

## THE FIELD

Linguistics is the study of human language: its formal structure, its use in communication, and its role as part of human psychology. The field has undergone rapid change and development in the last 30 years, and the UMass Amherst faculty is at the forefront of that change. Undergraduates, thus, have an excellent opportunity to find out what linguistics is, how linguistics has advanced the understanding of the nature of human language, and how the results of linguistic research may relate to such fields as communication studies, computer science and artificial intelligence, philosophy, psychology and human development, and speech therapy. Linguistics is nearly unique in relating to all three of the broad areas of research at UMass Amherst: humanities, the natural sciences and mathematics, and the social and behavioral sciences. It, therefore, may appeal especially to those who have broad interests spanning these domains. Linguists do not have to know a large number of languages, but a background in foreign languages can certainly be an asset, since concentrated investigation of one language or a few related ones is a typical mode of inquiry. In addition, a grounding in mathematics can be very helpful for the formal side of linguistic theory.

*A minor in linguistics is available.*

## THE MAJORS

The department offers a linguistics major, as well as interdisciplinary majors combining linguistics with other fields. The common requirements for all majors are the Junior Year Writing and the Integrative Experience requirements in the department, plus the HFA requirement of two years of a foreign language in college or four years in high school, or equivalent competency.

**LINGUISTICS:** The major requires 12 courses, including introductory courses in theory, syntax, speech sounds and structure, phonetics, and semantics; non-English language courses; and departmental electives. Students may apply up to two courses from certain related departments (e.g., anthropology, computer science, communication disorders, legal studies, philosophy, psychology) to this requirement with prior approval from the undergraduate advisor.

**LINGUISTICS AND ANTHROPOLOGY:** Requirements include a minimum of 36 credits in linguistics and anthropology.

**LINGUISTICS AND CHINESE:** Requirements include the successful completion of four courses (24 credits) in Mandarin Chinese (CHINESE 125, 246, 326, and 327, or the equivalent) and at least 12 courses distributed between linguistics and Chinese.

**LINGUISTICS AND GERMAN:** Requirements include the successful completion of four courses (12 credits) in German (110, 120, 230, and 240, or equivalent), and 30 credits distributed between linguistics and German. Students are also encouraged to take graduate courses in the older Germanic languages for undergraduate credit. They may also opt to take courses in German literature or civilization, and courses in Danish, Dutch, or Swedish.

**LINGUISTICS AND JAPANESE:** Requirements include the successful completion of four courses (24 credits) in Japanese (JAPANESE 126, 246, 326, and 327, or the equivalent), and at least 36 credits distributed between Japanese and linguistics.

**LINGUISTICS AND PHILOSOPHY:** Requirements include 42 credits in courses distributed between philosophy and linguistics.

**LINGUISTICS AND PORTUGUESE:** Requirements include 12 required courses (36 credits). Contact Luiz Amaral (amaral@umass.edu) for course availability.

**LINGUISTICS AND PSYCHOLOGY:** Majors complete 36 credits in linguistics and psychology. A senior thesis may contribute up to six credits toward this requirement.

**LINGUISTICS AND RUSSIAN:** Requirements include the successful completion of four courses in Russian (RUSSIAN 110, 120, 230, and 240, or equivalent) and 30 credits distributed between linguistics and Russian. Additional courses may be selected from the offerings of the Slavic languages departments in the Five Colleges.

**LINGUISTICS AND SPANISH:** Requirements include 12 required courses (36 credits) across Spanish and linguistics.

## **HONORS**

Contact the departmental honors coordinator for information on how to pursue honors opportunities within the major.

## **STUDY ABROAD**

Linguistic majors may choose to study abroad if it supports their academic and career goals. Students should contact the International Programs Office (413-545-2710, [umass.edu/ipo/](http://umass.edu/ipo/)) and work closely with their academic advisor to choose the appropriate courses in preparation.

## **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

The primary job market in pure linguistics is academic for those with PhDs, and is rather limited. However, training in linguistics can be valuable for those specializing in any field in which language is at the center of attention, such as communications, communication disorders and speech and reading therapy, information retrieval, natural language processing, law, philosophy, preschool and elementary education, psychology, and teaching English and other languages. Notions from linguistics have been influential in a number of other fields in recent years, especially in the study of literature, and in the social and behavioral sciences. There are considerable opportunities in the development of computer processing of text, both spoken and written. In general, the field provides an excellent opportunity for training both theoretical and observational powers, by practice in the development of techniques of analysis, and hypothesis formation and testing—all applied to data that can be collected readily by the student.

## **THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS**

The humanities focus on human creativity, endeavor, and culture. The imaginative and creative arts—literary and performing—derive from life and teach about human behavior and constructs of social reality. The history of social, political, and economic systems illuminates and shapes the present and future. Students in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts are expected to broaden their perspectives on individual and cultural expression within their own and other societies, to understand the development and evolution of the discipline of study in relation to the culture from which it emanates, and to learn the methods by which knowledge in the discipline is gained.

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