

MA Degree Explainer

July 2024

Our MA-related [Program Requirements](#) and policies:

- the only people who can receive an MA in Linguistics from UCLA are people who do not already have an MA in Linguistics (UCLA prohibits a duplication of degrees)
- anyone who wants to get an MA in Linguistics from UCLA must advance to Master's candidacy ("MATC") early in the quarter in which they intend to earn their MA
- MATC status is only valid for one year
- there are three ways to earn an MA in Linguistics from UCLA:
 1. **Capstone Plan, Oral Examination Requirement:**
Students complete their course requirements; form a committee; apply to MATC; and finally schedule and sit for an oral examination with their committee. The oral examination is usually two hours long and covers their UCLA Linguistics education.
 2. **Capstone Plan, Writing Requirement:**
Students complete their course requirements; form a committee; apply to MATC; and write an MA paper. Students distribute their final draft to their committee, and their committee notifies faculty and the Grad SAO of the date of approval of their MA paper.
 3. **Thesis Plan:**
As above, for the Capstone Plan, Writing Requirement; but, additionally, students [file their MA as a thesis with the university](#). This involves more paperwork, but is the only way students can have their MA paper available to the public via ProQuest.
- only students who write an MA paper are eligible for admission into the PhD program
- in order to be awarded an MA, students must complete and file whatever paperwork is required by the end of Spring quarter of their third year, i.e. a quarter before they are awarded their CPhil for advancing to doctoral candidacy.

Timeline (Year 2)

- Winter quarter, by Week 8: Grad SAO sends out survey to DSP students and second-year PhD students, polling them about their preferred MA plan
- Spring quarter, Week 2: Grad SAO initiates and files MATC paperwork on behalf of the students
- Spring quarter, Week 10: students are expected to complete their MA requirements (including either their oral examination or their MA paper)

There are so many options! Which is right for you?!

It all depends on your educational background and your status in the program.



Departmental Scholar Program (DSP) students

DSP students do not already have an MA in Linguistics, and want to get one. They do not write an MA paper (but of course they are permitted to). In this scenario, the only option available is the Capstone Plan, Oral Examination Requirement. The oral examination is typically treated as an exit interview by the committee.



PhD students who do not already have an MA in Linguistics



Students who want to continue on into the PhD program

Admittance into the PhD program requires the successful completion of an MA paper in the UCLA Linguistics Department. So these students must choose either the Capstone Plan, Writing Requirement or the Thesis Plan. If they choose the Thesis Plan, they must make sure to [file their MA Paper as a Thesis with the university](#) in order to earn the degree.



Students who do not want to continue on into the PhD program

Any of the three options are available to these students for receiving an MA degree from UCLA Linguistics, including the Capstone Plan, Oral Examination Requirement.



PhD students who already have an MA in Linguistics



Students who want to continue on into the PhD program

Admittance into the PhD program requires the successful completion of an MA paper in the UCLA Linguistics Department. This requires completion of the Capstone Plan, Writing Requirement *except* for applying to MATC. Since UCLA prohibits a duplication of degrees, the MA paper is not eligible for an official MA Thesis at the university level and there is no way for these students to earn an MA from UCLA Linguistics, unfortunately.



Students who do not want to continue on into the PhD program

Since UCLA prohibits a duplication of degrees, there is no way for these students to earn an MA from UCLA Linguistics, unfortunately.

To help identify the appropriate plan and communicate your preference to the Department, the Grad SAO will send a survey in by Week 8 of Winter quarter, Year 2. The survey will need to be completed by Week 10, Winter quarter.