Executive Summary: Department of Linguistics

Mission

*Why study Linguistics? Because language is a window into the mind.* Our mission is to provide students with an understanding of the human capacity to acquire, perceive, and produce language and of language’s role in contemporary society. We accomplish this through the systematic pairing of theoretical and experimental investigations of linguistic knowledge.

Faculty

The past decade marked a major turning point in the focus of the department. Primarily because of retirements, faculty were hired in phonetics, psycholinguistics, phonology, second language acquisition, syntax/morphology, neurolinguistics, and acquisition/semantics. We are fortunate to have a young, productive, and highly visible faculty. The department has 7 tenured and 2 tenure-track faculty members. Indicators of our research productivity include the increase in research/teaching laboratories (from 1 in 1999 to 5 in 2009) and federal funding (over $1.7 million since 2005), as well as a dramatic jump in the NRC rankings of doctoral programs (from 35th out of 41 in 1995 to approximately 25th out of 52 in 2010).

In terms of teaching, all faculty teach courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and several of these courses also serve as service courses to allied departments (e.g., Anthropology, Speech Language and Hearing, Psychology, foreign language departments, Philosophy, School of Education). We have witnessed a tremendous increase in enrollments in both our introductory and higher-level courses, resulting in an increase in faculty workload from 599 undergraduate credit hours in 2005 to 1,360 in 2010.

Bachelor’s degrees (B.A., B.G.S.)

When freshmen arrive at KU, they are rarely aware of Linguistics as a possible major since this is not a discipline that they encounter in high school. Our two introductory courses fulfill general education requirements and most of our majors discover Linguistics by taking one of these courses. Our goal is to provide undergraduates with knowledge in the discipline, to instill the ability to gather information and data to support a linguistically informed decision, and to foster respect for cultural diversity. This approach is highly successful, as evidenced by the significant increase in the number of majors in recent years from 49 in 2005 to 109 in 2010. Those majors that decide to continue in Linguistics have successfully competed for top graduate programs. Others continue to pursue a professional degree in Law and several majors take positions to teach English as a Second Language around the globe.

Master’s degree (M.A.)

Most of our M.A. students do not come in with an undergraduate degree in Linguistics. They typically have a B.A. in a foreign language. The M.A. degree requires 33 credit hours, consisting of 6 core courses, a course in Research Methods, and four elective courses. In addition, students write either a Master’s thesis or take a comprehensive written exam. The latter exam option does not allow students to continue toward the Ph.D. degree. Time to degree: 2-2.5 years. Recipients of the M.A. degree with thesis option typically continue toward the Ph.D. degree, either at KU or elsewhere. Those who took the exam option often find employment as language teachers.
Doctoral degree (Ph.D.)

Virtually all of our graduate students complete the M.A. degree before being admitted to the Ph.D. program. The Ph.D. degree requires an additional 24 credit hours beyond the M.A.. In addition to this coursework, students need to write a major paper in the area of specialization; a minor paper in a second area; and a dissertation proposal. These three papers are defended during the oral comprehensive exam. Upon passing this exam, students devote their time to dissertation research, culminating in the oral defense of the written dissertation. Time to degree: 3 years, Doctoral recipients accept tenure-track positions in the U.S., return to faculty positions in their home countries, find employment in industry, or take postdoctoral positions (both in the U.S. and abroad).

Changes as a result of the review process

The Review Committee found that “the undergraduate program is thriving” and that “the faculty are actively engaged in high quality research and share a common commitment to achieving the department’s goals at all levels -- teaching, research, and service.” The Committee also stated that “the department is well-positioned to play a visible role in the next generation of linguistic research.” However, the Committee identified a few concerns that, if not addressed, could undo the progress that has been made.

These concerns include a burdensome workload for the faculty, a lack of depth in some areas of the graduate curriculum, and a lack of multi-year funding packages for graduate students. The first two of these concerns can only be addressed by the addition of new faculty. We are very pleased that the University authorized us to search for new faculty in Second Language Acquisition and Syntax, respectively and, following an international search, we will be adding three new Assistant Professors to the faculty this fall. This should greatly reduce the faculty workload and add depth to both the graduate and undergraduate curricula. In terms of graduate student funding, we have successfully grown enrollments in our undergraduate introductory courses to increase the number of GTAships. The increase in our federal funding also allows us to offer a few GRAships. However, these two types of assistantships are still not sufficient to compete with top Linguistics program that offer students 5 years of guaranteed funding.

Overall Evaluation

We are pleased that the Review Committee sees the department as a “well-functioning unit with the potential to improve its national and international reputation within the near future.” We believe that our undergraduate program does an excellent job of preparing students by honing their analytical and critical reasoning abilities and by fostering respect for cultural diversity. At the graduate level, students are taught to apply scientific methods to the study of language. At the Master’s level, students with little to no background in Linguistics often write theses that end up published in peer-reviewed journals. Our doctoral students have a thorough knowledge of both theoretical and empirical linguistics and are highly successful on the job market. Linguistics provides unique insights into the one capacity that is uniquely human, language. We make students think critically about a capacity most take for granted and we have been very successful in doing so.
Highlights: Department of Linguistics

*Why study Linguistics? Because language is a window into the mind. Linguistics provides an understanding of the human capacity to acquire, perceive, and produce language and of language’s role in contemporary society.*

The Linguistics department at the University of Kansas is the only Linguistics department in a five-state region, including Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas and offers B.A., B.G.S., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in Linguistics. Since our last performance review in 2004, the department has seen remarkable growth by any and all measures that are typically used in academic evaluations, including undergraduate enrollments, research productivity, national ranking, and federal funding. Our faculty include several award-winning teachers and mentors. Linguistics faculty frequently present their research at regional, national, and international conferences, thereby enhancing KU’s reputation. In the past 5 years, almost all (8 of 9) faculty have received federal funding for their research. In addition, many serve on editorial boards of the top journals in their field. Specific highlights include:

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM**

- The number of majors has grown in recent years from 49 in 2005 to 109 in 2010.
- The generation of undergraduate credit hours in Linguistics has more than doubled over the past 5 years (from 1338 to 2859) even though the number of faculty has remained steady.

**GRADUATE PROGRAM**

- The number of research/teaching laboratories has increased from 1 to 5 between 1999 and 2009, providing training for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Federal grant support for faculty research has more than quadrupled between 2006 and 2010, totaling over $1.7 million.
- In the latest survey of doctoral programs at U.S. universities by the National Research Council (NRC), KU Linguistics was ranked squarely in the middle of the 52 U.S. Linguistics doctoral programs, a very substantial improvement over the 1995 ranking in which Linguistics ranked 35th out of 41 ranked Linguistics programs.
University of Kansas
Linguistics Department
Self Study for 2010-11 Program Review

December 16, 2010
Why study Linguistics? Because language is a window into the mind. Linguistics provides an understanding of the human capacity to acquire, perceive, and produce language and of language’s role in contemporary society.

1. Introduction

The Linguistics department at the University of Kansas is the only Linguistics department in a five-state region, including Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas. Although some of the universities in the region have undergraduate concentrations in linguistics, ours is the only department within a 500-mile radius, and provides the only graduate program in the region as well. (Besides KU, the only Big 12 schools with Linguistics departments are the University of Colorado at Boulder and the University of Texas at Austin.) We offer B.A., B.G.S., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in Linguistics.

Linguistics currently has 9 professorial lines (with a 40-40-20% allocation for teaching, research, and service, respectively). While a regular course load consists of two courses per semester, two faculty currently hold administrative positions with a reduction in course load: Rosen (Associate Vice Provost/Dean of Graduate Studies) teaches one course per year; Jongman (Chair) teaches two courses per year. In sum, only 7.70 FTE of our 9 tenured and tenure-track faculty generate student credit hours (SCH). The department has no lecturers. As shown in Figure 1, the generation of undergraduate credit hours in Linguistics has more than doubled over the past 5 years (from 1338 to 2859) even though the number of faculty have remained steady.

![Student Credit Hours](image)

**Figure 1.** Undergraduate student credit hours over the past 5 years. Lower division courses are our two introductory courses at the 100 level; Higher division courses are junior and senior courses (300 and 400-level).
1.1 Historical overview

The first linguistics courses at KU were offered in 1957. In 1961, an undergraduate major was introduced, followed in 1965 by an M.A. degree. In 1968, Linguistics became a department and was authorized to offer a Ph.D. degree. Between 1968 and 2010, the department has awarded 275 B.A. degrees, 207 M.A. degrees, and 84 doctorates. Course offerings in the early days were primarily in descriptive and comparative linguistics. A unique strength was a focus on native American languages. This situation remained largely unchanged until the late 1980s, during which faculty in language acquisition and generative syntax were added.

1.2 The 21st century

The 2000s marked a major turning point in the focus of the department. Primarily because of retirements, faculty were hired in phonetics (Jongman), psycholinguistics (Sereno), phonology (Zhang), second language acquisition (Gabriele), syntax/morphology (Torrence), neurolinguistics (Fiorentino), and acquisition/semantics (Minai). We are fortunate to have a young, productive, and highly visible faculty, with significant federal research funding (NSF, NIH). The department has 5 tenured and 4 tenure-track faculty members. As shown in Table 1, only two faculty have been here for more than 11 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Ph.D. from</th>
<th>Starting year at KU</th>
<th>Current rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiorentino</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriele</td>
<td>CUNY</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jongman</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minai</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pye</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosen</td>
<td>Brandeis</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sereno</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrence</td>
<td>UCLA</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhang</td>
<td>UCLA</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Current Linguistics faculty.

One indicator of the change in orientation of the department is the increase in research/teaching laboratories from 1 in 1999 to 5 in 2009. The Phonetics and Psycholinguistics Laboratory, established in 1999, focuses on acoustic, aerodynamic, and perceptual measurements for the experimental study of speech and language, including its production, perception, and acquisition. The Second Language Acquisition Laboratory, established in 2005, explores the nature of acquisition and processing in adult second language learners, using interpretation, self-paced reading, and speeded grammaticality judgment tasks. Established in 2007, the Mayan Language Acquisition Laboratory archives video and audio recordings of children acquiring four Mayan languages: Ch’ol, Mam, K’iche’ and Q’anjob’al. The Neurolinguistics and Language Processing Laboratory, founded in 2006, investigates the cortical representation of language using...
ERPs (event-related potentials) as well as a range of psycholinguistic techniques including lexical decision, priming, and self-paced reading tasks. The most recent addition (2009), the Developmental Psycholinguistics Laboratory, investigates how preschool-age children acquire and use the knowledge of meaning in their first language, utilizing linguistic comprehension tasks and the visual-world eye tracking paradigm. These labs employ a vast array of methods for the collection and analysis of a wide range of linguistic data.

Since 2000, undergraduate interest in Linguistics has shown tremendous growth. We currently have over 90 undergraduate majors and this number continues to grow which has allowed us to increase the number of GTA lines to 6 (four of these are part of the department’s base budget, up from 1.25 FTE in 2000; the other two are reviewed on an annual basis). Even with the addition of GTAships over the past few years, Linguistics has been able to increase the proportion of faculty-taught Student Credit Hours from 51% in 2005 to 77% in 2010. Thus, the vast majority of our students are taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty. At the graduate level, we have 35 students, a number which has been very stable over the years.

2. Department Programs

2.1 Undergraduate curriculum

When freshmen arrive at KU, they are rarely aware of Linguistics as a possible major since this is not a discipline that they encounter in high school. Our two introductory courses, LING 106 Introductory Linguistics (as well as its Honors version LING 107) and LING 110 Language and Mind fulfill general education requirements (Social Sciences: Culture and Society and Social Sciences: Individual Behavior, respectively) and most of our majors discover Linguistics by taking one of these courses. The Linguistics department emphasizes the pairing of theoretical and experimental investigations of language and the two introductory courses reflect this approach. LING 106/107 Introductory Linguistics provides an introductory survey with a focus on theoretical linguistics (phonetics, phonology, syntax, morphology, semantics); LING 110 Language and Mind emphasizes experimental linguistics (first and second language acquisition, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and sociolinguistics). As of Fall 2010, both LING 106/107 and 110 are required for the major and students need a GPA of 2.5 across these two courses for admission to the major. These two courses serve as a highly successful introduction to the major, as evidenced by the significant increase in the number of majors in recent years from 49 in 2005 to 89 in 2009 (see Figure 2).
Students need an additional 24 credit hours for the major, consisting of Phonetics I, Phonology I, and Syntax I as well as one course in the area of “Acquisition and Processing”, one course in the area of “Structure and Description”, one course in the area of “Form and Meaning”, as well as two elective Linguistics courses (see Appendix A for a complete description of the major; see Appendix B for a listing of all undergraduate Linguistics courses). The major courses are meant to introduce students to a broad range of linguistic areas and to the principles and methods of the social and behavioral sciences. Our goal is to provide undergraduates with knowledge in the discipline, to instill the ability to gather information and data to support a linguistically informed decision, and to foster respect for cultural diversity.

The department has set four learning outcomes for the B.A. program. Specifically, upon completion of the B.A. program, the successful graduate will be able to

- a) recognize and transcribe major phonetic features of the world’s languages and to understand the theory of phonological systems
- b) knowledgeably appreciate the diversity and complexity of morphological and grammatical systems around the world
- c) apply linguistic methods to the analysis of sound, meaning, and sentence structure
- d) understand the major theoretical issues in and empirical approaches to the acquisition and processing of language.

The undergraduate curriculum also provides a number of capstone courses in which students have an opportunity to synthesize and apply the knowledge they have gained in a laboratory or fieldwork setting. Courses such as Field Methods and second-level courses in phonetics, phonology, syntax, second language acquisition, psycholinguistics, and research methods all serve as capstone courses in which advanced undergraduates write a substantial term paper, conduct a laboratory project, or
conduct and analyze field data. While participation in a capstone experience is currently optional, we would like to make this a required part of the curriculum in the future.

The increase in enrollments in the introductory courses is also seen in higher-level courses, resulting in an increase in faculty workload from 599 undergraduate credit hours in 2005 to 1005 in 2009 (see Figure 1). Figure 3 shows that the number of student credit hours per faculty member has nearly doubled over the past 5 years, from 191 in 2005 to 377 in 2009. Since graduate enrollment is stable from year to year, this increase primarily reflects an increase in our undergraduate enrollments.

![Faculty Workload](image)

*Figure 3. Number of student credit hours per full time faculty member equivalent over the past 5 years.*

Linguistics courses have had an unusual organization. With the exception of LING 106/107, LING 110, and LING 320, all other courses are open to both undergraduate and graduate students. This situation dates back to the very beginning of the department and was thought to provide the best allocation of resources. While this was a feasible approach when our classes were small and may in some cases have provided a positive challenge for superior undergraduates, joint undergraduate/graduate classes are no longer optimal for either the undergraduate or graduate students. For example, it is very difficult to pitch an introductory course in Phonetics or Syntax with approximately 60 undergraduate and 20 graduate students at an appropriate level.

Nevertheless, our undergraduate majors value their training in Linguistics (see Appendix C for a summary of senior survey data). Those majors that decide to continue in Linguistics have successfully competed for top graduate programs, including Illinois, Maryland, Texas, and British Columbia. Some of our majors continue to pursue a professional degree in Law and several majors take positions to teach English as a Second Language around the globe (recent destinations include Japan, Kazakhstan, and Korea).
In terms of advising, all majors initially meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Prof. Joan Sereno. Until recently, the Director of Undergraduate Studies took care of all majors and minors. However, due to the recent rapid increase in majors, we have changed the advising system. Prof. Sereno still meets with all new majors (and minors) and she also meets will all majors (and minors) again in the year that they are graduating. This ensures that they receive solid advice from a highly experienced advisor when they enter the major. In addition, Prof. Sereno makes sure that the majors have fulfilled all major and university requirements before they graduate. This is a very important and time-consuming process. For the intervening years, we divide our majors and minors over all departmental faculty such that each faculty member currently advises approximately 10-15 students. Faculty meet with their advisees at least twice a year, when they need to enroll for courses in the fall and spring.

2.2 Graduate curriculum

2.2.1 M.A. degree

Most of our M.A. students do not come in with an undergraduate degree in Linguistics. They typically have a B.A. in a foreign language. The M.A. degree requires 33 credit hours, consisting of Proseminar, Phonetics I, Phonology I, Syntax I, a course in Language Acquisition, a course in Psycho- or Neurolinguistics, a course in Research Methods, and four elective courses. The M.A. degree also includes a language requirement. In addition, students write either a Master’s thesis or take a comprehensive written exam. The latter exam option does not allow students to continue toward the Ph.D. degree. Time to degree: 2-2.5 years (see Appendix D for a complete description of the M.A. program; see Appendix E for a listing of all graduate Linguistics courses).

Recipients of the M.A. degree with thesis option typically continue toward the Ph.D. degree, either at KU or elsewhere. Recent M.A. recipients are currently studying at Connecticut, Stanford, and UCLA.

2.2.2 Ph.D. degree

Virtually all of our graduate students complete the M.A. degree before being admitted to the Ph.D. program. The Ph.D. degree requires an additional 24 credit hours (beyond the M.A.), consisting of a course in Research Methods, three second-level courses, and four elective courses. The Ph.D. degree also includes a research skills requirement (a course in statistics or Computational Linguistics). In addition to this coursework, students need to write the following three papers: a major paper in the area of specialization (the linguistics MA thesis may be expanded as the major paper; this paper should be of publishable quality); a minor paper in a second area; and a dissertation proposal. These three papers are defended during the oral comprehensive exam. Students become “ABD” upon passing this exam and devote their time to dissertation research, culminating in the oral defense of the written dissertation. Time to degree: 3 years (see Appendix F for a complete description of the Ph.D. program).

Doctoral recipients accept tenure-track positions in the U.S., return to faculty positions in their home countries (over 80% of our doctoral students are foreign), find employment in industry, or take postdoctoral positions (both in the U.S. and abroad) (see Appendix G for a listing of current positions held by recent Ph.D. recipients).

3. Department Strengths
3.1 Pairing of theoretical and experimental research

The unique strength of the Linguistics department is the systematic pairing of theoretical and experimental investigations of linguistic knowledge. As such, both our teaching and research focus on language as a cognitive system. We study the underlying rule system inherent in complex phonological, morphological, and grammatical structures of language. We also explore what it means to know a language both as an innate system in the human mind and the maturation of that system within the mind of the individual speaker, exploring similarities and differences in how children and adults acquire linguistic knowledge. The formal study of phonology, morphology, and syntax, for example, provides insight into the structure of language. Phonetic, psycholinguistic, and neurolinguistic research in turn explores how underlying structures influence the actual production and comprehension of language. Our experimental orientation distinguishes us from other linguistics departments that often have a sole emphasis on theoretical linguistics. Moreover, our curriculum emphasizes linguistic diversity as a reflection of human diversity: We teach a variety of “The Structure of ____” courses (recent examples include Arabic, Chinese, Kaqchikel, Kiche, and Quechua). We also offer a Field Methods course, always centered around a native speaker of a language unfamiliar to the students (recent examples include Kaqchikel, Marathi, Quechua, Vietnamese). And our faculty research interests span a wide range of genetically distinct languages, including Arabic, Asante Twi, Blackfoot, Dutch, English, Japanese, Kiche, Korean, Kaqchikel, Krachi, Mandarin, Mixtec, Russian, Serer, Spanish, Tuvan, and Wolof).

Faculty research falls primarily in the following four broadly-defined areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Area</th>
<th>Primary Faculty</th>
<th>Secondary Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonetics and Phonology</td>
<td>Jongman, Zhang</td>
<td>Sereno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntax and Morphology</td>
<td>Rosen, Torrence</td>
<td>Fiorentino, Minai, Pye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Acquisition</td>
<td>Gabriele, Minai, Pye</td>
<td>Fiorentino, Jongman, Sereno, Torrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho- and Neurolinguistics</td>
<td>Fiorentino, Sereno</td>
<td>Gabriele, Jongman, Minai, Zhang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II. Faculty research interests.

3.2 Multidisciplinarity

For the Linguistics department, the study of language is inherently multidisciplinary. Language does not only have an inherent structure in terms of sound, form, and meaning; it is also instantiated in the brains and minds of individual speakers and shaped by the cultural context in which it is used. Linguistics faculty collaborate not only within the department but also have strong collaborative ties with faculty in a range of departments, bridging the humanities, social sciences, and life sciences. Collaborations include the departments of Anthropology, East Asian Language and Culture (EALC), Indigenous Nations, Psychology, Speech-Language-Hearing, as well as the School of Education and the KU Medical Center. As evidence of these connections, Linguistics faculty have courtesy appointments in several KU departments and programs, including African
Studies Center, Child Language Doctoral Program, EALC, Latin American Studies, Neuroscience, and Psychology. These interdisciplinary ties add substantially to the already high graduate advising load. Currently, Linguistics faculty serve on 18 graduate committees in the School of Education, 7 in Psychology, 4 in Speech-Language-Hearing, 2 in the Child Language Doctoral Program, and 1 in EALC.

3.3 Research productivity

Over the past 10 years, the Linguistics department has developed a strong sense of research engagement. All faculty are actively engaged in research, obtaining external funding to support that research and publishing the results of their research in the leading peer-reviewed journals. Our Linguistics faculty collaborate with colleagues within the Linguistics department, with faculty in other departments at KU, and with colleagues at other institutions, both domestic and foreign. In addition, all faculty work with graduate students on research projects, and most work with undergraduates on research projects as well.

3.3.1 External research funding

Our faculty are exceptionally successful in securing external federal funding for their research. This is a recognition of the quality of their research and a major accomplishment, especially considering the current economic climate as well as the fact that funding for linguistic research is relatively limited even in good economic times. Table III lists the recent federal and international funding that the department has secured since 2005, totaling over $1.7 million. The emphasis on external funding has also led to recent successful grant applications by graduate students, including one NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, two NSF Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grants, one NSF East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes fellowship, and one William Orr Dingwall fellowship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P.I.</th>
<th>Granting Agency</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gabriele &amp; Fiorentino</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>2010-2013</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sereno</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>2009-2012</td>
<td>$284,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jongman</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>$10,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pye</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>$11,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhang</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiorentino</td>
<td>NIH</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>$428,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pye</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>2006-2009</td>
<td>$238,023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhang</td>
<td>Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation</td>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jongman</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>2005-2008</td>
<td>$230,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III. Current and recent federal and international grant support (totaling $1.78M).
Figure 4 displays the breakdown of federal grant support per year, showing a sizeable increase, with a fourfold increase between 2006 and 2010.

![External Funding](image)

**Figure 4. Annual federal grant support over the past 5 years.**

### 3.3.2 Dissemination: Publications and presentations

Linguistics faculty regularly publish their research in the top journals of their fields, including *Brain and Language, International Journal of American Linguistics, Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, Journal of East Asian Linguistics, Journal of Phonetics, Language Acquisition, Language and Cognitive Processes, Lingua, Linguistic Inquiry, Linguistics, Natural Language and Linguistic Theory, Phonology,* and *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. Faculty also make frequent presentations, both peer-reviewed and invited, at national and international conferences (see individual faculty CVs for details about publications and conference presentations). As shown in Table IV, our Linguistics faculty on average publish 1-2 peer-reviewed articles per year and give 3 professional presentations per year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Mean per faculty per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>publications</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentations</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table IV. Number of peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations produced by the current tenured/tenure-track faculty over the past 5 years.*
3.4 Teaching and advising

The quality of teaching in Linguistics as measured by both student and peer teaching evaluations is high. Students rate the quality of instruction in each course on a five-point scale (5 being the highest) for a number of categories. Over the past 5 years, for all faculty-taught Linguistics courses, the mean rating for course is 4.53 out of 5 and the mean rating for instructor is 4.57 out of 5. The high quality of instruction has been formally recognized, most notably in terms of a Kemper fellowship for Prof. Sereno (Kemper fellowships recognize outstanding teachers and advisers at KU as determined by a seven-member selection committee) and a Silver Anniversary Award for excellence in teaching for Prof. Zhang. Undergraduate students are also generally very pleased with the instruction provided by GTAs in the introductory courses, giving a mean rating of 4.65 for course and of 4.4 for instructor. Two of our GTAs, Kelly Berkson and Yuwen Lai, recently received an Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award (winners are selected by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies based on their dedication to teaching, departmental and student comments, and level of responsibility).

We review both the undergraduate and graduate curricula on a continuous basis and make changes based on developments in the field of linguistics, faculty expertise, and, when feasible, student demand. For example, we recently changed the cap on enrollment for LING 110 Language and Mind. Enrollments quickly grew from 50 to 200 per semester, which allowed us to add sections staffed by two new GTA positions. Following this success, we added a faculty-taught section of LING 106 Introductory Linguistics with an enrollment of 100 per semester, which allowed us to add sections staffed by another new GTA position. The fact that undergraduates can now take LING 106 in small classes taught by graduate students or in a big class taught by faculty requires that the different classes are coordinated. Profs. Gabriele and Torrence each teach the faculty-taught version of LING 106 on a regular basis; they have been instrumental in their supervisory roles as GTA coordinators, conducting weekly meetings with the GTAs, regular evaluation of the GTAs, and coordinating assignments and exams. This is beneficial both to the undergraduate students in the class and for the mentoring of our graduate teachers.

In terms of advising and mentoring, our advising at the undergraduate level is exemplary, primarily because of the tireless efforts of our Director of Undergraduate Studies, Prof. Sereno. As described in section 2.1, we have only recently begun to divide advising among all faculty and preliminary indications are that our majors and minors continue to appreciate the careful and personal attention they receive from faculty and our Office Manager, Ms. Corinna Johnson. The College recently reviewed statistics on departmental advising and found that Linguistics ranks among the top in the College in terms of communicating degree requirements and performance expectations to our majors. For 2009-10, Linguistics' "Do Not Issue" index, a measure of the percentage of students that are denied certification of their degree in the term in which they have applied, was one of the lowest at 12% (departmental percentages range from 29% to 8%).

Faculty regularly serve as mentors to undergraduates through programs such as the Dean’s Scholars, McNair Scholars, Honors Research Development Program, and on research projects sponsored by KU Undergraduate Research Awards.

At the graduate level, the Director of Graduate Studies, Prof. Zhang, is by default the advisor of all first-year graduate students. Once students have identified their research area, typically at the end of the first year, they select an advisor in that area. Faculty advisors meet regularly with their
advisees and we have recently added a stipulation that students also meet with their full committee once per semester. This is part of our faculty mentoring efforts, since none of our junior faculty had experience supervising graduate students prior to coming to KU. On average, each faculty member advises four graduate students, a heavy load, particularly for the junior faculty.

Faculty work very closely with their students, and spend much effort on their professional development, for example by co-authoring conference presentations with students and introducing students to the research community at national conferences (see Appendix H for a complete listing of recent articles and conference presentations by our graduate students). Prof. Gabriele recently received the Byron A. Alexander Graduate Mentor Award for her outstanding service as a graduate advisor.

3.5 Service

3.5.1 Service to other units on campus

At the undergraduate level, Linguistics offers three principal courses in humanities and in social sciences, as well as three non-Western Culture courses. All of the principal courses are popular, and fill very quickly during enrollment periods. The Linguistics Department has also always served other departments well. Many undergraduates from the foreign language departments, as well as Speech Language and Hearing, Anthropology, Psychology, and Philosophy take linguistics courses to enhance the education in their majors. At the graduate level, the TESL program in the School of Education’s Curriculum and Teaching department requires a concentration in linguistics, as does the Child Language Program. We regularly offer courses to their students. In addition, Linguistics offers cross-listed courses with Anthropology, EALC, Psychology, Latin American Studies, African and African-American Studies.

3.5.2 Service to the College and University

Linguistics has a strong tradition of service at the College and University levels. Faculty participation is very high, from junior to mid-career to seasoned faculty. Faculty serve or have served on the Committee on Undergraduate Studies and Advising, Committee on Graduate Studies, College Academic Council, Human Subjects Committee, University Honors Council, Academic Misconduct Committee, College Committee for Promotion and Tenure, Committee for Evaluation of Chairs and Directors, College and University Sabbatical Leaves committees, and Faculty and University Senate, to name but a few. Most of these committees meet frequently and are time-consuming. We carry a very heavy service load for a small faculty.

3.5.3 Service to the profession

Faculty are active reviewers for a number of professional journals and federal granting agencies (NSF, NIH, Canadian Research Council), and serve on grant review panels. In addition, the department counts three Associate Editors of top international journals: Jongman (Journal of the Acoustical Society of America), Pye (Journal of Child Language), and Sereno (Language and Speech).
4. NRC Rankings

The National Research Council (NRC) periodically conducts a survey and provides data about doctoral programs at U.S. universities. These data ("rankings") are another way to assess strengths and weaknesses of departments. Previously, the NRC had compiled rankings in 1995. In the 1995 report, KU Linguistics ranked 35th out of 41 ranked Linguistics programs.

The 2010 rankings were published in September, 2010. In the 2010 report, the NRC no longer provides absolute rankings, which makes it impossible to directly compare our current position to that in 1995. Instead, the NRC uses statistical sampling methods to present ranges of rankings (90% confidence intervals) over several variables. The 2010 rankings reflect information gathered in 2006 from 52 Linguistics programs. Two rankings are provided: the 'S-ranking', which is a composite measure of program features that raters judge to be important in Linguistics; and the 'R-ranking', which was designed to correlate with reputation ratings, and with student support and outcomes.

As shown in Table VI, The department's 5th percentile of the S-ranking was 13 and the 95th percentile was 29. Thus, the department may be ranked as high as 13th but no lower than 29th as compared to other Linguistics departments nationwide. The lower R-ranking likely reflects the normal lag between achievement and recognition/reputation.

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<td>Survey-based ‘S’ rankings</td>
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<td>Regression-based ‘R’ rankings</td>
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Table VI. S and R rankings for KU Linguistics. Data taken from the 2010 NRC rankings.

A conservative interpretation of these results places KU Linguistics squarely in the middle of the 52 U.S. Linguistics doctoral programs, a very substantial improvement over the 1995 ranking. The department also scored high in faculty and student diversity. Areas where the department did not do as well include ‘percent first-year students with full support’, ‘citations per publications’, and ‘awards per allocated faculty’.

While these data leave no doubt that the department has made significant strides since the 1995 survey, it is unfortunate that the 2010 report is based on data from 2006. This is particularly true for our department since (as shown in Table I), four of the 9 current faculty members had only just arrived at KU or were not here yet. These new faculty replaced faculty that had been on phased retirement and no longer contributed significantly to the department in terms of either publications or grants. The new faculty has substantially increased our number of publications and federal grants (see Tables III and IV). It is therefore likely that inclusion of more recent data will boost our ranking even more. (See Appendix I for a more detailed summary of our NRC data, provided by KU’s office of Institutional Research and Planning).
5. Current Challenges to the Department

5.1 The undergraduate program

The department has been fortunate in recent years to attract an increasing number of talented undergraduates to the major. With the exception of our introductory courses, however, all undergraduate courses are cross-listed with graduate courses and are not geared specifically to the undergraduate population.

We would like to offer hands-on courses to more of our undergraduates. Specifically, we would like to offer research experiences to many more of our majors. Currently, majors gain research experience by working in faculty members’ labs, taking second-level courses, or writing an Honors thesis. There is no doubt that an undergraduate research experience is rewarding: those Linguistics majors that participate in research typically end up writing an honors thesis, they secure funding for their research through an Undergraduate Research Award (UGRA, administered by the KU Honors Program), present their research at conferences, and sometimes co-author a paper with their faculty advisor. Recent examples include majors who presented their research at the Mid America Linguistics Conference, the CUNY Conference on Sentence Processing, and annual meetings of the Acoustical Society of America and the Psychonomic Society (see Appendix J for a complete listing of recent articles and conference presentations by our undergraduate students).

However, the heavy graduate advising load makes it difficult to offer such experiences to a large segment of our undergraduate majors.

A potentially more efficient way to engage more undergraduates is to include a research component in our regular core classes, something that our faculty is very interested in. This would require additional GTA positions. Four new positions (one each for Phonetics and Phonology, Syntax and Field Methods, Psycho- and Neurolinguistics, and First and Second Language Acquisition) would allow broad undergraduate participation in a significant research experience.

Linguistics participates in the Research Experience Program (administered through KU Research and Graduate Studies) through which undergraduates can receive official recognition of their research experience on their transcript. We need to raise the awareness of this program and promote its importance. Inclusion of a research component in our core classes would be the first stage of encouraging students to exploit research opportunities.

We are also not able to offer as wide a range of courses as is usually offered in an undergraduate linguistics program; courses such as sociolinguistics, languages of the world, language and gender, and dialects of the US, which are generally able to attract many undergraduates at other institutions, are not offered here. With our current staffing, it is sometimes difficult to ensure that the required courses are offered sufficiently regularly for students to graduate in time. Additional faculty would allow us to offer a full range of courses and to maximize the number of undergraduates who participate in a research experience.
5.2 The graduate program

5.2.1 Graduate student support

Linguistics graduate student enrollment is high for the number of faculty. We offer our graduate students in Linguistics only limited funding.

While our graduate enrollment remains high, we currently lack a competitive recruitment plan to attract graduate students. The most significant culprit here is the fact that we cannot advertise guaranteed funding for our students. The lack of funding is also the reason that we are sometimes not able to keep outstanding M.A. students who go on to pursue their Ph.D. elsewhere. For example, we have recently lost recipients of our M.A. degree to the University of Connecticut, Michigan, Stanford, and UCLA simply because those programs could offer them guaranteed funding.

We do not offer financial support for most of our graduate students. Currently, none of our graduate students is supported by university- or college-level fellowships. We also have few GTA positions to offer (only four GTAships are guaranteed). We have two types of GTAs, those that teach two full courses independently (with 50+ students in total), and those that teach discussion sections for the accompanying big lecture course (four sections with 25 students each). The discussion section format is a recent addition to our program.

To secure more funding for our graduate students, we have successfully developed large undergraduate courses to support GTAs. Current annual enrollment in LING 106 and LING 110 is about 900 students, and this has allowed for an increase in the number of GTAships. We currently support 6 GTAs, four of those are in the base budget. Enrollments in upper-level undergraduate courses such as Phonetics, Phonology, and Syntax have also increased to the point where these courses can no longer be offered without a GTA if the high quality of instruction is to be maintained. It is important to note that if it takes students 5 years to complete the Ph.D. degree and we have four guaranteed GTAships, we can’t even offer guaranteed support for one new student per year.

A substantial number of our graduate students support themselves through other means. A few of our international students are supported by fellowships from their home countries. Students from Jordan and Saudi Arabia are typically supported by their government, although not always for the full 5 years. In addition, a few of our graduate students secure funding in Language departments after their first year. Some of these students find GTAships as language instructors in other departments, teaching languages such as Arabic, English, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, and Uyghur. Native speakers with training in Linguistics make ideal language teachers. Since the Language departments give priority to their own students when selecting GTAs, these positions are never guaranteed for our Linguistics students and often don’t open up until August, which means we cannot plan our GTAships in advance and we cannot use these positions as recruitment tools. However, teaching assistantships are not without disadvantages since they tend to slow students down in their progress to degree. Our GTAs carry an extremely heavy load and are overworked and underpaid.

Graduate applicants increasingly recognize that Linguistics offers an excellent program. However, our competitors offer them five years of guaranteed funding. KU does not even come close to
competing with that. Table V shows that the number of applications is steadily increasing and that, on average, 40-55% of the students accepted in our graduate program actually enroll at KU. Informal inquiries suggest that our lack of guaranteed funding plays a major role in students’ decision to enroll elsewhere. Table V also shows that admission to our graduate program is becoming increasingly competitive. For example, the % of students admitted to the Ph.D program dropped from a mean of 92% over the years 2005 and 2006 to a mean of 62% over the years 2008 and 2009. The fact that our admission is becoming more selective means that the quality of our incoming students is improving. Since these graduate students are better prepared than in the past, combined undergraduate/graduate courses should be avoided whenever possible.

| Year | M.A. Program | | | | Ph.D. Program | | | |
|------|------------|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|
|      | Applied    | Accepted | Enrolled | Applied | Accepted | Enrolled | |
| 2005 | 9          | 8       | 6       | 3        | 3        | 2        |
| 2006 | 6          | 3       | 2       | 10       | 9        | 4        |
| 2007 | 9          | 4       | 2       | 11       | 7        | 3        |
| 2008 | 12         | 8       | 2       | 22       | 14       | 8        |
| 2009 | 16         | 6       | 4       | 25       | 15       | 3        |
| Yield | 100%       | 56%      | 55%     | 100%     | 68%      | 42%      |

Table V. Number of graduate students who applied, were accepted, and enrolled in the M.A. and Ph.D. programs over the past 5 years. Yield indicates the percentage of students accepted and enrolled.

5.2.2 Graduate student recruitment

Over the past few years, we have made a concerted effort to increase our national visibility by keeping the department website updated, mailing posters to advertise the department to undergraduate linguistics programs, regularly publishing the *Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics* and organizing conferences, such as the *Mid-America Linguistics Conference* (2007) and *Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition North America* (2012). Last spring, for the first time, we were also able to bring four (domestic) graduate applicants to KU for a campus visit. Funding for this one-time recruitment came from application fees that had been accumulating over several years. The campus visit was seen as very useful, both by the applicants and the department. Annual funding for such visits would be very helpful in our recruitment process. We recognize, however, that these issues are dwarfed by the larger issue of funding. Even with high visibility and recruitment efforts, we still need sufficient and stable funding to support the students once they are at KU.

5.2.3 Travel support

Currently, our graduate students do not have an extensive exposure to the linguistic community nationally or internationally. This negatively impacts the visibility of the department and the training of our graduate students. The department is not able to provide financial support for travel expenses. The Graduate School does provide funds for conference travel but this support is very
limited (the maximum amount of $400 only partially covers the costs of a trip and students can apply for those funds only once in their degree program).

5.2.4 Combined Undergraduate/Graduate Courses

Many of our graduate courses are combined with undergraduate courses which limits the opportunity for graduate students to be exposed to the most cutting-edge theoretical advances in the field. Many of our graduate courses (e.g., phonetics, psycholinguistics, second language acquisition, neurolinguistics, computational linguistics) would benefit from a separate lab or practicum component, and we currently do not offer these opportunities.

5.2.5 Advising

We recently noticed that it took some graduate students too long to complete the M.A. portion of the program. Several third- and even fourth-year students were still working on their M.A. thesis. During that time, they were also taking more advanced graduate courses that fulfill requirements for the Ph.D. degree. Moreover, the most recent graduate student satisfaction survey (2009) suggested that our students’ satisfaction decreased as compared to 2005 (see Appendix K for those survey data). Student comments from that survey as well as comments made at several meetings that the Department Chair held with all graduate students indicate that the time to M.A. degree was largely responsible for this drop in satisfaction. We need to do a better job of ensuring that our students finish their M.A. thesis on time (2-2.5 years) and that they don’t take advanced courses for the Ph.D. degree until they have completed the M.A. degree.

Faculty discussion last year led to a number of changes which were all designed toward a clearer set of goals and guidelines for the M.A. degree. All students now meet with their full committees at least once per semester. These meetings provide mentoring not only between faculty and graduate students but also between senior and junior faculty. We have also included a new section in our graduate study guide entitled M.A. timeline. It emphasizes that students need to select a subject area and advisor within the first year of study and it lays out the relevant milestones so that both students and faculty can gauge their progress. We also introduced a numeric score for the M.A. thesis to reinforce the notion that completion of an M.A. thesis in our department does not automatically mean qualification for the Ph.D. program. In the past, there has been confusion about this. The introduction of this scoring system and its inclusion in the graduate student guide should remedy this. We therefore hope that the recent program changes will restore the morale among graduate students to its previous high level.

5.2.1 Graduate student space

Our graduate students are not provided with adequate work space. There is one room with only four computers for a graduate student body of 35. This means that we do not provide the type of environment where students come to the department frequently to do their work. Except for the laboratories, we also do not provide space for students to discuss their work, share ideas, and collaborate on projects. The four GTAs for LING 106 share a single office in which they need to prepare classes and hold office hours; when one GTA is meeting with a student, it is very difficult for the other three to get any work done.
5.3 Staffing

5.3.1 Faculty

In our departmental discussions, it became clear that it is critical to develop ways to provide faculty with more time to dedicate to their research. As a department with a relatively small number of faculty but with large numbers of majors and graduate students, Linguistics faces special challenges. For example, all faculty are over-burdened with advising and committee work, at both the department and college levels. There simply are not enough people in the department to share these responsibilities.

Because of the small number of faculty, we already have trouble offering a sufficient number of introductory and advanced courses. Our traditional hands-on research projects which provide research engagement experiences in the classroom for both undergraduate and graduate students are difficult, if not impossible, to maintain with enrollments of 75 students per class. Initiatives such as course release are problematic for Linguistics in that they would further reduce our course offerings. We critically need additional faculty to maintain the momentum we have created.

5.3.2 Administrative staff

We currently have only a single staff member. This staff member is responsible for all departmental duties, including finances (state, grant, scholarships, and endowment funding), departmental budget administration and management, purchasing, travel, course scheduling, payroll, hiring, undergraduate and graduate student records, newsletter, and day-to-day operations. While our faculty have a track record of attracting both internal and external funding, KU currently does not have an effective infrastructure to support and administer the grants. In fact, a number of duties related to grant administration have recently been transferred from KUCR (KU Center for Research, the university’s office of sponsored programs) to the department. While this may work in departments with multiple staff members, it is not feasible in Linguistics. Faculty time is lost dealing with the paperwork and administrative duties that come along with the grants. Our single staff member has to take care of the budget of all grants as well as grant-supported hiring, purchasing, and travel in addition to all her other duties to keep the department running.

6. Planning for the Future

Within the next 10 years, we would like to stand out as a top linguistics program, showcasing our innovative, productive research across linguistic theory, acquisition, psycholinguistics, and cognitive neuroscience of language, while strengthening our fundamental commitment to providing a thorough, complete education in linguistics. The next few years will be critical to the future of the department.

One of our major goals is to increase the quality of our graduate students. However, this is practically impossible if we cannot offer them adequate funding. We face stiff competition from schools around the country. We have a graduate recruitment plan in place and we want to be able to guarantee five years of funding to all students entering our Ph.D. program and two years of funding to students entering our Master’s program. This will help make KU Linguistics a place where motivated, capable students want to come for their graduate education and the best students are mentoring our undergraduates.
To enhance both the undergraduate and graduate programs, KU Linguistics will need to add at least three tenure-track faculty positions in the immediate future. We propose three hires that build on our current strengths: in Bilingualism, in Phonetics/Phonology, and in Syntax/Semantics:

**Bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition (SLA).** This is clearly the fastest-growing area. The vast majority of the world’s population is bi- (or multi-) lingual or has proficiency in a second language. Ten of our current graduate students are engaged in research on second language acquisition. In terms of teaching, our courses in this area do not only serve students in the College, they are also taken by all students in the School of Education’s Teaching English as a Second Language program. Interest in SLA has increased to the point where a second faculty member (in addition to Prof. Gabriele) is needed to satisfy student demand for courses and research supervision. Prof. Gabriele is currently supervising 5 MA and 2 PhD students which is a very heavy load, especially for a junior faculty member. In terms of the College’s strategic plan, this hire supports internationalization and globalization through the study of language acquisition and language policy.

**Phonetics/Phonology.** The department is well known for its work in phonetics, phonology, and the interaction between these two areas. Currently, graduate students concentrating in Phonetics take two courses in Phonetics and then start work on their M.A. thesis. This is insufficient preparation for significant laboratory research requiring understanding of sophisticated digital analysis and signal processing methods. Once every few years, an advanced seminar in Phonetics is offered as well. This was already true when Jongman taught four courses per year (or more). His current course reduction has only exacerbated the problem. A position in Phonetics/Phonology would ensure that a sufficient number of crucial courses are offered on a regular basis, including Phonetics at all levels. In terms of the College’s strategic plan, this hire supports the emphasis on quantitative methods as well as multidisciplinary research.

**Syntax/Semantics.** Syntax is one of the core areas of any Linguistics department. With the appointment of Prof. Rosen as Associate Vice Provost/Dean of Graduate Studies, course offerings in this area have been severely reduced. Prof. Rosen teaches one course a year, typically Syntax II. Prof. Torrence teaches Syntax I, enrollments for which have steadily increased over the past few years and are currently close to 75. Prof. Torrence also teaches a number of other key courses in our curriculum, including Introductory Linguistics, Morphology, and Field Methods. Students seeking a foundation in Syntax must be able to take more than two classes in the subject. Appointment of a syntactician with a significant language specialization (e.g., Native American and/or endangered language) will ensure that a sufficient number of Syntax courses and appropriate graduate advising can be offered without hurting instruction in other areas.

As we expect a continued increase in the number of undergraduate majors, these new faculty will support the undergraduate program by increasing the range and number of classes we offer. The additional hires will allow us to strengthen the undergraduate program by offering courses in areas such as bilingualism, sociolinguistics, and dialectal variation. In addition, these new faculty will allow the current faculty to offer courses that cannot be accommodated given the present teaching load, including Acquisition of Spoken Language, American Slang, Comparative and Historical Linguistics, Native Mesoamerican Writing, and Writing Systems. This will positively affect the quality of undergraduate Linguistics education and it will increase the number of undergraduate majors who will participate in our department’s intellectual and research activities, and, ideally, go on to productive linguistics careers at the graduate level and beyond.
These hires will also make the graduate program much more attractive because we will have sufficient faculty able to work with students in these important areas of Linguistics. At the graduate level, an increase in the number of faculty will result in more regular offerings of seminars as well as third-level courses in our core areas. Further, increasing the number of faculty will allow us to begin to reduce the number of combined undergraduate/graduate classes.

These positions will also enable us to seriously implement research engagement by offering lab and field method experiences for both our undergraduate and graduate students. Our current core courses (Phonetics, Phonology, Syntax, L1 acquisition, L2 acquisition, Field Methods, Psycholinguistics, and Neurolinguistics) can then be restructured to include a hands-on intensive research component.

In order to reach our goal, we must also address the problem of providing the personnel and physical infrastructure needed to support our educational and research strengths. As we add more faculty, we must provide adequate lab space for the new faculty research/teaching laboratories. We will also need additional office staff to manage research grants as well as departmental matters. In addition, except for the few students that have GTAships, graduate students do not have any dedicated work space. In the next five years we expect our graduate students to be contributing more to the department’s research, and thus working more in labs, with professors, and with one another, and thus we will build into our plan the needed space and infrastructure for them to do so. While we currently have adequate lab space, our research labs are divided across two buildings. The Phonetics and Psycholinguistics Laboratory is housed in Blake Hall while the other four labs (Second Language Acquisition Lab, Mayan Language Acquisition Lab, Neurolinguistics and Language Processing Lab, and Developmental Psycholinguistics Lab) are housed in Dole, a 10-minute walk downhill from Blake. The physical separation between most of the labs and the department is a major disadvantage because it deprives our students from crucial interactions with faculty and peers.

Over the next five years, we also wish to showcase the research and educational achievements and opportunities at KU, and also increase the participation of our students and faculty in the broader community. Thus, we will focus attention on developing ways to achieve a higher visibility and higher participation in the linguistic and broader cognitive science communities. This will include a variety of programs, such as improving the publication record of our KU working papers, improving our influence on the major linguistic conference in the region, and finding ways to make sure our students have funding to maximally participate in other regional, national and international conferences.

7. Concluding Remarks

The unique strength of the Linguistics Department is the systematic pairing of experimental and theoretical investigations of language. Our experimental orientation and significant opportunities for students to participate in empirical investigations of language distinguishes us from other Linguistics departments that often have a sole emphasis on theoretical linguistics. By any and all measures that are typically used as academic performance indicators (e.g., enrollments, advising, research productivity, external funding), Linguistics has made tremendous gains and has positioned itself well by focusing on its strengths. This was recently recognized by the NRC rankings in which the department rose from the 85th percentile in 1991 to approximately the 40th percentile in 2010.
Linguistics also plays a vital role in the university-wide language research community (e.g., via cross-listed courses, service on graduate student committees, and research collaborations), with strong links to and service for a wide range of departments and programs, including African and African-American Studies, Anthropology, Child Language Doctoral Program Indigenous Nations, Latin American Studies, Psychology, Speech-Language-Hearing, as well as the KU Medical Center and the School of Education.

We are fortunate to have a young, productive, and highly visible faculty. However, the number of faculty is simply too small to sustain a vibrant department. We ask for 3 new positions in the short term which serve to emphasize our current strengths. With these positions, we will be able to provide a well-balanced curriculum and have the critical mass necessary to have a national and international presence. An increase in faculty lines will also help with separating the undergraduate and graduate courses, which is important in serving both populations better, but cannot be done with our current faculty size.

We also ask for more and stable student funding. Our graduate student funding is inadequate. We are competing with programs that offer guaranteed funding for 5 years. Our department has applied for and received external funding, applied for all possible sources of internal fellowships for graduate students, updated our website for recruiting, and developed large undergraduate courses that support GTAs. Full funding of our graduate students must be an immediate goal and is the only way to maintain our current synergy and to stay competitive in graduate recruiting.

Finally, as the department continues to grow, we will need to add a staff member to help with those aspects that are directly connected to this growth (e.g., undergraduate student records, grant management).

We are confident that the addition of faculty lines, graduate student funding, and a staff position will enable us to stay on track and continue our upward course to become a top Linguistics department at the national level. We feel that we have a clear and shared vision of our future goals and that reaching those goals is largely a matter of resources.
8. Appendices

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