FAQ

Master of Arts in Linguistics: Forensic Linguistics (MALFL)

Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549 USA
Director: Robert A. Leonard, Ph.D.
https://www.hofstra.edu/forensic-linguistics-master/
ForensicLinguistics@Hofstra.edu

For information and application, contact the Associate Dean of Graduate Admissions, MALFL at (516) 463-6707 or graduateadmission@hofstra.edu

To sign up for an upcoming graduate student open house, register at https://admission.hofstra.edu/portal/gradadmission

To learn more about graduate student life at Hofstra and in the greater New York metropolitan area, visit: https://www.hofstra.edu/graduate/student-life.html

INFORMATIVE MEDIA featuring Dr. Leonard and forensic linguistics

Television Shows
• A Tight Leash, an episode of Forensic Files/Medical Detectives about the Hummert murder case tried in 2006. Full episode: “A Tight Leash” Forensic Files/Medical Detectives full episode (also available on Netflix).
• “Facebook Murders” case: Too Pretty to Live: The Catfishing Murders of East Tennessee on Investigation Discovery in 2016. Leonard demonstrated that the defendants authored language attributed to “CIA Agent Chris”. A brief description of the case can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weROEU67dls

Podcasts
• Vanderbilt Law School’s “Evidence and Proof” podcast Excited Utterance: https://www.excitedutterancepodcast.com/listen/2018/2/19/46-robert-leonard
• Behavioral science podcast Behavioral Grooves: From Holding the Mic to Theory of Mind: Rob Leonard’s Love of Language

Forensic Linguistics Presentation

Forensic Linguistics Clips
• MTV’s 2016 Exoneration Series Unlocking the Truth, where Dr. Leonard and Hofstra MALFL interns reanalyzed evidence and revealed that the murder case against Mr. Case was seriously flawed: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1771560176438099
• Investigation Discovery Channel’s discussion of forensic linguistics: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acHg0L5ky30

NOTE: This document is not a contract. It is for informational purposes only. Details are subject to change. Revised 1/27/2022
FAQ Contents

A. Program and Faculty ......................................................... p. 3
   1. Program description
   2. On-campus and online program options
   3. Faculty

B. Professional Opportunities ............................................... p. 6
   4. Internships
   5. Careers
   6. Ph.D. programs

C. Application Requirements and Procedures ................................. p. 8
   7. Application requirements
   8. Application link and deadline
   9. Next steps upon acceptance

D. Program Cost and Financial Opportunities ............................... p. 9
   10. Program cost
    11. Linguistics fellowships
    12. Additional opportunities

E. Program Length, Requirements, and Schedule ............................. p. 11
   13. Program length
    14. Program requirements
    15. Suggested schedules
    16. Additional program details

F. Badge in Forensic Linguistic Case Studies: One-week Intensives .... p. 14
A. Program and Faculty

1) Program Description – broad scientific linguistic training and actual case experience

The program launched in 2010 as the first of its kind in the Americas. To this day it is the only forensic linguistics program in the Americas or, to our knowledge, anywhere in the world that combines broad-based scientific training with an emphasis on providing real-world practical experience through applied workshops and internships working on major serious cases. Upon graduation, students are prepared to bring to their workplace an array of skills and case experience in the analysis of language in legal and other real-world settings.

Linguistics is the systematic, scientific study of language. “Forensic linguistics” refers to linguistics applied to any use of language with legal relevance. The Hofstra Master of Arts in Linguistics: Forensic Linguistics (MALFL) is designed to meet a growing demand for advanced training in scientific language analysis.

At Hofstra, a student trains first and foremost to become a linguist and learn the scientific base of linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, and sociolinguistics. Throughout this training, at Hofstra, unlike many other linguistics programs, illustrations and teaching examples are, wherever possible, drawn from real-world forensic applications—most often from the extensive array of criminal, intelligence, counterterror, and civil cases worked on by the Hofstra faculty.

Advanced courses explore the specific application of linguistic science to cases involving criminal and intelligence activity of all kinds, including extortion, bribery, murder, espionage, and weapons of mass destruction, as well as to civil cases of trademark protection, the meaning of contracts and statutes, and defamation. Students learn how to perform analyses that investigate the authorship of different sets of documents and also learn to critique common interrogation procedures from a linguistic standpoint. In short, while they master the science of linguistics, they also practice applying it to a multiplicity of issues in the real world—in this case, the legal arena.

The MA program prepares students:

- for public or private sector employment in the United States and international arenas in careers relating to or associated with law, law enforcement, intelligence, the forensic sciences, or any language-related field; or,
- to pursue a Ph.D. in theoretical or applied linguistics or a related field.

Graduates of the program have been successful in pursuing employment in organizations that seek professionals with research and linguistic skills or in any field in which people work with language, including government and academic institutions, business, industry, and communications. See section 5 below for additional information on job opportunities.

A prime feature of the program is real-world experience through internships.

- Our graduates learn how to apply theory to the real world.
One prime internship opportunity is with the Hofstra Forensic Linguistics Capital Case Innocence Project, through which graduate linguists, law students, and professional analysts revisit language evidence that was used to put people on death row. Other serious pro bono crime cases are analyzed by graduate linguists through the Hofstra Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment, and Strategic Analysis. Recently, Hofstra interns and their faculty spent eight months helping investigators in the South as they tracked a suspected serial killer who staged her victims’ suicides to cover the murders. The interns’ analysis revealed that the purported suicide note of one of the victims was far more likely to have been authored by the suspected killer than the victim. See section 4 for more information on internship opportunities.

To be a forensic linguist, you must be a linguist first. Thus, first and foremost, our degree is specifically designed to train you as a linguist. Once you have the skills to scientifically analyze language, you will learn how to apply those skills to real world cases and problems.

What differentiates the forensic linguistics program from a general linguistics program is that our degree has additional practical, real-life applied knowledge of a type that may be even more attractive to a variety of potential employers, because our degree teaches students utilizing the extensive real-world experience of the faculty. The cases Dr. Leonard, Dr. Gales, and their colleagues have recently participated in are increasingly numerous and quite varied in type – e.g., criminal cases of fraud, solicitation to murder, and espionage; legal trademark cases; death penalty appeals; reversals of wrongful convictions; and cases of homicide, sometimes being retained by the prosecution and sometimes by the defense. We also regularly train counterterrorism experts and threat assessment professionals.

2) On-campus and Online Program Options

Beginning fall 2022, we offer two tracks to the MA. You can select to pursue the degree either as 1) a primarily on-campus student, or 2) an online student. The majority of online courses meet synchronously, that is, in real time with the students and professors face-to-face together online, so students can benefit the most from their course experiences and interactions with professors. See section 15 for scheduling options.

For students who need to fulfill the undergraduate Introduction to Linguistics program prerequisite, we also offer online and on-campus sections of LING 101: Introduction to Linguistics once or twice a year. See sections 7 and 15 for more information.

3) Full-time Faculty

Dr. Robert A. Leonard, the Program Director and Co-Director of the Hofstra Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment, and Strategic Analysis, is internationally recognized as a foremost expert in this field of study. He has worked as a consultant for the FBI and police, counterterrorism, and intelligence agencies throughout the U.S., U.K., Canada, and Europe, training agents in the use of forensic linguistics in law enforcement, threat assessment, and counterterrorism. Other clients have included Apple, Inc., Facebook, the Prime Minister of Canada, the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force, and the U.S. Dept. of Justice. Dr. Leonard has testified in both state and Federal District courts around the U.S. His testimony has been pivotal.
in investigating and prosecuting several high-profile cases, including the JonBenét Ramsey case, death threats to U.S. Congress members, and the Coleman family triple homicide in Illinois. He has also consulted to numerous defense teams and heads the Forensic Linguistics Capital Case Innocence Project.

In addition to being a leading expert in forensic linguistics, Dr. Leonard has also received much attention for being a rock star in the 60s and 70s as the founding leader of the group Sha Na Na (who would later cameo in the movie *Grease*). As vocalist, he and his group opened for Jimi Hendrix at Woodstock. Rock 'n' roll ignited his interest in forensic linguistics – analyzing the group's recording contract, he proved they were not receiving money due them. Dr. Leonard left the music business for his Fulbright Fellowship, where he spent years doing field research in Africa and Southeast Asia, and a Ph.D. from Columbia University.

**Dr. Tammy Gales**, Director of Research at the Hofstra Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment, and Strategic Analysis, has a reputation as an expert in threat and stalking cases and teaches a variety of innovative courses that incorporate forensic linguistic data and social science methods, including corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics. Since earning her Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of California, Davis, Dr. Gales has specialized in research on various linguistic aspects of assault cases, false confessions, and threatening communications. She has collaborated on projects with faculty at Brooklyn Law School and, as a Washington D.C. Graduate Fellow, conducted research with The Academy Group, the world’s largest privately-owned behavioral analysis firm, comprised of former FBI Supervisory Special Agents and Agents of the Secret Service. She has presented her findings to international audiences of linguists, psychologists, lawyers, and law enforcement agents at language and law conferences and at universities such as Georgetown, Princeton, and Yale. She has published in leading international peer-reviewed journals such as *Discourse and Society*, *Discourse Studies*, *Corpora*, and *Language and Law*. Dr. Gales has also conducted forensic linguistic training of federal and regional law enforcement agents within the U.S. and Canada.

**Guest Faculty**

**James R. Fitzgerald**, retired FBI Chief of Forensic Linguistics and Supervisory Special Agent in the Behavioral Analysis Unit-1: Counterterrorism and Threat Assessment, pioneered and developed Forensic Linguistics for the Critical Incident Response Group of the FBI. He is the only fully credentialed profiler and forensic linguist in the history of the FBI. Among his many notable cases, Mr. Fitzgerald worked on the Washington D.C. Sniper, Anthrax letters, 9/11 attack, and the Unabomber case. (See the scripted multipart Discovery series centering on his work, *Manhunt: Unabomber*.) He holds an M.S. from Georgetown in Linguistics. He and Dr. Leonard have worked together on cases and have conducted training workshops in forensic linguistics for the FBI and other law enforcement and counterintelligence professionals in both the U.S. and internationally. He co-directs the Hofstra Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment, and Strategic Analysis with Leonard, and they co-teach an intensive five-day online synchronous course (i.e., in real time) each spring and summer.

**Dr. Tanya Karoli Christensen**, Professor at the University of Copenhagen, currently leads a major international research project on threatening messages. The first linguist registered on the
Danish National Police’s list of forensic experts, she recently helped them secure convictions in a Syrian Warrior case (a Dane traveling to Syria to fight on the side of ISIS) and a hate crime threat case. Dr. Christensen initiated the establishment of forensic linguistic networks between universities and law schools in the U.S. as well as in Europe, among academics and police, judges, lawyers, and prison correction services. She has presented extensively in the U.S., Spain, Italy, Germany, and Scandinavia, to law enforcement professionals, scholarly audiences, and the public. Dr. Christensen also works with the Danish National Forensic Center in constructing a database of threats and other criminally oriented communications. Dr. Christensen has worked on many cases with Dr. Leonard both in the U.S. and Europe, teaches forensic linguistics in Denmark, and co-teaches an intensive week-long course in New York each fall with Leonard.

B. Professional Opportunities

At Hofstra, we train our students to succeed in a variety of professional capacities – internships, careers, and Ph.D. programs.

4) Internships

There are two types of internships: those internal to Hofstra and those external to Hofstra. (Only registered students may participate in our internships.)

1. Internal Internships

Working under the supervision of Hofstra faculty, students may participate in a variety of internal internships in the fall, spring, and/or summer terms. (Not all internships are available each term.)

   a. Students work on pro bono cases, typically ongoing serious crime cases, that Dr. Leonard has accepted through the Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment, and Strategic Analysis. Working individually and in groups, students conduct forensic linguistic analyses of case evidence under the supervision of Dr. Leonard and other faculty. For example, in 2016, Dr. Leonard and the Hofstra MALFL pro bono interns were recruited by the Midwest Innocence Project and MTV to review evidence that had resulted in the convictions of two men about whom MTV was producing a show. (See the related video on page 1.)

   b. Under the aegis of the Forensic Linguistics Capital Case Innocence Project, run by Dr. Leonard and Constitutional Law Professor Eric Freedman, forensic linguistic interns work side-by-side with Hofstra Law School interns in an Innocence Project specializing in capital and other serious crime cases in which language evidence was crucial.

   c. Through the research arm of the Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment, and Strategic Analysis, students work on current research projects under the supervision of Dr. Gales. Projects are exploratory in nature and address a current societal issue. The culmination of these projects are professional presentations to various public service communities. Previous projects have included analyses of language in sexual assault witness statements – presented to witness advocates and the NYPD – and analyses of
parole board hearings in which certain populations have been disproportionately denied parole – presented to the ACLU.

2. External Internships: there is no set list of internships; students are encouraged to find and/or create their own. Virtually any professional situation in which students interact with language data can be a potential internship. In the past, our students have successfully interned with the U.S. Department of State, the Office of Emergency Management, New York City’s Civilian Complaint Review Board, the New York State District Attorney’s Office, the Forensic Panel, law firms, and a range of law enforcement agencies. Be aware that deadlines for external internships can close very early, so plan ahead.

Students are required to take 3 semester hours of internship and may take up to two internships for a total of 6 semester hours toward their MALFL degree requirements. (See section 15 for more information about scheduling.) All internship opportunities help prepare students for future careers and/or PhD research.

5) Careers

One of the things we always tell our students when searching for employment is that no one knows they need a linguist, but everyone NEEDS a linguist. With this in mind, our MALFL graduates have been very creative, and many have gone on to successful careers in a wide range of industries, making opportunities for employment quite open-ended. For example, former graduates have found positions with intelligence and counterintelligence agencies such as the FBI, CIA, NCIS, and the Dept. of Homeland Security’s Intelligence Division, and with other special law enforcement agencies like the Capitol Police. Others have secured positions with large financial firms as intelligence analysts, at law firms as research specialists, at translation and transcription companies, and with non-profit agencies that advocate for the fair treatment of asylum seekers and victims of sexual assault. Another recent career trend for our graduates has been with private firms that specialize in cybersecurity, threat management, and big data analysis. All report that their forensic linguistics training at Hofstra was instrumental in obtaining their positions.

For those specifically interested in careers in law enforcement, another benefit of Hofstra’s MALFL program is the frequent opportunity for students to interact with active agents during our one-week intensive courses (see section 16 for more information). Over the past few years, we have trained special agents from NCIS, Army, Commerce, FBI, RCMP, and from Europe and South America. Such experiences can be invaluable networking experiences for students.

One question frequently asked by students interested in forensic linguistics is “will my MALFL degree prepare me to pursue a career as a professional forensic linguist?” To be accepted to testify as an expert in court in the United States, one typically needs a terminal degree (i.e., the highest degree in a field – for us, it is the Ph.D.) or have a combination of graduate degrees and extensive experience (like Jim Fitzgerald’s thousands of cases worked while in the FBI). So with the MALFL degree, students can pursue some of the exciting careers previously mentioned to aid in experiential training, seek opportunities to work with existing forensic linguists as data analysts on ongoing cases, or pursue their own terminal Ph.D. degree. As the need for forensic
linguistic experts continues to grow, Hofstra graduates will be first in line, as no other institution in the Americas offers this training that combines scientific linguistic principles with hands-on case applications.

6) Ph.D. programs

For students wishing to pursue a Ph.D. upon completion of their MALFL, Hofstra’s training prepares students for programs that focus on a variety of areas of expertise, such as forensic linguistics, corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and criminology. Previous students have attended excellent U.S. and international universities including American University in Washington D.C., John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, North Carolina State University, York University in Toronto, the University of York, the University of Birmingham in the U.K., and Aston University.

C. Application Requirements and Procedures

7) Application Requirements (the GRE is not required)

1. Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) with a GPA of 3.0 or better.
2. Two letters of recommendation, at least one from a former professor.
3. If requested by us, an interview with the program director (in person, by phone, or via video-conference).
4. Written statement of professional interests and goals or an academic essay from a past college-level class.

Applicants to the MALFL will ideally have completed their B.A. with a specialization in linguistics or a related field that contained a strong language analysis component, but applications are also invited from students with a background in other disciplines allied to forensic linguistics.

Accepted students who do not have a recent or sufficient level of linguistic training are required to take a single, additional introductory course in linguistics. Students can satisfy this requirement by taking an undergraduate Introduction to Linguistics course 1) at an accredited institution other than Hofstra prior to the MALFL program start date, 2) at Hofstra during a summer session prior to the MALFL program start date, if offered, or 3) at Hofstra during the first semester of the MALFL program in addition to the student's regular MALFL courses. Options (1) and (2) are strongly recommended over (3). The Introduction to Linguistics course is preparation and does not count as part of the student's 36 required credit hours for the MALFL program. A minimum grade of B+ is required to satisfy this prerequisite. Please contact the Linguistics Adviser for more information about this requirement.

International students should additionally see: https://www.hofstra.edu/graduate/international-students.html

8) Application Link and Deadline
To apply, go to [http://www.hofstra.edu/Academics/grad/grad_apply.html](http://www.hofstra.edu/Academics/grad/grad_apply.html). Once an application and all supporting credentials are received, the application is reviewed in the next round of meetings by our Admissions Committee.

Candidates for the Master of Arts in Linguistics: Forensic Linguistics are considered on a rolling basis. Thus, there is no strict cut-off date for applications. While this may put less pressure on the timing of your application, it also means that once there are no spaces left, applications will only be considered for the subsequent academic year. Therefore, as soon as a student is accepted, they should register and enroll to secure their spot in the required first-year courses. When those courses are full, they are full.

Further, be aware that we strongly recommend that all students enter in the fall (as opposed to the spring). The course schedule is designed to enable full-time students to take the courses in a logical sequence and move through the program as a cohort. (However, if special circumstances exist, highly qualified students may be allowed to begin the program in the spring.)

9) **Next Steps upon Acceptance**

Students who have been accepted can register for courses after talking to our Associate Dean of Admissions. Direct inquiries to (516) 463-6707, graduateadmission@hofstra.edu (include MALFL in the subject line). Students are encouraged to enroll as early as possible in order to secure their place.

Also, check out this webpage aimed at new graduate students:

- [http://www.hofstra.edu/Academics/grad/grad_newgrads.html](http://www.hofstra.edu/Academics/grad/grad_newgrads.html)

Incoming students should check their Hofstra email on a regular basis as this will be the main mode of communication about upcoming orientations, program news, and course announcements.

There are generally two orientations held in the fall for incoming graduate students.

- Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (HCLAS): This orientation takes place approximately a week before classes begin. Incoming students can take a tour of the campus, get their photo IDs, and learn about important campus resources.
- MALFL: We hold a program-specific orientation during the first week of classes so that students can get to know each other and learn more information about upcoming opportunities such as conferences, online talks, and the internal internships.

D. **Program Cost and Financial Opportunities**

10) **Program Cost**

For the most up-to-date program cost, see “Graduate, 200-level and above courses” at [http://www.hofstra.edu/sfs/bursar/bursar_tuition.html#GradTuition](http://www.hofstra.edu/sfs/bursar/bursar_tuition.html#GradTuition). The cost is listed at the per credit rate. Full-time students generally take 9 credits per term; a total of 36 credits are required for the program. There are no additional fees of which we are aware.
11) Linguistics Fellowships

Since we are a relatively new program, we have a very limited amount of scholarship aid available. What we do receive is reserved for second-year MA students in our program. These students are able to compete for two different kinds of graduate fellowships: graduate linguistics fellowships and graduate research fellowships. (Unfortunately, there are no opportunities for Teaching or Research Assistantship positions in our department. See section 12 for other options.)

Graduate Linguistics Fellowships: Each year (pending university approval of funding), we award two graduate linguistics fellowships. Recipients receive a $10,000 award that is applied directly to their tuition ($5,000 is applied in the fall and $5,000 is applied in the spring). Awardees work approximately 15-20 hours per week assisting faculty with outreach, the archives, program administration, minor course-related duties, and other program-related tasks, as needed. Duties require awardees to be on and/or in the vicinity of campus.

Eligible students must be available for the full academic year, are required to successfully complete at least 9 credit hours and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 each term toward the degree, and perform all duties satisfactorily each term. The appointment of a Linguistics Fellow may be terminated at any time due to unsatisfactory academic performance or evaluation by the program director of the Fellow’s service.

Graduate Research Fellowships: In previous years, we have also been able to award several smaller graduate research fellowships ranging from $1000 - $5000 for the academic year. Funds are applied directly to the awardee’s tuition each semester. For these fellowships, students work on assigned projects supervised by linguistics faculty, as needed.

Eligible students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 during their appointment, and must perform all duties satisfactorily. Students applying for the Research Fellowship may be full- or part-time, on-campus or remote, and matriculated during one or both terms. The appointment of a Fellow may be terminated at any time due to unsatisfactory academic performance or evaluation by the program director of the Fellow’s service. Specific projects will be assigned based on student location, availability, and faculty research needs.

Application Deadline: The call for graduate fellowship applications is made in mid-spring with fellowships beginning the subsequent fall. Application materials are due (in a single email) by April 1. Late applications cannot be considered for funding.

To apply for a Graduate Linguistics Fellowship or Graduate Research Fellowship, a first-year student submits the following to the Linguistics Adviser no later than April 1:

- the linguistics program’s Graduate Fellowship application form,
- a current copy of your unofficial transcript,
- a list of the courses you plan to take during the term/year of the Fellowship, and
- two sample course assignments (from two separate courses) that demonstrate your attention to detail, your ability to think creatively, and your level of professionalism.
These competitive fellowships are awarded by an external review committee and are announced in late spring for the subsequent year.

12) Additional Financial Opportunities

Students may also explore other financial opportunities outside of the linguistics program. These include on-campus employment, educational loans, and off-campus employment.

**On-campus employment and educational loans:** Once applicants have been admitted and enrolled, they may check the Hofstra jobs pages as well as the entire student employment site.

*Beware of confusing names for jobs and types of jobs; e.g.,* graduate student *assistants* may receive $10/hour, while graduate student *assistantships* provide far more, including free tuition:

Graduate assistantships are opportunities for matriculated students in a Hofstra graduate program. The assistantships typically last from 9 to 10 months, and require working 20 to 25 hours per week. Evening and weekend work may be required, depending upon the position. Most positions offer up to nine (9) credits (a full-time graduate student typically takes 9 credits per semester) of tuition remission each semester (unless otherwise noted), with no more than 18 credits per academic year. Some assistantships also offer on-campus housing, and some provide a stipend as well.

A number of our students have competed for and obtained Assistantships in departments that advertise them (e.g., the Registrar, Audio-Visual services) and have therefore not had to pay tuition.

For more information about educational loans and on-campus employment opportunities, see Student Financial Services and the Office of Student Employment:

- [https://www.hofstra.edu/graduate/tuition-aid.html](https://www.hofstra.edu/graduate/tuition-aid.html)
- [https://www.hofstra.edu/financial-aid/](https://www.hofstra.edu/financial-aid/)
- [https://www.hofstra.edu/financial-aid/scholarships.html](https://www.hofstra.edu/financial-aid/scholarships.html)
- [https://www.hofstra.edu/student-employment/](https://www.hofstra.edu/student-employment/)
- [https://www.hofstra.edu/student-affairs/graduate-assistantships.html](https://www.hofstra.edu/student-affairs/graduate-assistantships.html)

To contact your financial aid counsellor, see: [https://www.hofstra.edu/financial-aid/find-my-counselor.html](https://www.hofstra.edu/financial-aid/find-my-counselor.html)

**Off-campus employment:** Many students work part- or full-time off campus. Hofstra is located in Nassau County, which has a higher population than Atlanta and Boston combined, and in an area of intense economic activity, surrounded by shopping malls, big box stores, bars, and restaurants. The next town over, Mineola, is the county seat and law firms, accountants, and other professional opportunities abound.
International students should contact the International Student Affairs office for visa regulations regarding any kind of employment opportunities: https://www.hofstra.edu/international-student/

E. Program Length, Requirements, and Schedules

13) Program Length

One normally takes three classes (i.e., nine credits) per semester, which is officially considered full time. (While three classes in an undergraduate program is a light load, it is indeed a full load in a graduate program.)

Full-time students will typically complete the program in two years: 9 credits x 4 semesters = 36 credits. Based on course availability, it may be possible for students wishing to accelerate their studies to complete the program in 1.5 years by taking four classes per term and/or summer courses. (See section 15 for scheduling options.) Note that students in our program are not allowed to take more than four courses per term.

It is also possible to attend part-time. Speak with a linguistics adviser for the most up-to-date information about scheduling.

Graduate classes meet once or twice a week for approximately two to three hours. Class times are generally limited to Tuesday and Thursday, most of which meet midday to early evening. This helps students who need to schedule full- or part-time work and other obligations.

14) Program Requirements

The program requires 36 semester hours of graduate-level credits. The program is comprised of 3 components: the core curriculum, electives, and capstone requirements.

Core Curriculum Courses - Semester Hours: 24

- LING 202 - Phonetics and Phonology*
- LING 203 - Morphology and Syntax*
- LING 205 - Semantics and Pragmatics
- LING 206 - Sociolinguistics
- LING 221 - Linguistic Field Methods
- LING 231 - Discourse Analysis
- LING 239 - Language and the Law: Language as Evidence
- LING 250 - Corpus Linguistics

*For those entering with a background in Linguistics, place-out tests may be taken for LING 202 and LING 203. Students who receive a B+ or better may substitute an elective from the list below (36 s.h. are still required). Consult the linguistics adviser for availability.
Elective Courses - Semester Hours: 6

Two courses from the following or, with the adviser’s permission, one course in another relevant discipline:

- LING 204 - Historical Linguistics
- LING 207 - Dialectology
- LING 219 - International Forensic Linguistics (intensive one-week course)
- LING 220 - Forensic Linguistics for Criminal Justice (intensive one-week course)
- LING 258 - Foundations of Forensic Linguistics
- LING 281 A-Z - Special Topics in Linguistics (varies)
- LING 290 - Internship (a second internship in addition to the one required)
- CSC 219 - Cybersecurity for Everyone

Capstone Requirements - Semester Hours: 6

- LING 290 - Internship in Forensic Linguistics
  - (LING 290 may be repeated once for elective credit.)

- LING 303 - Capstone Project*
  - (NOTE: Students who do not complete the Capstone Project within the semester they first registered for it must re-register for an additional 1-credit of LING 303 in each subsequent semester until they satisfactorily complete the project. The additional semester hours do not count toward any degree requirements.)

*In certain circumstances, students may apply to write a thesis and substitute LING 301 Thesis for LING 303 Capstone. Please consult a linguistics adviser.

Students must maintain at least a B average with no more than one C per semester. No more than two Cs may be counted toward the MA. Students who do not maintain at least a B average, or who receive a D or an F in any course, will be dismissed from the program.

15) Suggested Schedules

Course scheduling subject to change. All tracks require 36 s.h. for completion

*OC = on campus, OS = online synchronous, OA = online asynchronous*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2 year (full-time OC)</th>
<th>1.5 year (accelerated OC)</th>
<th>2 year (full-time OS/OA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td>LING 101 OA (if needed)</td>
<td>LING 101 OA (if needed)</td>
<td>LING 101 OA (if needed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall 1</strong></td>
<td>LING 202(^1)</td>
<td>LING 202(^1)</td>
<td>LING 206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 206</td>
<td>LING 206</td>
<td>LING 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 239</td>
<td>LING 239</td>
<td>LING Elective(^5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LING 258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spring 1</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Fall 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 203^1</td>
<td>LING 203 (OA)^1</td>
<td>LING 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 205</td>
<td>LING 290 (OS)^2</td>
<td>LING 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 221</td>
<td>(these may also be taken as a 4th course in fall &amp; spring)</td>
<td>LING 303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 250</td>
<td>LING 290 (OS)^2</td>
<td>LING 290^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 221</td>
<td>LING 303</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LING 250</td>
<td>LING 220</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES**

1. Test out options available. If successful, an elective may be substituted. 12 classes (36 s.h.) are still required.
2. One (3 s.h.) LING 290 internship is required; however, students may take up to two (6 s.h.) LING 290 internships for credit. *(Only registered students may participate in our internships.)*
3. LING 290 internship and LING 303 capstone may be taken any term: fall, spring, or summer. They meet OS = online synchronously.
4. In order to qualify for federal loans (for full-time status), students must take at least 3 classes (9 s.h.) in fall/spring terms, and at least 2 classes (4.5 s.h. or more) in summer terms.
5. We offer other electives on a rotating basis. Please check the schedule for up-to-date information. Many students opt to take CSC 219: Cybersecurity for Everyone. This counts as a 3 s.h. elective for our program, and it is generally offered by the Computer Science Department every term (in-person only). (It is highly recommended that students enter with some basic programming skills, which can be acquired through a variety of free/affordable online courses.)

16) **Additional Program Details**

Given the increasing flexibility with which we conduct classes – which mirrors situations students will later face in career or academic pursuits – we require all students to have access to their own personal laptop with the ability to meet via Zoom, as needed.

**F. Badge in Forensic Linguistic Case Studies: One-Week Intensives**

Our Badge in Forensic Linguistic Case Studies is unique to Hofstra, and is aimed at non-matriculated students – many of whom are practitioners in the fields of law, intelligence, counterterrorism, law enforcement, and threat assessment/management – as well as our own
matriculated Hofstra students from linguistics and other disciplines. Badges are valuable in highlighting specialty training on resumes, transcripts, and professional social media sites, as well as supplementing knowledge for career applications and continuing education requirements.

To earn the **Badge in Forensic Linguistic Case Studies**, a person completes our two popular one-week intensive courses LING 219 and LING 220 for six graduate credits. (Continuing Education/Professional Development participation in these courses does not qualify for the Badge.) Students acquire a foundational understanding of the science of linguistics and a basic knowledge of techniques, theory, and approaches to forensic linguistic casework.

These one-week intensive courses are modeled after the FBI Forensic Linguistics week-long “boot camp” courses that then-Supervisory Special Agent Jim Fitzgerald conceived, organized, and taught (and recruited Leonard to also teach) at Quantico.

The “boot camp” was run by the FBI’s Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU) to teach forensic linguistics to agents of the FBI and other agencies such as the ATF, Secret Service, and agents of allied governments. When Fitzgerald retired from the FBI, he and Leonard moved the week-long intensive course to Hofstra, where it evolved into the two current one-week intensive courses.

Cases studied in our courses are those that the three instructors – Leonard, Fitzgerald, and Christensen, three world-famous practitioners of forensic linguistics – themselves worked, including the JonBenét Ramsey Case, Unabomber case, Coleman triple homicides, the Facebook Catfishing Executions, death threats to sitting judges and to members of the U.S. Congress, Apple vs. Microsoft, Brooklyn 911 street assassination, and the Washington, D.C. Sniper Case.

**LING 219: International Forensic Linguistics**

This course is a broad introduction to the field of international forensic linguistics. In addition to teaching the investigation of criminal, intelligence, and terrorism cases—major components of which are profiling and authorship—the course discusses foundational linguistic theory, criminal defense strategies, and a selection of US and international civil and criminal cases, such as trademark, product warnings, and contracts. This course also includes the latest ongoing research on threat assessment, and European forensic linguistic responses to terrorism, threats, and violence. In addition to lecture and class-based exercises, students will be formed into teams to work on case analyses out of class.

**Ling 220: Forensic Linguistics for Criminal Justice**

This course is an introduction to the field of forensic linguistics with a focus on (predominantly US) criminal justice. Classes are taught through lecture, case study, and workshop formats, and they elucidate forensic linguistic responses to challenges of intelligence and counterintelligence; domestic and foreign terror campaigns; threats to government, officials, workplace, schools, and private individuals; and criminal communications such as extortion, ransom notes, criminal intelligence disinformation, and intercepted communications.
Please see the Hofstra Bulletin for more information on Badge policies (including admissions, grading, and academic honesty), and on the Badge in Forensic Linguistic Case Studies:

- [https://bulletin.hofstra.edu/content.php?catoid=113&navoid=16942](https://bulletin.hofstra.edu/content.php?catoid=113&navoid=16942)
- [https://bulletin.hofstra.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=113&poid=22965&hl=Badge+Study&returnto=search](https://bulletin.hofstra.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=113&poid=22965&hl=Badge+Study&returnto=search)

For information about upcoming offerings, including dates and modes of instruction, please email [ForensicLinguistics@Hofstra.edu](mailto:ForensicLinguistics@Hofstra.edu).