

COMMENTARY

The AP Linguistics initiative

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In May 2016, the Executive Committee of the Linguistic Society of America approved formation of an ad hoc AP Linguistics Committee (APLC) to study the creation of an Advanced Placement Linguistics course and examination for US high schools. In January 2017, the APLC convened and voted to proceed with the drafting of a formal AP Linguistics proposal to the College Board and to take whatever preparatory steps were required in that process. In this paper we sketch the AP Linguistics initiative, describing the potential benefits of linguistics for American high schools and their students, the attractions of high school linguistics for the field of Linguistics itself, the motivations for an AP Linguistics course in this context, the formal requirements of an AP Linguistics proposal to the College Board, and the steps being taken to meet those requirements.*

Keywords: linguistics, education, high school, AP, College Board

The formation of an ad hoc AP Linguistics Committee (APLC) to study the creation of an Advanced Placement Linguistics course and examination for US high schools was approved by the Executive Committee of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA) in May 2016, and the APLC convened for the first time at the LSA's annual meeting in January 2017. There it voted to proceed with drafting a formal AP Linguistics proposal to the College Board and taking whatever preparatory steps were required in that process.

We sketch the AP Linguistics initiative in this paper and describe the potential benefits of linguistics for American high schools and their students, the attractions of high school linguistics for the field of Linguistics itself, the motivations for an AP Linguistics course in this context, the formal requirements of an AP Linguistics proposal to the College Board, and the steps being taken to meet those requirements.

1. WHY LINGUISTICS AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT? Going back to at least the mid-1960s with Project English (O'Neil 2007, 2010), a range of scholars and educators have explored the potential of modern linguistics in the K–12 curriculum, doing so in professional articles, dissertations, textbooks, films, educational programs, and practical curricular experiments (see e.g. Denham & Lobeck 2005). Beyond the basic value of acquainting students with an interesting and rapidly emerging new body of knowledge, these studies have noted particular properties of linguistics that make it attractive as a content area for secondary-school students.

1.1. LINGUISTICS OFFERS A UNIQUELY EFFECTIVE MEDIUM FOR STEM EDUCATION. Linguistics is the scientific study of language. Linguists study language just like other scientists study other natural phenomena, such as photosynthesis, the solar system, DNA, or climate change. Linguists collect data, formulate and test precise hypotheses, create and refine explicit theories, and so forth. A number of educators have pointed to the virtues of linguistics as a potentially effective medium for STEM education (Denham & Lobeck 2012, Honda 1994, 1999, Honda & O'Neil 1993, 2008, Honda, O'Neil,

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& Pippin 2010, Keyser 1970, Larson 1996, 2010, Lightfoot 2012, Lobeck & Lightfoot 2013, O'Neil 2012).

Human language is accessible in depth, largely without the aid of complex technical apparatus or calculus-level mathematics. The movements of articulators, the pronunciation of forms, the acceptability of words, phrases, and sentences, the meanings of words, phrases, and sentences, the felicity of sentences in a given context, the 'import' of an expression in a given context, the links between how we speak, where we come from, and what communities we belong to (or are perceived to belong to)—these constitute core data for linguistics and all are accessible to any competent speaker of a human language, with no need for any special equipment. Likewise, the core theories that linguists have devised to account for such linguistic data are technically simple in comparison to those in many other STEM areas. Basic concepts of algebra (graphs), physics (acoustics), logic, and statistics are sufficient to conduct linguistic theorizing, at least at the introductory levels.

A highly attractive result of these features is the rapid movement it enables between data collection and the central intellectual processes of science: hypothesis generation, pursuit of evidence for or against a given hypothesis, reflection on why a given hypothesis might be expected to succeed or fail, development of abstract models of linguistic structure or speaker knowledge, and so forth. Unlike in physics, chemistry, or biology, where data must often be collected over considerable time periods with special apparatus or specimens in a laboratory setting and where confirmation requires return to the laboratory, linguistics students can perform much of the data collection and testing within the 'laboratory' of their own minds.

These virtues have been demonstrated in practice. Success with linguistics as a K–12 science subject is documented in Honda 1994, 1999 and Honda & O'Neil 1993. Success with linguistics as a science subject in teacher education is explored and documented in Honda & O'Neil 2008 and Honda, O'Neil, & Pippin 2010. These ideas have been applied in an undergraduate university context in Larson 1996, 2010.

1.2. LINGUISTICS OFFERS TOOLS TO NAVIGATE A MULTILINGUAL, MULTICULTURAL WORLD. Human language is a core component of human identity. Our vocabularies embed shared cultural concepts and institutions that frame us. Our pronunciations, word choices, and grammars encode features that distinguish us. Our attitudes toward ourselves and other groups correlate, often strongly, with attitudes toward the ways in which we and they speak. Language thus presents a natural domain for exploring sociocultural dimensions of personal, regional, ethnic, racial, and economic identity and diversity. And linguistics offers analytical tools to navigate this multilingual, multicultural world.

The value of such study at the early levels has been widely discussed and demonstrated (Adger, Wolfram, & Christian 2007, Baugh 2000, Baugh & Alim 2006, Charity Hudley & Mallinson 2010, 2013, Devereaux 2014, Devereaux & Palmer 2018, Reaser & Wolfram 2007, Rickford & Finegan 2004, Smitherman 2000, among others). Knowledge of dialect and language variation and associated societally determined attitudes is crucial for students in many different fields, following a wide variety of career and life trajectories.

Again, these virtues have been demonstrated in practical settings. The School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society (SKILLS) program in Santa Barbara County, California, 'prepares and motivates California's public school students for higher education by giving them hands-on experience in studying language and culture'.¹ SKILLS curricular units focus on language in the peer group, the family, the

¹ <http://www.skills.ucsb.edu/>

local community, and the world and have been successfully implemented in one-semester elective social studies classes, in after-school programs, and in college-preparatory classes in Santa Barbara area high schools. Likewise, the widely used Voices of North Carolina program developed at North Carolina State University (Reaser & Wolfram 2007) offers curricula on language diversity via a North Carolina state-adopted social studies curriculum.²

1.3. LINGUISTICS OFFERS CRITICAL TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY. In advance of studying any particular language, it is extremely useful to know the sounds of languages, how meaning and structure are related in words, how grammars of languages work and vary, the principles of and differences in world writing systems, the culture-relativity of language and how cultural differences are encoded linguistically, and so forth. Linguistics provides critical tools and knowledge for foreign language study, as it occurs in English language arts, world languages, classical languages, and English for those for whom English is not a first language (Adger et al. 2018, Ginsberg, Honda, & O’Neil 2011).

The success of the Ohio State University’s Summer Linguistics Institute for Youth Scholars (SLIYS) program, which ‘promotes foreign language study ... in all aspects by cultivating a deeper appreciation of language similarities and differences ... [aiming] to provide high school students with greater linguistic awareness and understanding, with the ability to think critically about language, and with a deeper appreciation for all aspects of language and language study’³ has demonstrated the soundness of this view.

1.4. LINGUISTICS OFFERS A PATHWAY INTO EXCITING NEW CAREER CHOICES. The career paths for those who study linguistics are many and varied. Traditional careers include education, editing, publishing, journalism, marketing, language documentation and revitalization, forensic linguistics, and polyglot jobs such as translator, interpreter, diplomat, or humanitarian aid worker (Denham & Lobeck 2018). Linguistics also offers a pathway into exciting new career choices, including computational and clinical linguistics.

The explosive growth of the internet and consequent accumulation of vast, publicly accessible domains of information in textual and spoken form have made the processing of linguistic information of paramount interest for science, industry, government, and education. Simultaneously, the ubiquity of mobile devices with multimedia capabilities and speech recognition, along with advances in the ease of using speech-controlled applications on these devices, has led to the remarkable growth of helpful ‘agents’ like Siri and Alexa, tailored to assist people with various tasks and goals. The developing capacity to search texts quickly and efficiently for meaningful and relevant associations of data, to automatically translate texts to and from different languages, to convert spoken text into written text and vice versa, and to relate commands and requests to actions is having enormous impact on our individual lives and on human society generally—an impact that will only increase in the future. The area that applies the results of linguistics research to the processing of speech and linguistic information theoretically and develops its practical applications is computational linguistics.

Likewise, our increasingly deep understanding of how language is structured and how it is acquired, stored, and processed in the brain is having profound impacts on the study of what happens when ‘things go wrong’—when genetic, developmental, pathological, and traumatic factors intervene and interfere with language function. The linguistic effects of congenital birth defects, of Autism Spectrum Disorder, of dementia, of trauma (aphasias), and of normal aging are all part of the study of speech and language

² See the website for the Language and Life Project at <https://languageandlife.org/>.

³ <https://linguistics.osu.edu/sliys>

disorders and fall within the ever-expanding domain of clinical linguistics. A fairly recent report in *U.S. News & World Report* on the '100 best jobs of 2014' ranks Speech and Language Pathology (SLP) in the top ten 'best jobs', with a projected job growth rate for audiology at 34% and for SLP at 19%.

1.5. LINGUISTICS OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY COLLABORATION. Subject areas with curricular presence in high schools often develop educational and training opportunities in corresponding departments in local colleges and universities. These include internship and summer residence programs that allow high school students to pursue research in campus laboratories and other research facilities. They also include workshops, research opportunities, and professional-development programs for teachers seeking to broaden their training, expand their teaching portfolios, and in general to enrich their professional development.

Potential areas for collaboration within the broad field of linguistics are numerous in subject areas like language, literature, and culture, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, experimental linguistics, field methods, endangered languages, phonetics, corpus linguistics, clinical studies, and computational linguistics.

McKee et al. 2015 details a well-developed outreach program connecting the University of Arizona's Department of Linguistics with a public charter school, with a high school, and with a local public charter school designed for Native American students. These connections included guest lectures and visits to campus research labs.

A particularly rewarding basis of collaboration has developed recently with the establishment and growth of the North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad (NACLO), 'a contest in which high-school students solve linguistic puzzles. In solving these puzzles, students learn about the diversity and consistency of language, while exercising logic skills'.⁴ An increasing number of US Linguistics Departments are establishing themselves as NACLO test sites, offering test prep sessions and general introductory lectures to students as part of their NACLO participation.

1.6. LINGUISTICS IS ATTRACTING GROWING INTEREST AND ATTENTION. The number of colleges and universities offering linguistics courses continues to rise, as does the number of students studying linguistics. Figure 1 from the LSA (Linguistic Society of America 2017) documents the steady growth in Linguistics BA degrees granted since the mid-1990s.

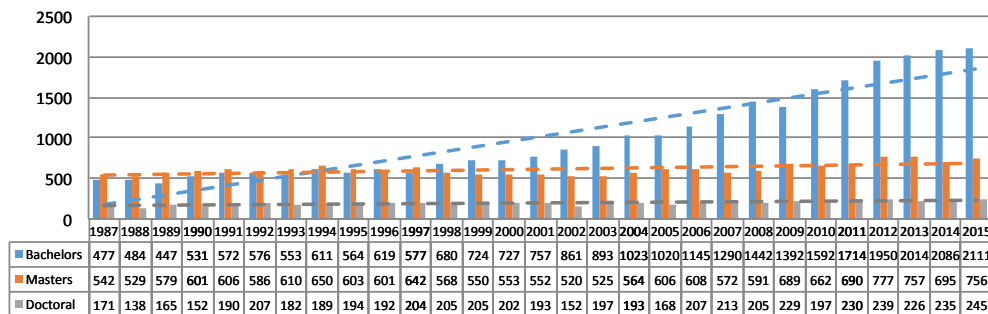


FIGURE 1. Trends in the growth of Linguistics degrees. (From the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), reprinted with permission of the Linguistic Society of America.)

⁴ <http://www.nacloweb.org>

At the same time, many US Linguistics departments anecdotally report increasing numbers of undergraduate students declaring an interest in linguistics upon matriculation, despite the virtual absence of the subject in the formal K–12 curriculum.

These trends suggest a growing national awareness of linguistics as a discipline at many levels. In this context it seems natural to think that student interest might be well served by offering the subject matter formally in K–12, feeding what seems to be a growing appetite.

2. ATTRACTIONS FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. Linguistics as a school subject is attractive not only from the K–12 perspective, but from the vantage point of colleges and universities as well.

2.1. BEYOND A ‘DISCOVERY MAJOR’. Although trends are encouraging, linguistics nonetheless remains a subject that most students are unaware of upon matriculation at a college or university. It must be ‘discovered’ in the course of studies, if indeed it is found at all. The formal presence of linguistics at the K–12 level would plainly assist students who would naturally be drawn to the subject matter and wish to explore it, but who currently miss the opportunity due to sheer ignorance.

2.2. GREATER FIELD VISIBILITY. Although comparable in size to astronomy as a professional field in terms of numbers of departments offering BA degrees, linguistics is vastly less familiar to teachers, administrators, parents, and the public at large. Everyone knows (or has some idea of) what astronomers do. Virtually none have equal clarity about linguists. The formal presence of linguistics at the K–12 level would greatly enhance field visibility. Not only would students encounter it, but also parents, school administrators, guidance counselors, and so forth.

2.3. IMPROVED OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION. We noted above that many STEM and humanities disciplines support summer programs, workshops, and internships for K–12 students and for their teachers. These connections are enriching not only for those students and teachers, but also for the academic departments and for the colleges and universities that house them. Outreach is now widely recognized as a key mission for modern research institutions.

3. THE AP LINGUISTICS IDEA. The educational and professional motivations for introducing linguistics at the K–12 level appear sound. Nonetheless, the challenges to doing so are also quite serious. In the majority of US high schools, for example, the day is divided into six to eight class periods of forty-five to fifty-five minutes (or four class periods of ninety minutes, if the school does block scheduling), with various different course subjects—both required and elective—competing for student attention.⁵ In this context, both administrators and teachers are typically pressed by the time and resource commitments they already carry. The curriculum thus becomes, in effect, a table with limited seating, serving out limited portions, and with many of the already-seated concerned about getting enough for their own needs. Why a new ‘seat at the table’ for linguistics versus some other attractive elective? Why should administrations invest resources in creating a course? Why should teachers invest in the training time necessary to deliver a course? What additional incentive might one offer?

Advanced Placement (AP) curricula have become increasingly attractive to districts focused on college readiness. AP classes have their contents and examinations fixed

⁵ See Baker et al. 2006 and Williamson 2010 and the references therein on current scheduling models in US high schools.

and regulated nationally by the College Board (CB) and offer rigorous modern college-level curricula. The CB's AP Central webpages list the following benefits to students taking AP courses:⁶

BUILD SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

- AP students learn essential time management and study skills needed for college and career success.
- They dig deeper into subjects that interest them and learn to tap their creativity and their problem-solving skills to address course challenges.

GET INTO COLLEGE

- Students who take AP courses send a signal to colleges that they're serious about their education and that they're willing to challenge themselves with rigorous coursework.
- 85% of selective colleges and universities report that a student's AP experience favorably impacts admission decisions.

SUCCEED IN COLLEGE

- Research shows that students who receive a score of 3 or higher on AP Exams typically experience greater academic success in college and have higher graduation rates than their non-AP peers.

SAVE TIME AND MONEY IN COLLEGE

- Research shows that students who take AP courses and exams are much more likely than their peers to complete a college degree on time—which means they avoid paying for, for example, a fifth year of tuition.
- Most colleges and universities nationwide offer college credit, advanced placement, or both for qualifying AP Exam scores. This can mean:
 - Fulfilling graduation requirements early
 - Being able to skip introductory courses or required general-education courses

The attraction of AP curricula for schools is clearly attested by program growth. Malkus (2016) reports that '2.2 million students took 3.9 million AP exams in 2012–13, both of which are twice the number from a decade earlier. Over the past two decades, the number of students taking AP exams increased at a remarkable average annual rate of 8.5 percent'.

Interestingly, among thirty-seven subject areas, 2016 CB data ranks AP Psychology, the subject perhaps most closely related to linguistics, as seventh in the number of schools offering it, and fifth in the number of students taking it.⁷ Over the 2006–2016 decade, AP Psychology also showed the seventh greatest volume growth (190%), only a few percentage points behind computer science.⁸

Having an AP offering in linguistics would plainly be a powerful inducement to high schools for introducing the subject into their curriculum. Furthermore, CB provides continuing support in delivering AP courses, including teacher training, advice on course content, and so forth.

4. HOW DO YOU CREATE AN AP? The process for creating new AP courses is specified in the document 'AP—New course proposal' (APNCP), available on request from the CB.

4.1. THE PROCEDURE. The APNCP stipulates the following four-step procedure in creating a new AP course and examination. First, a professional body informs the CB of its intent to develop a proposal for a new AP course. The professional body then drafts a formal proposal meeting stated proposal requirements. The CB then reviews the proposal at various levels and decides whether to proceed with development. If development is approved, funding must be found (estimated at \$5–7 million).

⁶ <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/discover-benefits>

⁷ <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/research/2016/Program-Summary-Report-2016.pdf>

⁸ <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/research/2016/2016-Exam-Volume-Change.pdf>

4.2. AP PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS. The CB requires AP proposals to demonstrate ‘proof of concept’ in three key areas.

First, the proposal must document a national college-level course to which the AP would correspond. This includes providing ‘a description of the standard, commonly offered college course upon which the proposed AP course will be modeled’ (APNCP, p. 1). The description must also be supported by ‘ten or more sample syllabi representing a range of higher education institutions; these syllabi should demonstrate that there is a degree of consistency across colleges & universities in what is taught and learned in this course and how the proposed AP course aligns with college-level expectations’ (APNCP, p. 1). Finally, the proposal must describe the ‘sequent courses into which students earning AP credit would receive placement, typically the next course in the sequence following the standard, introductory college course’. In a college curriculum, the latter would be courses to which the AP-correspondent is a prerequisite.

Second, the proposal must document the AP course’s eligibility for college credit, in the form of explicit attestations: ‘a minimum of 100 colleges and universities should attest to their desire for an exam that would allow high school students to place out of that course in college’ (APNCP, p. 1).

Third, the proposal must document sufficient existing demand for such an AP course. It must ‘indicate (by inclusion of letters) how many high schools in the United States offer an advanced or honors course in this discipline, and how many will agree to offer this proposed AP course in the first year that it is available ... The list should include representation across the country and be sufficient to lead to a sustainable offering’ (APNCP, p. 1). Again, demand is to be documented by attestation. APNCP notes that ‘[m]ost proposals include letters of attestation from 250 or more schools, with a total number of students for all attesting schools to be no fewer than 6000’ (p. 1).

5. MEETING CB REQUIREMENTS FOR AN AP LINGUISTICS PROPOSAL. The LSA’s AP Linguistics Committee is taking steps to meet the requirements for a formal AP Linguistics proposal to the CB, understanding that the effort will be a protracted one.

5.1. DOCUMENTING THE EXISTENCE OF A NATIONAL COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSE. Upon discussion at its initial meeting in 2017, the APLC concluded that an introductory college-level ‘LING 101’ course was the natural counterpart to an eventual AP Linguistics offering. Representatives from the LSA’s Linguistics in Higher Education committee (LiHE) volunteered to survey introductory college-level ‘LING 101’ courses offered by US Linguistics departments and programs, collecting syllabi and information on such parameters as course length, frequency and duration of class meetings, topics covered, textbook choice, and so forth. The survey was designed in Fall 2017, opened in Winter 2018, and closed in early Spring 2018. A formal report by the LiHE is in preparation; however, preliminary results demonstrate widespread national congruence regarding the content, goals, and target learning outcomes of an introductory linguistics course. In particular, the survey revealed that the basic subareas of linguistics, including syntax, morphology, phonetics, phonology, and (to a lesser extent) semantics, are widely regarded as the backbone of such a course. Figure 2 displays survey results concerning topics covered, covered in passing, and not covered at all.

In view of these results, the APLC concludes that the proposed AP Linguistics offering would have a ‘standard, commonly offered college course upon which the proposed AP course will be modeled’ and that it will be able to document this claim to the satisfaction of the CB.

5.2. PROOF OF COLLEGE CREDIT. The granting of credit for AP courses in the US differs by college and university and by subject area. Some schools award no AP credit at

AP Linguistics Survey: Subfields covered, not covered, covered in passing

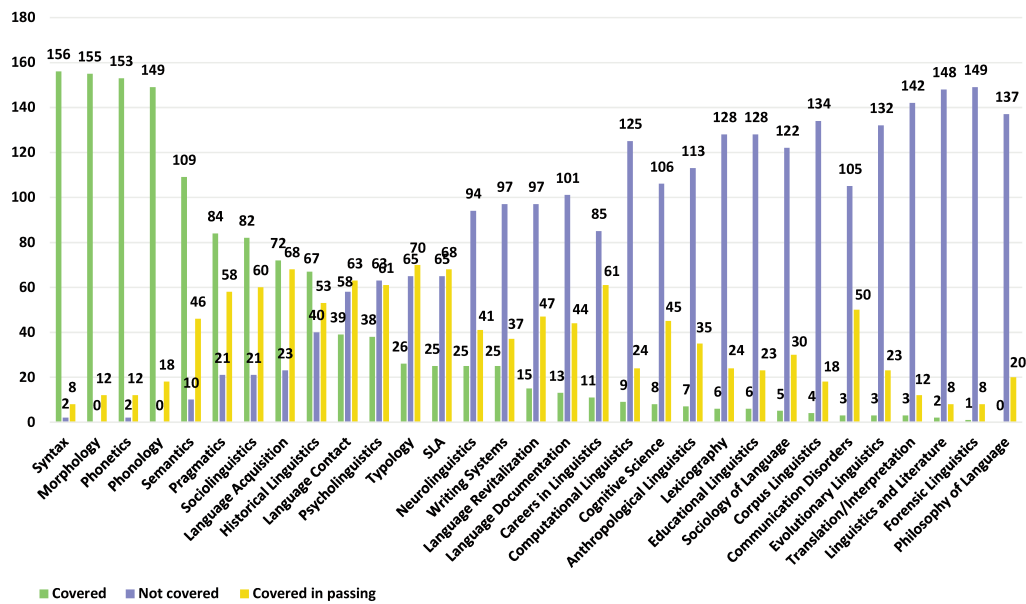


FIGURE 2. Topic coverage in introductory linguistics courses. (Figure prepared by Gaillynn D. Clements.)

all in any subject. For those granting AP credit, the total is typically limited by the college or university; the specific form of credit is decided by the departmental home of the corresponding subject area: that is, Physics departments decide on credit for AP Physics exams, English departments decide on credit for AP English exams, and so on.

Departmental decisions to award AP credit will obviously depend on several factors. Since AP courses rarely match corresponding college courses precisely, program alignment will involve both AP course content and exam score (5–1). Furthermore, there will be calculations regarding impact on major numbers and on the program. Awarding AP credit for an introductory course potentially means reduced enrollments in the corresponding college-level course. At the same time, it also potentially means faster entry into, and larger enrollments in, upper-division courses for which the introductory course is a prerequisite, as well as increased major numbers given the interest generated by the AP course and exam itself.

The APLC is currently preparing a sample AP Linguistics syllabus, based on the results of the LiHE survey, and plans to circulate it to chairs and directors of US Linguistics departments and programs. The APLC will ask them whether their program would award AP credit for such a course given the CB's examination scoring of 5 (Extremely well qualified), 4 (Well qualified), or 3 (Qualified). The APLC believes that for most US Linguistics programs, the advantages of awarding AP credit will outweigh any disadvantages in terms of reduction in introductory linguistics course enrollments and that it will be able to document this to the satisfaction of the CB in the form of at least 100 affirmative answers.

5.3. PROOF OF DEMAND. The CB's demand requirement presents the most serious current hurdle for an AP Linguistics proposal. To the best of the APLC's knowledge, only a handful of US high schools or college-preparatory institutions have offered, currently offer, or plan to offer something like the envisioned AP Linguistics course. Since no school can be expected to attest willingness to offer an AP subject with which it has had no prior experience and for which it has no established staffing, the CB proposal requirement of 250 school attestations supporting AP Linguistics cannot be met at present.

6. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? THE HIGH SCHOOL LINGUISTICS INITIATIVE. Evidently, if demand for linguistics is currently absent from modern US high schools, the only path forward for the AP Linguistics initiative is to create demand of the relevant kind. As one US Linguistics department chair succinctly put it, ‘AP Linguistics must build on non-AP Linguistics, which itself first needs to be a thing!’.

The APLC is now in the process of organizing a subproject in pursuit of its larger goal: ‘The High School Linguistics Initiative’. The aim of this subproject is simply to seed AP Linguistics ‘precursor’ courses in US high schools, to support these courses and ensure that they are successful, and to enlist these schools in the subsequent AP proposal campaign, aiming for 250 or more in total.

6.1. CREATING DEMAND FOR HIGH SCHOOL LINGUISTICS. Two key elements of creating demand in the commercial sector include identifying a product that will appeal to consumers and advertising it effectively.

We noted earlier the features that combine to make linguistics simultaneously a STEM, humanities, and social sciences subject, and hence an attractive bridge between them. Linguistics is a uniquely effective medium for science education. It offers a special window onto human social identity and social history. It supports foreign language study. And it offers pathways into exciting new careers. These properties doubtless help to explain why, at a time when many college Humanities programs report falling major numbers and falling numbers of degrees awarded, Linguistics continues to be a ‘bright spot’ (Schmidt 2018). But they also make linguistics attractive for high school administrators looking to strengthen connections between humanities and STEM areas, and to humanities and social sciences teachers looking to expand their teaching portfolios while supporting their own content areas. For a modern foreign language teacher or classical language teacher, linguistics is a chance to add STEM education to their resumes, while enhancing language teaching. For social studies teachers, it is a chance to add a humanities area, while adding a revealing new domain of inquiry. For science teachers, it presents a rare opportunity to move beyond the standard high school quartet of Earth science-biology-chemistry-physics. Linguistics thus has clear ‘product appeal’ to a range of ‘consumers’.

Informing consumers of product appeal is the job of advertising. The APLC has plans to advertise linguistics in conferences of high school language teachers, social studies teachers, science teachers, and math teachers. As spokespeople we will use our current AP Linguistics high school teachers group, all of whom have direct experience with teaching linguistics in K–12. The APLC received NSF funding to support conference activity of this kind in June 2017.

The APLC also plans to organize workshops stressing and exploring connections between linguistics and the teaching of languages, social studies, science, and mathematics. Such a workshop was organized for New York City/Long Island area Latin teachers in Fall 2017 at Stony Brook University (<https://www.stonybrook.edu/llw/>) and was a significant success. Other workshops are in development.

Finally, because new courses must ultimately be pitched before school administrators and department heads, the APLC has prepared a presentation package including a slide show and written materials explaining the benefits of high school linguistics.

6.2. SUPPORTING HIGH SCHOOL LINGUISTICS. Launching a new course in a new subject area is a significant undertaking. The APLC is offering support for high school linguistics courses and their teachers in a variety of areas.

Our professional organization, the Linguistic Society of America, is extending opportunities for participation to K–12 teachers by creating a new category of membership that can be obtained without charge. This will encourage teachers to attend LSA

meetings, workshops, and other events. In addition, the LSA is moving to incorporate dedicated sessions on high school linguistics into its annual meeting program.

The APLC is seeking to create opportunities for teacher training in linguistics through summer workshops at universities around the country, through summer courses, potentially including courses offered at the biannual LSA Summer Institutes, and through on-line course offerings.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the APLC is seeking support from US Linguistics departments and programs in assisting local high schools in creating and sustaining high school linguistics courses, especially in the initial period. Such assistance can include help with curriculum design and lesson planning, suggestions for and collaborative brainstorming on in-class activities, coordination of on-campus visits to laboratories and research facilities, student internships, and guest lectures and demonstrations by university faculty.

WARD MELVILLE HIGH SCHOOL (EAST SETAUKET, NY)—STONY BROOK LINGUISTICS. An example of a high school–university partnership in delivering high school linguistics is a recent initiative by Ward Melville High School (East Setauket, NY) and the Department of Linguistics at Stony Brook University (Stony Brook, NY). The initial connection came through APLC member Professor Christina Tortora (College of Staten Island, CUNY Graduate Center), an alumnus of Ward Melville High School, who has maintained connections with her alma mater. In September 2017, Professor Tortora organized a meeting between herself, the then-chair of Stony Brook Linguistics (Prof. R. K. Larson), the Stony Brook Linguistics NACLO Site Coordinator (Prof. Lori Repetti), the then-principal of Ward Melville High School (Dr. Alan Baum), his assistant principals, and heads of departments. Professor Tortora and the Stony Brook group briefly introduced linguistics, pitched the idea of a high school linguistics course, and offered Stony Brook Linguistics Department support in its offering. Ward Melville High School administration was enthusiastic and gave the go-ahead for course development. In October 2017, Professor Tortora drafted a course proposal for a new Ward Melville High School course ‘The Science of Language’, to be launched in September 2018. In November 2017, the Ohio State University Press (T. Sanfilippo) agreed to provide copies of *Language Files*, 12th edition, for Ward Melville High School teachers and students in the new course free of charge as an experiment. The LSA survey of introductory courses identified *Language Files* as the most popular textbook (by a considerable margin) for introductory linguistics courses in the US, and OSU Press was interested in its potential use in a high school setting. In June 2018, Tortora and Larson met with Ward Melville High School teachers Cynthia Porter and Lisa Crispino to organize drafting of the Science of Language curriculum. During July and August 2018, Tortora, Larson, and Prof. Mark Aronoff of Stony Brook Linguistics met with Porter and Crispino at intervals to discuss details and plans for the Science of Language. The course was formally launched in Fall 2018, on schedule, and was accompanied by a NACLO examination offering at Ward Melville High School in January 2019.

LONG ISLAND/NYC HIGH SCHOOL LINGUISTICS INITIATIVE. The APLC plans an ambitious expansion of the Ward Melville–Stony Brook experiment in 2019. The project will attempt to establish partnerships in the greater Long Island and Five Burroughs area between area high schools and Linguistics programs at the Borough of Manhattan Community College (CUNY), Brooklyn College (CUNY), College of Staten Island (CUNY), Fordham University, Hunter College (CUNY), Kingsborough Community College (CUNY), LaGuardia Community College (CUNY), Lehman College (CUNY),

Long Island University–Brooklyn, Long Island University–CW Post, New York University, York College (CUNY), and Queens College (CUNY).

In addition, the APLC has made contacts with Linguistics departments and programs elsewhere in the country and is actively exploring the creation of similar high school–university partnerships in their areas.

7. CLOSING THOUGHTS. AP Linguistics holds significant promise for both US high schools and their students and for US Linguistics departments and programs. Success is not foreordained, of course. Simply to attain the point where the APLC can offer a credible proposal to the College Board will require concerted, grassroots efforts by the field of American Linguistics over a span of years in order to launch the high school linguistics courses that will lay the necessary groundwork for a successful proposal. Nonetheless, the APLC remains convinced that whatever the ultimate result of its efforts to create a formal AP Linguistics course and examination through the CB, the steps taken in pursuit of this goal will have enduring value. Introducing American high school students to linguistics, the study of arguably the most important evolutionary development in the history of the human species, can only be counted as an important step forward in American education, one that may well impact a generation of American high school students in remarkable but unforeseen ways.

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