



Linguistics Department Master of Arts in Linguistics NEIU

Local Education ~ Global Application

The MA Program in Linguistics focuses on investigating language from both theoretical and functional approaches. Our dynamic curriculum combines core studies in the structure of language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) with current approaches in sociolinguistics, language acquisition, psycholinguistics, language contact, World Englishes, endangered languages, discourse analysis, and identity studies. In addition to direct application to the teaching of linguistics, English and other languages, an MA in linguistics is a recognized asset for careers in curriculum development, publishing, speech pathology, natural language processing, translation, law, education, and other professions within social and behavioral sciences, especially those concerned with language policies and practices in multilingual settings.

Through their course work and hands-on research, students will be introduced to

- ❖ the nature and structure of language;
- ❖ the principles and methods of language analysis;
- ❖ the relationship between language and cultural, national, social, and personal identity;
- ❖ the role of language as a mediator of intercultural understanding.

Program Requirements

- 12 courses/36 hours of course work
- Cumulative 3.0 GPA in Linguistics courses with no more than 2 grades of C or below
- Successful completion of a Linguistics Capstone course; oral defense of Capstone project.

Admission Requirements

- 2.75 undergraduate GPA;
- No GRE required.
- 9 hours of foreign language study at the undergraduate level or above OR for English as a second/foreign language learners a minimum TOEFL score of 600; 250 on the computer-based test.
- Submission of completed application to the Graduate College. Applications can be obtained on-line through the Grad College website at <http://www.neiu.edu/~Gradcoll/>.

Scholarships and Assistantships

FAQs

Q: Do I need any special background in Linguistics?

A: *The MA Program in Linguistics welcomes students with the degree of BA, BS, MA, or MS in any discipline who appreciate the role of language at a local and a global level.*

Q: How long will it take me to complete the program?

A: *Full-time or part-time? Ask us about our 2, 3 and 4 year plans.*

Q: I have a full-time day job, do you offer courses in the evenings?

A: *To help optimize opportunity, all our classes are offered at either 4:15pm or 7:05pm and meet once per week.*

Q: What are my career options with an MA in Linguistics?

A: *Linguistic knowledge and training help you achieve career goals in fields such as language teaching, speech pathology, computational linguistics, curriculum development, publishing, translation and interpretation, forensic linguistics, language policy and revitalization.*

Q: Can I transfer any course credits from another program?

A: *You may transfer up to 3 courses (9 credits) from another relevant graduate program after you have been accepted and completed 4 courses in the MA Linguistics Program. Contact one of our graduate advisors to answer your specific questions.*

Q: Can I meet the ESL endorsement course requirements while working toward an MA in Linguistics?

A: *Yes, you can. Three courses – LING 401, LING 446 and one of the following: LING 405, LING 437, or LING 449, fulfill three of the six requirements of the State. The other three State approved courses -- TESL 410, 414, and 468, or equivalent coursework—may be transferred into and count toward your 36 hour requirement for the MA in Linguistics.*

Every year, there are a number of merit-based scholarships and a number of assistantships made available through the Graduate college and through the College of Arts and Sciences. Scholarships may cover tuition for one or two classes for a given

semester. Assistantships provide tuition for up to 2 classes and a monthly stipend in exchange for up to 20 hours per week of work with a faculty supervisor. The numbers of available scholarships and assistantships vary from year to year based on budget and number of entering and continuing students. Graduate advisors can provide details about application deadlines.

Required Courses

LING-401 Fundamentals of Modern Linguistics
LING-405 Typology **or** LING-409 Research Design
LING-422 Phonology
LING-427 Morphology **or** LING-435 Semantics
LING-437 Generative Grammar
LING-446 Sociolinguistics
LING-450 First Language Acquisition

PLUS 4 electives

Elective courses may be selected from the list below or from one of the Capstone courses (without the Capstone requirement):

LING-433 Lexicology
LING-438 Syntax
LING-452 Psycholinguistics
LING-472 American English--History and Growth
LING-473 The English Language--History and Development
LING-475 Historical and Comparative Linguistics
LING-481 Language and Tourism
TESL-410 Techniques of Teaching English as a Second Language
TESL-414 Theories of Teaching English as a Second Language
TESL-468 Assessment of the LEP Student

AND a Capstone course or Thesis Seminar*:

To complete the Program, select one of the following courses as a Capstone course or select the Thesis Seminar:

LING-430 Structure of Language
LING-448 Discourse Analysis
LING-449 Anthropological Linguistics
LING-453 Language Contact
LING-471 World Englishes
LING-491 Seminar: Applied Linguistics
LING-492 Seminar: Linguistics and Related Fields
LING-493 Seminar: Linguistic Theory
LING-494 Seminar: Historical Linguistics

OR

LING-499 Thesis Seminar

***For full description of the Capstone Experience and the Thesis Seminar option, see the section on “Completing the Program”.**



Course Descriptions:

Linguistics 401 Fundamentals of Modern Linguistics

Overview of language as a rule-governed system, with particular emphasis on the following subfields of linguistics: phonetics (the sounds of a language), phonology (the functioning and patterning of sounds), morphology (the analysis of word structure), syntax (the analysis of sentence structure), and semantics (the analysis of meaning). This course will also give an historical overview of the field of linguistics. Other topics that may be included in this overview include historical linguistics, language typology, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, the brain and language, and computational linguistics.

Linguistics 405 Typology

Typology in linguistics is the study of the similarities and differences in human languages. This course examines the major grammatical categories and constructions found in the world's languages. Using a cross-linguistic comparison we seek to understand absolute linguistic universals (things all languages share), universal tendencies (things that most languages share), and implicational universals (if a language has X, then it has Y). This type of study allows us to better understand the human mind and how it processes language, what is possible and impossible in human language, and how and if languages are genetically related.

Linguistics 409 Research Design

Research Design is a survey course that reviews some of the major trends and methodologies used in linguistics, language acquisition, and language teaching. It will provide an exploration of primarily quantitative approaches used in language-specific inquiry by examining a variety of studies from the literature, their questions, their underlying assumptions, and their design.

Linguistics 422 Phonology

Introduction to articulatory phonetics (how sounds are produced) and current phonological theories. The development of this subfield of linguistics is traced, covering generative phonology, autosegmental phonology, feature geometry, and Optimality Theory. We will also look at the interface between phonology, semantics and pragmatics as well as the role of phonological theory in models of speech perception, language acquisition and other psycholinguistic processes.

Prereq: LING 401

Linguistics 427 Morphology

Morphology is the study of word formation. This course examines a wide range of data from a variety of languages in order to determine how words are composed. It focuses primarily on derivational morphology (how words are composed in the lexicon) and inflectional morphology (how variation in word forms shows grammatical functions in the syntax of the language). The interaction between morphology and phonology and morphology and syntax are also examined as well as the development of morphological theory. **Prereq:** LING 401

Linguistics 430 Structure of Language

Phonological and grammatical structure of a selected language and its genetic relations to others of its family. Topics may include Arabic, Farsi, Kirundi, Rotuman and Thai. Consult the Schedule of Classes for specific languages. **Prereqs:** LING 401, LING 422, and LING 437

Linguistics 433 Lexicography

Review of the problems and trends of word study in the past, especially the notions surrounding the concepts of authority and usage of language; scrutiny of the various types and sources of English vocabulary; recent linguistic insights considered in the light of their value for various kinds of handbooks. **Prereq:** 401

Linguistics 435 Semantics

What is meaning? How does word meaning contribute to sentence meaning? This course explores these two fundamental questions beginning with basic assumptions about semantic compositionality and how it corresponds to syntax. The course introduces the fundamentals of logic as they apply to semantics and investigates the meanings of nouns, adjectives, and especially verbs through lexical semantics. **Prereqs:** LING 401 and LING 437

Linguistics 437 Introduction to Generative Grammar

In taking a scientific approach to the study of language, this course investigates the linguistic process of constructing formal grammars that reflect native speaker knowledge and, therefore, works towards arriving at a Universal Grammar. Comparing data from a variety of languages, we look for generalizations and tendencies across languages that not only account for what speakers know but also account for how children learn language. We examine a number of topics that are core to generative assumptions about language and language study. This investigation leads us to formalizing predictions about how language is structured. These skills can then be extended to further work on syntax or adapted to pedagogical applications. **Prereq:** LING 401

Linguistics 438 Syntax

Following the ground work established in LING 437, this course will build on students' knowledge of modern syntactic theory as practiced within the Principles and Parameters approach. Although an emphasis will be placed on the methodological and theoretical achievements of the Minimalist Program as developed in the past decade, contributions from other frameworks will be examined as well. Students will be introduced to the notions of functional and lexical projections, empty categories, feature checking operations, and various kinds of movement and merge operations. **Prereq:** LING 401 and LING 437

Linguistics 446 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and culture. The language practices of individuals and communities vary in correlation with social, cultural, and individual factors. This course examines this variation in analyses of topics like social and regional dialectology, interactional discourse, ethnography of communication, and language and gender.

Linguistics 448 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis examines the structuring and use of language to promote social action – i.e. language produced in recognition of and response to its role in society and effects on others. Theory and research focus on gathering and analyzing naturally-occurring texts to gain understanding of the patterns of social action they respond to and initiate. Research explores spoken, written, and visual texts and sociolinguistic aspects of the relationship between languages, cultures, and individuals. Students will come to understand that identity – personal, social, national – as well as ideology – are constructed by and, in turn, serve to construct interactional discourse. **Prereq:** LING 401, LING 437, and LING 446

Linguistics 449 Anthropological Linguistics Combining the theory and methodology of the ethnographic analysis of culture with the theory and methodology of the sociolinguistic analysis of contextualized talk and text, this course examines the social practice of language in use. While universals of structural and psychological features of language can be identified, language variation also exists within and across cultures. Through collection and analysis of naturally-occurring culturally-grounded data, students will identify and come to appreciate how language structures and reveals the systems that both influence and expose cultural knowledge. Students can apply their awareness to culturally-bounded events in settings such as education, corporations, families, and the world at large. **Prereqs:** LING 401, LING 437, and LING 446

Linguistics 450 First Language Acquisition

Examination of the stages through which a child passes as he/she masters the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic systems of his/her native language, consideration of the various theories which attempt to account for the child's ability to acquire language. **Prereq:** LING 401

Linguistics 452 Psycholinguistics

Theoretical studies in the area of linguistics and psychology; possible implications of the form of grammar for the language learning process; survey of relevant research.

Prereq: LING 401

Linguistics 453 Language Contact

This course examines language contact and bilingualism as a sociolinguistic phenomenon and articulates its impact on individuals and society. It focuses on issues such as language choice, language maintenance and language death in multilingual communities, national and individual identity, the structure, function and impact of codeswitching, and controversial issues such as bilingual language acquisition and the relationship between bilingualism and cognitive, linguistic and social development. **Prereq:** LING 401, 437, 446

Linguistics 471 World Englishes

Examination of issues involved in the development and maintenance of varieties of English throughout the world, now commonly referred to as World Englishes. Specifically, this course emphasizes the historical, political, and ideological issues of post-colonialism, globalization, nativization, standardization, hegemony, canon, and pedagogy of native and non-native varieties of English. **Prereq:** LING 401 and LING 446

Linguistics 472 American English--History and Growth

Phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon of English in the United States as well as its cultural history with reference to the mother country and the New World, both in colonial and post-revolutionary times.

Prereq: LING 401

Linguistics 473 The English Language--History and Development Survey of English phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon and cultural history through Old English, Middle English, early Modern English and recent Modern English, using literary documents for the older periods, and literary as well as spoken records for the most recent times. **Prereq:** LING 401

Linguistics 475 Historical and Comparative Linguistics

This course examines some of the issues involved in language variation and change. Using the comparative method and data from a wide variety of languages and language families, students will learn how to classify languages, how to establish genetic relationships between languages, and how to reconstruct proto-languages. In addition, students will learn how the reconstruction of protolanguages complements the work currently being done in other fields such as population genetics, archaeology, and ancient history. **Prereq:** LING 401 and LING 422

Linguistics 481 Language and Tourism

Advanced work and individual projects in language and tourism, a growing area of applied linguistics. Topics will include the sociolinguistics of tourism, social/identity construction of not only tourists but also of touristic locations, language use in tourism, discursive, visual semiotic, and ethnomethodological analyses of tourism materials.

Prereq: LING 401 and LING 446

Linguistics 491 Seminar: Applied Linguistics

Advanced work and individual projects in a selected area of applied linguistics. Topics may include language policy and language planning, linguistic analysis and language learning, linguistics and writing, reading, research design, translation, cross-cultural communication, and discourse analysis. Consult the Schedule of Classes for specific topics. **Prereq:** graduate standing, LING 401, LING 422 **or** LING 427 **or** LING 435, LING 437, LING 446, and a B average

Linguistics 492 Seminar: Linguistics and Related Fields

Advanced work and individual projects in a selected area of linguistic specialization, such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, bilingualism and creole languages. Consult the Schedule of Classes for specific topics. **Prereq:** graduate standing, LING 401, LING 422 **or** LING 427 **or** LING 435, LING 437, LING 446, and a B average

Linguistics 493 Seminar: Linguistic Theory

Advanced work and individual projects in a selected area of linguistic theory. Topics may include Readings in Linguistics, Semantics and Syntax. Consult the Schedule of Classes for specific topics. **Prereq:** graduate standing, LING 401, LING 422 **or** LING 427 **or** LING 435, LING 437, LING 446, and a B average.

Linguistics 494 Seminar: Historical Linguistics

Advanced work and individual projects in a selected area of historical linguistics. Topics may include etymology and cultural contexts. Consult the Schedule of Classes for specific topics. **Prereq:** graduate standing, LING 401, LING 422 **or** LING 427 **or** LING 435, LING 437, LING 446, and a B average.

Completing the Program

Students may choose to complete their MA degree through either a Capstone Experience or the Thesis Seminar. Both options engage students in an assessment component that authentically addresses and evaluates their knowledge and skills in linguistics and applied linguistics. All Linguistics MA students will be required to complete with a grade of 'B' or better one 400-level linguistics course identified as a Capstone Course or the Linguistics 499: Thesis Seminar.

1) The Capstone Experience

The Linguistics MA capstone courses require students to demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of and skills in linguistics as well as informed reflective self-evaluation of this and all other course work as well as their overall experience in the MA Linguistics program. The Capstone Experience, consisting of completion of course work specific to a given topic selected by a student, offers students a unique opportunity to integrate their MA linguistics education. Rather than complete the MA with assorted collections of knowledge and skills, students complete their capstone research by demonstrating their understanding of how these collections fit together to form a comprehensive and cohesive display of language form and function. The product of this capstone experience will be a research paper that is appropriate for conference presentation and/or publication.

Prereq: Candidacy for the Master of Arts in Linguistics, a B average, and approval of graduate advisor.

2) Linguistics 499: Thesis Seminar

Student will work with a committee of three faculty to conduct research and to write a thesis to fulfill the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Linguistics.

Prereq: Candidacy for the Master of Arts in Linguistics, a B average, and approval of graduate advisor.



Faculty

υ**Dr. John Boyle, Undergraduate Advisor**

Assistant Professor

Ph.D. University of Chicago

Areas of expertise and interest: Syntax, Morphology, Native American Languages (Siouan languages), Second Language Acquisition, Language Documentation and Revitalization, Language Pedagogy.

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υ**Dr. Richard Hallett, Colloquium Coordinator**

Associate Professor

Ph.D. University of South Carolina

Areas of expertise and interest: Second Language Acquisition, English as a Second Language, Sociolinguistics, World Englishes, Phonology, Language and Tourism.

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υ**Dr. Judith Kaplan-Weinger, Coordinator**

Professor

Ph.D. Georgetown University

Areas of expertise and interest: Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Identity Studies, Theories, Techniques & Assessment of TESL, Language and Tourism.

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υ**Dr. Shahrzad Mahootian, Graduate Advisor**

Professor

Ph.D. Northwestern University

Areas of expertise and interest: Language Contact and Identity, Bilingualism, Codeswitching, Languages and Cultures of Iran, Psycholinguistics, First Language Acquisition, Syntax-Pragmatics Interface, Forensic Linguistics, Semantics.

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