The PhD in linguistics trains students in the science of language. Students become specialists in the core areas of linguistics—phonology, syntax, and semantics—and learn to integrate this core with the study of second language acquisition. The program prepares students for positions in academia, industry, government, and a host of organizations concerned with language and second language acquisition. Graduates may become research and teaching professors, administrators of language-learning programs, and consultants in computational linguistic research.

**Admissions & Policies**

**Admissions**

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions. Applicants must already have earned a master’s degree in a relevant field.

For specific information, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (http://linguistics.gmu.edu/programs/application/LA-PHD-LING).

**Policies**

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see Graduate Policies.

**Reduction of Credit**

For students entering the doctoral program with a master’s degree, the number of required credits may be reduced by a maximum of 30 credits, subject to approval of the program faculty and the dean. Requests for reduction of credit are reviewed only after acceptance to the doctoral program.

**Requirements**

**Degree Requirements**

Total credits: 72

Students should be aware of the specific policies associated with this program, located on the Admissions & Policies tab.

**Core Courses**

- Phonology
  - LING 690 Generative Phonology 3
  - LING 692 Phonology II 3
  - LING 890 Advanced Phonology Seminar 3

- Syntax

**Semantics/Pragmatics**

- LING 785 Semantics and Pragmatics 3
- LING 788 Semantics and Pragmatics II 3

**Language Acquisition**

Select two courses from the following: 6

- LING 582 Second Language Acquisition
- LING 782 Second Language Acquisition II
- LING 882 Seminar in Language Acquisition

**Research Methodology**

- LING 770 Research Methods 3

**Qualifying Papers**

- LING 898 Advanced Qualifying Seminar (Students register for this course twice) 6

**Total Credits**

- 39

**Two Seminars**

Select 6 credits from the following: 6

- LING 882 Seminar in Language Acquisition
- LING 886 Advanced Syntax Seminar
- LING 890 Advanced Phonology Seminar

**Total Credits**

- 6

1 Students take two seminar courses in two chosen fields. Seminar topics change every time they are offered. They may be repeated for credit.

**Electives**

Select five electives from the following: 15

- LING 507 Field Work in Applied Linguistics
- LING 521 Applied Linguistics: Teaching English as a Second Language
- LING 522 Modern English Grammar
- LING 523 English Phonetics
- LING 525 Practicum in ESL
- LING 580 First Language Acquisition
- LING 581 Psycholinguistics
- LING 650 Introduction to Sociolinguistics
- LING 691 Theories of Language
- LING 798 Directed Reading and Research
- ENGH 592 Historical Studies of the English Language
- FREN 575 Grammatical Analysis
- FRLN 565 Theory of Translation
- SOCI 636 Statistical Reasoning
- SPAN 500 History of the Spanish Language
- SPAN 501 Applied Spanish Grammar
- SPAN 502 Hispanic Sociolinguistics
- PSYC 615 Language Development
Advancement to Candidacy
To advance to candidacy, students must complete all coursework required on their approved program of study. Students must also successfully pass a written qualifying exam and an oral qualifying exam. In addition, students must have a dissertation committee appointed by the Dean’s Office as well as an approved proposal. Evidence of the approved proposal must be on file in the Dean’s Office before a student can advance to candidacy.

Dissertation
Once enrolled in LING 999 Doctoral Dissertation, students must follow the university’s continuous registration policy as specified in AP.6.10.6 Dissertation Research. Students who defend in the summer must be registered for at least 1 credit of LING 999 Doctoral Dissertation.

Students apply to this degree a minimum of 12 dissertation credits (LING 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal and LING 999 Doctoral Dissertation combined) with at least 3 credits of LING 999 Doctoral Dissertation. Because of the continuous registration policy, students may be required to register for additional credits of these courses.