

**DEGREE/PROGRAM CHANGE
FORM C**

Fields marked with * are required

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Linguistics

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Department* Linguistics

Division

Program

Branch

Proposed effective term:

Semester Fall ▼ Year 2009 ▼

Course Information

Select Appropriate Program Graduate Degree Program ▼ CIP Code

Name of New or Existing Program * MA Linguistics

Catalog Page Number 241 Select Category Degree ▼ Degree Type M.A.

Select Action Revision ▼

Exact Title and Requirements as they should appear in the catalog.

See current catalog for format within the respective college (enter text below or upload a doc/pdf file)

M.A. in Linguistics The Department of Linguistics offers the Master of Arts degree in linguistics with flexibility in selection of an area of study. This degree is offered under Plan I (24 hours plus thesis) or Plan II (32 hours) according to the regulations set forth in earlier pages of this catalog, except that a minimum of 12 hours of 500-level courses is required. Minimum prerequisites for pursuing the M.A. in linguistics are 12 hours of basic linguistics, including introductory linguistic analysis, phonetics, phonological analysis, and grammatical analysis. Deficiencies in these prerequisites may be made up after admission to the program but such course work may not be counted toward the degree. Candidates for the master s degree must complete 21 hours of core course work, including 3 hours in each of the following areas: phonology (502, 503), morphosyntax (512), psycholinguistics (560, 565, 566, 567, 568), sociolinguistics (531, 533, 535, 539), language change (546), and two of the following three areas: discourse/syntax (523, 529, or a seminar on a relevant topic), cognitive linguistics (519, 525, or a seminar on a relevant topic), and typology (513, 517, 548, or a seminar on a relevant topic). The remaining required hours are selected by the candidate, with the approval of the Graduate Advisor. Plan I students are required to undergo an oral examination of the master s thesis. Plan II students are required to take a written comprehensive examination.

This Change affects other departmental program/branch campuses

Reason(s) for Request * (enter text below or upload a doc/pdf file)

Background. A large number of applicants to graduate programs in linguistics do not have undergraduate linguistics degrees (only around 50 universities in the US offer undergraduate degrees in linguistics). The goal of UNM s MA program is to take students with a wide variety of backgrounds and produce an MA graduate with a well-rounded training in linguistics. For this reason, our program has a number of prerequisite courses. However, a comparison of MA programs in our peer institutions, including not only UNM s peer institutions but other universities that focus on the functionalist approach to language as UNM s department does, conducted for the Academic Program Review self-study revealed that two prerequisite courses for UNM s MA program, psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, are not required by any of our peer linguistics programs. As a consequence, the current UNM MA program makes it impossible for even an entering student with a BA in linguistics to complete our MA program in four semesters as a full-time student, and an entering student with a BA in another subject (such as a foreign language) would require six semesters to complete our degree program, because the prerequisites in psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics do not count toward the MA credit hours. Hence the department proposes not to treat psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics as prerequisites, but as requirements for the degree which can count toward the MA credit hours. This will allow any full-time student with a BA in linguistics to complete the MA in linguistics at UNM in four semesters, and a full-time student with a BA in a related area to complete the MA in linguistics at UNM in five semesters. The second change is to the structure of the required courses for the MA. First, the addition of a required course in morphosyntax (512) strengthens the training of MA students in the core area of grammatical structure. Second, the restructuring of the options reflects the functionalist focus of the department, and allows for greater flexibility for students with more background in certain areas of linguistics to satisfy the breadth requirements of the MA degree with more advanced courses. The functionalist approach to language, which is the strength of our department, consists of three related but distinct approaches to language: discourse, cognitive and typological (the last represents a focus on language diversity, in particular with respect to indigenous languages of the world). Our proposal allows for a choice between a range of courses in each of these approaches to language that are represented by our Department. The option of satisfying these breadth requirements by more advanced courses and seminars as well as more basic courses will allow us to serve the wide range of students we admit to the MA program, including students such as our own BA students who have already complete basic courses in some of these areas. Finally, we clarify the examination requirements for Plan I and Plan II MA

degrees. Plan I students undergo an oral examination of the thesis, similar to the Plan I degrees in Geography and Communications. Plan II students take a written comprehensive examination.

Statements to address budgetary and Faculty Load Implications and Long-range planning * (enter text below or upload a doc/pdf file)

These revisions will have no budgetary or faculty load effects. These revisions are part of a comprehensive review of Linguistics programs in order to increase recruitment of MA students with respect to our peer departments at other institutions, maintain academic quality with a small faculty, and allow completion of the MA degree in a maximum of four semesters (full-time) for students with a BA in Linguistics, and five semesters (full-time) for students with a BA in a related discipline. Reviewed and approved by the Department faculty.