Master of Arts

Applied Linguistics with a Concentration in Language, Society, and Social Justice (MA)

Staci Defibaugh, Graduate Program Director

The Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics prepares students to pursue advanced graduate study in fields like linguistics, applied linguistics, law, psychology, and education; for careers in government and industry; to teach in colleges, adult education programs, businesses, private schools, or institutions in the U.S. or abroad, and for other professions requiring good analytical, linguistic, discourse, and writing skills. The program has two concentrations: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Language, Society, and Social Justice. Students may elect to pursue a concentration area by taking the required 9 credits of specialized coursework for each concentration or they may complete a general MA degree in Applied Linguistics without a concentration. Students in the program can complete their degree in-person on the main campus in Norfolk as well as by taking select courses synchronously online or asynchronously online. They may also earn a graduate certificate in TESOL and/or use appropriate courses in the program as requirements toward obtaining the Commonwealth of Virginia Endorsement for English as a Second Language.

Admission Information

In addition to general University admission requirements, applicants must have a grade point average of 3.0 or better, and must have taken some upper-level English, linguistics, or foreign language courses. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE), General Test is optional. Applicants must also submit a sample of scholarly writing, statement of purpose, and two letters of recommendation. International students must submit scores from the TOEFL iBT, (88 for regular admission and 80 for provisional admission), from the TOEFL PBT (570 for regular admission and 550 for provisional admission) or from IELTS Academic Module (6.5 or higher), a sample of scholarly writing, statement of purpose, and two letters of recommendation, both of which should also address the applicant's proficiency in English. After 12 hours of graduate work, international students must meet the language proficiency requirement for regular admission if admitted provisionally. Applications submitted after the deadlines will be considered for review but admission for the desired semester is not guaranteed.

Curriculum Requirements

The M.A. in Applied Linguistics requires 33 credit hours, including 18 credit hours of program core courses and 15 credit hours of electives, and the passing of an oral comprehensive examination. Elective credit hours may be used to complete one of two concentration areas offered by the program or a general MA degree in Applied Linguistics without a concentration. Students should discuss their plans with the graduate program director at the beginning of their studies. No more than 12 hours may be taken at the 500 level. Courses taken PASS/FAIL are not included in the 33 credit hours.

Applied Linguistics: Core Courses

ENGL 540	General Linguistics	3
ENGL 671	Phonology	3
ENGL 672	Language Structure Analysis	3
ENGL 673	Discourse Analysis	3
ENGL 679	First and Second Language Acquisition	3
ENGL 770	Research Methods in Language Analysis	3
or ENGL 780	Corpus Use, Research, and Material Design	

Total Credit Hours for Concentration or Electives	15
Total Credit Hours	33

Language, Society, and Social Justice Concentration

Language, Society, and Social Justice Concentration

ENGL 550	American English	3
ENGL 678	Sociolinguistics	3
or ENGL 778	Seminar in Sociolinguistics	
Select one of the following:		3
ENGL 542	English Grammar	
ENGL 543	Southern and African American English	
ENGL 544	History of the English Language	
ENGL 545	Forensic linguistics	
ENGL 577	Language, Gender and Power	
ENGL 595	Topics in English (Linguistics)	
ENGL 674	Internship in Applied Linguistics	
ENGL 677	Language and Communication Across Cultures	
ENGL 695	Topics (Linguistics)	
ENGL 705	Discourse and Rhetoric Across Cultures	
ENGL 732	Digital Activisms	
ENGL 754	Cultural Studies	
ENGL 755	Critical Race Theory	
Electives *		
Complete electives		6
Total Credit Hours		**15**

*   Or a thesis approved by the graduate program director. The elective requirement can be satisfied by selecting from the list of electives in each of the concentrations or from courses offered by other graduate programs at the University if they are language oriented. Elective courses can be at the 500, 600, or 700 level and they should be pre-approved by the Graduate Program Director.

Additional Requirements

Master of Arts - Applied Linguistics, Thesis Option

Writing a thesis may benefit those who contemplate further graduate work, as well as those who have a desire to pursue a single topic in depth. Under the guidance of a member of the graduate faculty, a student may earn six hours of credit for a completed approved thesis. Students who write a thesis will defend the thesis early in their final semester and complete their oral exam in a separate examination.

Master of Arts - Applied Linguistics, Oral Comprehensive Examination

At the end of the program, all students must complete an oral comprehensive examination that covers each student's program of study and, where applicable, the thesis. Students who fail the oral comprehensive examination may re-take it one more time in a different semester. Students who fail a second time will no longer be eligible to receive the Master of Arts degree in applied linguistics from Old Dominion University. During their final semester, students must submit an electronic portfolio that will include course syllabi, a selection of assignments for each course, along with a reflection on their experiences in the MA program.

Continuance

Students must:

1. Meet all university and program requirements;

2. Maintain a 3.0 grade point average or better;

3. Retake any core course in which grades below B- are earned.

Exit

In order to graduate from the program, students must:

1. Complete the required course of study for a total of, at least, 33 credit hours of course work. Credit hours with grades below B- and courses taken PASS/FAIL are not included in the 33 credit hour total;
2. Submit a program electronic portfolio;
3. Pass an oral comprehensive examination;
4. Fulfill all university exit requirements.