



The Undergraduate Program in Linguistics

Linguistics is the scientific study of language, a complex tool that humans can use to construct meaning, to create beauty, to build identity, and for countless other purposes. Language is an elaborate system. It is like the Colorado landscape: filled with sweeping plains of regularities and surprising canyons of exceptions. The trails to the summits of the mountains of meaning sometimes take direct routes—each word is an obvious step toward the goal. At other times, the meaning of a whole sentence can seem completely different from what the words in the sentence mean, just as a trail may switchback and meander, seeming to lead far from the summit that it ends up on. This landscape offers countless questions for linguists to investigate. Some linguists make maps of the uncharted landscapes of languages that haven't been studied yet. Other linguists study how children learn languages. Linguists can study particular sub-components of language at great depth, or investigate how to more effectively teach language. They study how language produces and organizes society, social relations, and identity. Still more model language computationally. Inside, you can learn about how students and faculty in our program explore these areas and the training that we offer.

Our course offerings are chosen with two purposes in mind: to ensure that students are provided with an engaging survey of foundational topics across the field of linguistics in our core classes, and to inspire students to pursue research questions deeply with classes that explore our instructors' cutting-edge research. A selection of classes is included below:

- Language in US Society
- The Study of Words
- Languages of the World
- Intro to Linguistics
- Language, Gender, and Sexuality
- Language Sound Structures
- Native American Languages
- Semantics
- World Language Policies
- Computational Lexical Semantics
- The Structure of Lakhota
- Formal Foundations of Linguistics
- Morphosyntax
- Language and Culture
- Senior Honors Thesis

Learning beyond the classroom

The linguistics department offers several opportunities for **learning beyond the classroom**. Students in the honors program work closely with a faculty member to write a senior honors thesis, in which they create and develop an original argument in an area of research that is of special interest to them. Many LING majors have received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program for collaborative research with LING faculty. Collaborative projects can range from working in a lab with cognitive scientists to conducting fieldwork that contributes to language revitalization efforts. Many undergraduate students have participated in the Literacy Practicum, an outreach program that works with at-risk readers in the Colorado Front Range community to provide resources and support to improve literacy skills. The department also hosts an active, student-led LING club.

Requirements for the **LING major** include:

- 1) 32 LING-related credit hours (see departmental website for detailed breakdown).
- 2) 2.00 or higher GPA (both in major and overall)
- 3) Complete all LING classes with C– or better.
- 4) At least 5 credit hours of a language other than English at or above the 3000-level (for widely taught languages) or the 2000-level (for less widely taught languages)

Requirements for the **LING minor** include:

- 1) 18 LING-related credit hours (see departmental website for detailed breakdown).
- 2) 2.00 or higher GPA (both in minor and overall)
- 3) Complete all LING classes with C– or better.

The BA/MA

The Linguistics Department offers a **five-year concurrent Bachelor's and Master's degree program** for students with strong abilities and motivations. Students in this program normally receive the BA and MA simultaneously, at the end of the fifth year of study. You may apply to this program in fall or spring of your junior year.

Career Opportunities

Students who have graduated with the CU Linguistics BA have entered highly ranked MA, MS and PhD programs in linguistics, anthropology, library science, computer science and related disciplines, and have gone on to careers in education and industry. Recent BA graduates have found jobs in translation/interpreting, academic publishing, language teaching, information extraction, marketing, forensic science, and advertising. For more information about careers in linguistics, see the Linguistic Society of America's brochure at <http://www.linguisticsociety.org/content/why-major-linguistics>. For more information about the major, visit us on the web at colorado.edu/linguistics or contact Linguistics undergraduate advisor Dr. Kira Hall: kira.hall@colorado.edu

Specializing

About the Department

The TESOL certificate

Our new TESOL Certificate (anticipated, starting in 2016-7) will equip students with the foundational knowledge and skills needed to compete for and engage in jobs teaching English to speakers of other languages—both abroad and in the U.S. It is available to both LING and non-LING majors.

Computational Linguistics

Computational linguistics exists at the interface of linguistics and computer science. Students in this field learn to model language comprehension and to design technologies on the basis of these models. The new Computer Science BA makes it much easier for undergraduate students to double major in Linguistics and Computer Science. This double major offers preparation for employment opportunities at places like IBM, Google, Microsoft Research, and Amazon.

Sociolinguistics

Our offerings in sociolinguistics explore how language contributes to the organization of society and culture. We examine how discourse creates social categories such as ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, age, nationality, and social class. Students have used skills learned in these classes to pursue careers in public policy and social advocacy, branding and advertising, social media marketing, healthcare communications, and knowledge management.

Linguistic Cognition

Linguistics majors interested in the cognitive and neural bases of language, including computational modeling, psycholinguistic experimentation and neuroscience of language, can earn the interdisciplinary undergraduate certificate in Cognitive Science. Training in cognitive science prepares students for many of the fields targeted as the major growth areas of the 21st century: telecommunications, information processing, intelligent systems, medical analysis and learning technology.

Language is something that we have and something that we do. It is a fundamental part of the human experience and indispensable to human progress. Language is a social, cultural, and interactive tool, and it is also a major part of the way we think and reason. Studying the language faculty requires you to study everything from the way we form sounds and gestures, to the way we perceive speech, to the meanings that language expresses, to the use of language as a signal of group identity. All of these topics are encompassed by coursework in the major. The Linguistics department gives its majors the experience of an academic neighborhood—something that few other CU departments can do. At present, there are about 160 students working toward a Major or Minor degree in Linguistics at CU Boulder.

Because of the small scale of the major and a faculty dedicated to teaching excellence, Linguistics majors can interact extensively with peers and instructors both inside and outside the classroom.

Instruction in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Colorado Boulder comes from specialists in a range of research fields in linguistics. The Department's orientation is empirical: its approach to the structure and use of language confronts theory with first-hand observations. Analysis of video and audio data (typically conversational data), acoustic measurements of speech, computational modeling and statistical analysis, psycholinguistic experimentation and fieldwork in local communities and abroad all contribute to this enterprise.



Komol Isaach is the last person who is still able to tell stories in the Nyang'i language from northeastern Uganda. The first description of his language is being prepared by a student in the CU linguistics department. The CU linguistics department teaches students how to approach linguistic data rigorously, using empirical methods to test linguistic theory.