

# LINGUISTICS, PH.D.

The mission of the Ph.D. Program in Linguistics is to train students to pursue research and teach in the areas of general linguistics and a chosen subfield. The Ph.D. in Linguistics at USC typically involves a much broader range of coursework than what is found at more traditional Linguistics Departments and Programs in the United States. The program does not focus on the training of theoretical linguists, but instead sees its mission as that of training historical linguists, language acquisition specialists, sociolinguists, and others, who can apply linguistic theory to the pursuit of their research. Thus, it is typical for a student in this program to use current syntactic theory in investigations into language contact or language variation, or to apply phonological theory to research on second language acquisition.

The Ph.D. course requirements (see degree requirements) involve six core courses, plus a primary field of study of at least 12 hours, and either a secondary field of 9-12 hours or at least 9 hours breadth requirement outside the primary field. **Approved special fields are the following: linguistic anthropology, English/French/German/Spanish linguistics, historical linguistics, philosophy of language, phonological theory, psycholinguistics, second/foreign language acquisition, sociolinguistics, syntactic theory, and teaching English as a second/foreign language.**

The secondary field may consist entirely of LING-designated courses; however, it also could include both LING-designated courses and courses from other departments. A student may also choose a secondary field made up entirely of courses from a cooperating department. Examples include English Composition and Rhetoric, Medieval and Early Modern English Literature, Experimental Psychology, Philosophy, or Communication Sciences and Disorders. It is possible for all credit hours earned in a graduate certificate program in TESOL at USC to apply to this degree. Please speak to an advisor to see how these hours apply in your situation.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of theory and research in core areas of linguistics.
2. Students will demonstrate advanced knowledge in a subdiscipline in the field of linguistics.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to formulate and conduct a plan of linguistic research that advances the state of knowledge in the area of inquiry.
4. Students will progress through the program in a timely manner and find suitable employment in the field of linguistics (or in a profession where their linguistic skills are being meaningfully used) at the completion of their doctoral degree.

## Admissions

### Required Documents

- **Official Transcripts.** Please submit transcripts for all prior undergraduate and graduate study.
- **3 Letters of Recommendation**
- **Personal Statement.** Please ensure that your statement addresses the following questions, though you do not need to address them in the exact order below (maximum 1,000 words total).
  - a. *What kind of linguistic research do you see yourself conducting in graduate school? Be as specific as possible, offering examples as relevant.*

- b. *How have you learned about linguistics, whether through classes, readings, seminars, or other experiences? What insights have you gained that further stimulated your interest and reinforced your conviction that you are well-suited for this field?*
  - c. *What relevant experience, training, or coursework do you have, given the type of research you wish to pursue (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, or formal research)?*
  - d. *Are there any gaps or discrepancies in your academic record that you would like to explain?*
  - e. *Why do you want to join our program, given the specific training and faculty expertise that we offer?*
  - f. *What makes you a strong candidate for graduate school and likely to have a successful career in linguistics?*
- **Writing Sample.** Your writing sample should reflect your ability to carry out research in your intended subfield. For example, if you plan to pursue quantitatively oriented research, your sample should showcase your ability to draw on quantitative methods of analysis. Likewise, if you plan to pursue qualitatively oriented research, your sample should showcase your ability to draw on qualitative methods of analysis.
  - **Curriculum Vitae or Resume**
  - **TOEFL/IELTS Score** (for international applicants for whom English is not a first language)

## Degree Requirements (60 Post-Baccalaureate Hours)

### Core Courses (18 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
LING 710	Introduction to Phonology	3
LING 720	Introduction to Syntax	3
LING 711 or LING 721	Phonological Theory Syntactic Theory	3
Select three more graduate level core linguistics courses in phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and/or pragmatics <sup>1</sup>		9
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>18</b>

<sup>1</sup> Exclusive of LING 600. Other courses may be used to satisfy this requirement pending the approval of the student's advisor and the graduate director.

Note: Students who proceed from the M.A. to the Ph.D. will need to take one more course to satisfy the Ph.D. core requirement if LING 600 was counted as an M.A. core requirement.

### Primary Field (12 Hours)

- Ph.D. students should take at least 4 courses (12 credit hours) in an area approved by the student's Ph.D. committee.

### Secondary Field or Breadth Requirement (9-12 Hours)

- Students may decide on a secondary field in which they will take 3-4 courses (9-12 credit hours). Alternatively, students who do not wish to declare a secondary field will take course work in Linguistics outside of their primary field of at least nine hours.

## Methodology (3-6 Hours)

Students are required to take at least 1 and up to 2 approved methodology courses. Approved courses include any Linguistic methodology course, in addition to the following courses offered by other departments:

Course	Title	Credits
BIOS 700	Introduction to Biostatistics	3
EDRM 710	Educational Statistics I	3
EDRM 711	Educational Statistics II	3
PSYC 709	Basic Quantitative Methods in the Analysis of Behavioral Data I	3
PSYC 710	Basic Quantitative Methods in the Analysis of Behavioral Data II	3
STAT 515	Statistical Methods I	3
STAT 516	Statistical Methods II	3

## Elective Courses (0-6 Hours)

- Up to 2 courses (6 credit hours) approved by the program, in elective LING courses. Additional credit hours may be taken in coursework approved by the student's Ph.D. committee.

## Dissertation Hours (12-30 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
LING 899	Dissertation Preparation	1-12
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>1-12</b>

Note: LING 806: The Graduate School's official policy on independent study is to allow up to 9 hours towards the Ph.D.

## Foreign Language Requirement

Candidates must demonstrate knowledge of two approved languages other than their native language. For the second language, a student may, with the approval of the student's advisor and the graduate director, substitute a research methods, statistics, or computer science course. Demonstrating knowledge of a foreign language can be accomplished in one of the following ways:

- successful completion of an intensive reading course in a language - approved by The Graduate School - while a graduate student at USC,
- successful completion of a course at the intermediate level of language proficiency no more than six years prior to award of the degree,
- a passing grade on a language reading proficiency examination administered by the USC Department of Language, Literatures, and Cultures,
- completing 6 hours of coursework in a non-Indo-European language with a grade of at least a B.
- 3 credits of a research methods class (NOTE: if a student claims a research methods course as a substitute for a foreign language requirement they cannot claim the same course as fulfilling the research methods requirement)

If a student claims a research methods course as a substitute for the second foreign language that is required, that course cannot be used to fulfill the research methods requirement.

Nonnative speakers of English may select English as a foreign language, upon submission of the following Certification In English as a Foreign Language for Masters and Doctoral Programs ([https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/graduate\\_school/documents/gcie.certification.in.english.pdf](https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/documents/gcie.certification.in.english.pdf)).

[www.sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/graduate\\_school/documents/gcie.certification.in.english.pdf](https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/documents/gcie.certification.in.english.pdf)).

The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures has further information about Graduate Reading Proficiency Exams ([https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/artsandsciences/dllc/study/graduate/grad\\_reading\\_exam.php](https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/artsandsciences/dllc/study/graduate/grad_reading_exam.php)).