

University of Toronto

New Minor Program

(applies to creation of minors, options or streams within an existing program
and where there is no existing Specialist or Major)

Section 1

Version Date:	November 14, 2011
Faculty / Academic Division:	University of Toronto Mississauga
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Department / Unit (if applicable) where the program will be housed:	Department of Language Studies
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What is being proposed: <i>Please specify exactly what is being proposed Eg. A Minor where there is no existing Specialist or Major.</i>	Creation of a minor within an existing program (Linguistics) English Language Linguistics (ELL), B.A., Minor ERMIN####
Anticipated start date of the program:	2012-2013 Academic Year

Section 2

1. Executive Summary

The courses offered in the current Minor and Major programs in Linguistics are mainly focused on theoretical constructs that are relevant in the analysis of the grammar of all languages. The existing programs also explore Linguistics as an academic discipline and prepare students for graduate studies. The proposed Minor in English Language Linguistics (ELL) is equally grounded in disciplinary linguistics, but while the current programs consider a broad spectrum of the world's languages in relation to the human language faculty, the ELL program emphasizes the structure of English.

Students enrolled in the new program will be able to apply theoretical constructs to understand the rules that underlie the sound system of English, English word formation, and English syntax. This knowledge will then deepen their understanding of how different registers and varieties of English are used, how second languages are acquired, and how they are best taught.

The program will offer students a secondary set of skills involving the application of linguistic analysis to written English. They will be able to recognize and understand the principles of cohesion and coherence in written passages (logic, rhetoric, discipline specific/ non-discipline specific vocabulary). The practical training will allow them to analyze, understand, and evaluate written English, with a special focus on the academic uses of the English language. These are necessary tools for academic success in any discipline at the University level. Any student in Health care, in professional degree programs or in the Humanities; any local or international student with a need to develop linguistic skills will benefit from the type of training in linguistic analysis offered by the Minor in ELL.

2. Program Rationale

The proportion of students at the University of Toronto Mississauga with English as their second or third language is expected to continue to rise, due to both the multicultural and diverse Canadian student body and the growing number of international students. Many of these students face language-related challenges. In addition, the general student population, including students with English as their first language, has serious difficulties with academic writing. This calls for an action plan to provide discipline-based opportunities to all such UTM students to acquire the linguistic and critical-thinking skills needed to succeed in their academic programs. The English Language Linguistics program will provide students with an opportunity to improve their communicative and writing abilities through an academic training in the field of linguistics with a focus on English, as discussed in more detail below.

Courses in the proposed minor program are primarily designed to equip students with the analytic tools required for a scientific approach to language. These tools in turn are recruited for two complementary objectives: 1) to help students make linkages between the advanced language skills (communicative, analytical and pragmatic competence) required for success at the university level and the description of the English language through the tools and methods provided by Linguistics; and 2) to provide students with the training in linguistics required to effectively read, evaluate, present, and write academic work.

The ELL Minor program is distinctive and unique, as it draws on the strengths of contemporary linguistic analysis in both the theoretical and applied domains to provide students with a sophisticated understanding of the structure of English. This knowledge is then applied to their own command of the language, especially in the academic sphere. The Minor aims at producing well-rounded students with superior communicative skills and is suitable to those looking for enhanced linguistic skills to express themselves at an appropriate level both orally and in writing in order to improve their overall academic performance.

3. Need and Demand

The Department of Language Studies has been offering an *English Grammar* course (LIN204H) for some time. The course was initially designed to be a purely descriptive linguistic introduction to the grammar of English but we realized through the annual student opinion surveys that a significant number of students were choosing this course to improve their mastery of English. We therefore changed the nature (and then

the structure) of the course to suit our students' needs. As a result, enrolments in LIN204H have gone up steadily from below 100 in 2006 to over 400 students in the 2011 Fall session (with a very low attrition rate in 2010). The course was also scheduled for the 2011 summer session with an initial enrolment cap of 150 that was subsequently raised to 200 (with 6 tutorial sections), thanks to the support of the Dean's Office.

Apart from LIN100Y (*Introduction to General Linguistics*) which has a total enrolment of 350 students across two sections, the *English Grammar* course (LIN204H) is the largest single course in our Department (with 400 students), thus signalling the existence of a solid base for the creation of such a program. Last year at the end of the course, the Associate Chair and the Coordinator of the Program in Linguistics met with the course instructor. It became clear from students' comments on the course evaluation forms, from T.A. comments based on having conducted the tutorials, and from the instructor's insights, that another, more advanced level of the course was needed in order to consolidate the students' newly acquired abilities in analytic and critical thinking, as well as in structuring their writing in a more effective and skillful way. LIN205H was then created with a specific focus on "the structures of academic discourse and their application to meaning-making in reading and writing contexts for specific disciplines."

Working with the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre, we came to the realization that many linguistically fragile students are afraid of writing and/or doing in-class presentations. Apart from being shy and coping with the stress generated by such activities, it seems that most students lack the confidence that comes with a solid mastery of the English language. In our experience, many undergraduate students feel uncomfortable in both communicative and grammatical performances, as they are unable to communicate with an adequate level of fluency, accuracy, and complexity. Even some domestic English-speaking students feel uncomfortable with their writing skills. In our opinion, teaching English as a Second Language may not be sufficient and/or adequate to help all our various categories of students process and produce English academic texts in economics, literature or philosophy.

Creating the ELL Minor program at UTM would offer more opportunities for success to our students and possibly allow a connection to the surrounding communities and the world, as international students from countries such as Japan, China and South Korea are longing for such offerings. In sum, this Minor program would not only satisfy the language needs and enhance the academic performance of a growing number of undergraduate students, but it could also serve as a recruitment and retention tool for both international and domestic students.

4. Eligibility Requirements

Student must complete LIN100Y5 (Introduction to Linguistics) as the first course. In year two, students will typically take LIN204H (English Grammar) and LIN205H (Advanced English Grammar). They will need to complete 1.5 more LIN courses required in the proposed program (LIN203H ((The Structure of) English Words), LIN256H (Sociolinguistics) and LIN228H (Phonetics)), as well as 1.0 among a limited selection of relevant LIN credits in their third and fourth years.

5. Program Requirements

ERMIN#### English Language and Linguistics, B.A., Minor (4.5)

Required courses (3.5):

LIN100Y: *Introduction to Linguistics*

LIN203H: *(The Structure of) English words*

LIN204H: *English Grammar*

LIN205H: *Advanced English Grammar*

LIN256H: *Sociolinguistics*

LIN228H: *Phonetics*

Remaining Courses (1.0) at the 300/400 level, to be selected from among the following:

LIN356H: *The Acquisition of Grammar in Different Contexts*

LIN360H: *English Phonetics and Phonology*

LIN380H: *Theoretical Issues in Second Language Teaching & Learning*

LIN486H: *Teaching and Learning Cross-Cultural Communication*

JAL353H: *Discourse Analysis/Conversation Structures*

6. Learning Outcomes

Attitudes to be developed:

Students will be able to persist in the acquisition of linguistic skills and knowledge; will be willing to apply their theoretical training within and outside the classroom; will be willing to self-assess and reflect on their own learning process, and demonstrate an inquiry-based approach to the acquisition of knowledge in English language linguistics. This engagement toward the learning process will contribute to transforming them into organized life-long learners.

Skills to be developed:

Students enrolled in the program will be able to construct grammatical sentences in writing and to identify the explicit and implicit impact of their grammatical and lexical choices. They will be able to analyze the principles for the construction of cohesive and coherent written passages, and to think critically and strategically in order to do so. Students will also be able to adjust to differences between types of audiences and use appropriate skills and registers to address particular audiences. They will be able to interpret the linguistic structure embedded in academic prose and other written genres, identify, apply and construct expository and persuasive texts, and discern principles for the construction of these types of texts.

Knowledge to be acquired:

Students will be able to explain regularities and exceptions in the use of discrete linguistic structures (phonetics, phonology, syntax, morphology, semantics), and demonstrate a reflective approach to grammatical forms and combinations (sound formation, sentence structure, internal structure of words, word meaning in context). They will be able to form strong connections between their knowledge (of logic, rhetoric, and of discipline specific/non discipline specific genres) and linguistic analysis in order to form an advanced and principled view of forms and rules of language use.

Students will also know how to apply simple and complex concepts from linguistics to the description and

analysis of the English language. In a nutshell, students will acquire the following abilities:

- to understand and explain rules and patterns for the construction of English utterances
- to critically analyze and assess English language productions (from individual sounds to texts, their own and of others)
- to harness linguistic knowledge in order to improve expressive fluency, accuracy, and complexity

7. Program Structure and Degree Level Expectations

Degree Level Expectations	How the program design / structure supports the degree level expectations
DEPTH AND BREADTH OF KNOWLEDGE	<p>The general introductory linguistic theory course (LIN100Y) initiates students to the fundamental principles of scientific linguistic inquiry. Students will approach natural language as an intricate system and will develop a solid grounding in its core components: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics with illustrations from English and a broad spectrum of other languages. Students will also gain a familiarity with applications in the field such as psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and historical linguistics. This will serve as a first introduction to the complexity of linguistic expression (selection of vocabulary in special fields, structure of vocabulary and linguistic creativity in the English lexicon; syntax and regularities for the combination of words, including constraints and binding (pronouns, anaphora); sound structure and description of sounds in languages).</p> <p>These concepts will be deepened and expanded in 200 level courses, such as LIN228H (Phonetics) and LIN203H (English Words).</p> <p>Students will be required to take up at least 1.0 FCE at the 300-400 level, which will ensure that they are able to function at a high academic level in more complex domains of linguistics relevant to the development of abstract knowledge and performance-oriented proficiency about the English language, such as Acquisition or Communication.</p> <p>To the extent that LIN204H and LIN205H are also required, students will also be required to develop and apply critical thinking as they go through English Grammar and Advanced English Grammar and reflect "about fundamental grammatical concepts and structures and about their application to meaning-making in academic reading and writing contexts".</p>
KNOWLEDGE OF METHODOLOGIES	<p>Several required courses in the program (LIN100Y, LIN203H, LIN256H) and also LIN356H present students with a detailed explanation of linguistic methodologies and require that they engage in applying those methodologies on varying scales of complexity, such as sound linguistic parsing, labelling and description, contrastive analysis, corpus analysis, quantitative reasoning, inference). LIN380H, for instance, "examines theoretical research on adult second language learning". If students take LIN486H, they will be taught to perform error analysis.</p>
APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE	<p>Students are required to interpret and evaluate English productions in LIN204H and LIN205H.</p> <p>LIN228H (Phonetics) and the more specialized LIN360H (if selected) will require students to weigh competing theoretical options to explain discrepancies or irregularities in spoken linguistic data.</p> <p>In LIN256H, students will have to formulate clear explanations for variation in pattern or for linguistic constraints on social standards dependant on sex, ethnicity, and other social variables.</p> <p>Whether they choose more advanced topics in Acquisition, Language Pedagogy, or Communication, students will also learn to extend their understanding of linguistics to applied domains where problem solving happens in a pragmatically more complex, richer milieu.</p>

COMMUNICATION SKILLS	<p>Two required courses LIN204H and LIN205H specifically target the development of English capacities in the academic setting, with the lion's share of the course devoted to student-led analysis of and production in the English language. LIN205H specifically mandates the study of and proficiency development with "complex grammatical concepts and structures of academic discourse and their application to meaning-making in reading and writing contexts for specific disciplines".</p> <p>Three credits (one required, two optional) rely heavily on social and/or cross-cultural discourse-oriented approaches (LIN256H, LIN486H, JAL353H), which demands a clear articulation of the understanding of levels of formality (and of its variation across languages/cultures).</p>
AWARENESS OF LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE	<p>The required courses approach linguistic analysis primarily from a scientific point of view, with an emphasis on the English system and its particular complexities. Students will build an awareness of the difficulties with which learners of English are confronted in the layered structure of its lexicon (borrowings, derivations), in its hard to predict relationship between spelling and pronunciation, in its global variation in pronunciation norms across national and regional varieties of English. It is our hope that students versed in linguistic knowledge will become more accepting of linguistic plasticity and choice as they are presented with more advanced insight into the structure of English than the formula-driven and rule-bound teaching of ESL.</p> <p>The relevant course selected in the more advanced options of the Minor aim to test the validity of linguistic theories and descriptions acquired at the lower levels, as students learn to perform more complex types of analysis in the fruitful contact between languages and in actual communication.</p>
AUTONOMY AND PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY	<p>Students in the ELL Minor will need to manage their own learning of the English language in light of and in parallel with their academic studies in the discipline of linguistics, as well as in light of their other programs where English production (written and oral) is bound to be required. They will also develop a strong appreciation of how their developing expertise in Linguistics tied with their experience of the English language intimately relates to their own professional and personal maturing in an academic – and then professional – milieu where English is a dominant medium of expression and information.</p>

8. Assessment of Teaching and Learning

The proposed Minor Program in English Language Linguistics (ELL) will help students develop language analysis techniques specific to linguistic inquiry and also transferrable in other disciplines. These analytic skills will allow them to develop a more advanced set of language strategies and linguistic resources. Within the Minor, they will be assessed regularly in various formats: traditional testing in the content area (problem solving, data analysis, corpus analysis, essays, research papers, oral presentations, and group project evaluations), but also in more (trans)formative manners that will allow them to reflect critically on their own spoken and written production (reflective journals, self-assessment, and collaborative assessment).

9. Consultation

Initial consultations took place at the Discipline, the Department level and with the then Director of the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre, Cleo Boyd. Subsequent consultations took place with Vice-

Principal and Dean, Academic and Vice-Dean Undergraduate, Teaching & Learning.

10. Resources:

a. Faculty requirements

The Department of Language Studies has the expertise to manage such a Minor Program, as two faculty members in the Linguistics Program (Professors Katherine Rehner and Arsalan Kahnemuyipour) are linguists who are also qualified and trained instructors in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

Table 1: Detailed listing of committed faculty

<i>Faculty name and rank</i>	<i>Home unit</i>	<i>Area(s) of Specialization</i>
Arsalan Kahnemuyipour, Asst. Prof.	Language Studies	Theoretical Linguistics
Emmanuel Nikiema, Assoc. Prof.	Language Studies	Phonology, contrastive ling.
Mihaela Pirvulescu, Assoc. Prof.	Language Studies	Language Acquisition
Katherine Rehner, Assoc. Prof.	Language Studies	Applied Linguistics
Dr Michelle Troberg, Lecturer	Language Studies	Syntax, morphology

b. Space/Infrastructure

There are no resource implications for this program; the available infrastructure (laboratory, space, equipment, discipline coordinator, etc.) and faculty complement is sufficient to manage and deliver the program.

11. Governance Process:

	<i>Levels of Approval Required</i>
<i>Decanal Sign Off</i>	
	Unit Approval
	Faculty/Divisional Council
<i>Submission to Provost's Office</i>	
<i>Report to AP&P</i>	
<i>Report to Ontario Quality Council</i>	

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