



## LINGUISTICS

Widely recognized for innovative theoretical, experimental, and field-based research on language and its cognitive and social underpinnings, with a prominent interdisciplinary focus

The Department of Linguistics at the University of Michigan is one of the very few departments in the United States that captures the inherent breadth of the discipline by integrating the cognitive, social, cultural, and developmental aspects of language in its research, teaching, and professional development of graduate and undergraduate students. Faculty and students investigate the cognitive and social aspects of language structure, history, knowledge, behavior, and use. Faculty research brings together these diverse approaches to language and innovates in its research methods and results, by integrating theoretical, experimental, and computational approaches to research and teaching.

By virtue of language's central role in human cognition and all aspects of culture, social interactions, and activities, linguistics is situated at the intersection of the humanities and the social, biological, and behavioral sciences. Linguistics is essential to a strong liberal arts education by also educating students in the development of skills in data analysis, analytic thinking, problem solving, critical inquiry, qualitative and quantitative reasoning, experimental, computational, and field methods.

Our students pursue careers that span many professional fields and become speech pathologists, educators, language teachers, data scientists, managers, executives, computational linguists, research librarians, medical professionals, software engineers, as well as professional linguists and professors. Our undergraduates are highly competitive for placement in top graduate programs in linguistics, psychology, law, speech and hearing sciences, anthropology, philosophy, and information technology, among other fields. They often become professors at universities and colleges throughout the world, bringing with them a commitment to the broad-based exploration of human language and to maintaining linguistics as a vital part of undergraduate education.

Gifts from alumni and friends enable the department to compete with leading private universities for top faculty and students. Our capacity to attract and retain leading scholars, outstanding graduate students, and competitive undergraduates is linked to our leading accomplishments in research and student education and mentoring both nationally and internationally. Support for scholarships, and for the research of graduate and undergraduate students is vital; it makes it possible for them to be involved in the field, and to participate in original research, in hands-on research in the lab in the field, attend conferences, collaborate with high-profile faculty, and to undertake experiential and internship opportunities in different professional environments.

## LANGUAGE DOCUMENTATION SUPPORT

Faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates are eager to conduct substantial fieldwork, especially to document and help preserve endangered languages. Donors can support the top priority for the field of linguistics today to study and maintain some of the 50 percent of the world's 7,000+ languages predicted to vanish by the end of this century.

## RESEARCH LABORATORY SUPPORT

Experimental research is becoming increasingly necessary in a wide range of subfields of our discipline. We have seven faculty research laboratories, but keeping them running smoothly can be difficult, especially since only a small amount of grant support is available for linguistic research. Gifts of \$10,000 - \$50,000 annually are essential for us to maintain state-of-the-art laboratories.

## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SUPPORT

Our undergraduate curriculum centers on making the results of linguistic research accessible to undergraduates while providing them with opportunities for hands-on experience in conducting their own original research projects. Our undergraduates often present their research results at national and occasionally international conferences, where their work is showcased alongside that of well-established scholars. Gifts of \$10,000 - \$50,000 annually for undergraduate research will enable us to offer these kinds of opportunities to more of our students.



**“Something I absolutely love about the linguistics major is that we are far from a homogenous group. For me, linguistics has been a pathway to understanding, both in the sense of cross-cultural communication and in understanding myself. But the beautiful thing about this major is that this could be not even remotely what the Ling student sitting next to me in class thinks or cares about. From future speech pathologists to advocates for indigenous languages, from programmers delving into natural language processing to those captivated by the magic of wordplay, we are a jumble of interests, perspectives, and aspirations.”**

**–Thea Kendall-Green, A.B. '24**



## GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

Educating graduate students is closely connected with our undergraduate educational mission, both because our graduate students, in their role as apprentice teachers, work with our undergraduates and because graduate students will embark on teaching careers after they receive their Ph.D. While we offer a full five-year funding package to all incoming graduate students, our ability to offer more than one year of fellowship/research support is limited; most graduate students have teaching assignments for the majority of their graduate careers. The ability to guarantee an additional year of fellowship/research support, with an endowed investment of \$10,000 – \$50,000 annually, would enhance our students' professional development and also help us attract top applicants.

## STRATEGIC FUND

This fund will support projects such as on-campus conferences, faculty research, and new teaching initiatives. Gifts of all sizes contribute to reaching our goals and are extraordinarily important if we are to create and take advantage of exciting opportunities. We continue to develop new, often collaborative, teaching initiatives, especially ones that help us implement our vision of integrating cognitive and social aspects of language knowledge and use. Support will enable students to participate in original research across the many subfields of linguistics. It will allow us to organize conferences that bring leading scholars to our campus. Additionally, funding will build our experiential practice program, allowing promising undergraduates to participate in study abroad and in highly innovative internship projects in industry, education, and the non-profit sector.



"When I first encountered Linguistics, I was eager to learn what linguistics is. Is it about grammar? Or perhaps literature? I soon discovered that linguistics is a vast academic field encompassing many perspectives on language. As I explored linguistics, from phonology and syntax to neurolinguistics and computational linguistics, I began to see the beauty and complexity of language."

—JACKY HE, B.S. '23

## WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your partnership connects the college's rich past to a boundless and bright future. You can change lives with gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities, and create a meaningful legacy through your bequest, trusts, gift annuities, and other planned gifts. Your generosity makes an impact on what's next, for a better tomorrow.

for what's next ▶

**Look to Michigan**

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