



Linguistics

FROM STUDY TO SKILLS

All academic programs offered at the UM help students develop valuable transferable skills. Linguistics applies the social sciences, the natural sciences, and the humanities to the study of all aspects of spoken and written language. It studies the sound patterns of language, how they are produced, perceived and used to give rise to words, how sentence structure is built and assigned complex meaning. It explores language use and its evolutions in diverse social and cultural settings, and how different language systems, including sign languages, develop throughout the world and through history.

As a Linguistics concentrator, you will develop academic, professional and technical skills that are useful across a wide range of professional settings. You will also receive a solid foundation for advanced work in graduate and professional school programs. Representative skills acquired by Linguistics students are listed below.

Related fields include Psychology, English, Foreign Languages, Education, Philosophy, Anthropology, Communication Studies, Computer Science, and Classical Studies.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Cross-Cultural Skills

- Relating language to social, cultural and historical contexts
- Understanding local and global perspectives
- Adapting to and functioning in different cultural settings
- Working effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds

Communication Skills

- Dealing with complexities of meaning and social uses of language
- Understanding the properties of discourse
- Understanding language change and variation
- Organizing and explaining complex ideas
- Presenting information effectively in speech and writing
- Gaining insight into human-computer interaction

Analytical Skills

- Critically interpreting spoken and written language
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Identifying patterns
- Observing people and their behavior
- Evaluating evidence
- Comparing interpretations

Research Skills

- Constructing and applying theories
- Using data as evidence, comparatively or historically
- Working with research subjects
- Applying methodologies from many disciplines
- Working in interdisciplinary settings

BUILDING YOUR SKILLS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Employers seek out individuals who can demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills, initiative, and a strong work ethic. Linguistics students further develop such skills by combining their coursework with on and off-campus work, and by participating in research groups and projects, internships, and volunteer work outside the classroom.

Participation in the Linguistics Club and other academic or student organizations offer valuable opportunities to add to your skills. Study abroad experiences are particularly helpful to improve language proficiency and hone intercultural skills. Finally, a professional internship is an excellent way to test out a career field and develop marketable skills.

FROM SKILLS TO CAREER

In our increasingly interconnected world, the skills you gain as a Linguistics concentrator will strongly prepare you to succeed in a number of careers, such as research, business, and other professional fields. A representative list of occupational areas chosen by linguistics graduates

can be seen below. Many graduates also go on to academic graduate programs in fields ranging from linguistics to psychology to languages, or to professional or masters programs in speech pathology, language education, information science, business, medicine, or law.

Cross-Cultural Skills

Anthropologist 
English as a Second Language instructor
Foreign language teacher
GED instructor
International affairs specialist
International student support staffer
Translator/interpreter

Communication Skills

Advocate (non profit organizations)
Adult literacy instructor
Business communication specialist
Dialect coach
Editor/publisher
Language teacher
Speech pathologist 
Technical writer

Analytical Skills

Cryptographer / cryptanalyst 
Information science specialist
Marketing consultant
Lawyer 
Neuroscientist 
Physician 
Psychologist 
Software developer
Speech Recognition/synthesis specialist

Research Skills

Computer programmer
Lab manager
Lexicographer
Market researcher
Research associate
Research scientist 
Technical writer

 = Further Study Required

For more career information, see O*Net at online.onetcenter.org

CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Students concentrating in Linguistics take a 200-level prerequisite course and three required courses, one each in the core areas of phonetics/phonology, syntax, and semantics, in addition to 21 other credits of Linguistics courses. The Department also offers a fifteen-credit minor (with a 200-level prerequisite) along with an Honors concentration. For more information about the concentration and minor, contact the Linguistics Department.

Department of Linguistics

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ling.lsa.umich.edu

Newnan Advising Center

1255 Angell Hall
734-764-0332
lsa.umich.edu/advising

NEXT STEPS / RESOURCES

To learn more about the Linguistics undergraduate program, undergraduate research and internship opportunities, visit the undergraduate section on the department's webpage: lsa.umich.edu/linguistics

To begin connecting to professionals in fields that interest you, create your own LinkedIn account: careercenter.umich.edu/article/getting-started-linkedin

To identify internships or job opportunities, visit Career Center Connector: careercenter.umich.edu/article/c3

Maize Pages list hundreds of organizations for students to get involved in: maizepages.umich.edu

On-campus jobs (work-study and non work-study jobs) are listed at: studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_Home.aspx

Connect to Community lists volunteer opportunities in local organizations: connect2community.umich.edu

The Career Center

3200 Student Activities Building
734-764-7460
careercenter.umich.edu
facebook.com/careercenter.umich
twitter.com/careercenter
linkedin.com/company/the-career-center-at-the-university-of-michigan