A Career Guide for Linguistics

Linguistics investigates all aspects of spoken and written human language. It applies the social sciences, the natural sciences, and the humanities to the study of language. Linguistics includes the study of how languages use sound, the organization of language in word structure, syntax, and semantics, the meaning and analysis of spoken and written texts, and the structural patterns of different language systems, including sign languages, throughout the world and through history.

The study of linguistics enables students to develop the objectivity and analytical and argumentative skills, as well as cross-cultural awareness, that are applicable to numerous occupations. It also serves as a solid foundation for advanced work in graduate and professional-school programs.

SKILLS&ABILITIES

A concentration in linguistics provides students with the opportunity to build skills and abilities in areas ranging from critical analysis to theory development to observation. Applying linguistic theory within a global perspective, students address myths about language in addition to acquiring new knowledge and skills. Whether working as a librarian, a computer programmer, or a legislative aide, for example, a graduate would find an objective view of language and the ability to synthesize theories useful on a regular basis. Representative skills and abilities acquired by majors in Linguistics are highlighted below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross-Cultural</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Research</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizing a global perspective</td>
<td>Listening/reading for meaning and social use</td>
<td>Reading critically</td>
<td>Observing people/data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relating language to social context</td>
<td>Applying knowledge about discourse skills</td>
<td>Identifying patterns</td>
<td>Synthesizing novel theories</td>
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<td>Identifying relationships between language groups</td>
<td>Understanding historical language change</td>
<td>Analyzing discourse</td>
<td>Acknowledging historical perspectives</td>
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<td>Adapting to/functioning in other cultures</td>
<td>Writing clearly</td>
<td>Evaluating evidence</td>
<td>Working with research subjects</td>
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<td>Working with persons from other backgrounds</td>
<td>Informing/explaining ideas</td>
<td>Comparing interpretations</td>
<td>Identifying areas for research</td>
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CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

GENERAL AREAS
A concentration in linguistics has led graduates to successful careers in research, business, and professional fields. Many graduates go on to law school or medical school, where the analytic skills that are sharpened in linguistics courses are especially useful, or to academic graduate programs in fields ranging from psychology to computational linguistics to languages, or masters programs in speech pathology, information science, business, or language teaching.

SPECIFIC AREAS
The range of occupational areas chosen by linguistics majors may be seen in the selected list below, which was developed from follow-up information from University of Michigan graduates and also from national data. Some of the occupations listed below require further study and/or specialized training.

- advocacy (e.g. supporting ethnic minorities or other social groups)
- cryptography
- editing/publishing
- information sciences
- international relations (government, business)
- international student support
- language-related software development
- lexicography
- research assistant
- speech pathology
- speech recognition/speech synthesis
- teaching English as a second language
- technical writing
- translating/interpreting
- website design

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS
Students concentrating in linguistics take three required courses, one each in the core areas of phonetics/phonology, syntax, and semantics, and an additional 21 credits of courses in linguistics. Consult the LS&A Bulletin for more detailed information on program requirements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For information about choosing a career, about graduate/professional school, internships, or job descriptions;
The Career Center
3200 Student Activities Building
764-7460
www.careercenter.umich.edu

For information about degree requirements for the linguistics concentration and minor, and for general information about choosing a major:
Student Services Assistant
Linguistics Department
440 Lorch Hall
764-0353
Email: Linguistics@umich.edu
www.lsa.umich.edu/ling/

LS&A Academic Advising
Angell Hall
764-0332