Program: Linguistics

Assessment Coordinator: Edward Vajda

Departmental Mission: The WWU Linguistics Program offers a broad, multidisciplinary approach to the scientific analysis of human language. Students analyze the structural components of language: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. They study how language is acquired, how it varies across time and space, and how it is used in different social contexts. Students also develop a solid foundation in a second language and are introduced to various subfields of linguistics, including neurolinguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, historical linguistics, computational linguistics, applied linguistics, and discourse analysis. Our classes engage students in critical inquiry, enabling them to become informed participants in public discourse about language.

Program Student Learning Outcomes: Upon graduation, Linguistics major will be able to:
1. recognize and understand the basic fields of linguistic inquiry
2. gather and synthesize linguistic data effectively and ethically
3. formulate and test hypotheses
4. draw conclusions and inferences from linguistic evidence
5. present findings of their linguistic research
6. analyze the structural components of language
7. understand social factors that shape language structure and use
8. understand theoretical concepts and methodologies for thinking critically about language

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed This Year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>SLOs Assessed</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course tests, out of class assignments, course final exam</td>
<td>8, 11</td>
<td>It was found that the current linguistics GURs (Linguistics 201 – Introduction to Linguistic Science; and Linguistics 204 – Sociolinguistics) give only a basic preparation to linguistics majors in applying critical thinking to solve complex problems in the structure of language. It was decided to add a major-only introductory course that would strengthen this preparation, before students enter upper-division courses devoted to specific areas of linguistic theory, such as phonetics/phonology and syntax.</td>
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Changes based on assessment findings:
During the next year, the faculty will monitor the newly approved Linguistics 310 ‘Introduction to linguistic analysis’ course to assess how the material tested has better prepared linguistics majors to use critical thinking in solving the more complex problem sets they will encounter in the second two classes of the 300-level sequence: Ling311 Phonetics/phonology and Ling 321 Syntax. At the end of next year, the program will decide whether adjustments in the content of the Ling310 course are warranted.