

Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics

Website: <http://www.gvsu.edu/linguistics>

Program Description

The MA in Applied Linguistics provides students with foundational knowledge of linguistics and its practical application to real world concerns. It addresses issues in language teaching and learning, language assessment, second language literacy development, cross-cultural communication, and empirical research in language acquisition. The overall goal of the program is to graduate students as knowledgeable and skilled English language specialists who can work in a variety of professional careers in applied linguistics at home and abroad such as second language education, adult literacy development, language assessment and evaluation, various domestic and international contexts of TESOL, language program administration, and publishing.

The program requires a total of 36 credit hours of coursework:

REQUIRED COURSES (30 credits)

Foundation (9 credits)

ENG 660	Principles of Educational Linguistics
ENG 667	Introduction to Applied Linguistics Research
ENG 669	Teaching English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Concentration (21 credits)

ENG 662	Pedagogical Grammar
ENG 664	Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching
ENG 665	Second Language Acquisition
ENG 668	Second Language Assessment
ENG 670	World Englishes: History & Variation
ENG 675	Second Language Reading & Writing
ENG 679	Practicum

CULMINATING EXPERIENCE (6 credits) Choose one:

Thesis Option ENG 695 Master's Thesis (6 credits)

Capstone Option	Elective ENG 693	1 elective course (3 credits) + Master's Project (3 credits)
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ELECTIVE COURSES

ENG 680 Special Topics
ENG 699 Independent Study (1-3 credits)

Other electives to be determined in consultation with graduate advisor

Culminating Experience

Students have two options for their culminating experience in the program: the Master's Thesis option or the Master's Capstone option.

Master's Thesis Option

The Master's Thesis Option is designed to give students experience designing and conducting empirical research. This option is strongly recommended to students planning to pursue doctoral work. Students must take a total of six credit hours of ENG 695 prior to graduation.

Preparing a thesis is a multi-stage process that involves the following (see MA-AL program materials for more detail):

- *Forming a Committee:* You need to form a thesis committee, comprised of a chair and two additional graduate faculty. If you wish to select a faculty member from outside of the program as chair, you should consult with the program director for prior approval. The outside committee member must have relevant expertise in the thesis topic.
- *Writing a Prospectus:* You will write a prospectus for your proposed thesis project.
- *Holding a Prospectus Meeting:* After your chair approves your prospectus, you will share it with the committee, prior to holding a meeting, at which you will get feedback. If the prospectus is approved, you begin research; if not, you will need to revise and resubmit.
- *Research & Writing:* You will research, write, and revise the thesis, under your chair's supervision.
- *Defending the Thesis:* You will defend your thesis to your committee in a meeting that is open to faculty and students. Your committee may require further revision of the thesis as a condition of graduation. Students have 30 days in which to complete the revision, at which time the committee will decide whether to accept the final thesis. No further oral defense is necessary, unless the committee votes no on the final thesis, in which case the student has the option of writing a new thesis or dropping the program.

Prerequisite: Students who choose the thesis option must complete 18 credit hours of coursework prior to registering for ENG 695 thesis credits.

Master's Capstone Option

The Master's Capstone Option offers students the opportunity to take additional coursework in Applied Linguistics, and to engage in the kinds of professional activities they will be expected to undertake in the field following graduation. Students who choose the Capstone option for their culminating experience will take the following courses (instead of 6 thesis credits):

- One 3-credit elective course, to be chosen in consultation with the program director, *and*
- ENG 693: Master's Project (3 credits) In this course, students will design and develop an independent project in applied linguistics, which they will present publicly at a departmental conference.

Prerequisite: Students must complete 27 credits in the program prior to taking ENG 693.

Suggested Program of Study

The program can typically be completed in two academic years by students enrolled full-time. Students who wish to enroll on a part-time basis should consult with the program director to determine a viable plan of study. All students must begin their study in fall semester.

The following is the suggested course sequence for full-time students:

Fall, Year 1 (9 credits)

ENG 660 Principles of Educational Linguistics
 ENG 667 Introduction to Applied Linguistics Research
 ENG 669 Teaching English as an Additional Language

Winter, Year 1 (9 credits)

ENG 662 Pedagogical Grammar
 ENG 664 Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching
 ENG 665 Second Language Acquisition

Fall, Year 2 (9 credits)

ENG 675 Second Language Reading & Writing
 ENG 679 Practicum
 + One of the following:
 Elective 1 elective course, chosen in consultation with advisor (3 credits) *or*
 ENG 695 Master's Thesis (1-3 credits)

Winter, Year 2 (9 credits)

ENG 668 Second Language Assessment
 ENG 670 World Englishes: History & Variation
 + One of the following:
 ENG 693 Master's Project *or*
 ENG 695 Master's Thesis (1-3 credits)

Practicum

The practicum (ENG 679) is a 3-credit course that provides students with hands-on experience in the field. In addition to field placements arranged by the program, students may propose their own practicum sites, with prior consultation and approval of the instructor.

Special Topics

A variable or special topics course may be offered with a focus on an area of applied linguistics. It may be used as a substitute for an existing course in the concentration. Please consult with the program director to determine substitution options.

Independent Study

Independent study gives students an opportunity to explore a topic of interest in Applied Linguistics that is not already covered in an existing course. Students can propose a topic for a 1-3 credit independent study under faculty supervision. Consult the program director for details about this process.

Transfer Courses

Students who transfer from another accredited institution may apply for credit for courses taken at the prior institution. To earn transfer credit, the courses must have been completed no earlier than five years prior to the time of application, and they must be equivalent to those offered at Grand Valley. Per university policy, a maximum of 9 credits can be transferred. Please consult the program director about the materials required to determine course equivalency.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must complete GVSU's online application, and include the following materials:

- **Personal statement:** A statement about your reasons for pursuing this program of study, your learning objectives in the program, and your career goals when you complete the program.
- **Writing sample:** A substantive piece of writing, no fewer than three typed pages (1500-1700 words), which demonstrates your academic writing ability. You may submit a paper you wrote for a past undergraduate or graduate course.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Two letters of recommendation from former professors or supervisors in a relevant field who can testify to your potential as a graduate student in this program.
- **GRE Scores:** Applicants whose GPA is lower than 3.0 (in the undergraduate major or in prior graduate coursework) must submit a score for the Graduate Record Examination (general test only).
- **Evidence of English language proficiency:** International students whose first language is not English must submit evidence of English language proficiency. GVSU accepts scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), among others. Consult the program director concerning other tests that may be accepted.

Graduate study at GVSU requires minimum scores of 79 on the TOEFL-ibt, or 6.5 on the IELTS. We recommend that students applying to the MA-AL program score 20 or higher on each subtest of the TOEFL-ibt (Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking).

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENG 660 Principles of Educational Linguistics

An introduction to contemporary linguistics and its applications in educational contexts. Major topics in phonology, morphology, syntax, language variation, and language acquisition are examined, with attention to pedagogical relevance and implications.

ENG 662 Pedagogical Grammar

An advanced course in contemporary grammatical analysis of English. The course focuses on both descriptive and prescriptive properties of English, primarily in the generative-transformational framework, and addresses pedagogical issues in teaching grammar in ESL and other settings. Pre-requisite: ENG 660.

ENG 664 Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching

The study of sociolinguistic theories investigating the interaction of language and society. An examination of the social and cultural aspects of language, language use, language teaching, and language variation. Particular emphasis on English as a second or foreign language, bilingual and multilingual education, and cultural influences on learning, communications, and ideology. Pre-requisite: ENG 667.

ENG 665 Second Language Acquisition

An examination of the major theories of second language acquisition and various factors that influence the learning process among different age groups of learners from different first language backgrounds. The relationship between SLA research and its pedagogical implications for teachers is also addressed. Pre-requisite: ENG 667.

ENG 667 Introduction to Applied Linguistics Research

An introduction to empirical research in applied linguistics. Essential components of the course include critical reading of published research in the field, study of qualitative and quantitative research design, methodology and analysis, and writing of research reports. Pre-/co-requisite: ENG 660.

ENG 668 Second Language Assessment

An examination of the basic concepts in language assessment, with a special focus on assessing English as a second language in both domestic and international contexts. Areas of coverage include linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions in test selection, evaluation, development, and application. Both qualitative and quantitative methods will be addressed. Pre-requisite: ENG 667.

ENG 669 Teaching English as an Additional Language

Exploration of second language learning theories and pedagogy of teaching English as an additional language in domestic and international contexts. The course addresses theoretical foundations of language learning and the implications for instructional practice and considers critical issues in English language teaching. Pre-/co-requisite: ENG 660.

ENG 670 World Englishes: History and Variation

Examination of the external and internal history of the English language from Old English to present day English with emphasis on the development, change, and variation of regional and social varieties of World Englishes. Includes linguistic and textual analyses of corpora, social media, dictionaries, grammars, and other resources. Pre-requisite: ENG 667.

ENG 675 Second Language Reading and Writing

Exploration of major issues in the teaching of second language (L2) reading and writing in a variety of instructional contexts. Students will gain insight into the characteristics and needs of diverse second language learners and develop informed practices for teaching L2 reading and writing at different levels. Pre-requisite: ENG 669.

ENG 679 Practicum

Practicum experience in teaching or administrative contexts, domestic or international, where students serve as English language specialists. Focus on integrating theory and practice and the implementation of informed approaches to instruction, assessment, curriculum development, or program design. Emphasis on reflection and development of critical perspectives. Pre-requisite: ENG 669.

ENG 680 Special Topics

Variable topics in applied linguistics.

ENG 693 Master's Project

The culminating experience for MA-AL candidates who choose the capstone (non-thesis) option. Students will design and develop an independent project in applied linguistics, which they will present publicly at a departmental conference. Pre-requisite: Completion of 27 program credits.

ENG 695 Master's Thesis

The culminating experience for MA-AL candidates who choose the Thesis option. Carried out under supervision of thesis director. Students must register for at least one credit of thesis per semester (including spring/summer), and must have registered for a total of a minimum of 6 thesis credits before scheduling their defense. Pre-requisite: Completion of 18 program credits.

ENG 699 Independent Study