DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS AND PHILOSOPHY

Graduate Study

Master of Science in Linguistics

The Department of Linguistics (*http://linguistics.mit.edu*) and Philosophy (*http://web.mit.edu/philosophy*)'s Indigenous Language Initiative (MITILI) (*https://linguistics.mit.edu/mitili*) offers a two-year graduate program of study leading to a Master of Science (SM) in Linguistics. The MITILI SM in Linguistics is for members of indigenous communities whose languages are threatened; the goal of the program is to provide its graduates with the linguistic knowledge that will help them in efforts to keep their communities' languages alive. Additionally, MITILI offers expanded opportunities for MIT students and faculty to become involved in indigenous and endangered languages through work with native speaker linguists in the master's program and also with outside groups.

Admission

Applicants must have a native speaker's knowledge of an indigenous or endangered language or commitment to learning it as a second language (as evidenced, for example, by demonstrable commitment to the community in the area of language revitalization), as well as a demonstrated ability and interest in scholarly and practical work in or out of the community relating to the language. Applications are encouraged not only from individuals who have demonstrated their capabilities in a traditional academic setting but also from individuals who have demonstrated their ability in concrete ways recognized as valuable within their home communities.

Requirements

Students in the MITILI in the SM in Linguistics (*https://catalog.mit.edu/degree-charts/sm-linguistics*) must fulfill the Institute's General Degree Requirements (*https://catalog.mit.edu/mit/graduate-education/general-degree-requirements/#mastersdegreetext*): 66 units of graduate subject credit, plus a thesis approved by the department.

During the first year of the program, students complete coursework in linguistics, along with independent study in their language. The second year is normally devoted to the writing of the master's thesis, under the supervision of the student's advisor, along with any additional coursework judged to be relevant to that project. Upon the successful completion of the program and defense of the thesis during the second year, the student is awarded the Master of Science in Linguistics.

Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics

The Linguistics Section offers a demanding program leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics. The normal course of study is five years, including the writing of the dissertation. The orientation of the program is highly theoretical, its central aim being the development of a general theory that reveals the rules and laws that govern the structure of a given language and the general laws and principles that govern all natural languages. The topics that form the core of this program are the traditional ones of phonology, syntax, and semantics, but the program's interests also extend into questions of the interrelations between linguistics and other disciplines such as philosophy and logic, speech science and technology, computer science and artificial intelligence, and study of the brain and cognition.

Approximately eight students enter the program each year in a highly selective admissions process. The department does not require that applicants have taken any particular set of subjects or that they be trained in any particular discipline. Instead, applicants must present evidence that they are able to engage in serious scholarly inquiry of complex subject matter.

All students in the linguistics program must complete a set of required subjects unless they have acquired adequate preparation elsewhere. Before degree candidates begin their doctoral research, they are required to pass a comprehensive general examination, in conformity with Institute requirements.

The following subjects are normally required of all doctoral candidates in linguistics:

24.951	Introduction to Syntax	12
24.961	Introduction to Phonology	12
24.970	Introduction to Semantics	12
24.952	Advanced Syntax	12
24.962	Advanced Phonology	12
24.973	Advanced Semantics	12
24.993	Tutorial in Linguistics and Related Fields	
24.942	Topics in the Grammar of a Less Familiar Language	12
24.949	Language Acquisition I	9
24.991	Workshop in Linguistics (two terms)	12
24.995	Linguistics Professional Perspective	1
Two additional subjects, including:		
An advanced subject with research paper requirement in syntax/semantics		
An advanced subject with research paper requirement in phonology/morphology		

Before students begin their doctoral research, they are required to pass a comprehensive general examination that is composed of two parts. The first part is a written examination consisting of two substantial papers on topics chosen in consultation with members of the faculty. The two papers must present research on two distinct topics in two distinct subdisciplines of linguistics. The subdisciplines include phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics,

pragmatics, language acquisition, language processing, or any other area of linguistics, so long as there is a substantial theoretical-linguistic component to the papers. In conformity with Institute regulations, the second part of the examination is oral. It deals with topics treated in the candidate's written examination, but is not limited to these and probes into the candidate's competence in linguistics in general.

For more information about the PhD program requirements (*http://web.mit.edu/philosophy/PhDprogram.html*), visit the website.

Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

The program of studies leading to the doctorate in philosophy provides subjects and seminars in such traditional areas as logic, ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of science, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, aesthetics, social and political philosophy, and history of philosophy. Interest in philosophical problems arising from other disciplines, such as linguistics, psychology, mathematics, and physics, is also encouraged.

To enter the doctoral program, students must have done well in their previous academic work and must be formally accepted as candidates for the degree by the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy. Although there are no formal course requirements for admission, applicants must satisfy the committee on admissions that their preparation in philosophy and allied disciplines is sufficient for undertaking the study of philosophy at the graduate level.

Before beginning dissertation research, students are required to take two years of coursework, including a proseminar in contemporary philosophy that all students must complete in their first year of graduate study. Students are also required to demonstrate competence in the following areas: value theory, logic, and the history of philosophy.

Interdisciplinary study is encouraged, and candidates for the doctorate may take a minor in a field other than philosophy. Options for minors include linguistics, psychology, and logic. Students who elect one of these options are expected to complete three approved graduate subjects in their minor field. There is no general language requirement for the doctorate, except in those cases in which competence in one or more foreign languages is needed to carry on research for the dissertation.

For more information about the PhD program requirements (*http://web.mit.edu/philosophy/PhDprogram.html*), visit the website.

Inquiries

Information regarding undergraduate or graduate academic programs, research activities, admissions, financial aid, and assistantships may be obtained from the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, Room 32-D808, 617-253-4653.