

AACR 6

Office of the President
June 19, 2012

Members, Board of Trustees:

ACADEMIC DEGREE RECOMMENDATION: COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of a Master of Arts with a major in Linguistic Theory and Typology degree (CIP Code: 16.0102, PROG: GS MA LTTY) in the Department of English within the College of Arts and Sciences, effective in the Fall 2012 Semester.

Background: Linguistics is the scientific study of language, a uniquely human capability whose systematic study sheds light on human behavior and thought. The College of Arts and Sciences currently offers a bachelor's level degree in linguistics through the College's interdisciplinary Linguistics Program.

The proposed interdisciplinary program will build on existing theoretical expertise in syntax, morphology, phonetics, sociolinguistics and historical linguistics to create a program of study that in coverage, rigor and research-led instruction is unparalleled in the Commonwealth and arguably in the southeastern region of the United States.

Linguistics as a discipline operates along separate but connected lines of inquiry, both theoretical and applied. Theoretical linguistics aims to increase our knowledge about language as a human characteristic and ability, focusing on the nature of language as a biological, physical, psychosocial, social and cultural phenomenon. The domains of similarity among languages and the dimensions and degrees of their differences are the concern of Linguistic Typology, an area of research which has recently been energized by large collaborative projects, new research outlets and vast collections of digital and therefore searchable data. Language typologists have also had a central role in responding to the urgent need to document and revitalize the large proportion of the world's 6000 languages that are endangered and facing extinction.

This program has the approval of the appropriate councils and the University Senate and has completed the forty-five day review by the Council on Postsecondary Education. The Interim Provost of the University supports this recommendation.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____