

Bachelor of Arts
University at Buffalo Department of Linguistics

For more information, contact Jeff Good (jcgood@buffalo.edu), Director of Undergraduate Studies

Linguistics is the scientific study of the function and structure of language and is concerned with language as a general aspect of human knowledge and behavior. The department offers three major tracks: Applied Linguistics, Language & Cognition, and Language, Society & Communication. It also offers two honors tracks: Language Structure & Theory and Language & Cognition. In addition, the department offers a joint major and a minor.

Applied Linguistics (36 credit hours)

Entrance Requirements: 2.0 GPA; 2.5 GPA in LIN 205 and 207.

Required courses (24 credits): LIN 205, 207, 301, 302; one of LIN 315, 355, 356; one of LIN 405, 421, 493; 6 credits of LIN 496 (teaching internship)

Electives (12 credits): Four additional Linguistics Department courses; may include one course from another department with approved linguistic content.

Language and Cognition (36 credit hours)

Entrance Requirements: 2.0 GPA; 2.5 GPA in LIN 205 and 207

Required courses (24 credits): LIN 205, 207, 301, 302; two of LIN 320, 342, 355, 417, 455; two of LIN 356, 413, 421, 438.

Electives (12 credits): Three additional Linguistics Department courses, and one course from another department with approved language and cognition content (see examples below).

Language, Society & Communication (36 credit hours)

Entrance Requirements: 2.0 GPA; 2.5 GPA in LIN 205 and 207.

Required courses (24 credits): LIN 205, 207, 301, 302; four additional Linguistics Department courses with sociolinguistic, communication or cultural content.

Electives (12 credits): Four additional Linguistics Department courses; may include one course from another department with approved linguistic content.

Honors Track: Language Structure & Theory (36 credit hours)

Entrance Requirements: Permission of the DUGS and a minimum 3.0 GPA; grade of A- or higher in both LIN 205 and 207, or a letter of recommendation from 205 or 207 instructor. Students in Honors programs must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 in the major.

Required courses (24 credits): LIN 205, 207, 415, 432; 3–6 credits of LIN 497 (Honors Thesis) and two or three additional upper-division Linguistics Department courses in theoretical linguistics for a total of 24 credits.

Electives (12 credits): Four additional Linguistics Department courses; may include one course from another department with approved linguistic content.

Honors Track: Language & Cognition (36 credit hours)

Entrance Requirements: Permission of the DUGS and a minimum 3.0 GPA; grade of A- or better in both LIN 205 and 207, or a letter of recommendation from 205 or 207 instructor. Students in Honors programs must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 in the major.

Required courses (27 credits): LIN 205, 207, 415, 432; two of LIN 320, 342, 355, 417, 455; two of LIN 356, 413, 421, 438; 3 credits of LIN 497 (Honors Thesis).

Electives (9 credits): Two additional Linguistics Department courses, and one course from another department with approved language and cognition content.

Joint Major (24 credit hours plus requirements of second department)

Entrance Requirements: Permission of the DUGS from both participating departments; 2.0 GPA; 2.5 GPA in LIN 205 and 207.

Required Courses (12 credits): LIN 205, 207, 301, 302.

Electives (12 credits): Four additional Linguistics Department courses, to be chosen in consultation with the DUGS.

Minor in Linguistics (18 credit hours)

Entrance Requirements: 2.0 GPA; 2.5 GPA in LIN 205 and 207

Required Courses (12 credits): LIN 205, 207, 301, 302.

Electives (6 credits): Two additional Linguistics Department courses, to be chosen in consultation with the DUGS.

Sample of acceptable courses outside the Linguistics Department for the Language & Cognition track (not limited to these)

CDS 301	Language Development	PSY 341	Cognitive Psychology
LAI 205	Intro to Child Development	PSY 342	Intro to Cognitive Science
PHI 215	Symbolic Logic	PSY 343	Sensory Processes and Perception
PSY 336	Development Psychology	SPA 382	Intro Sec Lang Acq Theory

Course Descriptions

3 credits unless otherwise indicated

104 Writing Systems

This course is a survey of the different types of writing systems from the earliest deciphered systems to a variety of systems which are in use today.

106 Languages of the World

An overview of the languages of the world, what languages there are, what they are like, how they are similar, and how they are different.

108 Roots of English

Word roots in English, their history and development, meanings and combinations, usage and variations. Borrowings into and from English. English as a world language.

198 Freshman Seminar

Varies each semester depending on instructor.

200 Language in Pluralistic America

Language variation by ethnicity, race, class, gender, and religion in American society. (A cognate equivalent to UGC211, American Pluralism).

205 Introduction to Linguistic Analysis

An introduction to the structure of language (phonetics, phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax), looking at a broad variety of languages; approaches to linguistic analysis and theory.

207 Language, Society, and the Individual

Introduces the functions of language in social groups; the acquisition of language; the relationships among language, thought and culture; bilingualism.

275 Languages and Cultures of Native North America

Concerns the expression of meaning and linguistic concepts in a number of native languages of North America.

301 Structure of English: The Sound System

Prerequisite: LIN 205

An in-depth look at the sound structure of English, including the articulation of sounds, phonological patterns and alternations, and dialects.

302 Structure of English: Grammar and Lexicon

Prerequisite: LIN 205

An in-depth look at the syntax and morphology of English, including lexical and grammatical categories, basic clause structure, and complex sentences.

311 Variation in English

Introduction to major regional dialects and contact varieties of English speaking world and to many dimensions of social variation in British and North American English. Hands-on activities and projects will help familiarize students with the theories and methods of dialectology and variationist sociolinguistics.

315 Language in its Social Setting

Analyzes the social basis of conversational interaction on two levels: the linguistic structures of dialogue, and the cultural models underlying interaction.

320 Language and the Brain

Localization and lateralization of language in the brain; aphasia, dyslexia, and other neurolinguistic disorders; developmental neurolinguistics.

342 Introduction To Cognitive Science

An interdisciplinary approach to the understanding of knowledge and mind, guided by principles of formal systems and computation. Concepts and approaches from psychology, philosophy, artificial intelligence, linguistics, and neuroscience.

345 Natural Language and the Computer

Natural language applications such as search engines, and speech recognition play an increasingly important role in society. It seems like a very simple process, and yet it is very difficult. This class addresses the problems faced by computers in dealing with human language.

355 Child Language Development

The acquisition of the structure and function of a child's native language. Relationships among the development of language, cognition, biology, and social interaction.

356 An Introduction to Contemporary Theories of Metaphor

A general overview of the analysis of metaphors and analogy from a linguistic and cognitive perspective.

404 Discourse-Pragmatics

Prerequisite: LIN 301 & 302 or permission of instructor

The use of language in communicative acts, e.g., speech acts, conversational principles, text structure, discourse-governed grammatical alternations, topic, focus, and theme.

405 Bilingualism and Language Contact

Prerequisite: LIN 301 & 302 or permission of instructor

The linguistic, psychological, educational, and sociocultural characteristics of bilingualism, multilingualism, and language contact.

410 Morphology

Prerequisites: LIN 302 or permission of instructor

The structure of words; different theoretical approaches to the analysis of morphemes, words, and idioms.

413 Language and Cognition

Prerequisite: LIN 205 & 207 or permission of instructor

An examination of classificatory phenomena in lexical and grammatical structures from a cross-linguistic perspective, focusing on African, European, East Asian, and Native American languages.

414 History of the English Language

Linguistic and cultural development of English from its Indo-European and Germanic origins to the present; World Englishes, regional dialects, and English-based pidgins and creoles of today.

415 Syntax 1

Prerequisite: LIN 205

Fundamentals of syntactic analysis, applied to data from a wide range of languages. Brief introduction to syntactic theory.

417 Psycholinguistics

Prerequisite: LIN 205 & 207 or permission of instructor

Psycholinguistic processes involved in producing and comprehending language, including speech sounds, meaning, lexicon, syntax, discourse, and literacy.

421 Linguistic Anthropology

Prerequisite: LIN 207

Relationship between language and culture cross-culturally from the point of view of linguistic anthropology. Relies on primary readings, looking both at descriptive studies of particular languages and cultures, and theoretical issues, specifically the Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis.

425 Typology and Universals

Prerequisite: LIN 302 or 415

The ways in which languages are similar to and different from each other, including morphological categories, word order, case marking, and grammatical relations.

431 Phonetics

Prerequisite: LIN 205

The fundamental aspects of phonetics: articulation, aerodynamics, acoustics, suprasegmentals, phonetic features, sound change, and universals. Focus on cross-linguistic analysis.

432 Phonology 1

Prerequisite: LIN 205

Thorough grounding in phonological analysis using data from a wide variety of languages. Brief introduction to phonological theory.

433 Phonology 2

Prerequisite: LIN 432

Current developments in phonological theory, including derivational and non-derivational approaches.

434 Syntax 2

Prerequisite: LIN 415

Introduction to contemporary syntactic theory, including generative and non-generative approaches.

438 Semantics 1

Prerequisite: LIN 205

An introduction to the basic concepts and methods in the analysis of natural language meaning.

439 Historical Linguistics

Prerequisite: LIN 432

Language change, the divergence and convergence of dialects and languages in time and space, and linguistic reconstruction.

443 Semantics 2

Prerequisite: LIN 415 or permission of instructor

Introduces the description of the meaning of sentences; focuses on how the meaning of sentences is built from the meaning of individual words.

448 Formal Semantics

Prerequisite: LIN 415, 443 or permission of instructor

A survey of formal approaches to the study of meaning.

455 Language Acquisition

Prerequisite: LIN 301 & 302 or 432 & 415

Survey of the child's linguistic development, primarily in phonology, morpho-syntax, semantics, and discourse; current controversies in acquisition theory.

465 Introduction to Dialectology

Prerequisite: LIN 432

Dialect in its diachronic and synchronic manifestation; social and regional variation; languages in contact; linguistic fieldwork.

467 Computational Linguistics

Prerequisite: CSE 115 & 116 or permission of instructor

Introduces the field of computational linguistics which is concerned with the understanding and use of language by computers.

493 Sociolinguistics

Prerequisite: LIN 315 or permission of instructor

Language structure and development in social contexts of speech communities; processes of linguistic change; linguistic behavior as an index of social status; problems of language or dialect minorities.

496 Internship (3-6)

Language teaching experience either in a UB department (Linguistics, a language department, English Language Institute, etc), in the Buffalo public schools, or at a public service agency (International Institute of Buffalo, Herman Badillo Institute, Literacy Volunteers, etc.) Open to majors and non-majors. Apply to director of undergraduate studies.

497 Honors Thesis (3-6)

Guidance in, and supervision of, the preparation of a research essay required for the completion of an honors degree. Apply to director of undergraduate studies.

498 Senior Seminar

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

An advanced seminar on a special topic of linguistics research.

499 Independent Study (1-12)

Apply to the Director of Undergraduate Studies.