Courses in linguistics are intended to open up systematic perspectives on the nature of human language by means of detailed studies of language structure, language change and language acquisition, the sound system of language, and the syntactic/semantic system of language. The major is designed to provide a fundamental understanding of modern linguistics for the student seeking a general education in the liberal arts as well as for the student preparing for graduate study.

Department Programs

Major

• Linguistics Major, B.A. (p. 1)

Minor

• Linguistics Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/linguistics-minor)

Graduate Programs

• M.A. in Linguistics (http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/linguistics)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the linguistics program, students should be able to:

• Use a linguistic analysis method (i.e., a formal model or a framework) correctly and apply it to a novel set of linguistic data
• Formulate and test hypotheses on the basis of a linguistic data set or information about language-related behavior
• Express their knowledge of some linguistic topic clearly and effectively in a written assignment of term-paper length

Requirements

In addition to the program requirements listed below, students must

• attain a final cumulative GPA of at least 2.0
• complete a minimum of 45 academic credit hours earned from UNC– Chapel Hill courses
• take at least half of their major course requirements (courses and credit hours) at UNC–Chapel Hill
• earn a minimum of 18 hours of C or better in the major core requirements (some majors require 21 hours).

For more information, please consult the degree requirements section of the catalog (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/general-education-curriculum-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext).
No more than six (6) combined credit hours from LING 395, LING 493, and LING 495) can be counted toward the major.

Thus, the major requires eight courses, including LING 101. Students majoring in linguistics may concentrate entirely in linguistics, or they may select their major courses to include a field related to linguistics, such as linguistic anthropology, computer processing of language data, philosophy of language, psychology of language, sociology of language, speech and hearing sciences, or study of a particular language or language family. Any such second-field option should be planned in consultation with the student’s advisor. Students interested in a career in speech pathology may pursue a minor in speech and hearing sciences through the Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences in the UNC School of Medicine.

Students interested in the linguistics major are encouraged to consult with the department’s director of undergraduate studies, Professor Katya Pertsova. Additional information about the major is provided on the department’s Web site (http://linguistics.web.unc.edu); select the link for the undergraduate program.

Linguistics (LING) course descriptions (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/departments/linguistics/#coursestext).

Dual Bachelor’s–Master’s Degree Program

The dual B.A.—M.A. program offers highly motivated undergraduates the opportunity to earn an M.A. in less than the usual time by completing some of the M.A. requirements while still an undergraduate. Students must have a grade point average of 3.3 overall and 3.5 in linguistics. Students interested in pursuing this program should consult the department’s director of undergraduate studies, Professor Katya Pertsova, to assess feasibility.

Special Opportunities

Honors in Linguistics

Any linguistics major with a cumulative total grade point average of at least 3.3 and at least 3.5 within the linguistics major is eligible to attempt a degree with honors in linguistics. To graduate with honors, a student must work with a faculty supervisor, enroll in LING 691H and LING 692H during the senior year, and complete and defend an honors thesis according to departmental and Honors Carolina requirements. Interested students should contact the honors advisor, Professor Katya Pertsova, during their junior year.

Departmental Involvement

Many linguistics majors and minors join Underling, the undergraduate linguistics club, which sponsors a variety of educational, outreach, social, and career-development events each year.

Study Abroad

Students in linguistics are encouraged to consider study abroad. Courses that can be applied toward the linguistics major and minor are available through many of the programs administered by the Study Abroad Office.

Undergraduate Awards

The Marc Adam Eisdorfer Award recognizes the graduating senior judged most outstanding in academic achievement in linguistics. It was established in 1998 by Sandra Eisdorfer in memory of her son, a graduate of the class of 1984.