

Website (<http://www.northeastern.edu/linguistics>)

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Linguistics is the scientific study of human language. A growing and exciting field, it has links to a diverse range of others, including psychology, philosophy, neuroscience, computer science, artificial intelligence, sociology, language teaching, anthropology, and education. Linguistics is a key component of the field of cognitive science, the study of the structure and functioning of human cognitive processes.

How do children learn to speak? How is language represented in the mind? What do all languages, including sign languages, have in common? How is language different from the communication systems used by whales, bees, and chimpanzees? What linguistic information do computers need in order for us to converse with them? What are the neurological tie-ins of language disorders such as aphasia or Williams Syndrome, and what can such impairments tell us about the brain mechanisms for language? These scientific and technological questions lead us to ask other questions about language and society: How might we think about linguistic controversies, including debates about official languages, Black English, gender bias, and bilingualism in education? Linguistics attempts to answer each of these questions and covers a surprisingly broad range of topics related to language and communication. Cutting-edge work in cognitive science investigates how natural languages are learned and processed. Grammar checkers and translation programs use language parsers; search engines, browsers, and editors apply the results of linguistic theory and computational linguistics. Linguistics is behind every application that recognizes or synthesizes speech. To work in a field that involves language in any way, you will need to know how language works, the core of the field of linguistics.

Linguistics at Northeastern offers courses in the theory and structure of language (such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics); the sociocultural nature of language (such as language and culture, language and gender, and sociolinguistics); the psychology of language (offered by the Department of Psychology); and applications to related domains (such as language acquisition, language change, and historical linguistics) that cross into the humanities and social sciences.

Students can pursue a major in linguistics as well as in one of the combined majors: linguistics and psychology, linguistics and cultural anthropology, linguistics and English, linguistics and communication studies, computer science and linguistics, and American Sign Language (ASL) and linguistics. A minor in linguistics is also available.

Linguistics offers a variety of co-ops, including positions at local and national companies involved in speech recognition and production, as well as at Northeastern's own speech perception and language processing labs in the Department of Psychology. Linguistics majors

can also participate in international co-ops—for example, working with researchers at the University of Kaiserslautern in Germany.

Students with backgrounds in linguistics have pursued advanced degrees in fields including law, cognitive science, education, English, interpreting, business, speech pathology, computer science, developmental psychology, sociology, and linguistics itself. Other graduates have gone on to work in neurological research, computational linguistics, translation, language software, education, dictionary publishing, robotics, and criminal justice.

Programs

Bachelor of Science (BS)

- Linguistics (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/science/linguistics/linguistics-bs>)
- American Sign Language and Linguistics (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/social-sciences-humanities/cultures-societies-global-studies/american-sign-language-linguistics-bs>)
- Computer Science and Linguistics (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/computer-information-science/computer-information-science-combined-majors/computer-science-linguistics-bs>)
- Linguistics and Cultural Anthropology (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/science/linguistics/linguistics-cultural-anthropology-bs>)
- Linguistics and Psychology (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/science/linguistics/linguistics-psychology-bs>)

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

- Linguistics and Communication Studies (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/science/linguistics/linguistics-communication-studies-ba>)
- Linguistics and English (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/science/linguistics/linguistics-english-ba>)

Minor

- Linguistics (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/science/linguistics/linguistics-minor>)

Courses

Linguistics Courses

LING 1000. Linguistics at Northeastern. 1 Hour.

Introduces first-year linguistics majors to the discipline, the department, and the University as a whole; offers students an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the skills needed for success as a university student.

LING 1150. Introduction to Language and Linguistics. 4 Hours.

Introduces students to their tacit linguistic knowledge of word structure (morphology), sentence structure (syntax), meaning (semantics), and speech sounds (phonetics and phonology). This structural knowledge is the basis for exploring the social dimensions of language: geographic dialects (e.g., Boston speech), Black English (Ebonics), men's and women's language, as well as biological questions of nature vs. nurture, language acquisition, and animal communication.

LING 1449. English Now and Then. 4 Hours.

Introduces the linguistic study of the English language from current and historical perspectives. Topics include the Latin and Greek etymology of English words; the linguistics of modern English dialects; English as a global language; and the origins of English as a Germanic language, closely related to German and Dutch.

LING 1990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

LING 2350. Linguistic Analysis. 4 Hours.

Offers a workshop that focuses on the three core areas in the study of language: syntax, morphology, and phonology. Examines the regularities that lie inside each language user's mind, with a slant toward "doing" linguistics: playing with data, analyzing it, and ultimately explaining it.

LING 2990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

LING 3412. Language and Culture. 4 Hours.

Explores the complex, often inexplicit relationship between language and culture, using a variety of methods drawn from the fields of anthropological linguistics and sociolinguistics. Questions may include: How do language and thought interact? How is language used to create and maintain social institutions and individual personae? How is language used differently by and across gender, ethnicity, and social class?.

LING 3420. Phonetics. 4 Hours.

Surveys phonetics, the study of speech sounds, including articulatory, acoustic, and auditory phonetics. Articulatory phonetics topics include anatomy and physiology; cross-linguistic consonant and vowel articulation; aerodynamics of speech production; coarticulation phenomena; and phonetics of supersegmentals such as syllables, stress, tone, and pitch accent. Acoustic phonetics topics include the physics of sound waves, reading spectrograms, and performing acoustic analyses. Auditory phonetics topics include audition and speech perception.

LING 3422. Phonology. 4 Hours.

Examines phonology, the study of the mental representation, organization, and patterning of sounds in human language. Major topics include phonological typology, phonemes, underlying and surface representations, phonological rules and alternations, natural classes of sounds, syllables and prosody, autosegmental phonology, rule-based vs. constraint-based approaches, morphophonology, diachronic phonology, and current theoretic models of sound systems.

LING 3424. Morphology. 4 Hours.

Introduces morphology, the study of the structure, distributional behavior, and use of words. Covers descriptive methods of analysis, hierarchical word structure, morphological processes and rules, productivity, morphological change, and the interaction of morphology with phonology and syntax. Introduces major contemporary theories, including split morphology and single-component architecture.

LING 3434. Bilingualism. 4 Hours.

Focuses on the fact that half of the world's population is bilingual, that is, uses two or more languages on a regular basis. Also explores the fact that bilingualism remains a poorly understood phenomenon surrounded by a number of myths: those that hold that bilinguals are found in bilingual countries and are equally fluent in both languages; that bilingual children suffer from cognitive impoverishment; and that bilingual education hinders the assimilation of minority groups. Reviews all aspects of bilingualism (in the world, in society, in the child, and in the adult). Discusses topics such as biculturalism and language change.

LING 3442. Sociolinguistics. 4 Hours.

Focuses on why people choose to say things in different ways in different situations. Examines language behavior in its social context and outlines the linguistic constructs that allow conversation to occur, the types of variation that can occur in registers and dialects, and the possible reasons for choosing different linguistic varieties. Also explores linguistic variation in relation to social context, gender, socioeconomic class, race, and ethnicity.

LING 3450. Syntax. 4 Hours.

Introduces syntax, the theory of sentence structure. Explores how to do syntactic analysis using linguistic evidence and argumentation. Focuses primarily on English, with some discussion on the syntax of other languages. Other topics include syntactic universals and the relation between syntax and semantics. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

LING 3452. Semantics. 4 Hours.

Focuses on meaning and how it is expressed in language—through words, sentence structure, intonation, stress patterns, and speech acts. Considers how content, logic, and speakers' and listeners' assumptions affect what sentences can mean and how linguistic meaning is determined by one's perceptual system or culture. Requires completion of the mathematical/analytical thinking level-1 requirement of the NU Core.

LING 3454. History of English. 4 Hours.

Surveys the linguistic and social history of the English language from its Indo-European beginnings to the present. Examines the changes that have occurred in the sound system, word and sentence structures, vocabulary, semantics, and spelling from a formal linguistic perspective. Considers issues in language change—the influence of foreign invasion and migration, differences in dialect, and the emergence of English as a "world" language.

LING 3456. Language and Gender. 4 Hours.

Investigates the relationship between language and gender. Topics include how men and women talk; the significant differences and similarities in how they talk, why men and women talk in these ways, and social biases in the structure of language itself.

LING 3458. Topics in Linguistics. 4 Hours.

Focuses on one of a range of topics from the perspective of current linguistics, such as American dialectics, contemporary syntactic theory, language and law, women's and men's language, words and word structures, or issues in linguistics and literature. May be repeated without limit.

LING 3990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

LING 4654. Seminar in Linguistics. 4 Hours.

Explores a topic in current linguistics research. Requires prior completion of either two 3000-level LING courses or one 3000-level LING course and permission of instructor. May be repeated without limit.

LING 4891. Research Seminar in Linguistics. 4 Hours.

Offers individualized research experience on a chosen topic under the direction of a faculty member. Also includes group meetings of students and the faculty member to study relevant research methods, to discuss relevant research literature, and to present research progress and results. Research content and requisites depend on the instructor, and prior arrangements should be made with the faculty member well in advance of registration. May be repeated up to eight times.

LING 4970. Junior/Senior Honors Project 1. 4 Hours.

Focuses on in-depth project in which a student conducts research or produces a product related to the student's major field. Combined with Junior/Senior Project 2 or college-defined equivalent for 8-credit honors project. May be repeated without limit.

LING 4971. Junior/Senior Honors Project 2. 4 Hours.

Focuses on second semester of in-depth project in which a student conducts research or produces a product related to the student's major field. May be repeated without limit.

LING 4990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

LING 4991. Directed Study Research. 4 Hours.

Offers individualized research experience on a chosen topic under the direction of a faculty member. Research content and requisites depend on the instructor, and prior arrangements should be made with the faculty member well in advance of registration.