

LINGUISTICS (BA)

Department Website (<http://as.nyu.edu/linguistics/>)

NYSED: 08117 **HEGIS:** 1505.00 **CIP:** 30.2501

Program Description

Linguistics is the science of human language. It seeks to determine that which is necessary in human language, that which is possible, and that which is impossible. While linguists work to determine the unique characteristics of individual languages, they are constantly searching for linguistic universals—properties whose explanatory power reaches across languages. The discipline of linguistics is organized around syntax (the principles by which sentences are organized), morphology (the principles by which words are constructed), semantics (the study of meaning), phonetics (the study of speech sounds), phonology (the sound patterns of language), historical linguistics (the ways in which languages change over time), sociolinguistics (the interaction of language with society), psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics (the representation of language in the brain). Current research by faculty members extends across the field, including topics in the interaction of syntax and semantics, phonetics and phonology, languages in contact, language change, urban sociolinguistics, and computer analogies of syntactic processes.

New York University's Department of Linguistics has established itself as a top linguistics program in the United States and the world, covering an extensive range of subfields including: phonetics/phonology, syntax, semantics, sociolinguistics, morphology, neurolinguistics, language acquisition, and computational linguistics.

The Linguistics Department has eighteen core faculty members, one Global Distinguished Professor, and several visiting professors and scholars each year, with eight laboratories and research groups.

Recommended Work Outside of the Department

To meet standards currently set in the field of linguistics it is suggested to gain competence in one or more of the following areas during one's undergraduate studies: (1) a foreign language; (2) psychology, for issues of language and the mind, and anthropology, for issues of language and culture; (3) mathematics or logic, for an understanding of modern algebra and mathematical logic; (4) philosophy of language; and (5) one or more computer languages for computational linguistics. Majors and minors in linguistics should avail themselves of NYU study away programs where appropriate. Note that any course substitution or transfer credit toward a required course for the major must be approved by the director of undergraduate studies.

Honors in Linguistics

The Department of Linguistics offers an honors track. The requirement for graduation with honors in linguistics is an honors thesis of 40 to 50 pages, typically the culmination of a year's work, and two advanced courses chosen with the honors thesis adviser.

Students who are excelling in the linguistics major are highly encouraged to develop an honors project as early as the second semester of their sophomore year. It is expected that students who pursue honors work in the Department of Linguistics have sufficient preparation and background (i.e., high-level coursework) in a field of linguistics, which is

not always the case for students in the joint majors with French, German, Italian, and Spanish.

Admission to the honors program is by application in the second semester of junior year. To be eligible, a student must have a GPA of 3.65 overall as well as in linguistics. Applications are due to the director of undergraduate studies by April 15 and must include a one- to two-page description of the topic that the student wishes to investigate in the senior thesis. The student must identify a faculty member in the Department of Linguistics who has agreed to supervise the project, and the description of the thesis is written in consultation with this faculty adviser.

Admissions

New York University's Office of Undergraduate Admissions supports the application process for all undergraduate programs at NYU. For additional information about undergraduate admissions, including application requirements, see How to Apply (<https://www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/how-to-apply.html>).

Program Requirements

The major in Linguistics requires nine 4-credit courses (36 credits) as outlined below.

Course	Title	Credits
General Education Requirements		
First-Year Seminar		4
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing as Inquiry	4
Foreign Language ¹		16
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Physical Science		4
Life Science		4
Texts and Ideas		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
Expressive Culture		4
Major Requirements		
LING-UA 1	Language	4
or LING-UA 3	Language and Mind	
LING-UA 4	Intro to Semantics	4
LING-UA 11	Sound and Language ³	4
LING-UA 12	Phonological Analysis	4
LING-UA 13	Grammatical Analysis	4
Select one of the following:		4
LING-UA 8	Language, Power, and Identity	
LING-UA 14	Language Change	
LING-UA 15	Language & Society	
LING-UA 23	African American Vernacular English	
LING-UA 30	Language in Latin America	
LING-UA 57	English Dialects	
Select three courses freely chosen from the offerings of the department (major electives) ²		12
Electives		
Other Elective Credits		44
Total Credits		128

¹ The foreign language requirement is satisfied upon successful completion through the intermediate level of a language. This may be accomplished in fewer than 16 credits, but those credits must then be completed as elective credit.

² With permission, students may choose from CSCD-UE 221 Intro to Audiology, CSCD-UE 231 Anatomy/Physiology of Speech/Hearing Mechanism, and/or CSCD-UE 241 Neuroanatomy and Physiology/Communication and count them toward the major as electives. These courses are offered by the Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders in the NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, but do not count against CAS students' allowance of 16 credits taken outside of the College in the other schools of NYU. (However, they cannot be applied toward the 64-credit UA residency requirement for internal and external transfers to the College.)

³ Note that LING-UA 11 Sound and Language is only taught in the fall; it is a prerequisite for LING-UA 12 Phonological Analysis, which is only offered in the spring.

Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
1st Semester/Term		
LING-UA 1 or LING-UA 3	Language or Language and Mind	4
Foreign Language		4
Texts and Ideas		4
First-Year Seminar		4
Credits		16
2nd Semester/Term		
LING-UA 13	Grammatical Analysis	4
Foreign Language		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing as Inquiry	4
Credits		16
3rd Semester/Term		
LING-UA 11	Sound and Language	4
Foreign Language		4
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Elective		4
Credits		16
4th Semester/Term		
LING-UA 12	Phonological Analysis	4
Foreign Language		4
Expressive Culture		4
Elective		4
Credits		16
5th Semester/Term		
LING-UA 4	Intro to Semantics	4
LING-UA 15	Language & Society ¹	4
Physical Science		4
Elective		4
Credits		16
6th Semester/Term		
LING-UA XXX	Major Elective 1 of 3	4
Life Science		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Credits		16
7th Semester/Term		
LING-UA XXX	Major Elective 2 of 3	4

LING-UA XXX	Major Elective 3 of 3	4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Credits		16
8th Semester/Term		
LING-UA XXX	Major Elective 3 of 3	4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Elective		4
Credits		16
Total Credits		128

¹ Or one of the following courses:

- LING-UA 14 Language Change
- LING-UA 15 Language & Society
- LING-UA 23 African American Vernacular English
- LING-UA 30 Language in Latin America
- LING-UA 57 English Dialects

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will have:

1. An understanding of how to approach the study of human language scientifically.
2. The ability to question assumptions and debunk certain myths about language use and linguistic variation.
3. The skills to analyze linguistic data in the subfields of phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, and sociolinguistics.
4. Knowledge of methods used to analyze linguistic variation in different social contexts.
5. The capability to carry out linguistic research and present results and arguments in both oral and written work.

Policies

Program Policies

Grade Policy

No grade lower than C (or any course taken Pass/Fail) may be counted toward the major or toward a joint major.

Other Major Policies

In some cases, courses taken for a major in the Department of Linguistics may be applied to the requirements of another major or minor if the departments consider this appropriate. Students must then obtain written approval for the shared course(s) from the directors of undergraduate studies of both departments. No student may double count more than two courses between two majors (or between a major and a minor, or between two minors).

All linguistics majors, joint majors, and combined majors must select and register for linguistics courses with the advice of the director of undergraduate studies in the linguistics department.

NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/>).

College of Arts and Science Policies

A full list of relevant academic policies can be found on the CAS Academic Policies page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/undergraduate/arts-science/academic-policies/>).