Greetings!

The Linguistics Department at Carleton warmly congratulates you on your admission to our College. We are delighted that Linguistics is on your list of potential majors. As you may know, only a few liberal arts colleges offer linguistics as a program of study, and we believe that our curriculum is among the strongest.

Our faculty actively pursue scholarly research on Icelandic, Faroese, Indonesian, Japanese, Spanish, and Tatar. Our students are also deeply engaged in research, contributing to faculty research projects and pursuing their own. They’ve written excellent senior projects on topics including reflexive verbs in Maltese, the structure of questions in Nukuoro (an understudied Polynesian language), tense and aspect in Haitian Creole, the phonology of child language, and code-switching in Junot Díaz’s *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. They often present their work at undergraduate linguistics conferences, such as those held annually at Harvard, Cornell, and Hunter College, and at the Minnesota Undergraduate Linguistics Symposium. Our faculty and students, together with computer science faculty and students, are also collaboratively engaged in scholarly research on the endangered language Dakota. This project is especially meaningful to us, as Carleton sits on what was once Dakota land.

Our curriculum is structured to allow students to work at the frontiers of the field in syntax and phonetics/phonology. Our course *First Language Acquisition* involves interaction with very young language learners, examining their progress in acquiring a complex language system, while *Second Language Acquisition: Speech* offers a deeper dive into older learners’ development of a second language sound system. *Structure of Dakota* is an investigation of the phonology and grammar of the language. You could consider signing up for our first-year seminar *The Noun*, which considers the many forms and functions of nouns across the world’s languages. We also offer a dynamic off-campus seminar, *Carleton Linguistics and Culture in Japan*. The seminar will return to beautiful Kyoto in the spring terms of 2020, 2021, and 2022, and no prior study of Japanese is required.

Our majors are a lively, close-knit, supportive, and diverse group of students with many interests, talents, and pursuits. They gather regularly for linguistics lunches and other social events. They go on to many diverse postgraduate careers, such as medicine, law, technology, higher education administration, speech language pathology, and even linguistics. Our students have won Watson, Fulbright, Boren, and NSF fellowships, have worked in the Peace Corps, and have taught English in Japan and France. They begin these journeys with the faculty and fellow students in our department, where our goal is to help students become articulate, insightful, and intellectually brave, adept at solving problems, finding patterns in noisy data, and thinking creatively.

We are so glad that you are considering joining us. If you have any questions, I invite you to contact me.

Best wishes,

Catherine Fortin
Chair, Linguistics Department