

# Linguistics

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## Program of Study

The purpose of the BA 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 linguistics may visit [linguistics.uchicago.edu](http://linguistics.uchicago.edu) to learn about events and resources on and off campus and for links to information on employment opportunities.

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 BA in linguistics requires thirteen courses, which fall into two categories: courses that provide expertise in linguistics and courses that ensure breadth of study in a non-Indo-European language. Students have flexibility to construct a course of study that accords with their interests, but their final tally of thirteen courses must include the following: Introduction to Linguistics (LING 20001), Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology (LING 20101), Introduction to Syntax (LING 20201), Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics (LING 20301), and study of a non-Indo-European language.

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 director of undergraduate studies); 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 non-Indo-European language requirement with fewer than three quarters of study must substitute elective courses for the language course quarters not taken. At least six electives for the major must be courses offered by the Department of Linguistics (i.e., courses whose numbers begin with LING). For any further electives, a student may petition the department to substitute a related course that does not have a LING number.

### Summary of Requirements

1	LING 20001 (introductory course)
3	LING 20101, 20201, and 20301 (core courses)
0–3	courses in a non-Indo-European language*
6–9	linguistics electives**
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\* *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 director of undergraduate studies, such electives may be taken in other departments.*

\*\* *A minimum of six must be courses with LING numbers.*

**Grading.** All courses used to satisfy requirements for the major and minor must be taken for quality grades. With consent of the instructor, nonmajors may take linguistics courses for *P/F* grading.

NOTE: Students who entered the University prior to Autumn 2009 may choose to fulfill either the requirements stated here *or* those that were in place when they entered the University.

**Honors.** In order to receive the degree in linguistics with honors, a student must write an honors essay. At the end of a student's third year, any student who has maintained a 3.0 or better overall GPA and a 3.5 or better GPA in linguistics courses may consult with the director of undergraduate studies about submitting an honors essay. The honors essay must be submitted by fifth week of the quarter in which the student plans to graduate. Complete guidelines and requirements for the honors essay can be obtained from the director of undergraduate studies.

Students wishing to write an honors essay are required to take two graduate-level courses (numbered 30000 or above) in areas most relevant to their thesis work, as determined in consultation with their adviser(s) and approved by the director of undergraduate studies.

This program may accept a BA paper or project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major with the consent of both program chairs. Students should consult with the chairs by the earliest BA proposal deadline (or by the end of their third year, when 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.

### 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, which must include three linguistics electives (courses whose numbers begin with LING) and the following four courses: Introduction to Linguistics (LING 20001), Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology (LING 20101), Introduction to Syntax (LING 20201), and Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics (LING 20301).

Students who elect the minor program in linguistics must contact the director of undergraduate studies 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 (not *P/F*), and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

### Faculty

K. Arregi, A. Dahlstrom, V. Friedman, S. Gal, A. Giannakidou, J. Goldsmith, L. Grenoble, C. Kennedy, G. Kobele, J. Merchant, S. Mufwene, J. Riggle, M. Silverstein, A. Yu

### Courses: Linguistics (LING)

#### *Undergraduate Courses*

**20001. Introduction to Linguistics.** This course offers a brief survey of how linguists analyze the structure and the use of language. Looking at the structure of language means understanding what phonemes, words, and sentences are, and how each language establishes principles for the combinations of these things and for their use; looking at the use of language means understanding the ways in which individuals and groups use language to declare their social identities and the ways in which languages can change over time. The overarching theme is understanding what varieties of language structure and use are found across the world's languages and cultures, and what limitations on this variety exist. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**20101. Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology.** *PQ: LING 20001.* This course is an introduction to the study of speech sounds and their patterning in the world's languages. The first half of the course focuses on how 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. The second half focuses 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). *Autumn.*

**20201. Introduction to Syntax.** *PQ: LING 20001.* This course is an introduction to 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. *Spring.*

**20301. Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics.** *PQ: LING 20001.* This course familiarizes students with what it means to study meaning and use in natural language. By “meaning” we refer to the (for the most part, logical) content of words, constituents, and sentences (semantics), and by “use” we intend to capture how this content is implemented in discourse and what kinds of additional dimensions of meaning may then arise (pragmatics). Some of the core empirical phenomena that have to do with meaning are introduced: lexical (i.e., word) meaning, reference, quantification, logical inferencing, presupposition, implicature, context sensitivity, cross-linguistic variation, speech acts. Main course goals are not only to familiarize students with the basic topics in semantics and pragmatics but also to help them develop basic skills in semantic analysis and argumentation. *Winter.*

#### *Graduate and Other Undergraduate Courses*

**20150/30150. Language and Communication.** This course is a complement to LING 20001. It can also be taken as an alternative to it by nonmajors who are interested in learning something about language. It covers a selection from the following topics: What is the position of spoken language in the usually multimodal forms of communication among humans? In what ways does spoken language differ from signed language? What features make spoken and signed language linguistic? What features distinguish linguistic means of communication from animal communication? How do humans communicate with animals? From an evolutionary point of view, how can we account for the fact that spoken language is the dominant mode of communication in all human communities around the world? Why cannot animals really communicate linguistically? What do the terms language “acquisition” and “transmission” really mean? What factors account for differences between “language acquisition” by children and by adults? What does it mean to be a bilingual? Are children really perfect “language acquirers”? What factors bring about language evolution, including language loss and the emergence of new language varieties? What is language contact and what are its manifestations? *Autumn.*

**21000/31000. Morphology.** (=ANTH 37500) 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). *Autumn.*

**21300/31300. Historical Linguistics.** *PQ: LING 20600/30600 and 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.*

**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, sound and structural features of the world’s languages, and writing systems. *Spring.*

**26310/36310. Contact Linguistics.** (=SLAV 20600/30600) *L. Grenoble, V. Friedman. Spring.*

**26400/36400. Introduction to Slavic Linguistics.** (=SLAV 20100/30100) The main goal of this course is to familiarize students with the essential facts of Slavic linguistic history and with the most characteristic features of the modern Slavic languages. In order to understand the development of Proto-Slavic into the existing Slavic languages and dialects, we focus on a set of basic phenomena. The course is specifically concerned with making students aware of factors that led to the breakup of the Slavic unity and the emergence of the individual languages. Drawing on historical development, we touch upon such salient typological characteristics of the modern languages as the rich set of morphophonemic alternations, aspect, free word order, and agreement. *Autumn.*

**27220. Professional Persuasions: The Rhetoric of Expertise in Modern Life.** (=ANTH 27505) This course dissects the linguistic forms and semiotics processes by which experts (often called professionals) persuade their clients, competitors, and the public to trust them and rely on their forms of knowledge. We consider the discursive aspects of professional training (e.g., lawyers, economists, accountants) and take a close look at how professions (e.g., social work, psychology, medicine) stage interactions with clients. We examine a central feature of modern life—the reliance on experts—by analyzing the rhetoric and linguistic form of expert knowledge. *S. Gal. Autumn.*

**28600/38600. Computational Linguistics.** (=CMSC 25020/35050) *PQ: CMSC 15200 or 12200, or competence in a programming language.* This course introduces the problems of computational linguistics and the techniques used to deal with them. Topics are drawn primarily from phonology, morphology, and syntax. Special topics include automatic learning of grammatical structure and the treatment of languages other than English. *J. Goldsmith. Autumn.*

**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. BA 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.*

**30101. Phonological Analysis I.** This course introduces the general principles of phonology as a discipline. The course begins with an introduction to the study of the speech sounds used in the world's languages with an emphasis on their articulatory, acoustic, and perceptual structures. Building upon this foundation, the principles of phonological analysis are illustrated with emphasis on fundamental notions 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.*

**30102. Phonological Analysis II.** *PQ: LING 30101.* This course is a continuation of Phonological Analysis I, focusing on topics of current interest in phonological theory. Topics vary. *Spring.*

**30201. Syntactic Analysis I.** 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.*

**30202. Syntactic Analysis II.** *PQ: LING 30201.* A continuation of LING 30202, this course expands our examination of the locality of various syntactic dependencies, especially the nature of unbounded dependencies in a wide variety of languages. Topics include A'-movement and nonmovement in interrogatives, relatives, and comparatives, partial wh-movement, wh-expletives, resumptivity, islands (selective and strong), reconstruction effects, intervention effects, and the nature of successive cyclic movement. This course has a strong cross-linguistic aspect, examining data from Korean, Irish, Hungarian, Turkish, Tzotzil, Swahili, Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Slavic, Romance, and Germanic languages, Chamorro and other Austronesian languages, and varieties of Arabic, among others. *Winter.*

**30301. Semantics and Pragmatics I.** This is the first in a two-course sequence designed to provide a foundation in the scientific study of all aspects of linguistic meaning. The first quarter focuses primarily on pragmatics: those aspects of meaning that arise from the way that speakers put language to use, rather than through the formal properties of the linguistic system itself, which is the domain of semantics. However, a central goal of the course is to develop an understanding of the relation between pragmatics and semantics by (1) exploring empirical

phenomena in which contextual and conventional aspects of meaning interact in complex but regular and well-defined ways, and (2) by learning analytical techniques that allow us to tease these two aspects of linguistic meaning apart. *Autumn.*

**30302. Semantics and Pragmatics II.** This is the second in a two-course sequence designed to provide a foundation in the scientific study of all aspects of linguistic meaning that focuses on the syntax-semantics interface and cross-linguistic semantics. This course introduces in detail a theory of the way in which the meaning of complex linguistic expressions is formed compositionally from the meaning of constituent parts, and the interaction of semantic and syntactic composition. This theory forms the basis for exploring some empirical questions about the systematicity of cross-linguistic variation in the encoding of meaning. *Winter.*

**31100-31200. Language in Culture I, II.** (=ANTH 37201-37202) *PQ: Consent of instructor. Must be taken in sequence.* This two-quarter course presents the major issues in linguistics of anthropological interest. Among topics discussed in the first half of the sequence are the formal structure of semiotic systems, the ethnographically crucial incorporation of linguistic forms into cultural systems, and the methods for empirical investigation of "functional" semiotic structure and history. The second half of the sequence takes up basic concepts in sociolinguistics and their critique. We then discuss such topics as the linguistic analysis of publics, performance and ritual, and language ideologies. *M. Silverstein, Autumn; S. Gal, 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.* This course continues 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: 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)

This course introduces 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. *A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**20400-20500-20600/30400-30500-30600. Intermediate Modern Hebrew I, II, III.** (=HEBR 20501-20502-20503, JWSC 25300-25400-25500) *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.*

**22001/32001. From Proto-Indo-European Old Church Slavonic.** (=SLAV 22001/32001) *PQ: Some familiarity with either Old Church Slavonic or Indo-European.*

This course covers essentials of Slavic historical grammar with emphasis on the evolution of Proto-Slavic verbal and nominal morphology. *Y. Gorbachov. Spring.*

**22100-22200-22300/32100-32200-32300. Elementary Georgian I, II, III.**

This course introduces students to modern Georgian grammar, primarily through reading exercises that relate to Georgian historical, social, and literary traditions. Supplemental activities that encourage writing, speaking, and listening skills are also included. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**22400-22500-22600/32400-32500-32600. Intermediate Georgian I, II, III.**

This course reviews and reinforces the grammar principles presented in Elementary Georgian through the reading and analysis of selected texts written by influential Georgian authors and poets. Additional class exercises are provided to strengthen listening and speaking skills. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**22700-22800-22900/32700-32800-32900. Advanced Georgian I, II, III.**

This course emphasizes advanced language skills and vocabulary building through independent reading and writing projects, as well as class exercises involving

media (e.g., newspaper and magazine articles, videoclips, radio programs, movies, sound recordings, online materials). *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**23000-23100-23200/33000-33100-33200. Advanced Modern Hebrew I, II, III.** (=HEBR 30501-30502-30503, JWSC 25600-25700-25800) *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 efforts of students, 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. *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. *Y. Gorbachov. Winter.*

**27200-27300-27400. Elementary Yiddish for Beginners I, II, III.** (=JWSC 20300-20400-20500, YDDH 10100-10200-10300)

The goal of this sequence is to develop proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking for use in everyday communication. These courses introduce the main features of Yiddish culture through websites, songs, films, and folklore. *J. Schwarz. 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. *F. Mpiranya. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

**26800-26900/36800-36900. Intermediate Swahili I, II, III.** *PQ: SWAH 25400/35400 or consent of instructor.*

Students focus on broadening their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in this course. They learn to use sophisticated sentence structures and expression of complex ideas in Swahili. Advanced readings and essay writing are based on student interests. *F. Mpiranya. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*