Linguistics Department

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Degrees Awarded
M.A. in Linguistics
M.A. in Computational Linguistics
M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
Ph.D. in Linguistics

Web Site
http://www.linguistics.stonybrook.edu

Description of the Linguistics Department

The Stony Brook Linguistics Department, in the College of Arts and Sciences, is a leading center for research and training in all areas of modern linguistics. The Department offers graduate training that leads to the M.A. and Ph.D. in Linguistics, the M.A. in Computational Linguistics, and the M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

The department has a long-standing focus on theoretical linguistics, with core research areas in syntax, semantics, morphology, phonology, phonetics, and language acquisition, and particular strength in Computational Linguistics. Departmental research includes both theoretical issues --- how the human language capacity is organized --- and computational ones -- how language is processed and computed by humans and what the computational complexity of natural language is. In addition to the full range of theoretical and computational areas of linguistics, faculty have expertise in a wide range of languages/language areas including, East Asian, Germanic, Romance, Semitic, Slavic and signed languages.

The Ph.D. program prepares students for advanced research in all branches of theoretical linguistics, especially Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Computational Linguistics. Ph.D. students also work with students and faculty in Psychology, Computer Science, Philosophy, Music, and the Institute for Advanced Computational Science (IACS). Ph.D students assist in and/or teach MA and BA courses in Linguistics.

The M.A. in Theoretical Linguistics is a stand-alone 30 credit degree in all core areas of linguistic theory designed to give students an opportunity to carry out graduate work in linguistics in preparation for a doctoral degree in Linguistics, or other career.

The M.A. in Computational Linguistics focuses on core competencies in programming, algorithms and data structures, mathematical linguistics, linguistic theories of sound and grammar) and the computational analysis of natural language. Students will also have practical experience with existing software solutions and toolkits that are widely used in the Computational Linguistics industry.

The M.A. in TESOL is designed to prepare students to become professional teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum designers. The program offers courses in theoretical linguistics and its applications as well as pedagogy. Graduates of the program are successfully employed in public and private schools at K-12 levels, colleges, and universities in the United States and abroad. The requirements of the M.A. TESOL program satisfy a substantial portion of the requirements for New York State certification in TESOL.

Admission requirements for Linguistics Department

LINGUISTICS (LIN) Deadlines (for Fall admission):

- Ph.D: December 1
- M.A. Linguistics: May 1
- M.A. Computational Linguistics: May 1
- M.A. TESOL: July 15

For admission to all graduate program in the Department of Linguistics, the following, in addition to the minimum Graduate School requirements, are normally required:
1. **Baccalaureate Degree**: Students must present evidence that such a BA or BS degree will be awarded by the time they begin graduate work. A final transcript is required prior to registration.

2. **Minimum grade point average of 3.0**: A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (or its foreign equivalent) on a 4-point scale is required.

3. **Recommendations**: Three letters of recommendation are required.

4. **Graduate Record Examination (GRE)**: The GRE is not required for the MA LIN, the MA CompLing, the MA TESOL, and the PhD in Linguistics.

5. **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

6. **Writing Sample**

**MA LIN and PhD**: The writing sample should be a paper written for a previous course taken in linguistics, or if that is not available, a paper on any subject is acceptable.

**MA CompLing**: The writing sample may take one of two forms: (a) a short paper written for a previous course, ideally related to language, mathematics, or computation, or (b) a 2-page document describing a completed or ongoing programming project, including a link to an online repository hosting the code.

1. **Foreign Language Requirement**:

**PhD program**: Proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to two years of college work is required.

**MA programs**: Native speakers of English must provide evidence of at least one year (or six credits) of study of one language other than English at the college level with a grade of C or better. Students who are seeking New York State certification will need to satisfy additional requirements for foreign language study before receiving certification.

1. **English proficiency** (for students whose native language is not English):
   - **PhD, MA LIN, MA Comp Ling**: 250 (computer), 90 (iBT TOEFL) or 6.5 (IELTS).
   - **MA TESOL**: Minimum total score: 90 (iBT TOEFL) or 6.5 (IELTS). Minimum speaking component scores: 22 (iBT TOEFL) or 6.5 (IELTS).

Please note that non-native speakers who are seeking New York State certification must achieve a speaking component score of 28 (iBT) or the equivalent.

Note: For all programs, students who do not meet the above requirements may be admitted conditionally. Their status will be reviewed after their first semester of graduate study.

**Facilities of the Linguistics Department**

The Department of Linguistics has several lab facilities.

**Computational Linguistics Lab (Director: Jordan Kodner)**

Research in the Computational Linguistics Lab is concerned with the analysis of natural language phenomena using tools and concepts from mathematics and computer science, in particular statistics and probability theory, formal language theory, machine learning, algebra and logic. The lab suite includes a classroom, workstations, a library, and access to a large number of corpora and software.

**Phonetics Lab (Director: Marie Huffman)**

The phonetics lab provides equipment for investigation of a wide range of linguistic questions, with special emphasis on speech acoustics, dialogue, and speech perception. The lab suite includes a lab classroom, a recording room and a research annex, with digital tape recorders, microphones, and headphones as well as facilities for computer-based data acquisition and video recording of spoken or signed language.

**Semantics Lab (Director: Richard Larson)**

The semantics Lab was created in 1992 by Richard K. Larson (Linguistics) and David S. Warren (Computer Science) as part of the NSF-sponsored Grammar as Science Project. Along with primary research in semantics, a focus of the lab has been the creation of software tools for linguistics research and education. Productions to date include Syntactica, a program for teaching transformational syntax and Semantica, a companion program for teaching truth-conditional natural language semantics.

**Requirements for the Ph.D. in Linguistics**

In addition to the requirements of the Graduate School, the following are required:

**A. Course requirements**: Students must complete a minimum of 60 credits; 30 of them before advancing to candidacy.

Required Courses (12 credits)
Electives (minimum of 18 credits)

Linguistics 500 and 600 level courses may be taken as electives. With permission from the Program Director, courses from other departments may also be counted as electives.

B. Qualifying papers: Students must write and defend two (2) qualifying papers. Each qualifying paper must be of publishable quality in order to be accepted by the department.

C. Advancement to candidacy: Advancement to candidacy takes place upon the successful completion of the following: the required courses in A and the qualifying paper requirement in B.

D. Dissertation: Students must write and defend an acceptable dissertation.

Please refer to the Linguistics Doctoral Student Handbook for a more detailed discussion of procedures and expectations.

Requirements for the M.A. in Linguistics

The MA LIN is a 30 credit Masters program aimed at students interested in pursuing linguistics beyond the BA level, but not yet ready for, or not planning to go on to, the PhD. The curricular focus of the MA LIN is on theoretical rather than applied linguistics. Students interested in applied or computational linguistics at the MA level are encouraged to consider the MA TESOL or MA Computational Linguistics program.

The MA LIN is a coursework degree, consisting of 12 credits of required courses and 18 credits of electives.

A. Core courses: (12 credits, required):
   - LIN 521 Syntax I
   - LIN 621 Syntax II
   - LIN 523 Phonology I
   - LIN 623 Phonology II

B. Electives: minimum of 18 credits of Linguistics 500 and 600 level courses*

*Courses from other departments may also be counted as electives with permission from the Program Director.

Requirements for the M.A. in Computational Linguistics

The MA in Computational Linguistics is a 36-credit coursework degree consisting of multiple components.

A. Core courses: (12 credits, required):
   - LIN 521 Syntax I
   - LIN 522 Phonetics or LIN 523 Phonology I
   - LIN 537 Computational Linguistics 1
   - LIN 637 Computational Linguistics 2

B. Formal methods: (1 of the following: 3 credits):
   - LIN 538 Statistics,
   - LIN 539 Mathematical Methods in Linguistics

C. Advanced Linguistics: (1 of the following not taken as another requirement: 3 credits)
   - LIN 522 Phonetics,
   - LIN 523 Phonology I
   - LIN 621 Syntax II,
   - LIN 623 Phonology II,
   - LIN 624 Morphology and Word Formation,
   - LIN 625 Semantics

D. Electives* (4 of the following not taken as a Core or Linguistics course above = 12 credits):

Electives can be taken in Linguistics or other departments, with approval of the Program Director.

E. Final project. Students must also complete a final project as part of LIN 595. (6 credits)
Courses that appear in more than 1 category multiple cannot be used to satisfy multiple requirements at once. For example, if LIN 522 is taken as part of the core sequence, it cannot be used to satisfy the linguistics requirement.

Requirements for the M.A. in TESOL

The MA in TESOL is a Master's program in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Master of Arts in TESOL (48 credits)

The 48-credit track is designed for those who have little or no previous coursework in education or formal classroom teaching experience and leads to the MA-TESOL degree and the initial New York State certification for teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (preK-12). The MA-TESOL consists of approximately four semesters of study (excluding summer session) for the full-time student and a somewhat longer period of time for the part-time student.

A. Coursework

This degree and certification program consists of 48 credits distributed among the areas listed below. All courses are three credits except for the one-credit fieldwork courses (LIN 579 taken twice, and LIN 578).

Linguistics and Foundation (15 credits):
- LIN 522 Phonetics
- LIN 527 Structure of English
- LIN 530 Introduction to General Linguistics
- LIN 541 Bilingualism
- LIN 532 Second Language Acquisition
- and two of the following (6 credits):
  - LIN 526 Analysis of an Uncommonly Taught Language
  - LIN 542 Sociolinguistics
  - LIN 555 Error Analysis
  - LIN 571 TESOL Pedagogy: Curriculum Design and Evaluation
  - LIN 572 Course Design: Theory and Practice
  - Any other TESOL-related course approved by the Program Director

Professional Preparation (18 credits):
- CEE 505 Education: Theory and Practice
- CEF 547 Principles & Practices of Special Education
- CEE 565 Human Development
- LIN 524 TESOL Pedagogy: Theory and Practice
- LIN 529 TESOL Pedagogy: Language & Literacy Development Through Content Areas
- LIN 579 Field Experience N-12 (1 credit course, taken twice)
- LIN 578 Field Experience in Educational Contexts (1 credit course)

B. Field Experience and Clinical Practice

Students are required to complete 100 clock hours of field experience (LIN 579) related to coursework prior to student teaching. These experiences include ESOL classroom observations, practicing skills for interacting with parents, and experiences with students who are English language learners.

Supervised Student Teaching (9 credits):
- LIN 574 Managing Instruction, Assessment, and Resources
- LIN 581 Supervised Student Teaching Grades N-6
- LIN 582 Supervised Student Teaching Grades 7-12
Teacher Candidates are placed in partner schools and are required to complete 75 days of full-time student teaching under the supervision of a NYS Certified Cooperating Teacher. During this experience, candidates assume the professional responsibilities of the teacher. Students are responsible to provide their own transportation to local school districts. See this webpage for more information about the student teaching requirement for initial certification.

LIN 574, 581, and 582 are co-requisites and cannot be taken until completion of all other course and ancillary requirements. As part of LIN 574, 581, and 582, students are required to submit the TCWSSL (Teacher Candidate Work Sample for Student Learning).

**Final Project**

Students are required to submit a professional portfolio at the completion of the program.

**C. Teacher Certification**

In order to be recommended for New York State certification, students must complete all courses required for the MA and achieve a minimum grade of B in all pedagogy courses. In addition, transcripts must indicate completion of at least two years (12 credits) of college-level study of a language other than English. Non-native speakers who are seeking New York State certification must achieve a speaking component score of 28 (iBT) or the equivalent.

All teacher candidates must complete the following NYS Teacher Certification Exams:

- Educating All Students (EAS)
- Content Specialty Test (CST) – ESOL

See this webpage for more information about the current New York State initial certification requirements.

**Application Procedure for the MA TESOL 30 credit track and 48 credit track**

Applicants must have completed an undergraduate degree in a liberal arts or science major with a minimum GPA of 3.00 in the overall bachelor's degree. Applicants must demonstrate, through their application and recommendations, that they possess the temperament and disposition to be an effective teacher.

Applications and instructions are available on the MA-TESOL program website (https://linguistics.stonybrook.edu/TESOL/ma-tesol/requirements-2). A completed application consists of: Completed Graduate School application with a non-refundable application fee; Three letters of recommendation; Official copies of all previous college transcripts; Curriculum Vitae (Resume); A statement of purpose.

**English proficiency** (for students whose native language is not English):

- **Minimum total score:** 90 (iBT TOEFL) or 6.5 (IELTS).
- **Minimum speaking component scores:** 22 (iBT TOEFL) or 6.5 (IELTS).

Non-native speakers who are seeking New York State certification must achieve a speaking component score of 28 (iBT) or the equivalent.

Admission is competitive and no single factor will exclude anyone from being admitted. Similarly, no single factor will ensure admission.

Applications and supporting documentation for the fall semester must be received by June 1. International students must apply by April 15.

Faculty of Linguistics Department

Please see the faculty directory here: https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/linguistics/people/faculty.php#LinguisticsFaculty

Number of teaching, graduate, and research assistants, 2025: 21

**NOTE:** The course descriptions for this program can be found in the corresponding program PDF or at COURSE SEARCH.