

Proposal to Create a New Minor in Linguistics

1. Name of the academic program and the department(s) or unit(s) that will administer the program.

The Department of Comparative Literature and Languages will administer the new undergraduate minor named “Linguistics Minor.”

2. A thorough justification, including the motivation for the creation of the program in terms of student interest and professional or academic importance.

The motivation for creating a Linguistics minor is to give undergraduate students a foundational understanding of Linguistics and how it connects to other disciplines, yet without having to commit to completing the curricular requirements of the Linguistics major. The Department of Comparative Literature and Languages has housed the Linguistics major for many years, and it is currently the largest in our department. We already offer all of the courses required for the Linguistics major (and minor) on a regular basis, and so initiating and supporting this minor requires no additional teaching or financial commitment. The immediate occasion for the conceptualization and presentation of this new minor relates to student demand: Students from other disciplines who completed the introductory course, LING 20, “Language and Linguistics,” have recently approached our Linguistics faculty to inquire regarding a minor. Therefore, this minor allows for more students who are interested in linguistics to continue taking classes to complement their major discipline. This minor is a great way to connect students in other departments in CHASS and in other colleges (e.g., CNAS, Engineering) to linguistics and possibly also create a bridge toward double-majoring for these students. As well, a student taking a minor in linguistics can powerfully supplement other majors in the College, e.g., Psychology, Philosophy, Neuroscience, Ethnic Studies, Hispanic Studies, Mathematics, and others.

The Linguistics minor uses existing teaching and curricular resources, and the existing course and staffing infrastructure provided by the Linguistics major, to create an opportunity for students to develop competencies and expertise in Linguistics, which will be beneficial for them on a variety of career paths, including in the public and private sectors, as well as in graduate studies in a variety of fields. The creation of this minor also corrects a long-standing imbalance in relation to other UC campuses. All UC campuses other than Riverside, which support Linguistics programs, support majors and minors in Linguistics (UCLA, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UCSC, UCSD, UCSB). UC Merced, which does not support a Linguistics program, does not have a major or a minor in Linguistics.

3. Relationship of the new program to existing programs.

The Linguistics Minor will be part of the Linguistics Program within the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages, which currently offers a major in Linguistics.

All core courses in the Linguistics program are offered by the Linguistics faculty in the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages (LING 20, 21, 111, 121, 131, 141, 151). The minor in Linguistics requires LING 20 plus LING 111, 131, and either 121 or 141.

The core program (major and proposed minor) LING courses are (N.B. instructors are listed in parentheses):

LING 20 – Language and Linguistics (Graham, Chidambaram, Waltz)

LING 21 – Grammar (Waltz)

LING 111 – Phonetics (Waltz)

LING 121 – Syntax (Chidambaram, Waltz)

LING 131 – Morphology (Chidambaram, Ross, Waltz)

LING 141 – Phonology (Graham, Waltz)

LING 151 – Semantics (Graham)

All LING elective courses are offered by faculty in the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages. Other courses offered at UC, Riverside will also support the Linguistics minor by serving as elective courses, from among which students can choose, are outlined below.

The LING elective courses are:

LING 160e-i – Topics in Dynamic and Comparative Linguistics (Ross, Waltz, Graham)

LING 162 – Language and the Brain (Graham, Chidambaram)

LING 163 – Anatomy and Physiology of Speech, Language, and Swallowing (Chidambaram)

LING 165 – A Linguist’s Guide to Speech Language Pathology (Chidambaram)

LING 167 – Structural/Descriptive Linguistics (Ross, Waltz)

LING 168 – Statistics for Linguistics (Approved) (Graham)

The Department of Comparative Literature and Languages has reached out to the Department Chairs and/or faculty who teach the non-LING elective courses listed below. The Chair of Ethnic Studies, Prof. Robert Perez, has shared that he is happy to have ETST 153 and ETST 163, taught by Prof. Wesley Leonard, included as electives for the Linguistics minor and major. The Chair of the Department of Philosophy, Prof. Michael Nelson, has shared that he is happy for PHIL 132 to be included as an elective course for the minor. A note from the Chair of Anthropology, Prof. Christina Torres, indicating Anthropology’s willingness to include ANTH 123 as an elective course for the Linguistics minor, is also attached. The Chair of Hispanic Studies, Alessandro Fornazzari, has shared that the Department of Hispanic Studies voted to approve including the 5 listed Hispanic Studies courses as electives for the Linguistics minor.

These elective courses are:

ETST 153 – Native American Language Revitalization (Wesley Leonard)

ETST 162 – Learning Native American Languages (Wesley Leonard)

SPN 104 – An Introduction to the Study of Spanish and Comparative Linguistics

SPN 105 – The Phonology of the Spanish Language

SPN 106 – Structure of the Spanish Language

SPN 107 – Spanish in the United States

SPN 130 – Digital Dialectology

ANTH 123 – Linguistic Anthropology (Stephen James)

PHIL 132 – Philosophy of Language

- 4. The proposed curriculum. Great care should be given in this area, correct rubrics should be listed for courses, all cross listings should be listed, unit total considerations should be taken into account and totals should be verified by program staff, faculty, and appropriate Executive Committee personnel. A copy of the proposed program change should be provided for inclusion in the Catalog.**

The proposed minor consists of 4 lower-division and 20 upper-division units. The minor proposed here fits well within the norms established throughout the UC system (see note below), while it provides a strong background in a number of core fields while also exposing students to elective areas of study in Linguistics. This balance of core and elective courses will allow students to gain a toehold in the field, and gain core competencies, while also pursue areas of professional interest which may intersect with career goals or plans for more advanced studies.

All students who complete the minor must take LING 020 (4 units). This is a lower-division introductory course that establishes a foundation for all future linguistics classes. All students must also take 12 units of Core Linguistics courses, which include LING 111, LING 131, and *either* LING 121 or LING 141. LING 111 and LING 131 were chosen as requirements as Phonetics (LING 111) and Morphology (LING 131) are essential in understanding theoretical and applied concepts in the field of Linguistics. Students are given the choice between LING 121 and LING 141. LING 141 (Phonology) builds off of LING 111, and LING 141 (Syntax) is a natural progression of LING 131; therefore, depending on their field of interest, students can enroll in classes that align with their linguistic interests.

To complete the minor, students will need to take 8 units from the following electives list:

- LING 151: Semantics
- LING 160e-i: Topics in Dynamic and Comparative Linguistics
- LING 162: Language and the Brain. Cross-listed with PSYC 128
- LING 163: Anatomy and Physiology of Speech, Language, and Swallowing
- LING 165: A Linguist's Guide to Speech Language Pathology
- LING 167: Structural/Descriptive Linguistics
- LING 168: Statistics for Linguistics
- ETST 153: Native American Language Revitalization
- ETST 162: Learning Native American Languages

- SPN 104: An Introduction to the Study of Spanish and Comparative Linguistics
- SPN 105: The Phonology of the Spanish Language
- SPN 106: Structure of the Spanish Language
- SPN 107: Spanish in the United States
- SPN 130: Digital Dialectology
- ANTH 123: Linguistic Anthropology
- PHIL 132: Philosophy of Language

A note regarding the outline of courses in Linguistics minors in the UC system.

Below is a sketch of course requirements at other UC campuses for the Linguistics minor:

UCLA - 1 or 2 lower-division, 5 or 6 upper-division

Berkeley - 1 lower-division, 5 upper division

UC, Davis - 1 lower-division, 5 upper-division

UC, Irvine - 3 or 4 lower-division, 3 upper-division

UC, Santa Cruz - 2 lower division, 5 upper-division

UCSD - 2 lower-division, 5 upper-division

UCSB - 1 lower-division, 6 upper-division

Proposed catalog language:

PRESENT:

PROPOSED:

Minor in Linguistics

1. Lower-Division Linguistics Courses (4 units): LING 020

2. Twelve (12) upper-division units distributed as follows:

a) LING 111

b) LING 131

c) LING 121 or LING 141

3. At least eight (8) additional upper-division units of linguistics electives selected from among:

LING 151, LING 160e-i, LING 162 (cross-listed with PSYC 128), LING163, LING 165, LING 167, LING 168, ETST153. ETST 162, SPN 104, SPN 105, SPN 106, SPN 107, SPN 130, ANTH 123, PHIL 132, PSYC 135

Elective linguistics courses should be chosen in consultation with the academic advisor. Additional courses may count for

this requirement with the approval of the Linguistics Program director.

5. A list of faculty who will be involved in the program, including those teaching, advising, and administering.

In the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages: Jeffrey Sacks, Emily Graham, Heidi Waltz, Vrinda Chidambaram

Faculty offering elective courses in other departments: Wesley Leonard, Stephen James, Linda Lemus, Claudia Holguín Mendoza, Covadonga Lamar Prieto

6. For interdisciplinary programs, the degree of participation and the role of each department must be explicitly described. The chairs of all participating departments must provide written approval for the creation of the program and indicate their commitment to provide necessary resources including faculty release.

The proposed minor uses only presently existing resources. No resources from any departments are required. No faculty releases are required.

7. Projected enrollment in the program.

Approximately 15-20 students per year

8. Name of degree, if applicable, and the anticipated number of degrees to be granted when the program reaches steady state.

Minor in Linguistics; approximately 15-20 awarded per year

9. Potential impact of the new program on existing programs. If the proposed program includes required courses from a department other than the administering department, the proposal must include a statement from the department indicating that it has been consulted and that it will provide access to the required courses.

We do not expect that this minor will impact existing programs. Since it will provide an institutional frame for the study of linguistics outside of the Linguistics major, it may lead some students to either leave the major (for the minor) or join the major (after having taken courses to complete the minor). This minor will not cause enrollments in other programs to decrease, as it does not replace or overlap with any other existing programs. This said, it may lead to an increase in the popularity or visibility of the study of linguistics on campus, and it therefore may lead to an increase in linguistics majors or double-majors.

10. A full listing of resources required for start-up and for operations. In cases where no additional resources will be needed, this must be explicitly stated. This listing may include: personnel (faculty FTE or temporary positions, Teaching Assistants or Readers, administrative staff, technical support); support services including computer facilities and library resources; space requirements. A plan indicating how the resources will be obtained would also be helpful to the committee in reviewing the proposal. A letter of

support from the College Dean and/or Executive Vice Chancellor-Provost indicating endorsement as well as a promise of support for the proposal also would be extremely helpful.

No additional resources will be needed.

- 11. Both internal and external letters of support should be provided with the proposal. Internal letters of support are often from UCR department chairs and faculty of related programs. The external letters should be from other UC campuses or other peer institutions. Letters from off-campus help to establish the quality of the program and its fit within the context of related programs at other universities. Upon consultation with the CEP the demand for external letters may be waived.**

A letter from Jeff Sacks, Chair of Comparative Literature and Languages, is attached.

Approvals from program faculty, College faculty (if the new proposal affects a college regulation), and the appropriate Executive Committee should be obtained before forwarding the new program to the attention of the Senate Analyst for CEP.

- 12. All proposals for new programs should be submitted to the Senate Chair no later than March 1 of the academic year prior to the fall quarter in which the proposed program is anticipated to go into effect. This schedule should provide sufficient time for Senate review of the proposal to meet the deadline for final consideration of approval at the May Division Meeting.**



Department of Comparative
Literature & Languages
900 University Avenue
HMNSS 2401
Riverside, CA 92521

Jan 25, 2026

Dear Review Committee,

This is to share my support of the creation of a minor in Linguistics in the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages.

Our department houses a long-standing major in Linguistics. This initiative will supplement the major by providing a formal opportunity for linguistics study for UCR undergraduate students outside of the major frame. This will allow undergraduate students across the College and University to gain training and expertise in linguistics, while also building the community of student learners in this field.

The creation of this minor in Linguistics also corrects a long-standing lacuna at UCR. All UC campuses other than Riverside, which support Linguistics programs, support majors and minors in Linguistics (UCLA, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UCSC, UCSD, UCSB). UC Merced, which does not support a Linguistics program, does not have a major or a minor in Linguistics.

This new minor has no budgetary impacts. We already offer all of the courses required for this minor, as well as the LING elective courses, on a regular basis (as outlined in the minor proposal).

With all best wishes,

Jeff Sacks
Professor and Chair

January 24, 2026

Dear Dr. Sacks,

I am happy to approve the inclusion of Anthropology 123 – Linguistic Anthropology as an elective course in the newly proposed Linguistics minor. Anthropology 123 currently serves as a course for the Linguistics major as well as an elective for the honors track, making this an appropriate parallel. We expect no significant impacts for the Anthropology department with the addition of this as an option for the Linguistics minor and look forward to serving these students.

Feel free to contact me should you need any other information.

Best wishes,



Christina M. Torres
Professor and Chair
Department of Anthropology
christina.torres@ucr.edu

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ETHNIC STUDIES DEPARTMENT

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92521-0121

January 26, 2026

Dear Members of the Academic Senate,

I write this memo to inform you that the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages has consulted with the Ethnic Studies Department about the creation of a new minor in Linguistics. They propose to include two of our Ethnic Studies courses as electives for the new minor. These courses, *ETST 153: Native American Language Revitalization* and *ETST 162: Learning Native American Languages*, were created by Dr. Wesley Leonard and he is supportive of this proposal. The department is also in favor of counting these courses towards the Linguistics minor or the major in Comparative Literature and Languages. The department will provide access to these courses. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Perez".

Robert Perez
Department Chair

Email from Philosophy Chair Michael Nelson:



Michael Nelson

to jeff.sacks ▾

1:27 PM (25 minutes ago)



Sorry for the delay, Jeff. I decided I really needed to ask the department and not decide this on my own. I have done that and it was only positive. Here's the note:

The Philosophy department regularly teaches PHI132, offering it once a year, and we currently have three full-time faculty members who rotate teaching it. Currently the primary enrollment to the class is Linguistics Majors and we will welcome Linguistics Minors into the course. We will continue to teach offer it at least once a year and will consider offering it more often, or increasing the enrollment size, if demand is increased.

Best,

Michael Nelson

Chair of the Department of Philosophy





College of Humanities, Arts, and
Social Sciences
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

February 25, 2026

TO: Ken Barish, Chair
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

FROM: Iván Aguirre, Interim Chair
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: New Linguistics Minor Proposal

The CHASS Executive Committee reviewed the New Linguistics Minor Proposal. The committee had no comment and was in support of the proposal for a new Linguistics minor.



Academic Senate

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

April 13, 2026

To: Jeff Sacks, Chair
Department of Comparative Literature and Languages

From: Annie Ditta, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy

Re: **External Letter of Support Exception Request for Proposed Minor in Linguistics**

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) reviewed and voted to support the exception for external letters of support for the proposed Minor in Linguistics. External letters of support do not need to be included in the new program proposal.