

- **MA IN ENGLISH, CONCENTRATION IN LINGUISTICS**
- **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (TESL)**

PROGRAM PROFILE

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. Linguists examine the components of language -- sounds, words, sentences, and meaning -- as a system of rules and universals. Every normal human has this system. We all possess knowledge of a native language. Linguists study how humans acquire and use this kind of knowledge.

The Linguistics Program in the English Department at George Mason has theoretical and applied courses of study for graduate and undergraduate students. Students benefit from courses in fall and spring semesters that are offered once a week in the late afternoon or evening in order to meet the needs of working professionals.

MASTER'S DEGREE

The master's degree program in English with a concentration in linguistics is theoretically oriented and provides a solid foundation in the major subfields of linguistics: phonology, syntax, and semantics. It requires 30 credits and can be earned on a part-time basis in two years.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

The graduate certificate in teaching English as a second language (TESL) is an 18-credit program that focuses on the applied aspects of English linguistics. This program offers courses in phonetics, grammar, second language acquisition, teaching ESL, and a practicum.

The degree and certificate can be earned concurrently. While they are independent programs with somewhat different goals, together they constitute an integrated curriculum with the goal

of bridging theory and application. Students who complete the concentration in linguistics and a TESL certificate will meet the academic requirements to teach in an accredited ESL institution. Students who continue their study of linguistics beyond the master's level will have an excellent foundation for doctoral work.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAM

Two-summer TESL program

Area teachers and others who want to earn an accelerated TESL certificate during the summer may do so in the two-summer TESL program. Offerings of certificate courses are rotated so as to make it possible for students to complete the certificate in two consecutive summers.

Speech accent archive

George Mason's Linguistics Program is home to the Speech Accent Archive (accent.gmu.edu). This continuously expanding web database contains approximately 1000 annotated speech samples spoken by native speakers of more than 200 languages. Each speaker reads the same English paragraph, so listeners can compare and contrast various speech accents. The archive has been used by more than a million people, including linguists, English as a second language (ESL) teachers, speech pathologists, actors, as well as those merely curious about languages and accents.

Linguistics club and working papers

Students studying linguistics can join the Linguistics Club, a student group sponsored by the university and the Linguistics Program. The club hosts various activities during the school year, including screenings of linguistically significant films, guest speaker colloquia, and job fairs. All activities are free and open to the public. The club also publishes *The GMU Working Papers in Linguistics*, a student-edited journal of linguistic work.

Student research and funding opportunities

Qualified students can gain valuable research skills if awarded a Graduate Research Assistantship through the Department of English. Teaching assistantships for ESL tutoring are also available through the University Writing Center.

Accelerated master's program

An accelerated master's program is available to highly qualified undergraduates at George Mason. Students accepted to this program complete some graduate coursework as part of their undergraduate degree program. They can earn both a BA and a MA in English with a concentration in linguistics by completing 144 credits.

TESL focus in the MAIS concentration in community college teaching

Students who want to teach entry-level courses in TESL at the community college level have the option of earning a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies (MAIS). The MAIS degree program has a concentration in community college teaching with a focus on teaching English as a second language.

FACULTY

- Steven H. Weinberger, Director** - phonetics, phonology, second language acquisition, psycholinguistics
- Charles Jones** - syntax, semantics, morphology
- Corrine McCarthy** - second language acquisition, morphology, sociolinguistics, dialectology, acoustic phonetics
- Douglas Wulf** - semantics and pragmatics, computational linguistics, historical linguistics

The Linguistics Program maintains close ties with faculty in related programs across the university, including those in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, the Department of Computer Science, the College of Education and Human Development, and the English Language Institute.

COURSES

The Linguistics Program offers a variety of courses in both theoretical and applied linguistics. The core courses deal with the structure of human language: phonology, syntax, and semantics and pragmatics. The applied courses, which support the TESL certificate program, concentrate on English. They cover the phonetics, the grammar, the acquisition, and the teaching of English as a second language.

Through the courses offered by the Linguistics Program and related programs across the university, students can explore the breadth of linguistic study through additional courses in psy-

cholingistics, sociolinguistics, and historical linguistics. Those students who wish to concentrate on one particular topic have the option of taking a special topics course or doing an independent study course with a faculty member.

CAREERS IN LINGUISTICS

A degree in linguistic theory provides the basis for a career that deals with language, and linguists work in a variety of positions. Most graduates of the program in linguistics teach language -- they are ESL instructors at colleges, adult education programs, and in public school systems. Graduates also go on to teach foreign languages in programs in the United States and abroad.

Linguists in addition are qualified for positions in industry as computational linguists, dealing with language understanding by machines. There are also careers for linguists in automatic translation, speech recognition, and brand name creation.

WHY LINGUISTICS AT GEORGE MASON?

George Mason's location provides a multitude of opportunities to apply a well-structured education in linguistics to teaching opportunities in ESL programs at all levels.

Mason is a member of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, providing students with library access and the opportunity to attend courses at any of 11 area campuses where different kinds of linguistic work are being done. The region is also home to professional organizations such as the Linguistic Society of America and the Center for Applied Linguistics.

Named the #1 national university to watch by *U.S. News & World Report*, George Mason University is an innovative, entrepreneurial institution with global distinction in a range of academic fields. Located in the heart of Northern Virginia's technology corridor near Washington, D.C., Mason prepares its students to succeed in the work force and meet the needs of the region and the world.

See linguistics.gmu.edu for a list of courses and program requirements. See chss.gmu.edu/howtoapply for complete details on the application process.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Linguistics Program
Department of English
4400 University Drive, MSN 3E4
Robinson Hall A 487
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-993-1180
englgrad@gmu.edu
linguistics.gmu.edu

GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

College of Humanities and Social Sciences
4400 University Drive, MSN 2D2
College Hall C119
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-993-3699
703-993-8714 (fax)
chssgrad@gmu.edu
chss.gmu.edu/howtoapply