



stay in touch and let us know your questions and concerns as you progress through the program.

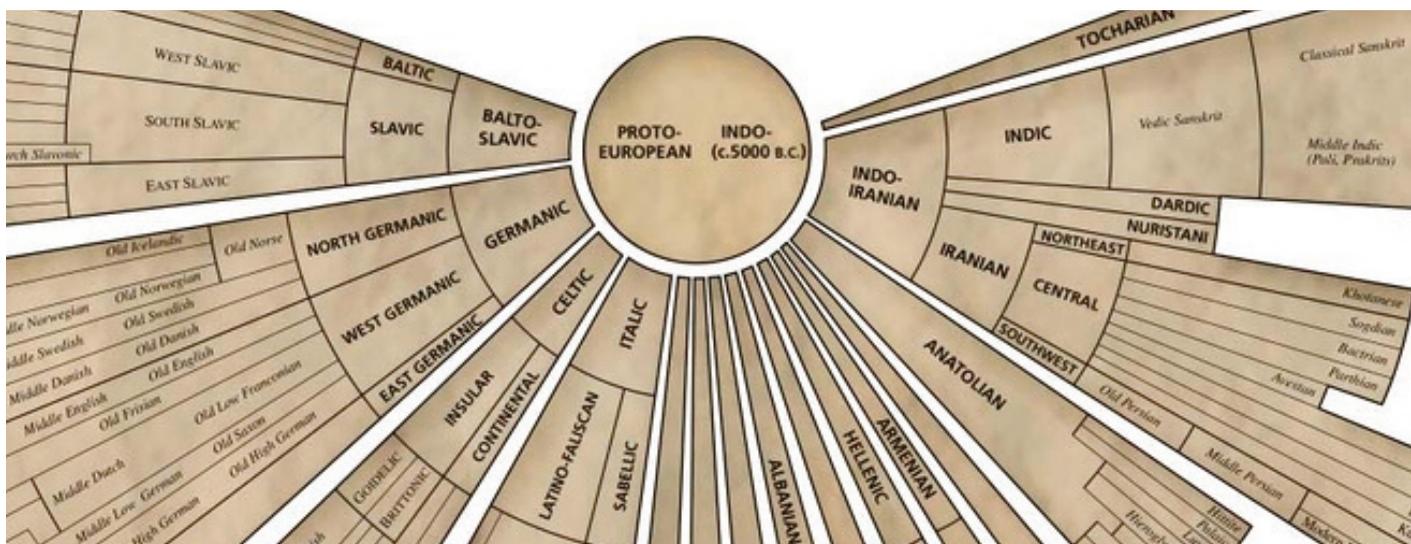
The College of Liberal Arts at Ashford University is proud to offer the only fully online, bachelor's degree program in Applied Linguistics in the United States. Our greatest achievement is you—our fully engaged students who are pursuing their passion for knowledge, and often balancing academics alongside the obligations of family and work. As always,

**Dr. Mingzhen Bao, Program Chair**



Welcome to this year's first issue of *The Linguists*. We hope you enjoy meeting two of our newest faculty members and learning about a new initiative to integrate career planning into linguistics courses. The Library Corner provides information about upcoming webinars and new resources for study and research in the field of Applied Linguistics. As always, we highlight one career path of interest to linguistics majors. And then there is Movie Night!, which features full-length films relevant to students of linguistics.

**Dr. Adrienne Hanson, Editor and Assistant Professor**



The job of the linguist, like that of the biologist or the botanist, is not to tell us how nature should behave, or what its creations should look like, but to describe those creations in all their messy glory and try to figure out what they can teach us about life, the world, and, especially in the case of linguistics, the workings of the human mind."

— Arika Okrent, *In the Land of Invented Languages: Esperanto Rock Stars, Klingon Poets, Loglan Lovers, and the Mad Dreamers Who Tried to Build a Perfect Language*

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# Faculty Snapshots

This month, we interview two of our newest faculty members, Kerry Linfoot and Kristyl Kepley. We asked them to talk about their reasons for pursuing studies in linguistics, their hometowns and hobbies, and any advice they might have for linguistics majors.

## Interview with Kerry Linfoot



studies, and this led me into Forensic Linguistics. My doctoral research was in police-citizen communication, truth detection, and the recognition and de-escalation of violence. However, I love to work anywhere in the fields of Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis.

### **4. Where do you call home? What is the place known for?**

Home is Hereford in the United Kingdom. It is a big farming town and is the origin of Hereford cattle (Hereford Beef), and is why Hereford, TX, shares that name! I have been living in Colorado Springs for the last eight years, however, and I love it here.

### **1. How did you enter the field of linguistics and what made you want to go on to graduate school?**

I did both my undergraduate degree in linguistics, and then my M.A. and Ph.D. I did a general 'humanities' degree for my B.A., and I was lucky enough that linguistics was one of the subjects covered! It met my interests immediately and I have been in the field ever since.

### **2. What courses do you teach at Ashford?**

Right now I have been teaching the capstone course, LNG 497. I am also approved to teach: LNG206 Language & Technology, LNG212 Second Language Acquisition, LNG310 Sounds of Language, LNG320 Structures of Language, LNG321 Foundations of Linguistics, LNG353 Evolution of the English Language, LNG360 Language & Society, and LNG 415 Meaning in Language.

### **3. What are your specific research interests in the field of linguistics?**

I was originally interested in the language of writing and literary linguistics, but this became a general interest in Discourse Analysis during my doctoral

### **5. Outside of teaching, do you have any special interests or hobbies?**

I love spending time with my family. I have two step-daughters who play college soccer (at the University of Colorado and the University of Wyoming), so that is fairly time consuming! I also have five little furry friends (two canine and three feline). I love going out to dinner and the movies with my husband...but I am a voracious reader! I love fiction and am always scouring the best-seller lists for new authors to follow.

### **6. What advice would you give to linguistics majors as they progress through their courses, and as they consider their options post-graduation?**

I would recommend keeping your options open. I had a wonderful time in Asia teaching ESL for six years. It was not my main area of interest and it was not what I chose to focus on when I returned to grad school. Teaching overseas, however, was an amazing experience and will set you up for life, no matter what your research focus turns out to be.

## Interview with Kristyl Kepley

### 1. Why did you enter the field of linguistics and what made you want to go on to graduate school?

I had always been interested in language and communications. I began Law School, but quickly realized I didn't want to be an attorney. So, while I was trying to decide what I wanted to be when I grew up, I began a degree in Liberal Studies, wherein I focused on intercultural communications. I sort of fell into linguistic anthropology from there. That study of communications just opened the door of language study to me, so my Ph.D. studies started because I was really interested in continuing research into meaning and language and the ways in which language changes.

### 2. What courses do you teach at Ashford?

LING 415 Meaning in Language

### 3. What are your specific research interests in the field of linguistics?

Language change, creoles & pidgins, ecology of language, sociolinguistics. My dissertation research involved college-aged Haitian youth living in South Florida. I analyzed the ways in which they used or did not use (either consciously or unconsciously) Haitian Creole as a marker of identity. Part of my interest in that was born of my interest in the evolution of language, diachronic language change, and how creole languages reflect the essence of language and give us insight into how languages evolve.

### 4. Where do you call home? What is the place known for?

I am originally from Miami, but we now live in Pittsboro, NC. Pittsboro is a "rural-ish" community just outside of Chapel Hill with a large artist



community and a lot of great farm-to-table restaurants. We live on an organic farm--with chickens, turkeys, ducks, and rabbits, and lots of vegetables.

### 5. Outside of teaching, do you have any special interests or hobbies?

Farming, of course. Yoga. I am also a Children's Minister in a United Methodist Church. And, I am a mom to two little ones, so they are at the core of a lot of my special interests.

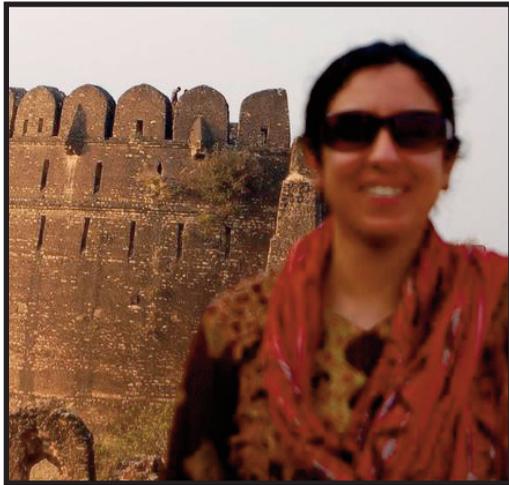
### 6. What advice would you give to linguistics majors as they progress through their courses, and as they consider their options post-graduation?

Linguistics is really, in my humble opinion, the most useful of all areas of study in liberal arts because it opens doors to all the other areas. In other words, you can follow the linguistic trails into all other subjects, and that makes you an incredibly well-rounded thinker, which is a great benefit as you enter the workforce. Even if you choose not to go into a purely linguistic field--like speech pathology, for example--the critical thinking skills that you have developed by looking at language on such a micro and macro level will make you a great thinker in whatever field you enter. The trick, then, is to explain to your boss what linguistics is; so, have a nice, quick explanation of what the study of linguistics is and what it means for the job in question!

# Teaching Excellence

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Dr. Sanaa Riaz and Amy Casey were ranked in the top 5% of Ashford faculty in quality of course facilitation, in a review of all faculty over a six month period.



**Dr. Riaz** is a cultural anthropologist by training and holds master's degrees in Applied Linguistics from UMass Boston and in History from the University of Karachi, Pakistan. She earned her doctorate in Anthropology from the University of Arkansas. She has taught at Mount St. Mary College, New York; Arkansas State University; University of Arkansas; and at undergraduate institutions in Karachi, Pakistan. Dr. Riaz has also worked as an ESL and foreign language instructor. Her research focuses on issues of language and social class in parochial schools, for which she conducted long-term ethnographic fieldwork in Pakistan. Her most recent publication is titled, *New Islamic Schools: Tradition, modernity, and class in urban Pakistan*, and is published by Palgrave Macmillan (2014).

We asked Dr. Riaz for her advice on how to succeed in linguistics courses:

“The key to success in linguistics courses is to not equate the readings with weekly tasks. You may think that a weekly discussion or assignment is not related to the readings because they do not contain a straightforward answer to the prompt. Weekly tasks at Ashford assess your critical thinking skills; the knowledge acquired from the readings that you apply to tasks with reasoning and rationality. If you complete the readings and the Instructor Guidance each week before Thursday and take notes, you will surprise yourself with the multiple ways in which you can answer a prompt without ever running out of stuff to say.”



**Amy Casey** has taught English and English as a Second Language for over 17 years to students of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and in settings as diverse as public schools, colleges and universities, language schools, and community-based literacy programs. She holds three master's degrees in the fields of English (Northern Arizona University), Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) with a concentration in Applied Linguistics (Northern Arizona University), and International Education (New York University). She received her B.A. in Spanish and Cultural Anthropology, with a minor in Linguistics, from the State University of New York, College at Geneseo. She has been teaching online courses since 2007, and is a full-time online faculty member at a small, private college in Tennessee as well as an associate faculty member at Ashford University. She is currently working on completing an endorsement to her Arizona K-12 teaching certificate in Gifted Education.

Ms. Casey offers the following advice to linguistics majors:

“Study what you are interested in learning more about, and it will help you develop and deepen your passion as well as help you 'do what you love' in your professional life after graduation. Try to take advantage of as many opportunities as you can outside of the classroom to experience language and culture in all its forms. Finally, apply what you have learned (your real life experience) about language in your classes.”



# Spotlight on Careers

## Adult Literacy

A variety of jobs and career options are open to Applied Linguistics majors after graduation. These professions include English language teaching, interpreting and translating, forensics, communications, speech-recognition software development, business, and marketing and advertising. Other options such as speech-language pathology and teaching ESL and TESOL require additional graduate work or certification.



community colleges, community-based organizations, and public schools.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, positions in the field of adult education are expected to grow by 15%<sup>h</sup> from 2008 to 2018 in adult basic and secondary education and literacy teachers. Employment of GED instructors is expected to grow by 9 percent from 2012 to 2022 (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>). This trend is aligned with similar growth patterns in the number of Adult Literacy and High School Equivalency Diploma Teachers (see chart below). Graduates of the Applied Linguistics Program are

One interesting option is in the field of adult literacy, which includes General Education Development (GED) teaching. Adult literacy teachers instruct adults in reading, writing, and speaking English. GED instructors assist students in earning their high school diploma. Adult literacy and GED instructors work in

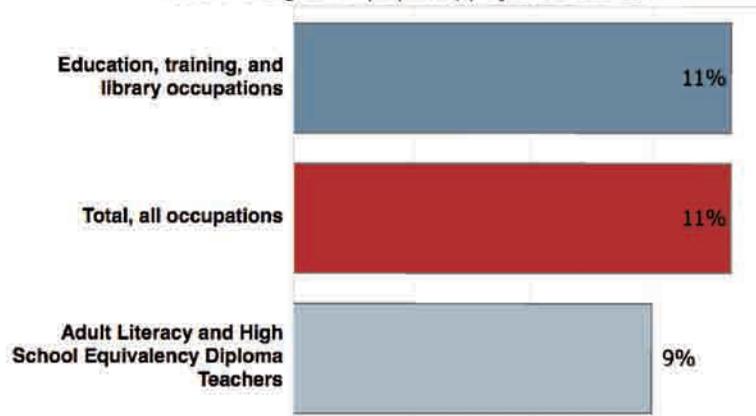
excellent candidates for these kinds of teaching, as well as curriculum development. In 2012, the median pay for these positions was \$48,590.

**Resources:** /

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/adult-literacy-and-ged-teachers.htm>

### Adult Literacy and High School Equivalency Diploma Teachers

Percent change in employment, projected 2012-22



Note: All Occupations includes all occupations in the U.S. Economy.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program

# Movie Night!

Have you seen *The Linguists*?

In this 2008 documentary, director Seth Kramer follows two linguists as they journey through rugged landscapes, locating isolated civilizations and studying rare and endangered languages. In Siberia, they listen to a language that will most likely disappear within a few decades. During a trek through India, they study how English colonists influenced the nation's culture and language. In the American Southwest, they talk with Native Americans. The film offers audiences a glimpse into the kind of research and field work performed by linguists who make the study of endangered languages their life's work.

Learn more at the film's official website: <http://thelinguists.com/>  
A PBS website dedicated to the film presents photographs and several interactive features, including sound recordings of endangered languages: <http://www.pbs.org/thelinguists/About-The-Film/>

**Release Date:** 2008 (1hr 5m)

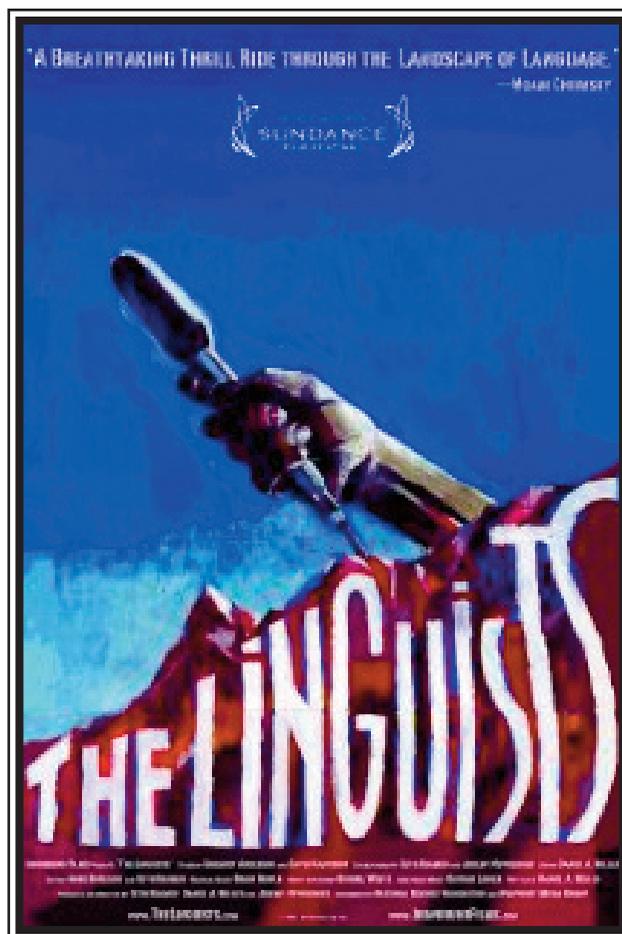
**Directors:** Daniel A. Miller, Jeremy Newberger, Seth Kramer

**Screenplay:** Daniel A. Miller

**Music:** Brian Hawlk

**Cast:** K. David Harrison, Gregory D. S. Anderson

**Cinematography:** Jeremy Newberger, Seth Kramer



## Next Issue:

The June issue of *The Linguists* will feature additional profiles of new faculty, curriculum updates, an overview of library resources, a spotlight on career options for linguistics majors, highlights from our program review, and more . . . !

### *The Linguists: Student Edition*

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## News to Share?

Do you have an idea for a future article or feature in *The Linguists* that would benefit linguistics majors?

Is there information about the major or field you wish was more readily available?

Do you have a recent personal or professional achievement related to the field of applied linguistics that you would like to celebrate?

Contact us with your story ideas!