

LINGUISTICS, BA

Language Sciences at UW–Madison is an interdisciplinary hub for research and collaboration that houses the Linguistics major.

Linguistics is the scientific study of human language. It investigates the common principles underlying all languages, as well as the organization of particular languages. It is expected that undergraduates with a major in linguistics will be able to:

- demonstrate a sound knowledge of the fields of phonetics (articulatory and acoustic properties of speech), phonology (the organization of the sound system of languages), morphology (the structure of words), syntax (the structure of sentences), and semantics (the interpretation of structures);
- demonstrate that they are able to analyze data in all these areas of linguistics;
- apply their linguistic training without prejudice, as expected in any science; and
- apply their analytical abilities beyond the study of linguistics.

Our undergraduate major emphasizes strong foundational training in the core areas of theoretical linguistics. Students also have access to breadth courses in a wide variety of interdisciplinary areas, including first and second language acquisition, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, language and data science, historical linguistics, neurolinguistics, and indigenous language documentation and revitalization. Coursework is also available in the linguistics of specific languages or language families, such as American Sign Language, Germanic, Spanish and Romance, Chinese, Japanese, and Native American linguistics.