasizes organization, grammar, and vocabulary.

Requisites: Restricted to International Undergraduate students.

Linguistics

LING 1000 (3) Language in U.S. Society
Nontechnical exploration of the ways that language is used in America. Emphasizes language as a social institution and how values and goals of both public institutions and private groups shape and are shaped by language and its use.

Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Contemporary Societies
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Diversity-U.S. Perspective
MAPS Course: Social Science

LING 1010 (3) The Study of Words
Study of English words of Latin and Greek origin, focusing on etymological meaning by analysis of component parts (prefixes, bases, suffixes) and on the ways in which words have changed and developed semantically.

Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: CLAS 1010

Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Arts Humanities

LING 1020 (3) Languages of the World
Explores the issue of human diversity by examining how languages vary around the world. Outlines historical, geographic, and typological classifications of languages across human societies, and the criteria used by linguists for grouping them into language families. Theorizes the relationship between linguistic and cognitive diversity, and considers the impact of language death on humanity. No formal training in linguistics is required.

Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Human Diversity
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Diversity-Global Perspective

LING 1500 (3) Understanding Grammar
Presents fundamentals of grammar in the Western tradition. Emphasizes making concepts and uses of grammar (as exemplified in English and closely related foreign languages) understandable to the nonspecialist.

Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences
LING 1900 (1) Community-Based Learning Practicum: Literacy and Language Learning
Practicum for students currently or previously enrolled in one of the departmental courses in sociocultural linguistics or TESOL. Student volunteers act as mentors to literacy and language learners in the Boulder community for 1-2 hours per week. Specific meeting times will be arranged at the beginning of the semester.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 3.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Requires a corequisite course of LING 1000, LING 2400 or LING 3545 or a prerequisite of LING 1900 (minimum grade C).
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail

LING 2000 (3) Introduction to Linguistics
Introduces the study of languages as structural systems. Principles of sound patterns, word formation, meaning, and sentence structure. Gives attention to language acquisition, psycholinguistics, language families, dialects, historical change in languages, and different language types.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

LING 2400 (3) Language, Gender and Sexuality
Familiarizes students with the effects of gender and sexuality on language use; discusses popular beliefs and scholarly theories about language and communication. Provides students with tools for exploring the role of language and gender.
Arts Sci Core Curr: Human Diversity
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Diversity-U.S. Perspective

LING 2500 (3) Race, Ethnicity, and Language
Explores the relationship between race, ethnicity, and language and how they are co-constructed. How do speakers of different racial and ethnic groups use language differently, and what are the social implications of these different language varieties? We discuss the implications of ethno-linguistic variation on racial stereotypes, education, and the law.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ETHN 2500
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 1000.

LING 3005 (3) Cognitive Science
Introduces cognitive science, drawing from psychology, philosophy, artificial intelligence, neuroscience, and linguistics. Studies the linguistic relativity hypothesis, consciousness, categorization, linguistic rules, the mind-body problem, nature versus nurture, conceptual structure and metaphor, logic/problem solving and judgment. Emphasizes the nature, implications and limitations of the computational model of mind.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: CSCI 3702 and PHIL 3310 and PSYC 3005 and SLHS 3003
Recommended: Prerequisites two of the following CSCI 1300 or LING 2000 or PHIL 2440 or PSYC 2145.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Arts Humanities
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 3100 (3) Language Sound Structures
Introduces the sounds of languages and their organization into phonological structures.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite of LING 2000 (minimum grade C).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 3220 (3) American Indian Languages in their Social and Cultural Context
A sampling of the many indigenous languages and cultures found in America. Emphasizes the United States, but also gives attention to the languages of Canada and Latin America.
Recommended: students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Human Diversity
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Diversity-U.S. Perspective
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 3430 (3) Semantics
Theoretical and practical study of meaning in natural language. Considers both semantic theories and semantic phenomena from diverse languages. Does not treat techniques for improving the use of language.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite LING 2000 (minimum grade C).
Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior) Linguistic major or minors only.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 3545 (3) World Language Policies
Examines the economic and sociopolitical impact of choosing English vs. other languages in the U.S. Introduces the study of language policies, rights, and planning in other countries, including the worldwide use of English in social, business, and legal contexts.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Diversity-Global Perspective

LING 3630 (3) Principles and Practices in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
Provides a practical overview of principles and practices in TESOL in its global context. Introduces methods and materials (texts, media, tools) and standards for teaching, learning and assessment. Includes lesson observation, planning and micro-teaching focused especially on listening, speaking and pronunciation. Assumes some background and/or interest in linguistics and language and applications to teaching English to adults/young adults.
Requisites: Requires a prerequisite or corequisite course of LING 2000 (minimum grade C).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 3800 (1-4) Special Topics in Linguistics
Intensive study of a selected area or problem in linguistics.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4050 (3) Japanese Sociolinguistics: Japanese Language and Society
Issues of Japanese sociolinguistics in areas such as speech varieties, language behaviors and attitudes, linguistic contact and change and language policy. Incorporating critical perspectives of sociolinguistics into analyses of Japanese literature and Japanese language education.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: JPNS 4050 and JPNS 5050
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of JPNS 3110 (minimum grade C).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Arts Humanities
LING 4100 (3) Perspectives on Language
Provides extended critical examination of a few selected issues, chosen each term for their general interest and relevance, e.g., the relation between language and thought, or human language vs. animal languages, and computer languages.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 2000.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4220 (3) Language and Mind
Studies topics such as speech perception, word recognition, sentence comprehension, language acquisition, bilingualism, reading and writing. Examines the role of language as a product and producer of the mind, studying interactions between language and cognition from an interdisciplinary perspective. Students will become familiar with the methods of psycholinguistics and design and conduct a psycholinguistic experiment on their own.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PSYC 4220
Recommended: Prerequisites PSYC 1001 and LING 2000.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4225 (4) Interdisciplinary Research Methods in Child Language Acquisition
Explores fundamental issues in language acquisition cross-culturally, combining methods from Linguistics, Anthropology, Psychology and Computer Science. Students will explore theoretical issue using a hands-on approach that involves acquiring skills such as designing and conducting experiments, investigating corpus data, and computational modeling.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PSYC 4225
Recommended: Prerequisites PSYC 1001 and LING 2000.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4420 (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 5420
Requisites: Requires prerequisite of LING 2000 (minimum grade C-).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4450 (3) Introduction to Formal Syntax
Introduces formal generative grammar, including determining constituent structure, drawing trees, writing rules, understanding the properties of the lexicon and their interaction with syntax, X-bar theory and its modifications and movement analysis. Recommend pre-req: LING 4420
Requisites: Requires prerequisite of LING 2000 (minimum grade C-).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4560 (3) Language Development
Emphasizes acquisition of language by young children; development in later years and into adulthood is also treated. Particular attention given to roles of environment and of neurophysiological endowment in learning to communicate with words, sentences, and narratives.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: SLHS 4560 and PSYC 4560
Requisites: Restricted to Linguistics (LING) majors only.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4610 (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 5610
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 2000.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4800 (3) Language and Culture
Principles of language structure and how language and culture interrelate, how language and language use are affected by culture and how culture may be affected by use of, or contact with, particular languages.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ANTH 4800
Recommended: Prerequisite LING 1000 or LING 2400 or ANTH 2100.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 4830 (3) Honors Thesis
Required for students who elect departmental honors. Students write an honors thesis based on independent research under the direction of a faculty member.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Additional Information: Arts Sciences Honors Course

LING 4900 (1-3) Independent Study
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 8.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

LING 4910 (3) TESOL Practicum
Provides the field-based component and practical experience in English language teaching for the TESOL Certificate. Work on site includes class observations and supervised teaching in community-based programs/ESL providers. Weekly meetings provide opportunities to debrief/discuss teaching practice and connect theory, methods and practice. Supports professional development, completion of a teaching resume and portfolio and the job search process.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: LING 5910
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of LING 2000 and LING 3630 (minimum grade C).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

LING 5610