

Why should I choose KU?

Rave Reviews. “With solid academics, outstanding extracurricular programs, winning athletics, and a stellar social life, the University of Kansas has a bounty of opportunities for motivated Jayhawks.” --- 2014 Fiske Guide to Colleges

The Fiske Guide gives KU four stars for academics, social life, and overall quality of university life. Only a handful of state universities received higher marks for academics.

KU Linguistics Program Strengths. The unique strength of the Linguistics department is the systemic pairing of theoretical and experimental investigations of linguistics knowledge. The department offers a broad range of courses that provide a basic understanding of human language and communication. Linguistics courses examine features of language that underlie the human capacity to express concepts and communicate ideas. KU linguistics is unique in having six research laboratories that allow students to gain research experience in phonetics, phonology, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, first- and second-language acquisition, field methods and sociolinguistics.

Foreign Language Study. Few universities rival KU for quality or breadth of foreign language study. Your general interest in language probably means you’re interested in learning foreign languages. At KU, you can choose from courses in dozens of languages.

KU Enrichment. Internationally known speakers and researchers visit KU each year. You will choose from an array of campus lectures, readings, and political and cultural events, and you will encounter a steady stream of artists and performances. The Lied Center of Kansas is approximately a 2,000-seat performing arts hall with excellent production capabilities. Concerts and shows in KU’s Lied Center Series bring many of the finest national and international performers to campus.



LINGUISTICS

The University of Kansas



KU Linguistics Department

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Is study in linguistics for me? To find out, ask yourself:

Am I fascinated by language and the way people use it? Am I curious about the origin of words and how languages have evolved and changed? Am I intrigued by the sounds and structure of language? Am I interested in how children acquire language so effortlessly, while computers and students in foreign language courses have so many difficulties? Would I like to know what makes people sound different or how language is instantiated in the brain?

What is linguistics?

Linguistics is a window into the mind. Linguists explore the nature of human language and the human capacity for acquiring and using language. Linguistics is one of the core branches of cognitive science. Linguists study how children and adults acquire language and how people use language. Linguists hope to identify the universal features of language that make it possible to express any concept. They also strive to document each of the world’s 3,000 endangered languages before they disappear completely. Language makes possible the uniquely human ability to record and communicate discoveries. Linguists address the connections between language, brain, culture, and mind.

What degrees and certificates are offered?

Linguistics majors can earn a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or a Bachelor of General Studies (B.G.S.) degree. The Department of Linguistics also offers Master of Arts (M.A.) and doctoral (Ph.D.) degrees.

The B.A. major gives students a basic understanding of the human capacity to acquire, perceive, and produce language and of language’s role in contemporary society.

A major in linguistics can be combined with other majors for double-major programs. You might consider a double major in anthropology, psychology, speech-language-hearing, philosophy, communication, international studies, or a foreign language. You also may combine a degree in linguistics with a degree from one of KU’s professional schools, such as Education or Journalism and Mass Communications.

What kind of job can I get with a degree in linguistics?

The B.A. in linguistics is a liberal arts degree. Your solid liberal arts background will make you attractive to employers seeking students for a variety of positions. Knowledge of linguistics is useful in both foreign language and English language education, in helping those with speech and language impairments, and in advertising and legal positions. Currently, employers want people who can deal with concepts and abstractions, who are imaginative, creative, and analytical. A linguistics degree will help you develop those skills.

You will be well prepared for advanced or professional studies either in linguistics or in other fields such as education, speech-language pathology and audiology, computer science, law, psychology, and languages.

How do I get into the department?

The Department of Linguistics has no admission prerequisites or requirements before declaring a major under our B.A./B.G.S. degrees. Prospective students should review the KU Admissions website. After identifying a major declaration, undergraduates need to discuss it with the director of undergraduate studies in the department.

The department offers an informal information meeting once a semester, where members of the department introduce the department, requirements, expectations, undergraduate research opportunities, and possible job opportunities graduates typically obtain.

What courses will I be taking?

Core courses offered in the linguistics department, include phonetics and phonology (the study of speech sounds), syntax (the study of sentence structure), morphology, (the study of words and word formation), semantics (the study of meaning), psycholinguistics (language processing), neurolinguistics (brain function), and acquisition of a first or second language.

The department also offers courses on language and mind, language in culture and society, and typology of the world’s languages that you may take as electives. You also can take a field methods course or a language structure course, the purpose of which is linguistic description rather than language proficiency. Structure courses recently focused on Chinese, Japanese, Kiche, Kaqchikel and Miskitu.

Many Linguistics courses fulfill KU Core 34 educational goals, as well as count towards completion of the core requirements for the Major and Minor in Linguistics. Both of our popular introductory courses count toward the core goals. LING 106 (Introductory Linguistics) satisfies Core 34 Global Culture and LING 110 (Language and Mind) counts for Core 34 US Culture. LING 320 (Language in Culture and Society), which does not require a prerequisite, fulfills Core 34 Social and Behavioral Sciences. Additionally, Linguistics offers a variety of advanced-level courses in which students learn how to apply their gained knowledge to generate an idea for linguistics research. In either of our Capstone courses (LING 420 and LING 421), students develop their own research project based on their interests.

What is the faculty like?

Faculty members, listed below, have a wide range of expertise, including phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, first- and second-language acquisition, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics:

- Philip Duncan (Syntax)
- Robert Fiorentino (Neurolinguistics)
- Alison Gabriele (Second language acquisition)
- John Gluckman (Syntax)
- Jeffrey Holliday (Second language acquisition)
- Allard Jongman (Phonetics)
- Hiro Katsuda (Phonology)
- Jieun Lee (Second Language Acquisition)
- Andrew McKenzie (Semantics)
- Utako Minai (First language acquisition)
- Stephen Politzer-Ahles (Psycholinguistics)
- Joan Sereno (Psycholinguistics)
- Lacey Wade (Sociophonetics)
- Jie Zhang (Phonology)

Research

The department operates five excellent laboratories in research in phonetics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and first- and second-language acquisition.

- Developmental Psycholinguistics Lab
- Field Methods Lab
- Neurolinguistics and Language Processing Lab
- Phonetics and Psycholinguistics Lab
- Second Language Acquisition Lab
- Sociolinguistics Lab

Honors Programs

The University Honors program is available for interested students. Contact the Honors Program at www.honors.ku.edu for more information.

Linguistics also offers a departmental honors program to engage in undergraduate research. For more information, contact Dr. Utako Minai, the Undergraduate Honors/Research Coordinator at minai@ku.edu or Dr. John Gluckman, the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) at johnglu@ku.edu.

Can I get a scholarship?

The Linguistics Department does not offer scholarships for entering students.

Scholarships are funds awarded to students who meet certain criteria, such as merit, need, and background. Generally, these funds are considered gift aid, which means that they do not need to be repaid, whether a student does or does not graduate. First-time freshmen and transfer students apply for KU scholarships through the KU Office of Admissions. Form more information about scholarships, please visit the Financial Aid & Scholarship website at: <https://financialaid.ku.edu/understand-aid/scholarships>.

The KU Difference.

The overall quality and breath of your education are great reasons for coming to KU. College or Liberal Arts and Sciences offers hundreds of courses and has expert teachers.

KU is home to one of the top 50 libraries in the Association of Research Libraries by volumes held, and the largest library in Kansas. KU Libraries have more than 5.6 million cataloged volumes in seven campus locations. Visit www.lib.ku.edu for your information.

Through course work and independent projects, the Certification in Service Learning (CSL) experience allows students to participate in organized service activities related to their courses of study. Visit www.csl.ku.edu/servicelearning for information.

What if my interests change after I come to KU?

Maybe you would like to pursue a degree in a field related to linguistics, such as a foreign language, English, psychology, anthropology, or speech-language-hearing. Whatever you decide, KU offers hundreds of programs from which to choose. You will take courses in many subjects; one of them will lead you towards a major and a career.

Where can I get more information?

The department contact information is provided below:

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For more information regarding studying Linguistics, contact:

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