



# College of Languages and Translation

## **Doctor of Philosophy Theoretical Linguistics**

Program Handbook

**1445 - 2023**

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## Introduction

Welcome to the Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program. We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to all prospective and current students who have chosen to embark on their academic journey in the captivating field of linguistics. This comprehensive manual has been crafted to serve as your indispensable guide throughout your time in the Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program. Whether you are passionate about linguistic theories or analytical techniques, our student-centered courses aim to empower you with the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and research expertise required to make a positive global impact.

## Program Mission

At the Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program, our mission is to produce world class postgraduates, researchers, scholars, and academics well versed in both theoretical and applied aspects of language studies, teaching and research who can actively participate in university teaching, international research, and various forms of linguistic community services.

## Program Goals

In completion of the program requirements, the following goals are expected to be achieved:

1. Enable students to scientifically evaluate and analyze various linguistic structures and themes.
2. Enable students to develop their critical thinking and convert their linguistic knowledge into practical, applied, and analytical reality for language structures.
3. Provide students with a robust research environment that is conducive to applying research skills.
4. Engage students in international linguistic research activities and publication.
5. Prepare highly-qualified faculty members to teach linguistics in Saudi at university level and serve in other sectors.
6. Prepare highly-qualified linguistics' specialists who can participate in different linguistic community events and services.

## Program Learning Outcomes

### Knowledge and Understanding:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the areas of theoretical linguistics including the phonological, structural, lexical, semantic, pragmatic, textual aspects of language in addition to principles of language acquisition, psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics.
2. Describe the role of technology in linguistic studies and research.
3. Identify principles and tools of corpus linguistics.
4. Demonstrate the acquisition of technical vocabulary, theoretical tools, and various forms of research methods necessary to read, reflect, criticize, and conduct research in theoretical linguistics.

### Skills:

1. Analyze the linguistic aspects of language scientifically.
2. Compare the linguistic aspects of different languages on various levels.
3. Use current technological tools to study language/ language applications.
4. Apply linguistic theories and approaches in different linguistic tasks, text analyses and research.

### Values, Autonomy, and Responsibility:

1. Conduct research in accord with the ethical standards and best practices of the discipline.
2. Demonstrate a capacity to work flexibly, collaboratively, critically, and creatively in teams to exchange theoretical knowledge, research proficiencies, and professional skills.
3. Show individual responsibility to manage time, meet deadlines, and work effectively under pressure in both the academic and professional spheres.
4. Demonstrate autonomous creativity, intellectual independence and proactive decision-making in complex academic and professional situations.

## Professional Occupations

The program's graduates aspire to the following career prospects:

### Academic Careers:

Academic Governance and Leadership, University Administrative Positions, researcher, Academic Consultant, Academic Quality Assurance, Specialized University Faculty (teaching advanced theoretical and applied linguistic courses), Supervising postgraduate research on linguistics, Designing and delivering advanced training courses both in public and private educational agencies and institutions, Serving on thesis defense panels locally and abroad, and applying for teaching positions in international universities where Arabic and English are a working language pair.

### Public and Private Sectors

Government Advisors, Foreign Affairs, Political Analysts, Technical Writers, Editors, Public Relations

Think Tanks, Intelligence Agencies, Problem-Solving Experts, Writing/Editing Consultants, Cultural and Advisors or Bilingual Advisors.

## Relevant Occupational/ Professional Sectors:

1. Academia (code 2310): with a PhD in theoretical linguistics, graduate students can pursue their career in academia, work as a faculty member teaching courses in departments such as linguistics, Philosophy of language, psychology, speech/communication sciences, anthropology, English, and departments focused on specific foreign languages.
2. Linguistic analyst (code 1330): graduate students of theoretical linguistics are qualified to take on work on speech recognition, text-to-speech synthesis, artificial intelligence, natural language processing, large language models, sentiment analysis, and computer-mediated language learning.
3. Journalism (code 246): among the skills graduate students of theoretical linguistics develop throughout their school years are those that equip them with the necessary background for positions in editing, publishing, and writing.
4. Lexicography (code 264): the development of good dictionaries requires the expertise of theoretical linguists.
5. Marketing and advertisement (code 2431): the role of language in marketing and advertising cannot be denied. Graduate students in theoretical linguistics are qualified to work on associations that people make with particular sounds, classes of sounds, and word collocation or word choice that would appeal to potential consumers.

## Program Structure: Curriculum Overview

The Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program is designed to provide students with a well-rounded and comprehensive education in linguistics. The curriculum is thoughtfully crafted to strike a balance between core specialized courses and a capstone experience. This structure enables students to gain a deep understanding of linguistic principles while also tailoring their studies to align with their individual interests and career aspirations. The overall program structure for the Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics comprises a total of 12 specialized courses, amounting to 48 credit hours (72.7%), and a thesis course, amounting 18 credit hours (27.3%). These hours are distributed into levels as the following table shows:

Level	Course Code	Course Title	Required or Elective	Pre-Requisite Courses	Credit Hours
Level 1	LNG 7102	Research Methods in Linguistics	Required	-	4
	LNG 7150	Corpus Linguistics	Required	-	4
Level 2	LNG 7163	Sociolinguistics	Required	LNG 7102 LNG 7150	4
	LNG 7175	Discourse analysis	Required	LNG 7102 LNG 7150	4
Level 3	LNG 7162	Language Acquisition and Bilingualism	Required	LNG 7163 LNG 7175	4
	LNG 7165	Psycholinguistics	Required	LNG 7163 LNG 7175	4
Level 4	LNG 7241	Advanced Phonology	Required	LNG 7162 LNG 7165	4
	LNG 7243	Advanced Semantics	Required	LNG 7162 LNG 7165	4
Level 5	LNG 7242	Advanced Syntax	Required	LNG 7241 LNG 7243	4
	LNG 7244	Advanced Pragmatics	Required	LNG 7241 LNG 7243	4
Level 6	LNG 7251	Contrastive Linguistics	Required	LNG 7242 LNG 7244	4
	LNG 7252	Advanced Topics in Linguistics	Required	LNG 7242 LNG 7244	4
Level 7	LNG 7301	Comprehensive Exams	Required	LNG 7251 LNG 7252	0
Level 8	LNG 7399	Dissertation	Required	LNG 7301	18

## Courses Overview:

### **LNG 7102- Research Methods in Linguistics:**

This course equips students with the knowledge and skills needed for conducting accurate and ethical research with different designs in theoretical linguistics. The course, therefore, introduces students to the basics in research writing and concepts of statistics.

### **LNG 7150- Corpus Linguistics:**

This course introduces students to corpus analysis for a wide range selection of data (spoken and written). It provides students with the opportunity to produce corpus-based description of different levels of linguistic analysis including vocabulary, grammar, and discourse.

### **LNG 7163- Sociolinguistics:**

The course provides a thorough understanding of the relationship between linguistic phenomena and human social life like prestige, regional variation, identity, and culture.

### **LNG 7175- Discourse analysis:**

This course discusses various theoretical frameworks and methods used in discourse analysis. It includes a macro-linguistic approach as well as micro-linguistic approaches to discourse analysis.

### **LNG 7162 - Language Acquisition and Bilingualism:**

The course empowers students with a strong background in the cognitive foundations of language and influential universal, individual, and social sources of learning additional languages later in life.

### **LNG 7165 – Psycholinguistics:**

This course examines current research linking language with biological foundations, nature of acquisition, comprehension and production processes, memory, impairment, and thought. The course also addresses a variety of behavioural and neurophysiological methods framing language processing.

### **LNG 7241 - Advanced Phonology:**

This course is an introduction to the fundamental premises of phonological theory. A number of phonological problems based on linguistic data from English and other languages are discussed within phonological framework.

### **LNG 7243 - Advanced Semantics:**

The course explores the new trends in the theories of meaning and semantic structures. It also explores semantic universals, logical deduction, mental model theory, usage-based approaches, cognitive semantics, and minimalist semantics theories.

### **LNG 7242 - Advanced Syntax:**

This course focuses on the principles of morphological and syntactic analysis, as well as phrase and syntactic structures based on contemporary linguistic theories, with an emphasis on theoretical frameworks and analytical approaches to syntax.

### **LNG 7244 - Advanced Pragmatics:**

This course is an advanced study of pragmatics that focuses on knowledge of pragmatic meaning of utterances. It requires student to delve into the theoretical frameworks of pragmatic analysis to investigate different contextual components affecting the understanding of meaning.

### **LNG 7251 - Contrastive Linguistics:**

This course introduces students to the key issues of contrastive linguistics to carry out synchronic, systematic comparisons of two or more languages on the various micro-levels as well as the macro-levels of linguistic structure.

### **LNG 7252 - Advanced Topics in Linguistics:**

This course covers both the theoretical and practical topics in the field of linguistics building on the knowledge of linguistic theories acquired in earlier courses. Major topics include language typology, natural language processing, corpus linguistics, clinical linguistics, forensic linguistics, and rhetoric

### **LNG 7301- Comprehensive Exams:**

This course is the final outcome of the program coursework, where students take oral and written exams in terms of theoretical content, methodological approaches, and research paradigms acquired from the taught courses in the program and intensive readings of primary and secondary sources.

### **LNG 7399 – Dissertation:**

This course is the final outcome of the PhD program, where students make use of the comprehensive knowledge of linguistics from the taught courses in the program as well as self-study activities. The student benefits from regular and scheduled supervisory input starting with guidance about the selection of the research area till the submission of the final complete thesis.

## Admission Requirements for the program

We are dedicated to fostering a diverse and talented community of linguists, and we have carefully designed our admission requirements to ensure that students possess the necessary academic background and language proficiency to excel in the program.

### University Enrolment Requirements:

1. A university degree and MA degree obtained from a Saudi or other recognized university
2. Two letters of recommendation delivered by the candidate's former instructors
3. Employer's permission if applicable

NB: The candidate is not authorized to concurrently enrol in two programs

### Department of English Enrolment Requirements:

1. Holding an MA degree in English Language, Literature, and/ or Linguistics with a minimum GPA of (3.75 out of 5.00).
2. A minimum IELTS academic score equal to (6.5) or its TOEFL equivalent (especially in writing and reading skills).
3. Passing the Graduate's Aptitude Test (with a minimum of 80%)
4. Passing the program admission test and admission interview.

### Required Documents:

1. ID (i.e. National or passport)
2. Academic documents (i.e. Degrees, academic records for BA and MA)
3. A model of a student's research production, which can be either a paper presented to the MA courses or the MA thesis.
4. A statement letter (written in English) on the purpose of the study.
5. C.V.

NB: Selecting the best candidates having prior experience and training record in case of equal candidates' scores or excess in the number of applicants to the program.

## Registration and Equation Procedures

Course equation procedures goes as follows:

- The Council of each scientific department appoints a committee of its teaching staff competent to equalize the courses, with a minimum membership of two.
- The formulation procedure takes place in the first two weeks of each semester.
- The decision of equivalence considers the following: 2. Convergence of the rapporteur's name in general.
- Passing the course whether inside and outside the university.
- - The score estimate must be (good) minimum.
- - Matching the number of units between the equivalent units, and more than one course may be equated with one course and one course may be equated with more than one when the number of units corresponds.
- - At least (70 %) of accordance between the course description of the courses.
- The Department Council recommends the approval of the Equations Committee's recommendation for postgraduate studies and submit it to the College Board for final approval.
- -The college to which the student is transferred addresses other colleges if the courses under the focus of equation are within the specialization of other colleges.



- After collecting the decisions of equivalence, the college to which the student is transferred sends the results to the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies to register them into the system.
- The formulation procedure does not exceed two weeks from the date of receipt of all the requirements of the appeal.
- Visiting student must provide the Deanship of Admission and Registration with the official results obtained from the university where a visitor studied within two weeks from the beginning of the following semester.

### **Transfer**

The student may transfer from one major to another in the university on the recommendation of respective department and college councils. The following regulations should be taken into account:

1. Current conditions for admission should apply to transfer students in addition to any further conditions relevant department may deem necessary.
2. The student should pass at least on semester in the program transferred from with a (Good) average.
3. Courses already studied at the university may be transferred if related departments find them corresponding to their programs; they will be included in computing students' cumulative average.
4. Student's registration in previous department should not for any reason have been repealed.
5. Time spent in the program transferred from shall be counted within the maximum time limit for obtaining the degree.
6. Transfer from one program to another is allowed only once during the period set for obtaining the degree.

### **Academic Policies**

At the Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program, we uphold rigorous academic standards to ensure a conducive learning environment and foster intellectual growth among our students. The following academic policies outline our grading system, evaluation criteria, academic integrity and plagiarism policies, attendance and participation requirements, and procedures for academic grievances:

#### *Grading System and Evaluation Criteria*

Our program follows a standardized grading system, which includes letter grades and grade point averages (GPAs). Each course is graded based on the student's performance in assignments, examinations, research projects, and class participation. The grading scale is as follows:

- A: Excellent (90-100)
- B: Good (80-89)
- C: Satisfactory (75-79)
- F: Fail (Below 75)

Faculty members provide clear evaluation criteria and rubrics at the beginning of each course, outlining the weightage of various assessments. This transparency ensures that students understand how their performance will be assessed and helps them strive for academic excellence.

#### *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policies*

Academic integrity is of utmost importance in our program. We expect all students to uphold the highest standards of honesty and ethics in their academic work. Plagiarism, cheating, and academic dishonesty are strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary actions.

To maintain academic integrity, students must properly cite all sources used in their assignments, research papers, and projects. Any direct quotes, paraphrased content, or ideas from external sources must be appropriately acknowledged. Failure to do so will be considered a breach of academic integrity.

We employ plagiarism detection tools to ensure originality and authenticity in student submissions. All faculty members and students are expected to familiarize themselves with our academic integrity policies and act in accordance with these principles.

### Attendance and Participation Requirements

Regular attendance and active participation are essential for student success and a vibrant academic community. Students must attend all scheduled sessions, except for valid documented reasons. Falling below 75% attendance may lead to course denial or academic consequences as per the attendance policy. Unforeseen circumstances should be communicated with the faculty, backed by proper documentation. Upholding these standards enhances students' academic growth and enriches the learning experience for all.

Consistent and engaged participation in discussions, group activities, and presentations enriches the learning experience for all students. Faculty members may consider participation as part of the overall assessment, emphasizing its significance in contributing to a comprehensive learning journey.

### Procedures for Academic Grievances

In the event of academic concerns or grievances, the program offers a transparent and fair procedure to address such matters. Students who have academic grievances should follow these steps:

1. *Informal Discussion:* Students are encouraged to address concerns informally by discussing the issue with the respective faculty member or advisor involved.
2. *Formal Complaint:* If the issue remains unresolved, students may submit a formal written complaint to the program coordinator or department head. The complaint should clearly state the problem, provide relevant evidence, and outline the desired resolution.
3. *Academic Grievance Committee:* The program has an Academic Grievance Committee responsible for reviewing formal complaints. The committee will conduct a thorough investigation, consider all evidence, and make a fair determination within a reasonable timeframe.
4. *Appeal Process:* If the student is dissatisfied with the committee's decision, they may have the option to appeal the decision to the higher academic authority within the university.

## **Students' Duties**

[Click here](#)

## **Faculty and Staff**

The Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program is supported by a distinguished team of faculty members with expertise in various areas of theoretical and applied linguistics. Our faculty is dedicated to creating a nurturing learning environment and guiding students in their academic and research endeavours. Additionally, the program offers comprehensive student counselling and support services. The General Academic Advisory Office provides personalized counselling, while the Student-Mentoring Unit assigns academic advisors to students for individual guidance. Faculty members are available for consultations during their office hours, and the Special Needs Unit caters to students with disabilities. Talented and gifted students are encouraged to participate in various activities, enhancing their educational experience. To ensure the program's success, we are seeking dedicated teaching and administrative staff members who share our commitment to academic excellence and student development.

## Student Academic Counselling

At the Doctor of philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program, we prioritize the holistic development and success of our students. To ensure their academic and professional growth, we offer a range of comprehensive student support services. Before the start of classes, the academic advising team at the graduate studies office at the College of Languages and Translation arranges for an orientation program, which is scheduled for all new postgraduate students. The main goals of the orientation program are listed below:

1. Acquainting the newly admitted students with the general academic university regulations, policies, and services.
2. Familiarizing them with the specific regulations and the registration process of the PhD Program of Theoretical Linguistics at Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud University.
3. Introducing the students to their rights and responsibilities. The students are also oriented on adding and dropping classes and receiving refunds deadlines.

## Academic Advising and Mentorship

In collaboration with the English department, the QADU prepares a yearly counselling calendar for students. The counselling program is meant to provide assistance to students in matters related to students' diverse activities within the university and if need be to respond favourably to their psychological needs. The Unit uses digital means in its counselling mission; making thus relevant information and data available to students with easy and rapid access. Here are some hints about the functioning of the student counselling system in the program:

1. The General Academic Advisory office in both Male and Female Sections handles personal counselling case by case. For example, students requiring in-depth individual counseling are referred to the Student Advising Unit office at male and female campuses, where they can receive social, psychological, and financial assistance.
2. In the student-mentoring unit, a faculty member is assigned to about 3-4 doctoral students as an academic advisor. Academic Advisors meet with the assigned students individually or in groups at least four times during the academic semester. These meetings provide valuable opportunities for information exchange and suggestions as to how the advisors can improve the student's educational experience.
3. Faculty members are also available two times a week to give consultations and advice to students during their office hours. The students may visit instructors in their offices or call them on the phone or other multimedia means. Accommodations for one-on-one consultations are also available if students need them.
4. The Special Needs Unit in the college is responsible for providing accommodations and facilities that fit students of disabilities. Committee members work with special needs students by identifying their individual problems and working on fulfilling his/her academic requirements.
5. Talented and gifted students are encouraged to participate in research activities, active seminars, community service, mentoring sessions and other activities available in the department.

Our program provides personalized academic advising and mentorship to each PhD student. Upon enrollment, students are assigned a dedicated academic advisor who guides them throughout their academic journey. These advisors offer valuable insights, help students navigate their coursework, assist in planning their research projects, and provide guidance on choosing elective courses that align with their career aspirations and research interests. Regular meetings with academic advisors enable students to receive tailored support and maximize their learning experience.

*Opportunities for Conference Attendance and Networking*

We believe in nurturing our students' scholarly growth and exposure to the wider linguistic community. As such, we actively encourage and support students in attending national and international conferences related to linguistics. These opportunities provide valuable platforms for students to present their research findings, network with leading experts in the field, and gain insights into cutting-edge research. By participating in conferences and engaging with fellow linguists, students can broaden their perspectives, establish valuable connections, and potentially open doors for future collaboration and academic pursuits.

Our student support services are designed to empower students throughout their academic journey and beyond. By combining academic advising, career services, and networking opportunities, we aim to cultivate well-rounded linguists who are prepared to excel in both their studies and future careers.

**Resources and Facilities**

At the Doctor of philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program, we provide a wide range of resources and state-of-the-art facilities to support our students' academic pursuits and research endeavours. Here are some of the key resources and facilities available:

*Library Resources Related to Linguistics*

Our program boasts a well-equipped library with an extensive collection of linguistics-related resources. Students have access to an array of books, journals, research papers, and academic publications covering various linguistic sub-disciplines, theories, and methodologies. The library's collection is regularly updated to ensure students have access to the latest advancements in the field of linguistics. Dedicated librarians are available to assist students in locating relevant materials and conducting literature searches for their research projects.

*Language Laboratories and Research Facilities*

We take pride in our modern language laboratories and research facilities, which provide students with hands-on learning experiences and opportunities to explore linguistic phenomena in practice. Equipped with advanced technology and language learning software, these laboratories enable students to engage in phonetic analyses, language processing experiments, and psycholinguistic research. The facilities are designed to foster practical language research, giving students valuable insights and enhancing their understanding of linguistic concepts.

*Access to Online Databases and Journals*

As part of our commitment to comprehensive academic resources, students access a wide range of online databases and journals in linguistics through our university's digital library, the Saudi Digital Library. This resource-rich platform enables exploration of leading academic databases, linguistic corpora, and digital archives worldwide, keeping students updated with the latest research trends. Our continuous investments in expanding resources and facilities, including the Saudi Digital Library, foster a stimulating academic environment that encourages exploration, critical thinking, and groundbreaking contributions to the field of linguistics.

## Comprehensive exam

A comprehensive Ph.D. exam is compulsory. Therefore, after completing all the required courses, the student must pass a comprehensive written and oral exam in the main and sub disciplines (if any) convened by a specialized committee on the recommendation of the Department Board and the approval of the competent College Board and the Council of the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies.

Moreover, passing the comprehensive exam is a requirement for obtaining the degree. However, the score of the comprehensive exam has no effect on the student's cumulative rate, nor it is a requirement for registering the topic of the thesis.

### Comprehensive Examination Date:

The comprehensive examination (in its written and oral forms) shall be held in the following semester in which the student has completed all the required courses of study. It could be held during the period 4<sup>th</sup> week- 12<sup>th</sup> week of the semester, with a period of less than one week between the two forms.

### As a result of the comprehensive test:

- The student passes the comprehensive exam if he gets 75% or more in each of the two forms of the exam.
- The student is considered failing if he fails the comprehensive exam or one of its forms, or misses the comprehensive exam or one of its forms without excuse.
- The failing student shall be given one opportunity to reinstate the exam in which he failed, after two semesters of the next semester where the result is declared.
- The student's enrolment shall be cancelled if he does not pass the comprehensive exam or part of it after failing the opportunities granted to him by the decision of the Board of Deanship of Postgraduate Studies, and at the recommendation of the Board of the Department and the College.

### Postponing the comprehensive exam:

The student may postpone the comprehensive exam upon the approval of the boards of the Department and the College, and the Council of Postgraduate Studies.

### Comprehensive Exam (Alternative):

An alternative exam shall be held for a student who has postponed the comprehensive exam, or who has failed the comprehensive exam or part thereof, with an excuse accepted by the boards of the Department and the College, during two semesters from the next semester of the comprehensive exam.

## Thesis Registration Policy

Thesis is the final outcome of the PhD program. Students will make use of the comprehensive knowledge of linguistics in terms of theoretical content, methodological approaches, and research paradigms acquired from the taught courses in the program as well as self-study activities. The student's responsibility is multiple. The student chooses an original, researchable, and relevant topic approved by the supervisor and the PhD committee. He/She engages in systematic self-study activities related to library search, intensive readings of primary and secondary sources, disciplined training in research methods and skills, and proficiency in academic writing. He/She comply with the norms of academic integrity as specified by the university laws and the universal standards of thesis writing. The thesis is sanctioned by a final oral defence before an officially appointed examination panel that will award the candidate the PhD diploma upon successful performance. The dissertation layout, sections, length, and formatting style (e.g. APA, MLA, etc.) will be formally specified by the respective academic committee in a specially designed Research Guide for both the theoretical and applied linguistic programs. For more details about thesis registration, refer to University Thesis Handbook.

## Graduation Requirements

To qualify for graduation and successfully complete the Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics Program, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Minimum GPA Requirements: Students are required to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.75 out of 5 throughout the program.
2. Passing the comprehensive exam; both written and oral
3. Passing the Thesis Course.
4. Steps for Graduation Application: As students approach the completion of their program requirements, they must apply for graduation by filling out the designated online application form and submitting it within the specified deadline. Before applying, students must ensure that all program requirements, including coursework, have been satisfactorily fulfilled.

Upon the verification of meeting all graduation requirements by the program's academic office, students will be conferred with their Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical Linguistics degree.

## Important Websites

**Deanship of Admission and  
Registration - Post-Graduate Studies**

[Click here](#)

**Olia System**

[Click here](#)

**Program Website**

[Click here](#)