



Linguistics

BA

Bachelor of Arts major

Our capacity for language sets us apart from other species. It is an important part of our national and ethnic identities.

Linguistics explores how we combine words into phrases and sentences, how we convey social information and social goals, how language changes, how children learn language, and even how we understand what is meant but has not been said.

Career possibilities

Linguistics can prepare you for a career in the computing industry, machine translation, speech synthesis and recognition, language education, speech and language therapy, journalism, advertising, marketing, and publishing.

“I appreciate being able to use my linguistic background and research skills in whatever capacity I can. A highlight for me was being involved in the development of a national language policy in St. Lucia which is where my PhD fieldwork was carried out.

“Problem solving and organisation and time management abilities have carried me through all kinds of projects. In an era that seems to be increasingly reliant on unreliable sources of information, the ability to read critically is crucial.”



MELISSA IRVINE
Project Manager, Productive Playhouse Ltd.;
Freelance Consultant

Graduate: Bachelor of Arts, majoring
in Linguistics + Spanish
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Linguistics
PhD in Linguistics



“Students will learn about all of the complexities which make languages special, from sounds to words to meaning. We train students to go into the world and work hands-on with languages, and prepare them for a world where language is at the centre of emerging technologies and societal issues.”

JASON BROWN
Associate Professor



You can study the structural and cognitive aspects of language, the use and functions of language in society and language change. You can also study the structure of English and the languages of the Pacific.

STAGE 1 COURSE*

LINGUIST 100 – Introduction to Linguistics

An introduction to the main areas of linguistics: the production and function of sounds in language (phonetics and phonology), word structure and word formation (morphology), the principles of grammar through a study of sentence structure (syntax), and various aspects of meaning (semantics). The course is a self-contained introduction and assumes no prior knowledge of linguistics or language study.

STAGE 2 COURSE*

LINGUIST 200 – Syntax

Continues on from LINGUIST 100 or 103 and consists of a formal and a functional part, providing problems and exercises in syntactic analysis, as well as an introduction to grammatical theories and types of grammatical system.

STAGE 3 COURSE*

LINGUIST 324 – Morphology

Provides an overview of linguistic morphology and the various strategies of word formation across languages. Theories such as Distributed Morphology, Lexical Phonology and Morphology, Lexeme-Based Morphology, Prosodic Morphology, and Word Syntax will be discussed, and the course will include a practical component in which these theories are applied to language data.



Get excited about your course options:



- Advanced Syntax
- Applied English Grammar
- Language, Mind and Society



Complementary majors include:

Linguistics
+
Anthropology
Communication
Māori Studies
Media and Screen Studies
Pacific Studies

**Course availability may be subject to change. For a full list of courses and up-to-date information visit our website. Published June 2025.*

“In Linguistics, you are constantly exposed to different cultures and language experiences, which broadens your worldview. It has taught me to navigate language differently and how to interpret it in a more thoughtful, analytical way. I’ve developed communication, data analysis and pattern recognition skills that will benefit me in any career.”

JONI WATSON

Student: Bachelor of Arts, majoring in English + Linguistics
/ Bachelor of Science conjoint

