Linguistics

Language is a uniquely human capacity that enables us to communicate a limitless set of messages on any topic. While human languages can differ greatly in certain respects, all are intricate, complex, rule-governed systems. Linguistics is the scientific study of these systems, their use in communicative and other social settings, and their cognitive and neural underpinnings. The linguistics concentration at Brown gives students a background in the “core” aspects of the language system: phonetics/phonology (the study of speech sounds and their patterning), syntax (the study of combinatorics of words, phrases, and sentences), and semantics/pragmatics (the study of the meanings of words, sentences, and conversation). Beyond this, students may focus more heavily in one or more of these areas and/or explore related questions such as how children and adults learn language (language acquisition), how utterances are produced and understood in real time (psycholinguistics), or how speaking and understanding are anchored in underlying neural systems (neurolinguistics). Other areas such as historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, philosophy of language, and linguistic anthropology can also be pursued in conjunction with offerings in other departments.

Requirements (10 courses)

Prerequisite Course

1. CLPS 0300 Introduction to Linguistics (May be waived in special instances)

Required Courses

2. CLPS 1310 Phonology

and either

CLPS 1330 Introduction to Syntax

OR

CLPS 1331 Linguistic Typology

AND one of:

1. CLPS 1341 Lexical Semantics
2. CLPS 1342 Compositional Semantics
3. CLPS 1370 Pragmatics

One course in Psycholinguistics to be drawn from the following: 1

CLPS 0800 Language and the Mind
CLPS 1650 Child Language Acquisition
CLPS 1800 Language Processing
CLPS 1820 Language and the Brain
CLPS 1821 Neuroimaging and Language
CLPS 1890 Laboratory in Psycholinguistics

or any Topics Course in Language Acquisition or Language Processing

5 additional appropriate electives forming a thematically related set to be determined in consultation with the Concentration Advisor. At least one of these must be drawn from the list of advanced courses listed below, and we strongly recommend that at least one course be an appropriate methods and a topics course. No more than 2 of these courses may be drawn from below 1000 level courses. The electives can be drawn from any of the above courses, or any of the other linguistic/language related courses in the CLPS department. Electives may also be drawn from courses in other in consultation with the Concentration Advisor; a list of courses which standardly count towards the Linguistics Concentration (provided they form part of the thematically related set) is appended below.

Advanced Courses

- CLPS 1320 The Production, Perception, and Analysis of Speech
- CLPS 1332 Issues in Syntactic Theory
- CLPS 1342 Compositional Semantics
- CLPS 1360 Introduction to Corpus Linguistics

A course from the 1381 series (Topics in Phonetic & Phonology)

A course from the 1383 series (Topics in Syntactic Theory and Semantics). For example:

CLPS 1383D - Topics in Syntax and Semantics

A course from the 1385 series (Topics in Language Acquisition)

A course from the 1387 series (Topics in Neurolinguistics)

A course from the 1389 series (Topics in Language Processing)

CLPS 1390 Linguistic Field Methods
CLPS 1821 Neuroimaging and Language
CLPS 1880 series (Topics in Psycholinguistics)
CLPS 1890 Laboratory in Psycholinguistics

Other Courses Routinely Fulfilling Linguistics Concentration Requirements (in consultation with the Concentration Advisor):

NOTE: This is NOT an exhaustive list of courses that can be applied towards the Linguistics Concentration requirements.

- ANTH 0800 Sound and Symbols: Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology
- ANTH 1800 Sociolinguistics, Discourse and Dialogue
- CLPS 0050M Playing with Words: The Linguistic Principles Behind Word Games and Puzzles
- CLPS 1365 Historical Linguistics
- CSCI 1460 Computational Linguistics
- EAST 1510 Chinese: A History of the Language
- EGYT 2310 History of the Ancient Egyptian Language
- SLAV 1300 Sociolinguistics (with Case Studies on the Former USSR and Eastern Europe)
- PHIL 0540 Logic
- PHIL 1780 Philosophy of Language

Total Credits 10

It is recommended that students take CLPS 1310 and CLPS 1330 before higher level courses.

Honors (12 courses)

Candidates for Honors in Linguistics must meet all of the requirements above, write an Honors thesis, and take two additional courses. One course is normally CLPS 1980 (Directed Research in Cognitive, Linguistic, and Psychological Sciences) - intended for work on the Honors thesis.

Three of the total 12 courses must be drawn from the advanced list above (the Directed Research course counts as one of the advanced courses).

Normally a 3.5 grade-point average in the concentration is required for admission to the Honors program. Honors candidates should formalize their projects in consultation with their advisors by the end of September 6.

Refer to the CLPS Honors Program page for detailed information about the Linguistics Honors program.

Independent Study

Independent study is encouraged for the A.B. degree. Students should sign up for CLPS 1980 with a faculty advisor who is a member of the Department of Cognitive and Linguistic Sciences (CLPS). Arrangements should be made in Semester 6 for students expecting to do independent study during Semesters 7 and/or 8.

Do Foreign Language Courses Count?

Foreign language courses will generally not count towards the concentration requirements, except those that focus on the structure or history of the language. Students are, however, advised to gain familiarity with a foreign language, and are encouraged to take at least one course which deals with the structure of a language other than English.
NOTE: Please refer to the Cognitive, Linguistic, and Psychological Sciences undergraduate Linguistics concentration page for updates not listed here.
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This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Helvetica was used instead of Arial.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.