

# Linguistics

*Undergraduate Adviser: Jason Merchant, CI 305, 702-8523,  
merchant@uchicago.edu*

*Departmental Secretary: Vanessa Wright, CI 304, 702-8522,  
vwright@uchicago.edu*

*Web: [humanities.uchicago.edu/depts/linguistics/](http://humanities.uchicago.edu/depts/linguistics/)*

## Program of Study

The purpose of the B.A. program in linguistics is to provide a solid, integrated introduction to the scientific study of language through course work in the core subdisciplines of linguistics, as well as to ensure that the student has a language background sufficient to provide a complement to the theoretical parts of the program and for an understanding of the complexities of human language. This program provides students with a general expertise in the field and prepares them for productive advanced study in linguistics.

Students who are majoring in other fields of study may also complete a minor in linguistics. Information follows the description of the major.

## Program Requirements

The B.A. in linguistics requires thirteen courses. These courses fall into two categories: departmental courses in linguistics and language requirements. The following departmental courses must be taken by all students who are majoring in linguistics: (1) Introduction to Linguistics (LING 20100-20200-20300), often taken during the second year; and (2) four linguistics core courses: Syntax I (20400), Phonetics (20600), Phonology I (20800), and one of either Pragmatics (20700) or Semantics I (22050). The four core courses are often divided between the third and fourth years.

The language requirement is designed to ensure breadth of study in a non-Indo-European language. This requirement can be met in four different ways: (1) registration in a three-quarter course in a non-Indo-European language on campus; (2) examination credit in a non-Indo-European language for which the University offers placement examinations; (3) registration for an intensive one-quarter course in the structure of a non-Indo-European language offered by a member of the linguistics faculty (or by another faculty member upon approval by the linguistics undergraduate adviser); or (4) completion of an approved intensive language program taken elsewhere for languages not offered or tested for at the University of Chicago. Students who fulfill the language requirement with fewer than three quarters must substitute elective courses offered in linguistics for the language course quarters not taken.

The first three electives for the major must be either courses with a LING number or courses taught by a linguistics faculty member. For any further electives, a student may petition the department to substitute a related course in another department. In no case can a total of fewer than thirteen quarters of study fulfill the requirements for the B.A.

NOTE: Students who entered the University prior to Autumn 2004 may choose to fulfill either the requirements for the major as stated here or those that were in place when they entered the University.

### Summary of Requirements

3	LING 20100-20200-20300 (introductory courses)
4	LING 20400, 20600, 20800, and either 20700 or 22050 (core courses)
3	courses in a non-Indo-European language*
<u>3</u>	linguistics electives**
13	

\* *Credit may be granted by examination. When any part of the language requirement is met by examination, the equivalent number of electives in linguistics must be substituted for quarter credit granted. With prior approval of the linguistics undergraduate adviser, such electives may be taken in other departments.*

\*\* *Must be courses with LING numbers or courses taught by linguistics faculty.*

**Honors.** Students who wish to be considered for honors must write an honors essay. At the end of a student's third year, any student who has maintained a 3.0 or better GPA overall and a 3.5 or better GPA in linguistics courses may consult with the linguistics undergraduate adviser about submitting an honors essay. The honors essay must be submitted by fifth week of the quarter in which the student plans to graduate. For more information on the honors essay, visit [humanities.uchicago.edu/depts/linguistics/](http://humanities.uchicago.edu/depts/linguistics/).

This program may accept a B.A. paper or project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major if certain conditions are met and with the consent of the other program chair. Approval from both program chairs is required. Students should consult with the chairs by the earliest B.A. proposal deadline (or by the end of their third year, if neither program publishes a deadline). A consent form, to be signed by both chairs, is available from the College adviser. It must be completed and returned to the College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student's year of graduation.

**Grading.** Students who are majoring or minoring in linguistics take requirements for the program for quality grades. With consent of instructor, nonmajors may take linguistics courses for *P/F* grading.

## Minor Program in Linguistics

Students in other fields of study may complete a minor in linguistics. The minor in linguistics requires a total of seven courses: the three courses in the introductory sequence (LING 20100-20200-20300) and any four additional courses in linguistics.

Students who elect the minor program in linguistics must meet with the linguistics undergraduate adviser before the end of Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the minor. The adviser's approval for the minor program should be submitted to a student's College adviser by the deadline above on a form obtained from the College adviser. Courses in the minor (1) may not be double counted with the student's major(s) or with other minors and (2) may not be counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for quality grades, and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

## Faculty

A. Dahlstrom, V. Friedman, S. Gal, A. Giannakidou, J. Goldsmith, C. Kennedy, J. Merchant, S. Mufwene, J. Riggle, J. Sadock, M. Silverstein, A. Yu

## Courses: Linguistics (LING)

**11100. Biological and Cultural Evolution.** (=BIOS 29286, BPRO 23900, CHSS 37900, HIPS 23900, PHIL 22500/32500) *PQ: Third- or fourth-year standing or consent of instructor. Core background in evolution and genetics strongly recommended.* This course draws on readings in and case studies of language evolution, biological evolution, cognitive development and scaffolding, processes of socialization and formation of groups and institutions, and the history and philosophy of science and technology. We seek primarily to elaborate theory to understand and model processes of cultural evolution, while exploring analogies, differences, and relations to biological evolution. This has been a highly contentious area, and we examine why. We seek to evaluate what such a theory could reasonably cover and what it cannot. *W. Wimsatt, S. Mufwene. Autumn.*

**20100-20200-20300/30100-30200-30300. Introduction to Linguistics I, II, III.** (=ANTH 27001-27002-27003/37001-37002-37003, SOSC 21700-21800-21900) *Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required.* This course is an introductory survey of methods, findings, and problems in areas of major interest within linguistics and of the relationship of linguistics to other disciplines. Topics include the biological basis of language, basic notions of syntax, semantics, pragmatics, basic syntactic typology of language, phonetics, phonology, morphology, language acquisition, linguistic variation, and linguistic change. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**20400/30400. Syntax I.** *PQ: LING 20100/30100 or equivalent.* This course introduces basic goals and methods of current syntactic theory through a detailed analysis of a range of phenomena, with emphasis on argumentation and empirical justification. Major topics include phrase structure and constituency, selection and subcategorization, argument structure, case, voice, expletives, and raising and control structures. *Autumn.*

**20500/30500. Syntax II.** *PQ: LING 20400/30400 or consent of instructor.* This course is a continuation of LING 20400/30400. Topics include wh-movement in questions, relative clauses, clefts, and comparatives. We also cover islands, crossover, parasitic gaps, superiority, resumptivity, wh-in-situ, multiple wh-fronting, reconstruction, and anaphora, as well as understanding their properties and distribution cross-linguistically. *Winter.*

**20550/30550. Syntax III.** *PQ: LING 20500/30500 or consent of instructor.* This course is a continuation of LING 20400-20500, with special emphasis on issues of the morphology-syntax interface. *Spring.*

**20600/30600. Phonetics.** *PQ: LING 20100-20200-20300/30100-30200-30300 or consent of instructor.* This course is an introduction to the study of speech sounds. Speech sounds are described with respect to their articulatory, acoustic, and perceptual structures. There are lab exercises both in phonetic transcription and in the acoustic analysis of speech sounds. *Autumn.*

**20700/30700. Pragmatics.** This course is an introduction to the pragmatics of natural language and its relation to basic semantic and syntactic theory. Topics include speech acts, implicature, presupposition, and the incrementation of context. *Autumn.*

**20800/30800. Phonology I.** *PQ: LING 20100-20200-20300/30100-30200-30300 or 20600/30600, or equivalent.* This course is an introduction to the general principles of phonology as a discipline. The emphasis is on fundamental notions that have always been central to phonological analysis and that transcend differences between theoretical approaches: contrast, neutralization, natural classes, distinctive features, and basic phonological processes (e.g., assimilation). We focus on generative phonology, both “classical” and autosegmental models, with brief discussion of optimality theory. *Winter.*

**20900/30900. Phonology II.** *PQ: LING 20800/30800.* This course deals with the interfaces between phonology, morphology, and phonetics. Specific topics vary, but in general we cover issues in prosodic morphology and optimality theory. *Spring.*

**21000/31000. Morphology.** This course deals with linguistic structure and patterning beyond the phonological level. We focus on analysis of grammatical and formal oppositions, as well as their structural relationships and interrelationships (morphophonology). *Spring.*

**21300/31300. Historical Linguistics.** *PQ: LING 20600/30600 or 20800/30800, or consent of instructor.* This course deals with the issue of variation and change in language. Topics include types, rates, and explanations of change; the differentiation of dialects and languages over time; determination and classification of historical relationships among languages, and reconstruction of ancestral stages; parallels with cultural and genetic evolutionary theory; and implications for the description and explanation of language in general. *Spring.*

**21600/31600. Introduction to Language Development.** (=HUDV 23900/31600, PSYC 23200/33200) This course addresses the major issues involved in first-language acquisition. We deal with the child's production and perception of speech sounds (phonology), the acquisition of the lexicon (semantics), the comprehension and production of structured word combinations (syntax), and the ability to use language to communicate (pragmatics). *S. Goldin-Meadow. Winter.*

**22050/32050. Semantics I.** This course is an introduction to natural language semantics and to formal, model-theoretic approaches to aspects of truth-conditional meaning. Topics include quantification, modality, polarity, tense and aspect, event structure, and the semantics of noun phrases. Tools from classical logic (propositional and predicate logic; type theory) are covered. Further topics include non-truth-conditional aspects of meaning, such as presupposition and implicature. *Autumn.*

**22100/32100. Semantics II.** *PQ: LING 22050/32050.* This course is a continuation of LING 22050/32050 with emphasis on the interfaces with syntax and pragmatics. Topics include temporal and aspectual operators in an event semantics with times, as well as type-shifting, partitivity, and crosslinguistic variation in NP-quantification. We also discuss negative polarity, scalarity, and free choice phenomena with modality, as well as scope, indefinites, choice functions, and the semantics of questions. *Winter.*

**23900/33900. Languages of the World.** This course is a nontechnical general survey of human languages, examining their diversity and uniformity across space and time. Major topics include language families and historical relationships, linguistic typology and language universals, language and population distribution, *sprachbund* effects, sound and structural features of the world's languages, and writing systems. *Winter.*

**23910. Language Myths and Realities.** This course explores through readings and directed discussion a number of widespread myths and misconceptions about language. We also aim to shed light on questions of broad, general interest. Topics include how children and adults learn languages, whether language equals thought, whether some languages are harder than others, whether English is getting worse (or better), whether all languages have grammars, the differences between men's and women's speech, orthographic reform movements, sign languages, animal communication systems, feral children's language, language

disorders, language savants, whether computers can learn language, language and politics, and whether Shakespeare should be translated. *Spring*.

**26700/36700. Human Being, Language, and Mind: An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics.** (=SLAV 21700/31700) This course explores the relatively new framework of cognitive linguistics. Topics include metaphor and metonymy, prototypes, polysemy, categorization and conceptualization, blends, constructions, the embodiment of meaning, construal, grammaticalization, and language pedagogy. Readings are drawn from the works of Croft, Janda, Fillmore, Lakoff and Johnson, Langacker, Sweetser, Talmy, Turner, Wierzbicka, and others. *S. Clancy. Winter.*

**27200/37200. Language, Power, and Identity in Southeastern Europe: A Linguistics View of the Balkan Crisis.** (=ANTH 27400/37400, HUMA 27400, SLAV 23000/33000) This course familiarizes students with the linguistic histories and structures that have served as bases for the formation of modern Balkan ethnic identities and that are being manipulated to shape current and future events. The course is informed by the instructor's thirty years of linguistic research in the Balkans, as well as experience as an adviser for the United Nations Protection Forces in Former Yugoslavia and as a consultant to the Council on Foreign Relations, the International Crisis Group, and other organizations. Course content may vary in response to ongoing current events. *V. Friedman. Winter.*

**29700. Reading and Research Course.** *PQ: Consent of instructor and linguistics undergraduate adviser. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**29900. B.A. Paper Preparation Course.** *PQ: Consent of instructor and linguistics undergraduate adviser. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

### Courses: Languages in Linguistics (LGLN)

**11100. Accelerated Elementary Modern Greek I.** (=MOGK 11100/30100) This course is designed to help students acquire communicative competence in Modern Greek and a basic understanding of its structures. Through a variety of exercises, students develop all skill sets. *Autumn.*

**11200. Accelerated Elementary Modern Greek II.** (=MOGK 11200/30200) This course is designed to help students acquire communicative competence in Modern Greek and a basic understanding of its structures. Through a variety of exercises, students develop all skill sets. *Winter.*

**20100-20200-20300/30100-30200-30300. Introductory Modern Hebrew I, II, III.** (=HEBR 10501-10502-10503, JWSC 25000-25100-25200, JWSG 35000-35100-35200) This course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension

of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials at their level, and write short essays. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**20400-20500-20600/30400-30500-30600. Intermediate Modern Hebrew I, II, III.** (=HEBR 20501-20502-20503, JWSC 25300-25400-25500, JWSG 35300-35400-35500) *PQ: LGLN 20300 or equivalent.* The main objective of this course is to provide students with the skills necessary to approach modern Hebrew prose, both fiction and nonfiction. In order to achieve this task, students are provided with a systematic examination of the complete verb structure. Many syntactic structures are introduced (e.g., simple clauses, coordinate and compound sentences). At this level, students not only write and speak extensively but are also required to analyze grammatically and contextually all of the material assigned. *A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**22900-23000-23100/32900-33000-33100. Advanced Modern Hebrew I, II, III.** (=HEBR 30501-30502-30503, JWSC 25600-25700-25800, JWSG 35600-35700-35800) *PQ: LGLN 20600 or equivalent.* Although this course assumes that students have full mastery of the grammatical and lexical content at the intermediate level, there is a shift from a reliance on the cognitive approach to an emphasis on the expansion of various grammatical and vocabulary-related subjects. After being introduced to sophisticated and more complex syntactic constructions, students learn how to transform simple sentences into more complicated ones. The exercises address the creative effort on the part of the student, and the reading segments are longer and more challenging in both style and content. The language of the texts reflects the literary written medium rather than the more informal spoken style, which often dominates the introductory and intermediate texts. *A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**25100/35100. Old Church Slavonic.** (=SLAV 22000/32000) *PQ: Knowledge of another Slavic language or good knowledge of one or two other old Indo-European languages required; SLAV 20100/30100 recommended.* This course introduces the language of the oldest Slavic texts. It begins with a brief historical overview of the relationship of Old Church Slavonic to Common Slavic and the other Slavic languages. This is followed by a short outline of Old Church Slavonic inflectional morphology. The remainder of the course is spent in the reading and grammatical analysis of original texts. Texts in Cyrillic or Cyrillic transcription of the original Glagolitic. *V. Friedman. Winter.*

### Courses: American Sign Language (ASLG)

**10100-10200-10300. American Sign Language I, II, III.** American Sign Language is the language of the deaf in the United States and much of Canada. It is a full-fledged autonomous language, unrelated to English or other spoken

languages. This introductory course teaches the student basic vocabulary and grammatical structure, as well as aspects of deaf culture. *D. Ronchen. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**10400-10500-10600. Intermediate American Sign Language I, II, III. PQ: LGLN 10300.** In this course we continue to increase grammatical structure, receptive and expressive skills, conversational skills, basic linguistic convergence, and knowledge of idioms. *Field trip required. D. Ronchen. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

### **Courses: Swahili (SWAH)**

**25200-25300-25400/35200-35300-35400. Swahili I, II, III.** This course is designed to help students acquire communicative competence in Swahili and a basic understanding of its structures. Through a variety of exercises, students develop both oral and writing skills. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*