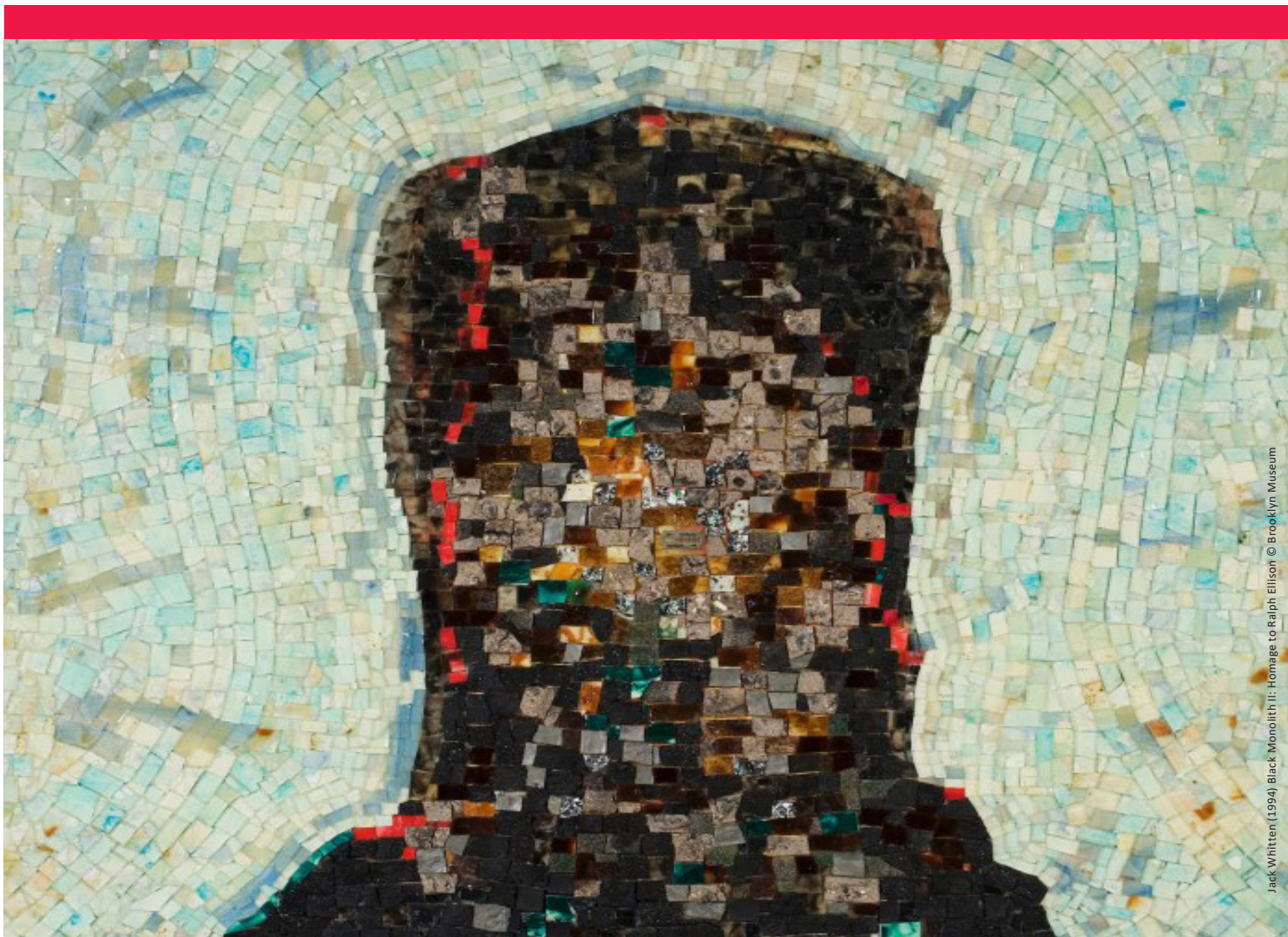


Course Booklet

Autumn Semester 2025



Jack Whitten (1994) Black Monolith II: Homage to Ralph Ellison © Brooklyn Museum

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Welcome from the Head of Department

Dear students, dear colleagues,

Welcome to the Autumn Semester of 2025. This semester promises a wide array of enticing courses. Center stage holds our focus module lecture '*Language and Materiality*', being accompanied by an extensive choice of satellite seminars offered by PD Dr. Kellie Gonçalves (*Language and Art*); PD Dr. Gwynne Mapes (*Language at Work*); and Dr. Hannah Hedegard (*The Linguistics of Seeking Asylum*). My own lecture with the title '*American Genesis*' also traces, in the tradition of American Studies, the connection between the materialities of American history and politics and the development of different strategies of literary expression, starting from the Native Americans and early white settlers and Puritan pilgrims to the end of the Civil War. As far as the chosen picture for this semester's booklet is concerned: It is an artwork by New York based Jack Whitten (1939-2018) called '*Black Monolith II*' (1994), and is a homage to Ralph Ellison. The artwork has a rough-textured mosaic pieced together from thousands of pixel-like cubes of dried paint, molasses, copper, coal, ash, chocolate and razor blades, and thus not solely represents a combination between language and materiality, but also encapsulates aspects of literary culture and linguistic expression, further emphasizing the interdisciplinary nature of our department, which seeks to transcend disciplinary sections.

A lot has happened in the last semester, and new things are on the horizon:

The **Medieval English Studies** section is happy to welcome two new student assistants, Annina Lerch and Annina Ganahl. Furthermore, Professor Dr. Annette Kern-Stähler has been awarded a four-year SNF grant (MAPS scheme) for the project 'Becoming Axolotl: Empathy, Simulation, and Embodiment in Medieval Narratives' with partners from Croatia and Romania. We are looking forward to meeting the complete team in due course. Melina Hauri, who was Prof. Dr. Kern-Stähler's student assistant, and an active member of the student committee, has left the section at the end of January. And while we're talking about the work of the Student Committee, I would like to express my gratitude towards the efforts, and initiative, and the very harmonious interactions that I had with them throughout my two years here; and I

wholeheartedly advise students to check out their manifold initiatives, which are a substantial part of the strong 'corporate identity' of this department.

In the **North American Literature and Culture** section, we congratulate Jonathan Sarfin for successfully submitting his PhD thesis. Moreover, Malaika Sutter successfully defended her dissertation in February this year and received the 'recognition for excellent teaching performance' (ALL) for her course on the North American short story (BA Seminar Fall Semester 2024). Nino Töndury, who was Prof. Dr. Gabriele Rippl's student assistant, and an active member of the student committee has left the department at the end of January. Thanks again for the untiring work for the Department and the Students' Committee!

The **Modern English Linguistics** section announces that Aline Kellenberger will leave the department as student assistant at the end of September.

The **Language and Communication** section is happy to inform you that Gwynne Mapes successfully completed the final step in her habilitation process in February. And although she's not leaving the department as an MA student, Alexandra Birrer will be finishing in July her services as student assistant; she's been an indispensable help for the 'Articulating Rubbish' project for the last two years. In the meantime, Lukas Baur will be joining the team as student assistant, starting 1st August. Speaking of the 'Articulating Rubbish' project, Prof. Crispin Thurlow, Charmaine Kong, Laura Wohlgemuth and Alessandro Pellanda will be teaching a special ENLIGHT course titled '*Waste Semiotics*' in Autumn semester with students from Bern and other ENLIGHT universities. The course will actually be the University of Bern's first ever '*Blended Intensive Programme*' within the Erasmus framework. Finally, Crispin has been nominated and invited to serve as the 2026 *Ander Visiting Professor in Geomedia Studies at Karlstad University, Sweden*.

As far as **Modern English Literature** section is concerned, we are proud to inform you that PD Dr. Zoë Lehmann is now the European Representative for the British Society of Literature and Science.

The **Literary Theory** section is welcoming, starting in the AS 2025, Dr. Salma Letaif, who has been granted a Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship for her project '*Towards a Poetic of Anglophone Algerian Diasporic Literature*.'

Moreover, I would like to mention on this occasion that Prof. Axel Stähler's open access publication of his book on the destruction of Jerusalem has been supported by the SNF with more than CHF 14.000.-

This (admittedly rather lengthy) list goes to show that you either already are in – or are about to enter – a lively, productive, and engaged English Department: a department, moreover, that will go through some substantial changes, as no less than five professors will be retiring in the next few years. However, we're all working hard to make this transition as smooth as possible for all of you.

We're also working on a number of videos designed to help you negotiate the numerous aspects

connected with studying in the ED, the first set of which we hope will be up and running at the end of AS 2025.

So a lot of enticing things are happening – stay tuned! I will step down as Head of the English Department 31 July; but I'm sure my successor, Prof. Crispin Thurlow, will lead the department with a steady hand.



Prof. Dr. Thomas Claviez
Bern, 05 June 2025

Key Dates and Deadlines

Course Registrations

You need to **register in KSL for every course you take**. Exceptions are: the BA/MA thesis, the Stay Abroad, Independent Studies, and Guest Lectures. There may be more than one version of the same course in KSL (i.e., **graded** and **ungraded**), so make sure you register for the right version.

Please read the **new course registration procedure carefully (see below)**. Our new course registration procedures are **effective immediately** for all BA and MA students. The table below outlines the opening and closing times for registration, as well as whether registration is binding, for each registration group.

Please note that seminars are **capped at 20 participants**.

	INDUCTION PHASE	ALL OTHER COURSES	ASSESSMENTS
OPENS	07:00 on 2. August for autumn semester 07:00 on 3. January for spring semester	07:00 on 2. August for autumn semester 07:00 on 3. January for spring semester	07:00 on 2. August for autumn semester 07:00 on 3. January for spring semester
CLOSES	23:59 on second Friday of the semester (26.09.2025 this semester)	23:59 on 1. September for autumn semester 23:59 on 1. February for spring semester	23:59 on 15 November for autumn semester 23:59 on 15 April for spring semester
DEREGISTRATION	Before closing window	Not possible (first registration is binding)	Before closing window

Why has the procedure changed?

Course capping has helped to improve the learning and teaching environment in the *Department of English*, but it has also **introduced new challenges**. The updated procedures help students access courses more easily, support instructors in planning, and reduce administrative load. Students are expected to prepare early, choose suitable courses for their study plan, and commit for the full term. In return, they benefit from smaller classes, more instructor attention, and faster grading.

Does the prioritisation policy still apply?

No. Registration for **capped courses now first comes, first served**. Some MA courses are intended for advanced students, so check course details carefully.

VML students (*Vorgezogene Master Leistungen*) are still not permitted to take graded MA courses, expect for the foundation lectures. Students must complete the Application Form for [Vorgezogene Masterleistungen \(VML\)](#) to apply for these courses.

Waiting on your BA thesis grade to enter the MA program?

BA thesis deadlines have been moved earlier to help avoid potential problems. Still, contact your major and minor study counsellors promptly for diploma ratification, and follow the Dean's Office instructions.

Accidentally registered for a course?

Contact your study counsellor immediately (*you can find relevant information on the next page*).

Can't attend a course you registered for?

You will fail. Repeat absences leading to failure will be tracked.

How do I register?

Students should add the course to the appropriate block in their KSL planning view before registration opens. When registration opens, register via your KSL planning view.

Note: in the *Department of English*, we don't include the assessment within the course. To take a seminar ungraded, just register for the seminar. To take it graded, register for the assessment and the seminar. You will see this in the course title and the course type. To take a lecture ungraded, just register for the ungraded lecture. To take it graded, register for the graded lecture. You will see this in the course title in KSL.

Still have questions?

Contact your study counsellors:

Students with last names from A-L

Study Counselling for BA and MA Students
Diploma Ratification
Admission Enquiries (BA; MA; PhD)
Independent Studies Coordinator

Helen Shepherd | D 213

helen.shepherd@unibe.ch

Students with last names from M-Z

Study Counselling for BA and MA Students
Diploma Ratification
Admission Enquiries (BA; MA; PhD)
Independent Studies Coordinator

Sabine von Rütte | D 213

sabine.vonrueette@unibe.ch

Exam Schedule for Lectures

The examination schedule for lectures (including Grammar) takes place within the 14-week teaching semester. The obligatory exam for lectures takes place in the twelfth semester week and (usually) at the usual course meeting time and in the usual course venue. Students failing an exam are allowed one chance to resit it. The resit exams take place in the thirteenth semester week (again, usual course time and venue). Students who, for valid medical or other official reasons, are unable to take the main exam or resit exam, have another chance in the fourteenth semester week to take the exam. The exception to this fixed exam schedule are the two MA Foundation lectures.

Students who take excursions in other departments and institutes that overlap with the exam period need to decide whether to do the course with the excursion or the course in the Department of English. No special allowances will be made for students missing exams for these reasons.

Advanced Reading List (ARL Examination)

The exam for Advanced Readings in Linguistics and Literatures is offered once every semester. It takes place in the penultimate week of the semester. You can choose between three specializations:

- (A) Medieval and Modern English
- (B) North American Literature
- (C) Language and Linguistics

You can register for the exam by registering for the Advanced Readings in Linguistics and Literature (A); (B); or (C) in KSL.

Notes and Helpful Resources:

Course Registration (how to register and deregister in KSL with the new deadlines)

https://www.ens.unibe.ch/studies/deadlines_and_ksl_registration/course_registration/index_eng.html

Deadlines BA and MA thesis registration and ARL program

https://www.ens.unibe.ch/studies/deadlines_and_ksl_registration/deadlines/index_eng.html

Advanced Reading List (ARL) Examination, Core List, Specialisation and Examination:

https://www.ens.unibe.ch/studies/course_types_and_modules/arل_advanced_reading_list/index_eng.html

Application Form for Vorgezogene Masterleistungen (VML):

https://www.ens.unibe.ch/unibe/portal/fak_historisch/dsl/ens/content/e41030/e72711/e542723/e1686519/VML_Application_Form_eng.pdf

Incoming Exchange and Visiting Students:

https://www.ens.unibe.ch/studies/deadlines_and_ksl_registration/incoming_exchange_and_visiting_students/index_eng.html

Check out the [HELP booklet](#), it might answer your question.

BA Thesis Registration

The registration for the BA thesis is a two-step process. First, you register your thesis with your supervisor. Second, you get the ok from your study counsellor. Retain the signed '*Registration for thesis (BA & MA)*' form until **both** steps are completed. Only hand it in to the secretariat once it has been signed by your supervisor (*first step*) and your study counsellor (*second step*).

The form to register your BA Thesis can be found on our [website](#).

SUBMISSION IN AUTUMN 2025

Project propositions	30 March '25
Supervisor deadline	30 April '25
Study counsellor and secretariat deadline	14 October '25
Thesis submission deadline	03 January '25

SUBMISSION IN SPRING 2026

Project propositions	15 October '25
Supervisor deadline	15 November '25
Study counsellor and secretariat deadline	15 March '26
Thesis submission deadline	30 May '26

At the supervisor's discretion, short extensions *may* be granted: maximum two weeks for the BA thesis or, via the Dean's Office, one month for the MA thesis. Only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. serious illness) may the thesis be extended into another semester. Students may be deregistered from the final colloquium and required to repeat it.

For further information, check out the [HELP Booklet](#).

MA Thesis Registration

MA theses need to be registered both with the *Department of English* and the *Dean's Office* (more information on their [website](#)). To register your MA thesis with the Department you must complete the '*Registration for Thesis (BA & MA)*' form and include your supervisor's and study counsellor's signatures before handing in the form to the secretariat. You must have completed all other compulsory modules except the last MA Colloquium. At the moment of registration, you cannot have more than one graded seminar pending. Furthermore, you cannot miss more than 10 ungraded ECTS when registering your thesis.

The form to register your MA Thesis can be found on our [website](#).

GRADUATION IN SPRING 2026

Department registration deadline	10 June '25
Dean's Office registration deadline	10 June '25
Thesis submission deadline	01 December '25

GRADUATION IN AUTUMN 2026

Department registration deadline	28 November '25
Dean's Office registration deadline	28 November '25
Thesis submission deadline	08 June '26

General Information

KSL Registration: General information

Click [here](#) (i.e. *Studies > Deadlines and KSL Registration*) for more information on how to register for courses and assessments or check the HELP booklet.

KSL Registration: Special cases

LANGUAGE MODULES:

If you take the *Language Modules (Grammar I&II and Writing Skills I&II)* you will need to sign up for *Grammar I* and/or *Writing Skills I* (0 ECTS) in the autumn semester, and for the *Grammar II* and/or *Writing Skills II* (6 ECTS) in the spring semester. You will only receive a grade for both completed courses **at the end of both semesters** for all 6 ECTS. Only students who have taken *Writing Skills I* and/or *Grammar I* may take *Writing Skills II* and/or *Grammar II*.

FOCUS MODULES:

A Focus Module consists of a 3 ECTS lecture, and a 7 ECTS seminar, **thematically linked**. When you register for a Focus Module, you need to register for 2 courses as well as the assessment (paper), i.e., the ungraded Focus Module lecture, the seminar connected to the lecture as well as the assessment. Ultimately, the grade you receive for the seminar of the Focus Module **will be applied to the entire 10 ECTS of the Focus Module**. If you are a BA student wishing to do a Focus Module lecture as an ungraded free-standing lecture, you should register for the ungraded version on KSL. If you are an

International Student, you should sign up for the graded version on KSL.

BA COLLOQUIA:

Students have to complete two semesters of the *BA Colloquium* for 2 ECTS each, writing their *BA Thesis* in the **second semester of the colloquium**.

MA COLLOQUIA:

The *MA Colloquium* is a course over the last three semesters of MA major studies for 2 ECTS each semester. The final colloquium **needs to be taken parallel** to writing the *MA Thesis*.

MA Requirements

MA Major students must acquire a minimum of 72 credits within their specialization (e.g. *Language and Linguistics*), and another 14-18 in the other field (e.g. *Literature*). A sample study plan can be found [here](#). *MA Minor* students can acquire up to 9 credits in the other field, but they do not have to.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. If you miss a class, you must write to your instructor to apologise for your absence and explain why it was unavoidable. Students who miss **more than 2 sessions of a workshop or seminar and more than 1 session of a colloquium** will fail the course in question.

Communicating with the Secretariat and Study Counsellors

When you email the secretariat or your study counsellor, please include: your *name*, your *matriculation number* and the *title of the course* or the *course number* if you ask about a specific course.

Notes: Consult our [website](#) for more information about how to register your thesis with the department and with the [Dean's Office](#) as well as format requirements. Check the [website](#) of the Dean's Office to reconfirm the registration and submission deadlines.

Diversity, Academic Freedom, and Content Warnings

The *Department of English* is committed to creating learning environments that respect and include a diversity of academic opinions, cultural perspectives, and social experiences. We are, for example, keen to engage directly with issues of classism, sexism, racism, ageism, and homophobia in our research and teaching. This commitment is in line with the position adopted by both the university's central administration and the Faculty of Humanities.*† Our department also tries to support disabled students and those with chronic physical and mental health challenges.

As a community of scholars and instructors, we believe that diverse people, backgrounds, and ideas are essential for producing the critical thinking and civic engagement at the heart of a public university education. For this reason, we also expect students in our classes to engage respectfully in debates about diverse worldviews embedded in discussions, readings, presentations, and artifacts. This also includes materials and topics that may be at odds with some students' personal beliefs or values.

One of the challenges we regularly face in our classrooms is the informed decision to teach about materials (e.g., texts, topics, and ways of speaking) from different historical moments and cultural contexts. Sometimes this material can be troubling, especially when assessed against current social values. Discussions about physical or sexual violence and suicide can also be

personally upsetting for some people, just as pejorative or taboo language can be distressing for people who have been at the receiving end of hateful speech.

We believe it is necessary sometimes to deal with uncomfortable topics or controversial issues in our classrooms; this is important for producing critical thinking and for protecting academic freedom. We are nonetheless keen to handle these teaching moments as sensitively and considerately as possible. It is not always possible to know what topics or materials students will find challenging or upsetting, but we have agreed to provide content warnings when deemed necessary. Sometimes these will be offered at the start of specific sessions, at other times at the start of the course.

As scholars and educators, we are always receptive to discussing with students the more complex or challenging issues raised in class. We always expect such discussions to be conducted in a mature, respectful way, and preferably on an intellectually, academically grounded basis.

* See the UL's equality statement:
https://www.unibe.ch/university/portrait/self_image/equal_opportunities/index_eng.html

† See the Faculty of Humanities equal opportunities page:
https://www.philhist.unibe.ch/about_us/equal_opportunities/index_eng.html

Conduct and Correspondence Guidelines

The following departmental guidelines have been compiled to help make explicit some of the basic standards we expect – and adhere to ourselves – when it comes to written correspondence (letters and emails) and professional conduct more generally. This is also a chance to clarify expectations concerning absences and the use of the tea corner.

General conduct

- The department is first and foremost a place of work for study, learning and writing. Please therefore try to keep the noise down in the corridors and in the tea corner (*see below*); sometimes, just pulling the tea corner door to is enough. We strongly discourage the use of cellphones in the corridors.
- If you know you will be missing a class, we expect you to send a short email to your instructor alerting them to the fact and proffering some kind of explanation (*see 'Absences' below*). We consider this a matter of basic professional courtesy. If you have already missed a class, please send an email to apologise and confirm that you will be making the necessary arrangements to catch up on the work missed.
- Members of academic and administrative staff should not be addressed on a first-name basis unless you have been specifically invited to address them this way. Being on a first-name basis, however, does not mean that common-sense politeness and professional standards cease to apply.
- In face-to-face interaction, students are commonly addressed by their

first name; but please advise staff to address you by family name, if you prefer. In all written communication we ask that you use professional titles along with names – this applies to emails as well.

Absences

Our departmental standards are very clear: attendance is expected for all classes and consistent, active participation is mandatory. We understand this to be a matter of academic, professional and civic responsibility. Our educational mission and your learning is heavily subsidized, and we are therefore responsible to the Bernese public for taking our work seriously and doing it properly.

Active participation does not only mean talking in class (although this is a key feature of academic discourse), but also entails coming prepared, completing assigned readings, engaging with your peers, taking notes, following directions, etc. Students who consistently fail to participate actively in class may be failed. In this regard, we consider non-participation in more than two sessions of a seminar or workshop, and more than one session of a colloquium, to be unacceptable.

Allowance is always made for *university-sanctioned absences* such as documented illnesses, deaths in the family, or military service. Absence due to your participation in a departmental excursion seminar **may** also be excused. Regardless, any absence threatens the success of your learning and missed work should *always* be caught up and/or made up. Excused absences, like any absence, should always be signaled to your instructor (*see above*).

Written correspondence

All written correspondence – print letters and emails – addressed to members of staff should follow a formal style. We realise that email often blurs the public-private boundary, but in the workplace, they are always professional interactions. We expect the following principles to be applied:

Openings and closings

Please always start your emails by addressing staff by name and by using their academic (i.e. professional) title. Please also sign off your emails or letters appropriately. If you do not know the title of a member of staff, consult the website. In the table below we offer some examples of how, in English at least, to begin and end written correspondence.

OPENING

On a separate first line:

Dear Professor Smith,
Dear Dr Brown,
Dear Ms Jones,
Dear Mr Jones,

Dear Alison,
Dear Timothy,

CLOSING

On a separate penultimate line:

Yours sincerely,
Sincerely,

Best wishes,
Kind regards,

Note: The commas are optional according to modern “open punctuation” conventions. In US-American practice, the colon can be used after the salutation; in the UK and elsewhere, this would be considered quite odd.

Introducing yourself/stating the subject

Please always give clear, specific

information in the subject line of emails or in the reference line of letters.

Remember, the staff member you are writing to might not immediately know who you are or why you are writing to them. It is usually helpful if you use the opening paragraph to introduce yourself, mention the seminar or lecture concerned and state the issue. It is also common courtesy to acknowledge emails by, for example, thanking staff for their assistance or by confirming that the issue in question has been resolved.

If you are writing to any member of staff who is not your immediate instructor, we ask that you *always reference your student number in the subject line*. For example, if you are writing to the Head of Department, your Study Counsellor, the International Coordinator, etc.

Register and style

All emails and letters sent to members of staff should, as we say, be treated as professional correspondence and therefore regarded as formal. This likewise means that you should adhere to the rules of formal writing with regard to, for example, paragraphing, capitalisation, punctuation, and word choice. It helps a lot if your correspondence is *succinct* and *clearly organized* so that staff know easily and quickly what your concerns or issues are.

Name changes

We are keen to *support* and *help facilitate* students who have decided to change their name. We are aware that the central administration can sometimes make things complicated because this process is usually attached to the legality of identity documents or tax forms. As a department, however, we would like to be more flexible and responsive, especially in our local communication with students. Please let Sannie Germann (*student administrator*) know if you do have a change to your first or last name and/or if you would like us to address you differently from your official documentation. Sannie will then share this information with your instructors and study counsellors. You would need to follow the central administration procedures for faculty- and university-level changes.

Tea corner

The department's tea corner is open to *all staff and students*. This is a special space – not all departments have one. It is also a space that is managed with the help of the Students' Committee. Equipped with a fridge and microwave, plates, cups and cutlery, the tea corner is a space for spending your lunch hour, mid-morning or mid-afternoon breaks, and for other informal moments with peers and staff.

Please *always* clean up after yourself – stacking the dishwasher, washing up and wiping down any surfaces you have used.

Theft

We would like to ensure that the university is a safe place to study. Please report *all cases of theft* in and around Unitobler or other university buildings to the secretariat and the *Head of Department*.

Access Arrangements (Nachteilsausgleich)

Following the UniBe's [equal opportunities policy](#), students with disabilities or chronic illnesses are entitled to certain [Access Arrangements](#) which means proportionate adjustments to study and examination conditions. The kinds of arrangements available are those listed on the central administration website (*see links above*). In order to accommodate your needs in the best manner possible we ask students to send an email to the study counsellor and to the respective course instructor(s) three months in advance of any exam or assessment. The email should include the relevant medical/specialist documentation and the duration of the arrangement. (*It might not be possible to accommodate later applications for the semester*). Ideally, this documentation should also indicate what access arrangements might be appropriate to the particular disability or chronic illness. Wherever possible these will be taken into consideration. The counsellor and *Head of Department* will work with the student to prepare a fixed-term Access Arrangement agreement, which will have to be renewed on a regular basis. (**Note:** UniBe policy is informed by guidelines established by the [Netzwerk Studium und Behinderung Schweiz](#)).

Access Arrangements Deadlines

If you wish to request access arrangements for a given semester*, adhere to the following deadlines:

- Contact your study counsellor by the **Friday of Week 2**

- Submit a formal request for access arrangements by the **Friday of Week 4**

Students are strongly encouraged to submit their request well in advance to ensure timely processing.

*Students with chronic illnesses and permanent disabilities will be granted access arrangements for the duration of their study program.

Advisory Services

Please click [here](#) for further information for disabled students (*future and current*).

Please click [here](#) and then follow *STUDIES > Advisory Services* to find more information about services offered.

Who to Ask – Autumn Semester 2025

For all enquiries concerning course assessments and grades, please address the relevant instructors.

Students with last names from A-L

- Study Counselling for BA and MA Students
- Diploma ratification
- Admission Enquiries (BA, MA, PhD)
- Independent Studies Coordinator
- International Coordinator (Stay Abroad Enquiries)

Helen Shepherd / D 213
helen.shepherd@unibe.ch

KSL Enquiries

Enrolment for Theses

Sannie Germann
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Students with last names from M-Z

- Study Counselling for BA and MA Students
- Diploma ratification
- Admission Enquiries (BA, MA, PhD)
- Independent Studies Coordinator
- International Coordinator (Stay Abroad Enquiries)

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Library Enquiries

Sabrina Mutti
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Gabriela Scherrer
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For information about staff consultation times please consult the departmental website.
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Academic Staff (AS25)

Dr. Sofie Behluli*
North American Literature and Culture
Olivia Biber, M.A.
Modern English Literature
Michael Boog, M.A.
North American Literature and Culture
Prof. Dr. David Britain*
Modern English Linguistics
Prof. Dr. Thomas Claviez*
Literary Theory & World Literature |
American Studies
PD Dr. Marijke Denger
Modern English Literature
Prof. Dr. Mary Flannery
Medieval English Studies
PD Dr. Kellie Gonçalves*
Language and Communication
Dr. Hannah Hedegard*
Modern English Linguistics
Prof. Dr. Annette Kern-Stähler*
Medieval English Studies
Charmaine Kong, M.A.*
Language and Communication
PD Dr. Zoë Lehmann Imfeld*
Modern English Literature
Dr. Beatriz Lorente*
Academic Writing
PD Dr. Gwynne Mapes*
Language and Communication

Dr. Viola Marchi*
North American Literature and
Culture/Literary Theory
Dr. Nicole Nyffenegger*
Medieval and Early Modern Literature
and Culture
Alessandro Pellanda, M.A.*
Language and Communication
Dr. Hannah Piercy*
Medieval English Studies
Prof. Dr. Virginia Richter
Modern English Literature
Prof. Dr. Gabriele Rippl*
North American Literature and Culture
Assoziierter Prof. Dr. Axel Stähler*
Literatures in English | North American
Studies
Dr. des. Malaika Sutter*
North American Literature and Culture
Prof. Dr. Crispin Thurlow*
Language and Communication, Head of
Department
Dr. Danielle Tod*
Modern English Linguistics
Marion Troxler, M.A.*
Modern English Literature
Sabine von Rütte, M.A.
North American Literature and Culture
Dr. Christiania Whitehead*
Medieval English Studies
Laura Wohlgemuth, M.A.*
Language and Communication

** Teaching this semester*

Administrative Staff | Autumn Semester 2025

Administrators

Gabriela Burkhart Sannie Germann	Please see the website for office hours
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Drittmittel Administration

Bettina Rhyn-Holzer	By appointment
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Directors' Assistant

Anja Burkhardt	By appointment
Federico Erba [until 01.08.2025]	By appointment

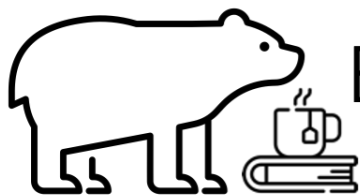
ICT Support & Web Administration

Fayaz Ali Khan	By appointment
André Argollo Pitta	By appointment
Milad Rezaei	By appointment
Philipp Lammerskitten	By appointment

Librarian

Sabrina Mutti	By appointment
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Information is subject to change. Please consult the notice boards and the departmental website regularly.



English Department **Students' Committee**

The Students' Committee

We are a group of students within the *Department of English* acting as the students' representatives at a departmental level. We maintain regular contact with the staff and professors, as well as other university departments and the SUB, communicating the voice of the student body to the department.

Among other things, we hold General Assemblies, where all the students of English are asked to meet and discuss topics of general concern, and to provide feedback about past activities and other matters.

It is our responsibility to assist you in study matters and, therefore, we organize information meetings, workshops or other events, to give you the opportunity to gather information. Check the notice boards as well as our social media profiles for announcements. You can always contact us if you need any kind of assistance concerning your English studies.

We meet regularly to keep up to date with what is going on. If you have any suggestions or complaints, talk to one of our members or e-mail us (**fsanglistik@sub.unibe.ch**). Feel free to join the Students' Committee, or if you are interested in finding out what we are all about, you can also just join in on one of our meetings.

Find us on social media and stay updated on upcoming events and activities throughout the semester!

Instagram



@StudentsCommitteeUniBe eng_sc_unibe

WhatsApp



(info group) <https://bit.ly/2DACLqS>

A week in the life of your instructor

by Professor Dr. Crispin Thurlow

One of the biggest challenges in the staff-student relationship is an unavoidable mismatch of expectations. While academic staff have all been students, students have rarely been full-time, professional academics. Having said which, it may have been many years ago – and under very different circumstances – that some academic staff were students. Nonetheless, it's understandably difficult for students to know sometimes where they stand in their instructor's larger schedule of work commitments. This can lead to misunderstanding and, sometimes, frustration.

Well, to make things a little more transparent, I have pulled together a snapshot impression of a typical working week for a full-time member of academic staff. I've based this on an *ad hoc* survey of my colleagues over the years. What follows is a sample (sic) of the range of activities your professors and other instructors will regularly be trying to get done during any typical working week. The hours or days listed are indicative of how much time might be spent on each activity during a regular week; this is not necessarily how long each takes to complete. Far from it.

Teaching/mentoring-related activities*

- prepping for lectures for one course (4 hours)
- reading/reviewing a graduate thesis proposal (3 hours)
- grading undergraduate papers for one course (20 hours)
- course-related office hours (2 hours)
- lectures, seminars and colloquia (8 hours)
- course preparation and administration (6 hours)
- reading/reviewing a dissertation chapter (3 hours)
- examination and coursework grading (6 hours)
- writing a letter of recommendation (1 hour)
- helping with a graduate fellowship proposal (2 hours)
- supervisory meetings with graduate students (4 hours)
- supervisory meetings with undergrad thesis students (2 hours)

Admin-related activities

- reviewing a journal article/conference paper (3 hours)
- reviewing a book for a publisher (5 hours)
- journal editorship/board-membership work (5 hours)
- monitoring and replying to email correspondence (5 hours)

* In addition to lectures and seminars, most full-time academic staff mentor (aka supervise) students on their BA, MA and PhD research projects or on BA and MA independent studies.

- attending a Directors/Faculty/Mittelbau meeting (2 hours)
- professional association committees/correspondence (2 hours)
- reading a graduate application with writing samples (4 hours)
- writing a letter of recommendation (1 hour)
- reviewing a promotion case for another academic (4 hours minimum)
- conducting a course evaluation or peer observation (2 hours)
- serving on a promotion or hiring committee (1 hour)
- attending a campus lecture or event (3 hours)
- reviewing another department's external review (2 days)
- participating on and/or chairing a Faculty committee (2 hours)
- participating on and/or chairing a departmental committee (2 hour)

Research-related activities

- writing an initial draft for a grant application (3 days)
- revising and resubmitting an article (2 days)
- editing a book manuscript (4 days)
- attending a colloquium presentation (1 hour)
- finalizing a grant application (5 hours)
- reviewing proofs of an article (2 hours)
- supervising/meeting with Research Assistants (2 hour)
- preparing a talk or keynote presentation (1 day)
- preparing and revising an ethics review application (2 hours)

Contrary to many people's outside impressions, academic staff seldom spend the day reading and writing. Many will tell you that the last time they had the luxury of 'just' or 'really' reading was when they were students. There's certainly very little time for standing around chatting about grand ideas and the finer points of theory. In fact, during the regular teaching semester, academic staff really struggle to prioritize their research even though this is one of the main ways we are assessed by the university's central administration and by the Cantonal government. The reality is that research and writing invariably get done on weekends, late at night and during the summer months.

Autumn Semester 2025

BA STUDIES

Language Module

Course: Modern English Grammar I

Instructor: Beatriz Lorente

Time: Tuesday 10-12

Credit Points: 6 ECTS upon completion of the two-semester module

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This is the first part of a two-semester module which will provide an overview of Modern English Grammar. The focus will be on exploring practical examples and then trying to deduce the grammatical rules that underlie them, in other words, a descriptive rather than a prescriptive approach. The ultimate goal is to develop an overview of Modern English Grammar that will serve as a reference for future work, be it in the study of language, in teaching, in which some students will find themselves involved, and in a more detailed understanding of the subtleties and nuances of the language that have an impact on the understanding of literary texts.

Required Reading: Materials will be posted on ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- have an overview of the grammar of contemporary English;
- can define and use the necessary terminology to talk about English grammar;
- can understand and appreciate the relationship between grammatical structure and function.

Coursework (pass/fail): This course is not eligible for required optional credits. All participants have to pass the graded assessments.

Assessment (graded): Four quizzes: two quizzes in Modern English Grammar I and two quizzes in Modern English Grammar II. This course cannot be taken ungraded.

Course: Writing Skills I

Instructor: Beatriz Lorente

Times: Tuesday 12-14, 16-18, Wednesday 12-14, 14-16, Thursday 10-12 and 12-14 (attend one of the sessions weekly)

Credit Points: 6 ECTS upon completion of the two-semester module

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No
This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This is the first of a two-part intensive, content-based academic writing course which is obligatory for all first-year students. The two-semester programme consists of weekly workshops in which we discuss and, above all, practise the skills required to write academic papers in English. During the first semester, our focus will be on writing the literary essay. You will write short papers which will allow you to focus on the development of cohesion and logical structure, as well as the appropriate and clear use of language.

Required Reading: Materials will be posted on ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes: Students will learn how to:

- Analyze how authors problematize what other authors say and how they position and argue their responses;
- enter the scholarly conversations between these authors by problematizing their arguments and arguing why one's position is reasonable with available evidence;
- organize ideas to help readers understand a line of reasoning;
- document sources so readers can check one's use of the ideas of others; and
- revise the content, organization and wording of the paper, as well as surface features such as spelling and punctuation.

Assessment (graded): Evaluation of written work. This course cannot be taken ungraded. All participants have to pass the assessment in order to gain the credits.

Deadline for Assessed Work: Throughout the semester.

Core Curriculum

Lecture:	Earlier Englishes
Instructor:	Christiania Whitehead
Time:	Tuesday 14-16
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This course offers an introduction to the earliest forms of English spoken and written between c. 500 and c. 1500. Students will become acquainted with Old and Middle English language through a series of lectures on the grammar, phonology and lexicon of the English(es) of the Middle Ages. In addition to acquiring a basic reading knowledge of Middle English, students will learn about aspects of the linguistics and literature of English during this period. Students will also have the opportunity to refine the skills acquired in the lectures in a series of supplementary tutorials.

Required reading: Students will have access to the primary texts studied on the course and extracts from the following textbooks via the Earlier Englishes ILIAS platform. These textbooks are also available as e-books via the Universitätsbibliothek Bern.

Peter Baker, *Introduction to Old English*, 3rd edn (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012)

John Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre, *A Book of Middle English*, 4th edn (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2020)

Keith Johnson, *The History of Early English* (London: Routledge, 2016)

There will be a tutorial offered in this course. Details will be communicated in the first week of the semester.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will

- have a good basic reading ability in Middle English;
- have a preliminary understanding of the cultures in which Old and Middle English were spoken and written;
- be prepared and, hopefully, excited to pursue the study of medieval English in other courses offered by the Department;
- have gained insights into the idea of cultural sustainability.

This lecture course addresses central aspects of cultural sustainability (also known as the fourth pillar of sustainability). Moreover, it participates in the discussion of the global standards of sustainability as defined by the UN General Assembly.

Assessment (graded): The exam is graded. Students who need to attend the course ungraded should contact the lecturer. 50% required to secure a 4.0.

Exam Date: The exam takes place during the regular class times on the twelfth semester week.

Resit Date: The resit exam takes place in the thirteenth semester week.

Substitute Resit (e.g. for cases of illness): The exam takes place in the fourteenth semester week.

Lecture: Introduction to Language and Linguistics

Instructor: Hannah Hedegard

Time: Monday 10-12

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This lecture provides an overview of the field of English linguistics. In the first part, we will explore what is known as micro-linguistics, i.e., the various fundamental systems and levels of language. Here, we will cover such topics as speech sounds and the way they interact (phonetics and phonology), the way words are composed (morphology), how words are combined into phrases and clauses (syntax) and how meaning is constructed (semantics). In a second, shorter part, as our department section predominately works in this area, we will examine how language operates in context and how communication in conversations works.

Required Reading: We will be working from two books in this course. Students can access the PDF versions on ILIAS:

- Fasold, R.W. and Connor-Linton, J. (2014). *An Introduction to Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kuiper, K. and Allan, S. (2016). *An Introduction to English Language: Word, sound and sentence*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Learning Outcomes: By attending this course students will:

- gain an overview of the workings of the English language;
- develop a basic understanding of the areas of linguistics, in order to be able to build on these in future seminars, lectures and individual research.

Coursework (pass/fail): This course is not eligible for required optional credits. All participants have to pass the graded exam. 60% required to secure a 4.0.

Assessment (graded): This lecture is part of the Core Curriculum.

Exam Date: The exam takes place in the twelfth semester week during the regular course hours.

Resit Date: The exam takes place in the thirteenth semester week.

Substitute Resit Date (for case of illness): The exam takes place in the fourteenth semester week.

Lecture: Introduction to Literature

Instructor: Axel Stähler

Time: Thursday 14-16

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This lecture provides an introduction to the methods, concepts, and tools students of literatures in English are advised to use when approaching literary texts. These will help them obtain a fuller understanding of the texts and to express themselves clearly and competently when discussing them. Furthermore, we will look at literature as a particular form of communication, i.e., we will consider the specificity of literary texts, its various genres (drama, narrative fiction, poetry), and its relationship to other media. The lecture course will be accompanied by a tutorial (details tba in the first week of term).

Required Reading: Texts will be made available on ILIAS. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* **must be read before the first session; your knowledge of it may be subject to examination.** The recommended edition is the 5th Norton Critical edition (by Paul B. Armstrong, 2016, ISBN-13: 978-0393264869); in addition, a PDF file of the original publication in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1899) will be made available on ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes: This lecture aims to familiarize students with central concepts and tools for the analysis of literary texts of various genres. Students will obtain clear ideas of approaches to literature, methodologies, terminology, and strategies of literary interpretation.

Coursework (pass/fail): This course is not eligible for required optional credits. All participants must pass the graded exam.

Assessment (graded): This lecture is part of the Core Curriculum. The final exam will consist of short answer questions.

First exam: during regular course time in semester week 12

Resit exam: during regular course time in semester week 13

Second Resit Exam: in semester week 14

Focus Module Language and Linguistics: The Economies of Language

BA Lecture:	Language and Materiality
Instructors:	Crispin Thurlow / Charmaine Kong / Alessandro Pellanda Laura Wohlgemuth
Time:	Tuesday 14-16
Credit Points:	3 ECTS
Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich?	☒ Yes ☐ No

Course Description:

Words really do matter. They are not simply symbolic representations of the material; they are material. They are bodily and concrete. When we speak, it is sound waves that beat against our eardrums; when we write, it is ink that is scratched, struck or pressed onto paper. Words also have material consequences. It is with strings of words, bundles of texts, that we name and distinguish people so as to categorize and regulate them. We deploy our words and texts also to punish people, to harm them, to exterminate them, even. (Thurlow, 2023, p. 153)

This lecture series considers a range of ways in which language has material consequences for our everyday lives. By the same token, we will also examine how language is itself something material and how it shapes and is shaped by material culture. We will start by thinking through the “hardcore” economies and politics of language/s nowadays, before looking at how language functions multimodally as a spatial, embodied, and sensory practice. In this regard, and following an initial introductory lecture, the course will be organized into bi-weekly cycles addressing five major thematics: *commodification*, *global semioscape*, *stuff/objects*, *space/place*, and *embodiment*. Lectures will be organized around a series of framing readings and case-study readings; every other week, class time will involve a short in-class exercise in order to apply some of the ideas covered in the readings.

Required Reading: The course hinges on a series of core theoretical framing readings and more applied case-study readings; these will be posted as PDFs on ILIAS. Your success in the course depends heavily on your having completed the reading and having demonstrated a core understanding. NOTE: The following core reading and case-study reading must be read before the first session:

Cavanaugh, J.R. & Shankar, S. (2017, extract). Toward a theory of language materiality: An introduction. In *Language and Materiality: Ethnographical and Theoretical Explorations*. Cambridge University Press.

Jaworski, A. (2015). Word cities and language objects. “Love” sculptures and signs as shifters. *Linguistic Landscape*, 1(1): 75–94.

For the core reading (Cavanaugh & Shankar) you must prepare two hard-copy summaries following the instructions under Assessment; for the case-study reading, you must complete

the first three questions of Reading Quiz 1 (printed out and with handwritten answers). Bring the summaries (stapled) and quiz to class on the first day.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will be able:

- to recognize how language has political-economic and material consequences;
- to explore some of the ways language functions multimodally through processes of embodiment, spatialization and materialization;
- To appreciate some of the different theoretical/critical approaches in the study of language materiality.

Assessment pass/fail:* In order to pass this class you will need to do the following: achieve a minimum average of 75% for six graded reading quizzes based on the case-study readings; complete six summary tasks based on the framing readings; and complete six in-class exercises. The summary tasks and in-class exercises are assessed as credit/half-credit/no-credit. You must pass all three components to pass overall.

Reading quizzes: The first three questions will be completed at home and the other three questions in class under test-like conditions (two questions on the reading and one recap question from previous class material). You must print out the template (back-to-back or stapled) and your answers must be handwritten. It will be submitted in class.

Summary tasks: Two summaries of each core reading must be produced: (1) an AI-generated summary of the main argument and key points, and (2) your own “meta-summary” of this initial summary which should also demonstrate your understanding of key terms and concepts. Each summary should be no longer than one page; they must be printed back-to-back or stapled and brought to class.

Assessment graded:

This course is graded through cumulative assessment (see above). If you are seeking a grade, the reading quizzes will be worth 50% of the final grade, the pre-lecture surveys 30% and the in-class exercises 20%. You must pass all three components to pass overall. The final percentage will be converted to the UniBe’s 6-point system as follows: 60-68% = 4.0 / 69-76% = 4.5 / 77-84% = 5.0 / 85-92% = 5.5 / 93-100% = 6.0.

BA Seminar: Language & Art
Instructor: Kellie Gonçalves
Time: Monday 12-14
Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description:

Studies on language and art within the field of sociolinguistics are in their relative infancy. Contemporary understandings of language have come to be understood as a broad set of communicative practices drawing on a wide range of communicative resources where embodiment, multimodality, and materiality (re)emerge as salient factors within diverse processes of meaning-making by individuals in our everyday lives. In a recent Themes Series Article found in the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* entitled “Sociolinguistics + Art”, Levon mentions that “art, like language, is also an attempt to represent, evaluate and, ultimately, engage with the world around us, and to do so in ways that highlight both subjective and collective experience and resist epistemological closure. Perhaps for this reason, a growing number of sociolinguists have begun turning their attention to art, either by collaborating directly with artists or by involving art in their research” (2020: 1). In this course, we will be exploring multilingual, embodied, and multimodal dimensions along with their material resources of both language and art and their inevitable intertwinement. This entails a certain exploration into the mixing of genres and styles, artworks emplacement and pragmatic relevance as well as their functions and effects. As such, we will also be exploring language and art in different spaces and places to better understand their indexical functions, meaning potential for artists and their intended as well as not intended audience. Banal and democratic spaces and places to be explored include the street (with regards to graffiti, street art and stickers Gonçalves & Milani 2022; Gonçalves et al. 2025) as well as more ‘permanent’ and ‘high cultural’ pieces (Jaworski & Gonçalves 2022) to sites such as museums considered places of “educative leisure” (Hanquinet and Savage 2012). There is a half day excursion planned for the course at a local museum in Bern and another session planned at a local art gallery in Bern, excursion dates will be announced during our first session.

Required Reading: All texts will be available on ILIAS

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- identify the theoretical and methodological challenges in studying language and art as well as the societal relevance of it;
- be able to critically engage with theoretical concepts and current debates in language and art studies;
- describe and discuss different types of work that embed perspectives of language and art in diverse international contexts;

- engage with language and art during our course excursions, which may entail digital communication, media, public signage and audience design;
- gain research competencies through conducting empirical work,
- practice discursive competencies during class discussions and poster presentations

Coursework (pass/fail): Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance, active participation in class discussions, data collection, data analysis, a poster presentation & *participation in a half-day excursion to a local art museum is mandatory.*

Assessment (graded):* Assessment (graded): Regular attendance, active participation in class discussions, data collection, data analysis, a poster presentation, and a written seminar paper of approximately 4000 words (excluding references). *Participation in a half-day excursion to a local art museum is mandatory.*

Deadline for Assessed Work: 12 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar: The Linguistics of Seeking Asylum

Instructor: Hannah Hedegard

Time: Wednesday 10-12

Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This course examines the central role of language in asylum procedures, focusing on how linguistic practices shape the experiences of asylum seekers and the outcomes of their claims. Divided into two distinct parts, the seminar integrates theoretical and applied perspectives from sociolinguistics, forensic linguistics and discourse analysis.

In the course's first half, we explore interactional and discursive dimensions of the asylum process, with special attention to asylum interviews. We will engage with institutional discourse, and narrative pragmatics to uncover how language norms and expectations reproduce systemic bias. Topics include interactional asymmetries, politeness and trauma discourse, narrative coherence, and voice construction.

In the second part, we shift to the use of language as *evidence* in asylum decisions — specifically focussing on Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO), where an asylum seeker's speech is evaluated regarding the extent it reflects their claimed geographical and social background. We assess the scientific foundations of the practice by examining the various forensic phonetic approaches utilised, and also explore the practical and ethical challenges involved in judging language as a biomarker.

This course has a *Problem-Based Learning (PBL)* format i.e., learning is driven by the process of solving complex, real-world problems; each week we will analyse case materials (interview transcripts, policy texts, LADO reports) and reflect on recurrent ideas in this applied field, such as a) the notion of credibility, and b) the linguist's role. The course culminates in a final project where students creatively address a chosen problem from one of the two parts in an "unessay" format, such as a podcast, poster, or mock legal brief.

Required Reading: All weekly reading will be uploaded to ILIAS before the term starts.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students can:

- Analyse the interactional and discursive structures of asylum interviews using sociolinguistic and discourse analytic frameworks;
- Evaluate how credibility assessments in asylum procedures are shaped by linguistic expectations, norms, and ideologies;
- Demonstrate they understand the principles and issues in Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO) in asylum cases.

Coursework (pass/fail): Active participation, final "unessay" project

Assessment (graded):* Active participation, final “unessay” project, paper of 3500 words (+/- 10%)

Deadline for Assessed Work: 18:00 on 19 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar: Language at Work
Instructor: Gwynne Mapes
Time: Tuesday 12-14
Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: Discourse analysts have long been interested in language at work, whether under the label institutional (e.g. Drew and Heritage 1992), workplace (e.g. Holmes 2007), professional (e.g. Kong 2014) or organizational discourse (e.g. Wee 2015). More recently, and as many of our societies turn increasingly from being rooted in manufacture-based economies to those relying more heavily on service-based economies, language sits powerfully at the heart of people's livelihoods. Ultimately, workers of all kinds – "professionals" and otherwise – are compelled to continually re-establish their (linguistic) value. In this course, students will receive an introduction to the foundational areas of language commodification and workplace/professional discourse, as well as specific settings/case studies related to both blue-collar workplaces and more high-end or "elite" contexts of language work (e.g. political speechwriting). Alongside these theoretical and applied explorations, students will also be responsible for ethnographically-informed data collection in a pre-selected workplace, culminating in a final workshop where they will present and discuss their findings.

Required Reading: A series of articles and chapters (posted on ILIAS) will comprise foundational theory material, case study readings, and then any material recommended by invited speakers.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- have a broad grasp of the commodification of language and its implications for workplace discourse;
- understand the sociolinguistic/discursive differences between blue-collar settings and so-called "professional" ones;
- have developed a good critical awareness of "language work" and the political economy of words in contemporary society;
- are able to apply ethnographic methods in their own investigations of workplace discourse.

Coursework (pass/fail): In order to pass this course (and earn 4 ECTS) you must fulfil the following coursework requirements:

- pass five in-class reading quizzes;
- demonstrate your active engagement in lectures/guest presentations;
- prepare and deliver a data-driven presentation about a particular workplace setting;
- participate actively in all other student presentations.

Assessment (graded):* In order to satisfy the additional workload for earning 7 ECTS, you must complete a final research paper entailing in-depth analysis of data collected for your project/ presentation.

Deadline for Assessed Work: Friday, 23 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

Free-Standing Lectures and Seminars

BA Lecture Literature: American Genesis 1620 - 1870

Instructor: Thomas Claviez

Time: Wednesday 14-16

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Course Description: The lecture will give – American Studies like – an overview of the main literary, political and historical events between 1620 and 1870, and the interplay between them.

Required Reading: The texts uploaded on ILIAS for the first session must be read before the first session; your knowledge of it may be subject to examination.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- Have familiarized themselves with the most important events and developments – literary, political, historical – of the US during these centuries;
- Have a firm grasp of the connections between literary and cultural eras – Puritanism, Early Republic, Romanticism, Realism – and their historical contexts;
- Are able to identify distinctive literary features of these eras.

Assessment (pass/fail or graded): * Pass/fail and graded. 'Pass' requires regular attendance; a grade requires a successful exam at either of the following exams:

Exam date: 03 December 2025

Resit date: 10 December 2025

Second Resit date: 17 December 2025

* Lectures are ungraded and graded. Please make sure to register correctly:

BA students - UNGRADED lecture (including the Focus Module Lecture); MA major student - UNGRADED lecture;
MA minor student - GRADED lectures; International / exchange student register for graded or ungraded lecture.

BA Seminar Linguistics:

Dialect and Performance

Instructors:

Hannah Hedegard / Danielle Tod

Time:

Wednesday 12-14

Credit Points:

4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich?

☐

Yes

☒

No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: Why does the bad guy always have an RP accent? How come non-US artists have American accents when they sing? Are toddlers around the world really acquiring British English from watching *Peppa Pig*? In this seminar we critically discuss methodological and theoretical sociolinguistic questions surrounding performance of dialect in modern entertainment media, such as the above.

Drawing on primarily variationist sociolinguistic literature, we will focus on various genres of media, exploring the ways in which dialects are approximated, avoided, and/or commodified by the entertainment industry. Entertainment media genres will include film, television, vlogs, commercials, popular music, theatrical productions, podcasts, and video games from across the Anglophone world. Amongst other topics, we will examine the degree to which a) scripted reality shows such as *Geordie Shore* and *Made in Chelsea* accurately reflect ongoing linguistic change in their respective dialects, b) video game characters' vocal performances support a player's sociomoral orientation, and c) musicians vary their speech in performance to align with the linguistic norms of a particular music genre. In addition, we will go behind the scenes in two special sessions: a) we examine the role and methodology of dialect coaching in a guest talk by a professional actor with accent training, and b) we shine a spotlight on the Transatlantic accent, aka American Stage Speech - the English variety that blurs the line between performance (of a role) and reality, affectation and authenticity.

Required Reading: All weekly texts/media will be uploaded to ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- understand the broad potential of entertainment media as sites of sociolinguistic research;
- evaluate the sociopolitical and cultural implications of dialect use in entertainment, including issues of stereotyping, linguistic profiling, and identity;
- critically reflect on the role of professional practices such as dialect coaching and staged speech in shaping public perceptions of linguistic authenticity.

Coursework (pass/fail): Class participation, oral presentation

Assessment (graded):* Class participation, oral presentation, and a 3000-word paper.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 18:00 on 19 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar Literature:

The Politics of Nostalgia and Solastalgia: Literary and Cultural Perspectives

Instructors:

Gabriele Rippl / Malaika Sutter

Time:

Thursday 14-16

Credit Points:

4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: “Nostalgia (from *nostos* – return home, and *algia* – longing) is a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed. Nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one’s own fantasy” (Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* xiii).

In recent years, American culture has seen a surge of longing for a ‘simpler’ past, an imagined golden age, a vanishing natural world. From the whitewashed nostalgia of “Make America Great Again” to the rise of Trad Wives, from the carefully curated aesthetics of Cottagecore and Dark Academia to the pandemic-era millennial nostalgia, the US is haunted by what it thinks it has lost and by what it knows it is losing. Meanwhile, solastalgia – the pain or sickness of losing our home caused by the climate crisis – adds new layers of urgency and grief.

This course explores how American literature, film, digital media, and art engage with nostalgia and solastalgia. We read novels, short stories, critical essays, poems, alongside internet trends and visual artworks to analyze how they reproduce, resist, or reimagine the past, present, and the future. We trace nostalgia’s history – considered a curable condition by Swiss doctors in the seventeenth century – and explore the different (literary and aesthetic) forms of nostalgia and their political functions. In addition, we turn to the more recent critical term ‘solastalgia,’ discussing it within the frameworks of affect, eco-sickness, and cognitive theory.

Topics include, but are not limited to, critical memory work, anti-nostalgia, and critical fabulation, Indigenous and queer nostalgia, gendered forms of nostalgia, ecological grief and climate fiction.

Please reserve the following date to attend this mandatory guest lecture by Prof. Lee Medovoi: 14:15-16:00 on 27 October 2025.

Required Reading: Shorter texts will be made available on ILIAS. In preparation, students are expected to acquire and read the following texts:

- Octavia E. Butler. 1979. *Kindred*. London: Headline, 2018.
- Powers, Richard. *Bewilderment*. London: Hutchinson Heinemann, 2021.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- gain insight into the goals of the environmental humanities and cultural sustainability;
- have improved their critical thinking, discussion, moderation, and academic writing skills;

- understand and explain the histories, definitions, and aesthetics of nostalgia and solastalgia;
- can critically examine orally and in writing how literary texts and other media use the concepts of nostalgia and solastalgia;
- understand and explain the different political functions of nostalgia and solastalgia.

Coursework (pass/fail): Thorough preparation of the texts, regular attendance, active participation in class, moderation of one session, one 4–5-page handout to be uploaded one week before the moderation, and/or writing exercises, depending on student numbers.

Assessment (graded):* Same as ungraded, plus a seminar paper (3000-4000 words).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 31 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar Literature:

The Early American Novel

Instructor:

Axel Stähler

Time:

Monday 10-12

Credit Points:

4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich?

☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: Early American literature struggled to find its own idiosyncratic voice. This became particularly palpable in the post-independence period and into the early nineteenth century. While European literary models were still frequently imitated, writers nevertheless sought to address American issues and to imbue their work with specifically American traits.

In this seminar, we will discuss four novels of the early American period engaged in this process with particular focus on their genre and their aesthetic and cultural-historical significance. Hannah Webster Foster's sentimental novel *The Coquette* (1797), a seduction story in the tradition of Samuel Richardson, articulates strong criticism of early American society and the repression experienced by women. Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland: Or, The Transformation* (1798) is considered the earliest American gothic novel. It addresses sensationalist psychology as well as voice and perception and religious fanaticism. *Female Quixote* (1801) by Tabitha Gilman Tenney not only challenges the delusions induced by romantic literature but also voices an early feminism. William Gilman Simms's *The Yemassee* (1835), finally, is an early historical novel. Following the examples of Walter Scott's historical romances and James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, it elevates American history to a subject of literature.

The four texts represent popular genres of the novel in eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century America and Europe: the epistolary novel (Foster), the gothic novel (Brown), the picaresque novel (Tenney), and the historical novel (Simms).

Required Reading: All novels should have been read prior to the second seminar session; scans of all texts will be made available on ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will:

- understand the generic specificities and history of the early American novel;
- have developed a critical awareness of the formation of an early American national literature post-independence and into the early nineteenth century;
- have practiced and enhanced close reading skills;
- have gained insight into the goals of cultural sustainability.

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance and active seminar participation; short presentations (POD paras) and individual research tasks.

Assessment (graded):* Introduction to one of the texts and annotations to one chapter (1500 words; 35%) and one seminar paper (2500 words; 65%).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 03 October 2025 (introduction and annotations); 11 January 2026 (seminar paper).

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

Reading the Romantics

Zoë Lehmann Imfeld

Monday 12-14

4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Course Description: Would you rather spend a weekend in the Lake District with Wordsworth and Coleridge, or a weekend by Lake Geneva with Byron and Shelley? This course will help you decide, as we tackle works by the major British Romantic poets, as well as some under-appreciated poets (particularly female poets), such as Helen Leigh and Felicia Hemans. The course is not intended as a survey of Romanticism, but will focus specifically on close readings of representative poems, to tease out the myriad voices within the Romantic poetic tradition.

Students should also read the discussion material posted by the other members of the class. In the spirit of engaging fully with close readings of relevant poetry, the reading material is mostly primary literature (i.e. poems, prefaces etc.), with some introductory chapters to provide context.

- will have developed and practiced close-reading skills;
- will have developed a familiarity with the salient features and themes in the work of major Romantic poets;
- will be able to identify key themes and motifs in the Romantic movement.

Deadline for Assessed Work: Monday, 09 February 2026

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BA Seminar Literature: Richard III in History and Drama

Instructors: Nicole Nyffenegger / Christian Hesse (Medieval History)

Time: Tuesday 10-12

Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 10 participants from our department.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Please note: We have already had a preliminary meeting for this course. If you did not attend but are interested in still joining the excursion, please write an email right away to nicole.nyffenegger@unibe.ch

Course Description: This course explores Richard III, king of England (1483–1485), whose brief but dramatic reign marked the violent end of the Wars of the Roses and the Plantagenet dynasty. The historical Richard, rising to power through a controversial series of events, including the disappearance of his nephews, the so-called Princes in the Tower, is one of the most disputed figures in English history. His rule was marked by ruthless consolidation of power, culminating in his defeat and death at the Battle of Bosworth, which ushered in the Tudor era under Henry VII. We will examine Richard III through two distinct but intertwined lenses: the historical perspective, drawing on chronicles, parliamentary documents, and contemporary accounts; and the literary representation in William Shakespeare's *Richard III* (1592). In Shakespeare's hands, Richard becomes the archetypal villain: charismatic, manipulative, and physically deformed, whose rise and fall are framed as a drama of morals and divine justice.

Our discussions will focus on questions of power, legitimacy, and propaganda. What strategies are used to justify a usurpation, and how do these differ between historical and dramatic narratives? How is deformity linked to morality, and what does that reveal about early modern understandings of the body? How are enemies, allies, and betrayals portrayed? And how do history and literature negotiate and shape the image of a controversial ruler? This interdisciplinary seminar will be co-taught in German and English. Students of English literature will present and submit their work in English; students of history in German. A good working knowledge of both languages is essential.

On our four-day excursion to London (5-8 October 2025), we will trace both the medieval and the early modern remains of the town and explore the significant sites for both the historical Richard III and the eponymous play.

Required Reading: We will be working with *Richard III*. Edited by James R. Siemon, The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd ser., Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2009. If you'd rather not buy a printed edition, you are welcome to work with the one provided by Folger Digital Texts: <https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/richard-iii/>

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will have:

- engaged with the social, political, and cultural circumstances of late medieval England, from the perspectives of historical and literary studies ;
- honed their skills at analysing and discussing texts of different genres;
- discussed Shakespeare's *Richard III* and the play's historical sources ;
- developed an understanding of the value of interdisciplinary approaches.

Coursework (pass/fail): One presentation in class and one presentation while on site in London, thorough preparation of set texts, regular presence, active participation.

Assessment (graded):* All of the above plus a paper of 3000-4000 words (tbc).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 15 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar Literature: Chaucer's and Shakespeare's Troy
Instructor: Nicole Nyffenegger
Time: Tuesday 14-16
Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This seminar explores two related meditations on love, war, and betrayal: Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. Reading Chaucer's poem 'backwards' through Shakespeare's dramatic adaptation, the course introduces students to adaptation studies, while also drawing on intertextuality, genre theory and gender criticism, to interrogate how this story of two Trojan lovers is reimagined. We'll analyse how Shakespeare 'hits' his medieval source: How does his *Troilus and Cressida* speak to or against Chaucer-the-narrator's voice? What happens with the genre switch? What changes in Criseyde/Cressida's role and agency in this male-dominated wartime world? And how do both works, individually and together, reshape the Trojan myth?

Required Reading: We will work with Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* in *The Riverside Chaucer* (ed. Larry D. Benson, 3rd ed., 1987), alongside Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* in the *Arden Shakespeare* Third Series (ed. David Bevington, 1998). Online alternatives for both texts are available and will be linked on Ilias before term start.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will have:

- critically analysed and discussed Chaucer's and Shakespeare's versions;
- understood principles of adaptation and intertextuality across periods and genres;
- further honed their skills of reading Middle English and Early Modern English;
- as well as textual analysis, academic discussion, and academic writing.

Coursework (pass/fail): Active participation, thorough preparation of set texts, regular presence, a presentation, written coursework.

Assessment (graded):* All of the above plus a paper of 3000-4000 words (tbc)

Deadline for Assessed Work: 15 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar Literature: *Beowulf's Entangled Worlds: Objects, Places, Creatures*
Instructor: Nicole Nyffenegger
Time: Thursday 14-16
Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: New Materialist and Posthumanist critics have been challenging the centrality of humans as the sole agent of meaning, value, and history. Moving beyond anthropocentric views, they have asked us to consider how matter participates in shaping the world, and how animate and inanimate entities act on one another. New Materialism insists on the agency of things, the vitality of matter, and the entanglement of bodies and environments. Posthumanism further interrogates how we define being, action, and relations and posits that non-human beings, landscapes, and objects do not primarily exist to serve human needs. This seminar applies these critical frameworks to the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*, investigating its entangled worlds of animate swords, haunting places, and grieving monsters; the spatial logic of liminal versus central settings (i.e., the mere and the mead-hall), as well as the poetic (de)construction of heroism.

Required Reading: We will work with **Seamus Heaney's celebrated verse translation of *Beowulf* (*Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, 2000)**, which captures the poem's poetic beauty, **supplemented by additional translations with critical apparatus; these** will be available for consultation on the presence shelf.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will have:

- critically analysed and discussed *Beowulf*,
- engaged with scholarly debates in New Materialism and Posthumanist criticism,
- practiced their reading of Old English,
- further honed their skills of academic discussion, doing presentations, and academic writing.

Coursework (pass/fail): A presentation, written coursework, thorough preparation of set reading, active participation, regular presence.

Assessment (graded):* All of the above plus a paper of 3000-4000 words (tbc).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 15 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar Literature: **Beyond the Bard: A Broader Introduction to Early Modern Literature**

Instructor: **Nicole Nyffenegger**

Time: Friday 10-12

Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This seminar introduces students to the vibrant and multifaceted literary landscape of England during the lifetime of Shakespeare, moving beyond the traditional focus on “The Bard” to engage with a wide array of voices and forms. From satirical prose to metaphysical poetry, from sermons to love poems to plays, we will explore how literary works of the time approached matters of politics, religion, identity, gender, social status, exploration, and knowledge in the rapidly changing and expanding world of Early Modern England. We will pay special attention to include female authors, such as Aemilia Lanyer, Isabelle Whitney, and Mary Sidney Herbert, alongside some that aren’t primarily known as authors, such as Sir Walter Raleigh and King James I, and others that were then just as famous as Shakespeare (Ben Jonson, Christopher Marlowe) or are today (John Donne).

Required Reading: All our primary and secondary texts will be available on Ilias.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will have:

- critically analysed a range of early modern English texts of diverse genre ;
- compared and evaluated the contributions of canonical and non-canonical authors;
- situated literary works within their historical and intellectual contexts;
- further practiced their skills at careful textual analysis, academic discussion, and writing.

Coursework (pass/fail): Active participation, thorough preparation of set texts, regular presence, a presentation, written coursework.

Assessment (graded):* All of the above plus a paper of 3000-4000 words (tbc)

Deadline for Assessed Work: 15 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

BA Seminar Literature: “I hear it said that you are a very wicked woman”: Reading *The Book of Margery Kempe*

Instructor: Hannah Piercy

Time: Wednesday 10-12

Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This course will explore one of the most intriguing and memorable works of medieval literature: *The Book of Margery Kempe*. A record of a middle-class woman’s life – sometimes thought of as the first autobiography in English – *The Book of Margery Kempe* offers a strong sense of its author-protagonist’s personality. We will read the entire book together over the semester, from Margery being accused of heresy to her fits of weeping; her travels from England to Jerusalem and more widely in Europe; and her adventures in brewing, her sexual temptations, and her intimate relationship with Jesus. We will also explore critical perspectives and the literary afterlives of the *Book* in medievalist fiction, alongside focusing on seminar paper skills.

Required Reading: Please purchase a copy of Anthony Bale’s translation of *The Book of Margery Kempe* into modern English (Oxford World Classics series, 2013). We will read the book in modern English to ensure understanding, but will also work with the online Middle English Texts Series edition, which you will be expected to use for your final assignments. A tip: buying the Bale edition from Blackwell’s, an English bookshop with free international delivery, may be a cheaper option. If you already have a different edition or if buying the edition poses a problem, please email me to discuss. The other set texts (criticism and medievalist works) will be uploaded to ILIAS.

The specific reading and questions to think about before the first seminar will be uploaded to ILIAS over the summer: **please make sure you have completed this reading before the first session.**

Content warning: *The Book of Margery Kempe* contains very brief references to suicidal thoughts, self-harm, marital rape and fear of sexual assault, as well as portraying mental illness and distress.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- Will have read the entire *Book of Margery Kempe* and explored this work in depth. This is a rare opportunity to focus in detail on one text rather than reading the *Book* in excerpts, making the course helpful for those who have encountered parts of the *Book* before as well as students who are new to it (and to medieval studies more broadly);
- Will have explored critical perspectives on *The Book of Margery Kempe*;

- Will have read and discussed modern creative adaptations of and responses to Margery's book;
- Will have practiced textual analysis, academic discussion, and seminar paper writing skills;
- Will have developed skills in reading Middle English.

Coursework (pass/fail): regular attendance, thorough preparation of set texts, active participation, occasional short writing assignments. I place significant emphasis on active learning in my seminars, supporting all students to contribute to small group discussions and plenary activities.

Assessment (graded):* All of the above plus EITHER a 3500 word paper OR a creative response to *The Book of Margery Kempe* and critical commentary of 1500-2000 words that explores how your creative piece relates to the *Book*.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 26 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

Optional Courses

BA Workshop:	Waste Semiotics: Language, Materiality, Space
Instructors:	Crispin Thurlow / Charmaine Kong / Alessandro Pellanda Laura Wohlgemuth
Times:	This is an ENLIGHT/BIP course with six online sessions and a one-week intensive programme in Bern. <u>Online sessions:</u> Tuesdays 16:15 to 17:45 on 14, 21, 28 October and 04, 11 and 18 November <u>One-week intensive:</u> Monday 24 to Friday 28 November
Credit Points:	3 ECTS + 2 ECTS Independent Studies

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This special course is only open to BA and MA students studying in the Department of English, and on a limited (see cap), competitively selected basis. *Students wishing to be considered for a place in the course should email Professor Thurlow with a short (10 lines max) motivation statement by 06 August; final selection and registration will be confirmed by 08 August.*

Course Description: Waste Semiotics offers a transdisciplinary, action-oriented space for students wanting to investigate the powerful connections between everyday language and communication and one of the most pressing ecological and cultural concerns of our time: waste. The course is organized as the UniBe's first Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) in collaboration with the following ENLIGHT partner universities: Ghent, Groningen, Tartu, and Uppsala. BA and MA students from these universities are already enrolled, as well as from Galway and Bratislava.

The course comprises a series of six online sessions and a five-day intensive programme in Bern, including outings, a methods workshop, and a community-engagement project. Students travelling to Bern will use their journey as a chance to complete a "trash trajectories" fieldwork exercise serving as the basis for our hands-on work together. Bern students will be expected to produce equivalent fieldwork data. For more information, see the ENLIGHT course catalogue:

<https://enlight-eu.org/students/courses/1272-waste-semiotics>.

Learning Outcomes: This workshop will be structured around five superordinate academic practices which are central to just about all academic work: observing, describing, explaining, evaluating and critiquing. By the end of this workshop, it is expected that students will:

- have a foundational understanding of the theoretical and conceptual links between "waste semiotics" and the interdisciplinary field of discard studies;
- understand how "waste semiotics" is grounded in the study of linguistic, representational and other communicative practices;
- have an appreciation for the way waste is approached in other fields such as cultural studies, geography, fine arts, and anthropology;
- develop practical and methodological skills for studying and documenting the "trajectories of waste" in urban spaces;

- recognize the concrete ways in which a semiotic approach to waste creates opportunities for wider community engagement and perhaps solutions for key ecological problems.

Coursework (pass/fail): This special course is worth 5 ECTS, which Bern students will be awarded as a mixture of Workshop (3 ECTS) and Independent Studies (2 ECTS). Students' learning will be assessed based on (a) satisfactory participation and engagement in online sessions and the intensive programme; and (b) the completion of short project report and learning reflection statement. The course will be assessed by the four Bern instructors.

BA Workshop: **Statistics for Sociolinguistics**
Instructor: **Danielle Tod**
Time: Wednesday 14-18 on 15, 22 and 29 October, and 05 November
Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☒ Yes ☐ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: This hands-on workshop introduces students to statistical concepts and methods used for the analysis of quantitative data in sociolinguistic research. We will cover basic terminology in statistics, learn how to do descriptive statistics, and how to select and carry out inferential statistics for hypothesis testing. We will also focus on interpreting and understanding the results of statistical tests using example research questions and case studies in sociolinguistics, and learn how to present the results of statistical analyses in research papers. Students will become familiar with several tools for doing statistics including Excel and R. No previous experience with statistics is required for participation. By the end of the course, students will be able to independently select and carry out statistical tests for the analysis of quantitative data in their own projects, making this course particularly suitable for those planning to conduct research using quantitative data in future assignments.

Required Reading: There is no required reading for this course, but optional reading will be made available on Ilias.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to:

- understand basic terminology and concepts in statistics;
- independently select and carry out appropriate statistical tests for a given data set;
- report and present the results of statistical tests;
- interpret the output of statistical tests.

Coursework (pass/fail): Active participation in class, completion of exercises and regular attendance.

BA Workshop: "And then, and then, and then...": A Narratological Exploration of Storytelling

Instructor: Marion Troxler

Time: Monday 14-16

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: The aim of this workshop is to explore storytelling as a rich and complex expression to convey information, emotions, and ideas as well as ideology. Looking at a variety of texts, we will focus on different key aspects within a narratological analysis, e.g. time, focalization, characters, and narrative structures, and consider the effects of genre and form. Accordingly, we will look at a wide array of genres, from novellas and short stories to song lyrics and dramatic monologues (e.g. Augusta Webster, "A Castaway"). The corpus will include examples of primarily contemporary poetry and prose as well as oral storytelling. Additionally, we will not only examine collaborative storytelling, such as the genesis of Rivers Solomon's *The Deep*, but also explore it in practice. Designed as a highly participative workshop, students are invited to contribute with their own choice of material or even their own creative work after consultation with the instructor.

Required Reading: The material will be uploaded on ILIAS. Please check ILIAS before the semester start in order to prepare the material for the first session.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- Have trained and improved their vocabulary to describe and analyse narrative elements;
- Can recognise relationships between form and content to refine their close reading;
- Have practiced their academic skills in presentation, discussion and in formulating written arguments.

Coursework (pass/fail):

Regular attendance, weekly preparation of material and active participation are expected to pass this course. Additionally, students will be required to contribute to sessions in the form of presentations or similar activities.

Wahlbereich Lecture:	BMZ lecture 'Mittelalter in der Schweiz – Schweiz im Mittelalter'
Instructors:	Annette Kern-Stähler and other Medievalists of the University of Bern and Guest Speakers
Times:	Thursday 16.15-17.45. In addition: three post-lecture seminars starting at 17.45 and a preliminary meeting
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

BMZ: Das Berner Mittelalter Zentrum (BMZ) hat als interdisziplinäres und Synergien stiftendes Forum an der Universität Bern die Aufgabe, Forschung und Lehre sowie Öffentlichkeitsarbeit auf dem Gesamtgebiet der mittelalterlichen Geschichte und Kultur zu fördern und zu koordinieren. Dies geschieht durch gemeinsame Lehrveranstaltungen, Forschungsprojekte, Publikationen, Sprachkurse, Tagungen und Exkursionen sowie durch Gastvorträge von in- und ausländischen Gelehrten.

Course Description: Die Ringvorlesung „Mittelalter in der Schweiz – Schweiz im Mittelalter“ beleuchtet zentrale Aspekte der Mediävistik aus interdisziplinärer Perspektive. Renommierete Expert*innen aus verschiedenen Fachbereichen wie Geschichte, Literaturwissenschaft, Kunstgeschichte und Handschriftenkunde geben Einblicke in die mittelalterliche Schweiz sowie in deren Rezeption und Interpretation. Dabei wird die Schweiz sowohl als geographischer Raum im Mittelalter als auch als moderne Konstruktion eines mittelalterlichen Erbes betrachtet.

Thematisch reicht das Spektrum von mittelalterlichen Handschriften und geistlichen Strömungen über Rittertum und kulturelle Ausdrucksformen bis hin zu materiellen Überlieferungen und musealen Darstellungen.

Eine besondere Stärke der Ringvorlesung liegt in ihrem interdisziplinären Ansatz: Forschende aus verschiedenen Universitäten und Institutionen präsentieren aktuelle Forschungsergebnisse und methodische Zugänge, die eine breite Auseinandersetzung mit der Thematik ermöglichen.

Ein detailliertes Programm der Vorlesung wird rechtzeitig vor Semesterbeginn per Aushang und im Internet (www.bmz.unibe.ch) bekannt gegeben. Ziel der Veranstaltung ist es, die interdisziplinäre Vernetzung der Mediävistik zu fördern und die Studierenden an einem fächerübergreifenden Gespräch zu beteiligen; diesem Zweck dienen vor allem die an die Vorträge anschliessenden Diskussionen. Eine Rückbindung an spezifisch germanistische Fragestellungen erfolgt durch drei zusätzliche Sitzungen (voraussichtlich Freitag, 9.00-10.00 Uhr).

Ort: Hauptgebäude, Hochschulstrasse 4, Raum 220

Wahlbereich Lecture: **Kein Witz. Eine interdisziplinäre Ringvorlesung über Humor**

Instructors: **Collegium generale**

Time: Wednesday 18:45-19:45

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Collegium Generale: Das Collegium Generale der Universität Bern ist die älteste eigenständige interdisziplinäre Institution der Universität. Es hat die Aufgabe, den fächerübergreifenden Dialog und die inter- und transdisziplinäre Vernetzung innerhalb der Universität durch Veranstaltungen für Lehrende, Nachwuchsforschende und Studierende aller Fakultäten zu fördern. In Veröffentlichungen und allgemeinbildenden Veranstaltungen vermittelt das Collegium generale Beispiele dieser Arbeit einer breiteren Öffentlichkeit.

Location: Hauptgebäude, Hochschulstrasse 4, Auditorium maximum

Anmeldung und Informationen [hier](#).

Anrechenbarkeit für Studierende: KSL

Der Besuch der Vorlesungsreihe wird Studierenden, deren Studienplan dies zulässt, nach bestandenem Leistungsnachweis mit 3 Kreditpunkten als Wahlbereich angerechnet.

Research Module

BA Colloquium:	Language and Linguistics
Instructors:	David Britain / Kellie Gonçalves / Crispin Thurlow
Times:	Monday 14-15
Dates:	15 and 22 September, 13 and 20 October, 03 November Conference on Friday afternoon 21 November
Credit Points:	2 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This course is only open for students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: The colloquium is for students who are either planning to write or are already in the process of writing their BA theses. Generally speaking, the colloquium expects students to be working on projects in the broadly defined field of “sociocultural linguistics” – most notably, sociolinguistics, discourse studies, and/or linguistic anthropology. The colloquium offers students the chance to learn about general academic communication practices; to present their own work or to learn about other people’s work; and to get feedback on their ideas from established researchers and peers.

- All students are expected to attend five foundation sessions: *General Introduction* (Week 1, 15 Sept), *What is a thesis?* (Week 2, 22 Sept), *Writing Skills* (Week 5, 13 Oct), and *Presentation Skills* (Week 6, 20 Oct).
- Students in their final semester must attend an *Analysis Workshop* (Week 8, 03 Nov), bringing a research design and indicative examples of completed data analysis.
- All colloquium students must then participate fully in the one-day colloquium conference scheduled for semester Week 10: Friday 21 November pm.
- Students in their first colloquium semester must submit their *Project Propositions* (see below) by 15th October – one month before the supervisor registration deadline.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will:

- know the general expectations for BA theses in sociocultural linguistics;
- have acquired basic skills and best-practice techniques for academic writing;
- have acquired basic skills and best-practice techniques for academic presentations;
- be familiar with a variety of methodologies, research designs and analytic procedures in sociocultural linguistics.

Coursework (pass/fail): To pass, all colloquium students must attend the whole conference whether or not they are presenting their work. All students must also attend the five foundation sessions. Students should always attend the *General Introduction* in each colloquium semester, but do not have to do the other sessions more than once during their BA studies. Students presenting their theses at the conference will be expected to prepare – and submit by fixed deadlines – an abstract and then a copy of their slideshow.

Project Propositions (previously “research exercise”)

The thesis is intended to take three months to complete; however, students doing empirical, data-based research must obviously agree an appropriate topic and design a do-able project before they can start the thesis. For this reason, and in order to earn 2 ECTS, students in their first semester of the Language & Linguistics colloquium (i.e., not yet doing their thesis) are required to approach ONE potential supervisor with at least two propositions for a thesis project. Each proposition should identify the following: the sociolinguistic/discourse analytic topic, a concrete research question, main methods, and possible data; each proposition should also be accompanied by two or three journal articles reporting studies like the ones proposed. These journal articles must come from major sociolinguistics and/or discourse studies journals; each article should be cited correctly (see *Manual for Writing Research Papers*). It is essential that the project propositions orient directly to the expertise/research agenda of the potential supervisor; the name of this person should be identified clearly with a short statement about how each proposition relates to the supervisor’s current research agenda. The potential supervisor will then consider the propositions to decide if the proposed projects are (a) well-founded in the research and do-able; and (b) sufficiently within their own areas of expertise. At this point, students may be asked either to amend their ideas or to approach a different potential supervisor. The deadline for submitting project propositions (to the ONE potential supervisor) is 15th October which is one month in advance of the supervisor registration deadline.

Failure to attend the foundation sessions, the analysis workshop (if relevant), or any part of the one-day conference will result in extensive make-up tasks (e.g., a six-page annotated bibliography; typed reports on three or more conference presentations).

Deadline for Assessed Work: All work should be completed by the time of the conference, except for Project Propositions (see deadline above).

BA Colloquium: North American Literature (Rippl/Behluli/Sutter)
Instructors: Gabriele Rippl / Sofie Behluli / Malaika Sutter
Time: Thursday 10-12
Sessions: 25 September, 09 and 23 October, 06 and 27 November
and 11 December
Credit Points: 2 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No
This course is only open for students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: The Research Colloquium will give students who are either planning to write or are already in the process of writing their BA theses the chance to present their work and to get feedback on their ideas both from professors and from peers. In addition, key theoretical and methodological approaches will be discussed where they prove relevant for students' work. **Students should attend the colloquium with the professor they are writing their thesis with.**

Learning Outcomes: To hone students' skills in problem framing and articulating research questions and hypotheses; to further their understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches; to help BA candidates to improve the structure and style of their final academic papers.

Coursework (pass/fail): Cumulative course work

Deadline for Assessed Work: Throughout semester

BA Colloquium: North American Literature (Claviez/Stähler/Marchi)

Instructors: Thomas Claviez / Axel Stähler / Viola Marchi

Time: Thursday 10-12

Sessions: 25 September, 09 and 23 October, 06 and 27 November
and 11 December

Credit Points: 2 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No
This course is only open for students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: The Research Colloquium will give students who are either planning to write or are already in the process of writing their BA theses the chance to present their work and to get feedback on their ideas both from professors and from peers. In addition, key theoretical and methodological approaches will be discussed where they prove relevant for students' work. **Students should attend the colloquium with the professor they are writing their thesis with.**

Learning Outcomes: To hone students' skills in problem framing and articulating research questions and hypotheses; to further their understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches; to help BA candidates to improve the structure and style of their final academic papers.

Coursework (pass/fail): Cumulative course work

Deadline for Assessed Work: Throughout semester

BA Colloquium: **Medieval and Modern English Literature**

Instructors: **Annette Kern-Stähler / Zoë Lehmann**

Day: Thursday

Sessions: 18 September 09:30 – 10:30, 16 October 09:30 – 12:00,
20 November 09:30 – 12:00, 18 December 09:30 – 13:00

Credit Points: 2 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No
This course is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Course Description: The Research Colloquium will give students who are in the process of writing their BA thesis the chance to present their work and to get feedback on their ideas both from professors and from peers. In addition, key theoretical and methodological approaches will be discussed where they prove relevant for students' work. **Students should attend the colloquium with the professor they are writing their thesis with.**

Learning Outcomes: To hone students' skills in problem framing and articulating research questions and hypotheses; to further their understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches; to help BA candidates to improve the structure and style of their final academic papers.

Coursework: (pass/fail): Cumulative course work

Deadline for Assessed Work: Throughout semester

Advanced Readings Examinations in Language and Linguistics and Literature

Exam: Advanced Readings in Linguistics and Literature

Supervisors: Danielle Tod / Viola Marchi

Dates: Introductory Q&A: 09:15-10:00 Fri 19 September (Zoom)
Exam Date: Tue 02 December 16-17
Resit Date: Fri 06 February 09-10

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☐ Yes ☒ No

This exam is only open to students studying in the Department of English.

Exam Description: The Advanced Reading List Exam covers a core list and one other specialisation list chosen by the student. Students must pass the exam before registering for their BA theses. The written exam is offered twice a year in the penultimate week of the semester. It is advisable to take the ARL Exam at the end of the fourth semester of study.

Texts: The core reading list has three parts:

- Four texts from North American Literature (one novel, one play, one short story, one set of poetry);
- Four texts from Medieval and Modern English Literature (one novel, one play, one piece of short fiction, one set of poetry);
- Four texts from Language and Linguistics. The student will also choose a specialisation list from one of the three sections.

Please consult the Reading List on the Department Webpage:

http://www.ens.unibe.ch/unibe/portal/fak_historisch/dsl/ens/content/e41030/e72711/e598299/e694204/2018_ReadingList_eng.pdf

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will:

- have got to know a set of core texts in Language and Linguistics, North American Literature and Medieval and Modern English Literature;
- have acquired detailed knowledge of a further set of texts from a chosen section.

Assessment (pass/fail): Exam (30 minutes)

MA STUDIES

Specialisation Language & Linguistics

MA Foundation Lecture: Language and Society

Instructor: David Britain

Time: Tuesday 10-12

Credit Points: 4 ECTS

Course Description: This course examines the underlying foundations of and recent developments in sociolinguistic approaches to the study of language. The aim is to provide a detailed examination of some sociolinguistic debates at a number of levels. We first consider how sociolinguistics differentiates itself from practices in asocial approaches to linguistics before looking at debates that rage both within sociolinguistics as a whole and, later, within individual sub-branches of the discipline. The course considers topics such as: competence and performance; the role of intuition in the study of language; the role of variability, change and diachrony; description, prescription and “verbal hygiene”; social identity; language ideologies; authenticity; and indexicality.

It aims, then, to examine some of the foundational building blocks of sociolinguistics – why it emerged when it did, how and why it differentiates itself from other forms of linguistics, and some of the fundamental debates that are going on within sociolinguistics. It is, therefore, largely (meta)theoretical. By the end of the course, students should know why sociolinguists do what they do, and the sorts of themes that sociolinguists are still grappling with, sixty years after the foundation of the discipline.

Required Reading: Readings will be placed on ILIAS for each session.

Learning Outcomes: Students successfully completing this course will understand some of the theoretical and methodological origins of sociolinguistics.

Assessment (graded): a 90 minute exam for 4 ECTS (graded). Pass rate is 58%.

Exam Date: 02 December 2025

Resit Date: 16 December 2025

MA Lecture: Language and Materiality
Instructors: Crispin Thurlow / Charmaine Kong / Alessandro Pellanda
Laura Wohlgemuth
Time: Tuesday 14-16
Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Course Description:

Words really do matter. They are not simply symbolic representations of the material; they are material. They are bodily and concrete. When we speak, it is sound waves that beat against our eardrums; when we write, it is ink that is scratched, struck or pressed onto paper. Words also have material consequences. It is with strings of words, bundles of texts, that we name and distinguish people so as to categorize and regulate them. We deploy our words and texts also to punish people, to harm them, to exterminate them, even. (Thurlow, 2023, p. 153)

This lecture series considers a range of ways in which language has material consequences for our everyday lives. By the same token, we will also examine how language is itself something material and how it shapes and is shaped by material culture. We will start by thinking through the “hardcore” economies and politics of language/s nowadays, before looking at how language functions multimodally as a spatial, embodied, and sensory practice. In this regard, and following an initial introductory lecture, the course will be organized into bi-weekly cycles addressing five major thematics: *commodification*, *global semioscape*, *stuff/objects*, *space/place*, and *embodiment*. Lectures will be organized around a series of framing readings and case-study readings; every other week, class time will involve a short in-class exercise in order to apply some of the ideas covered in the readings.

Required Reading: The course hinges on a series of core theoretical framing readings and more applied case-study readings; these will be posted as PDFs on ILIAS. Your success in the course depends heavily on your having completed the reading and having demonstrated a core understanding. NOTE: The following core reading and case-study reading must be read before the first session:

Cavanaugh, J.R. & Shankar, S. (2017, extract). Toward a theory of language materiality: An introduction. In *Language and Materiality: Ethnographical and Theoretical Explorations*. Cambridge University Press.

Jaworski, A. (2015). Word cities and language objects. “Love” sculptures and signs as shifters. *Linguistic Landscape*, 1(1): 75–94.

For the core reading (Cavanaugh & Shankar) you must prepare two hard-copy summaries following the instructions under Assessment; for the case-study reading, you must complete the first three questions of Reading Quiz 1 (printed out and with handwritten answers). Bring the summaries (stapled) and quiz to class on the first day.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will be able:

- to recognize how language has political-economic and material consequences;
- to explore some of the ways language functions multimodally through processes of embodiment, spatialization and materialization;
- To appreciate some of the different theoretical/critical approaches in the study of language materiality.

Assessment pass/fail: In order to pass this class you will need to do the following: achieve a minimum average of 75% for six graded reading quizzes based on the case-study readings; complete six summary tasks based on the framing readings; and complete six in-class exercises. The summary tasks and in-class exercises are assessed as credit/half-credit/no-credit. You must pass all three components to pass overall.

Reading quizzes: The first three questions will be completed at home and the other three questions in class under test-like conditions (two questions on the reading and one recap question from previous class material). You must print out the template (back-to-back or stapled) and your answers must be handwritten. It will be submitted in class.

Summary tasks: Two summaries of each core reading must be produced: (1) an AI-generated summary of the main argument and key points, and (2) your own “meta-summary” of this initial summary which should also demonstrate your understanding of key terms and concepts. Each summary should be no longer than one page; they must be printed back-to-back or stapled and brought to class.

Assessment graded: This course is graded through cumulative assessment (see above). If you are seeking a grade, the reading quizzes will be worth 50% of the final grade, the pre-lecture surveys 30% and the in-class exercises 20%. You must pass all three components to pass overall. The final percentage will be converted to the UniBe’s 6-point system as follows: 60-68% = 4.0 / 69-76% = 4.5 / 77-84% = 5.0 / 85-92% = 5.5 / 93-100% = 6.0.

MA Seminar: Language and Space/Place
Instructors: David Britain / Crispin Thurlow
Time: Monday 10-12
Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description:

Space, then, has been seen in distinction to place as a realm without meaning—as a “fact of life” which, like time, provides the basic co-ordinates for human life. Place, in contrast, is space filled with meaning. (Tim Cresswell, 2004, p. 8)

Space is the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny. (Doreen Massey, 2005: 9)

The quotes above, from two famous geographers, point to the ways that space and/or place are understood to be matters of meaning-making, social relations, and social interactions. In this sense, therefore, space/place are inherently and centrally about language and communication; and this is where sociocultural linguists enter the picture. Accordingly, this seminar will be rooted in two different traditions within sociocultural linguistics: (a) dialectology and sociolinguistic variation studies; and (b) geosemiotics and semiotic landscape studies. Following a general introduction session, the course will be organized around a series of four modules (two weeks each) taught either by Professor Britain or Professor Thurlow: (1) ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ places; (2) embodiment and interaction; (3) dialect enregisterment; and (4) signage and structures. There will also be two guest lectures, a mandatory fieldwork assignment, and case-study presentations towards the end of the semester.

Required Reading: Like most academic courses, you will be expected to undertake a series of readings in preparation for each of the four two-week modules; this will usually entail some core theoretical reading for the first week of the module and then some specific case-study readings exemplifying different sociocultural linguistic studies.

NOTE: There are two texts which must be read and prepared before the first day of class:

Cresswell, T. (2004). Ch 1: Defining place. In *Place: A Short Introduction* (pp. 1-21). Blackwell.

Massey, D. (2005). Ch 1: Opening propositions & Ch 2: Space/representation. In *For Space* (pp. 9-15 & 20-30). SAGE.

You are expected to produce your own “meta-summaries” (max. one-page each) of AI-generated summaries of the main argument and key points in these readings. You should bring to class – and be prepared to discuss – printed copies of both the AI-generated summaries and your meta-summaries; these must be stapled together ready to be submitted at the end of the first session.

Learning Outcomes: This seminar will help you acquire and practice a range of broad academic practices central to all scholarly work: reading, researching, describing, explaining, evaluating and critiquing. By the end of the semester, you will have:

- learned and understood the analytical distinction between space and place, and how both are socially and discursively constructed;
- learned and understood some of the major approaches used in sociocultural linguistics for theorizing and explaining the relation between language and space/place;
- learned and understood how sociocultural linguists use different methods for analyzing language and space/place; specifically in dialectology, sociolinguistic variation studies, geosemiotics, and semiotic landscape studies;
- practised applying some of these methods or approaches to their own site-specific investigations;
- acquired a critical awareness of, and appreciation for, the sociological and cultural-political ramifications of everyday place-making.

Coursework (pass/fail): In order to pass the seminar and earn 4 ECTS, you must fulfil the following coursework requirements: (1) complete a series of 14 academic readings together with summaries and meta-summaries; (2) complete in-class reading quizzes about these readings; (3) undertake two mandatory fieldwork tasks; and (4) prepare a final case-study presentation based on your fieldwork and a particular aspect of the required reading.

Assessment (graded):* If you are seeking an additional 3 ECTS for the seminar, you will be expected to return to the field, collect more extensive fieldwork, and prepare an extended, data-driven analysis and research report (10-15 pages) using one of the major approaches to the study of language and space/place covered in Module 3 or Module 4.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 17:00 on Friday, 16 January 2026.

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

MA Seminar:	Language Contact in the Arctic
Instructors:	Danielle Tod / Hannah Hedegard
Time:	Monday 26 May, 16:15-18:00 Friday 05 September, 10:15-12:00 (zoom) Monday 15 September, 12:15-14:00 Sunday 21 – Friday 26 September, excursion Monday 20 October, 12:15-14:00
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 14 participants.

Course Description: Longyearbyen (population ca. 3,000) is the main town on Svalbard, a Norwegian Arctic territory. There is no visa requirement for residents making Longyearbyen a highly multilingual environment with a diverse population. It is, therefore, an exciting site for examining the sociolinguistic consequences of language contact, including contact between various dialects of English, Norwegian, Russian, and other languages. The aim of this seminar is to collectively generate several data sets in the context of language contact in the Arctic town of Longyearbyen that may be used in further seminars and thesis projects. More concretely, these data sets (depending on number of participants) will document (1) language attitudes, (2) local language use, (3) the linguistic landscape, and/or (4) language use in tourism. The seminar is hands-on, providing students an opportunity to gain skills in data collection, research design, and critically reflect on the ethics of conducting sociolinguistic fieldwork.

Required Reading: Readings will be available on ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will be able to:

- Independently plan and carry out data collection in a multilingual context;
- Identify, assess, and apply ethical principles and best practices in sociolinguistic fieldwork;
- Collaborate and problem-solve effectively in small research teams, and
- Critically evaluate the methodological strengths, limitations, and potential biases of the method(s) of data collection undertaken.

Coursework (pass/fail): Completion of data collection in Svalbard, regular attendance, completion of required reading, and a presentation.

Assessment (graded):* As above for pass/fail, plus a written assignment (4000 words +/- 10%).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 17:00 on Sunday, 25 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

MA Seminar:	Analyzing Stickers
Instructor:	Kellie Gonçalves
Time:	Thursdays 12-14
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: As an ephemeral, mobile and categorized “wall” sign (Kallen 2010), the functions of stickers are extremely diverse. While they have been used since the 1970s for primarily political reasons (Reershemius 2019; Awcock 2021), stickers are now a very common sign to be found in a wide range of places and contexts including car bumpers (Bloch 2000; Hafez 2020), lampposts (Reershemius 2019), and more recently, also laptop covers (Bock & Busch 2025). Stickers are imbued with both informational and commercial purposes while simultaneously indexing a way of expressing support for a group or cause on a collective rather than just an individual level (Gonçalves et al. 2025a, Gonçalves et al. 2025b; Androutsopoulos 2024). A handful of studies exist recognize stickers as a relevant multimodal, semiotic sign worthy of analysis that provides insight into how public space is used and negotiated (Kallen 2010; Järlehed, 2017; Vigsø 2010; Ziegler et al. 2018; Reershemius 2019; Androutsopoulos 2024), given stickers’ contemporary proliferation (Awcock 2021). Stickers’ materiality, their quick and cheap production as well as their rapid dissemination and circulation have increased within what anthropologist Poole (1997) calls the *visual economy*, which refers to the way in which visual objects are made mobile through different kinds of exchange, sometimes commodified, sometimes not, being given different meanings and having diverse effects as they move through distinct physical and virtual places and spaces. Such spaces include contemporary digital environments and social media platforms in what Androutsopolous (2024) recently refers to as the “offline-online nexus”. In this course, we will review the sociolinguistic and interdisciplinary studies that focus on stickers’ communicative functions and also engage in hands on fieldwork during an obligatory 2-day excursion that is planned to take place in Davos, Switzerland on October 17-18, 2025

Required reading: All texts will be made available on ILIAS.

Learning outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- identify the theoretical and methodological challenges in studying stickers from an inter-disciplinary perspective;
- be able to critically engage with theoretical concepts and current debates about stickers multimodal designs, their materiality and various functions as they relate to sociolinguistic scholarship;
- gain research competencies through conducting empirical work in Bern as well as during our excursion in Davos;
- practice discursive competencies during class discussions and poster presentations.

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance, active participation in class discussions, data collection, data analysis, a poster presentation and mandatory course excursion to Davos on October 17-18, 2025.

Assessment (graded): Regular attendance, active participation in class discussions, data collection, data analysis, a poster presentation, a written seminar paper of approximately 4000 words and a mandatory course excursion to Davos on 17-18 October.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 12 January 2026

Center for the Study of Language and Society (CSLS)

The Center for the Study of Language and Society (CSLS) at the University of Bern is dedicated to research and advocacy on the intersection between language and society. We conceive of this intersection in its widest sense. As a result, our work focuses on exploring how social changes affect languages and language use, how social beliefs and ideologies are reproduced and transmitted through language, and how, conversely, beliefs about language and language users have lasting social impacts. In particular, we aim to foster studies of the relationship between language, inequality and social (in)justice in all of its forms. We support and enable research and training on these topics at the postgraduate and postdoctoral levels, and work to promote the importance of language and language issues to a broad public, both within and outside of academia.

Courses in autumn semester open to English students are:

- Approaching Language & Society (Lecture), **KSL: 512292**
- Romansh and other minority languages (Seminar), **KSL: 512413**
- Qualitative Methods in Sociolinguistics (Seminar), **KSL: 478559**
- Language Policy: Theory and Practice (Seminar), **KSL: 512403**

Specialisation Literature

MA Foundation Lecture: After the Linguistic Turn: Literary Theory in the 20th Century

Instructor: Thomas Claviez

Time: First session in second semester week Wednesday 10-12

Credit Points: 4 ECTS

Course Description: The lecture will cover the main schools, approaches, directions and tendencies in Literary Theory since the Linguistic Turn, initiated by the work of Ferdinand de Saussure. This includes Structural Textual Semantics, Structuralism (Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Althusser), Formalism (Sklovskij), Reception Aesthetics (Iser), Critical Theory (Adorno, Horkheimer), Poststructuralism (Foucault, Derrida) and Postcolonialism (Said, Spivak, Bhabha). **There will be a tutorial offered in this course. Details will be communicated in the first week of the semester.**

Required Reading: The main theoretical texts, as well as the primary texts used to exemplify these theories, will be provided on ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes: The aim of the lecture is to familiarise students with the main schools of Literary Theory in the 20th century, to show the interconnections between and the developments from one to the other, as well as to enable students to use them strategically in their studies.

Assessment (graded): Cumulative course work; written minutes of one lecture; final written exam; the exam takes place on the last day of the lecture series.

Exam Date: Wednesday, 17 December 2025

Resit Date: Wednesday, 14 January 2026

MA Lecture Literature: American Genesis 1620 - 1870
Instructor: Thomas Claviez
Time: First session in second semester week Wednesday 14-16
Credit Points: 3 ECTS

Open to students from other departments as Wahlbereich? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Course Description: The lecture will give – American Studies like – an overview of the main literary, political and historical events between 1620 and 1870, and the interplay between them.

Required Reading: The texts uploaded on ILIAS for the first session must be read before the first session; your knowledge of it may be subject to examination.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- Have familiarized themselves with the most important events and developments – literary, political, historical – of the US during these centuries;
- Have a firm grasp of the connections between literary and cultural eras – Puritanism, Early Republic, Romanticism, Realism – and their historical contexts;
- Are able to identify distinctive literary features of these eras.

Assessment (pass/fail or graded): * Pass/fail and graded. ‘Pass’ requires regular attendance; a grade requires a successful exam at either of the following exams:

Exam date: 03 December 2025

Resit date: 10 December 2025

Second Resit date: 17 December 2025

* Lectures are ungraded and graded. Please make sure to register correctly:
BA students - UNGRADED lecture (including the Focus Module Lecture); MA major student - UNGRADED lecture;
MA minor student - GRADED lectures; International / exchange student register for graded or ungraded lecture.

MA Seminar:	The Medieval Book
Instructor:	Annette Kern-Stähler
Time:	Tuesday 14-16
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: Medieval books are handmade and often customized and highly personalized objects, ranging from lavishly decorated works of art to unadorned, less expensive manuscripts. They were produced in various circumstances and served a variety of functions: Books were a source of knowledge and entertainment; an aid of devotion or instruction; a sign of status or belonging.

This seminar explores the ways in which books were produced, circulated, and consumed in the era before print. We will consider the book in all its variety, probing its materiality, contents, and evidence concerning its early owners and readers.

We will discuss the materials and skills needed for the production of a manuscript and consider choices of size, format, script, commentary, decoration, and language; we will explore the functions of patrons, scribes, and illuminators; we will think about the circulation of books and the transmission of knowledge and ask how books or parts of books were passed on, taken apart, and reassembled; we will inquire into the safekeeping of books and the function of book cures; we will think about practices of reading and reading acquisition and the depiction of these practices in medieval books; we will probe the role of women in book production and the transmission of knowledge and the nature of textual communities. Throughout the seminar, we allow ourselves to be challenged to rethink established categories of cultural production and transmission and the meanings of 'author' and 'reader' and consider aspects of cultural sustainability.

The seminar involves a half-day visit to the Papiermühlemuseum Basel, where students will have the opportunity to learn hands-on about the processes involved in book production, and a visit to the Burgerbibliothek Bern, where we will view medieval manuscripts firsthand.

Required Reading:

- The Proem to *The Book of Margery Kempe*, trans. Anthony Bale (on ILIAS). Please also read the Middle English text, ed. by Lynn Staley (also on ILIAS).
- Lynn Staley's introduction to her edition of *The Book of Margery Kempe* (on ILIAS)
- The chapter 'Writing Supports' from Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* (on ILIAS)
- The British Library blog <https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2014/03/the-life-of-a-mystic.html>
- Please prepare the set of guided reading questions (on ILIAS, under week 1)

Please note that there will be a ten-minute entrance exam in the first session, which will be based on the required reading and guided reading questions.

Further reading:

- Christopher de Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators* (London: The British Library, 1992).
- Daniel Donoghue et al (ed.), *The Practice and Politics of Reading, 650-1500* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2022).
- Martin Chase and Maryanne Kowaleski (eds.), *Reading and Writing in Medieval England*. Essays in Honor of Mary C. Erler (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2019).
- Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007)
- Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, Maidie Hilmo, and Linda Olson, *Opening Up Middle English Manuscripts: Literary and Visual Approaches* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012)
- Daniel Wakelin, *Designing English: Early Literature on the Page* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2018)

Learning Outcomes: Upon the successful completion of the course, students are expected to:

- have acquired an in-depth knowledge of medieval book production, transmission, and consumption and the terminology to describe medieval books;
- have gained an understanding of the functions of the book in the medieval period;
- have rethought established categories of cultural production;
- have improved their writing and presentation skills and have practised academic discussion;
- Have gained an insight into the role of the study and preservation of manuscripts in cultural sustainability.

Coursework (pass/fail): Short 'entrance exam', based on the preliminary reading; regular attendance and preparation of set texts; active seminar participation; mini-project: poster, artwork, or short creative text on the medieval book; short presentation of an object.

Assessment (graded): Short 'entrance exam', based on the preliminary reading; regular attendance and preparation of set texts; active seminar participation; mini-project: poster, artwork, or short creative text on the medieval book; short presentation; seminar paper (ca. 2500-3000 words).

Deadline for assessed work: mini-project 15 November 2025; seminar paper 01 February 2026.

MA Seminar:	Contemporary North American Graphic Narratives
Instructors:	Gabriele Rippl / Sofie Behluli
Time:	Wednesday 16-18
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: This seminar delves into one of the most playful, dynamic, and politically engaged forms of contemporary North American literature: the graphic narrative. Combining words and images in a variety of genres—including graphic novels, graphic journalism, and visual life writing—graphic narratives offer a unique, intermedial approach to storytelling. For much of its history, this form was overlooked by the literary establishment and dismissed as children’s literature. However, at the latest since Art Spiegelman’s *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1992, the critical and academic recognition of graphic narratives has grown significantly, acknowledging not only their wide public reach but also their profound intellectual, political, cultural, and aesthetic contributions. We will explore a wide range of graphic narratives that engage with various contemporary issues, first and foremost Spiegelman’s *Maus* (1991), Ware’s *Jimmy Corrigan* (2000), Satrapi’s *Persepolis* (2003), Redniss’s *Radioactive* (2010), Sacco’s *Paying the Land* (2020), and Beaton’s *Ducks* (2022). These examples demonstrate how invested contemporary North American graphic narratives are in matters of ecological and cultural sustainability, U.S. American domestic and foreign politics, structures of identity formation (gender, race, class, etc.), and the aesthetics of telling real and fictional stories in visually compelling and thought-provoking ways.

Required Reading: Art Spiegelman’s *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale* (1991); Chris Ware’s *Jimmy Corrigan, the Smartest Kid on Earth* (2000); Marjane Satrapi’s *Persepolis, vol. 1* (2003); Lauren Redniss’s *Radioactive: Marie and Pierre Curie, A Tale of Love and Fallout* (2010); Joe Sacco’s *Paying the Land* (2020); Kate Beaton’s *Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands* (2022). The theoretical texts for the first two sessions will be uploaded to Ilias by 1 September. **All of these texts must be read before the first session; your knowledge of them may be subject to examination.**

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- are familiar with key concepts, theoretical approaches, and major themes in graphic narrative studies;
- know how to read, interpret, talk and write about graphic narratives as intermedial literary forms that combine words with images;
- are acquainted with a broad range of theoretical texts and important examples of contemporary North American graphic narratives;
- gain insight into the goals of the environmental humanities and cultural sustainability and understand how graphic narratives participate in these debates.

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance, reading and preparation of all primary and secondary readings, oral presentation & moderation of session

Assessment (graded):* 4000 - 5000-word seminar paper (in addition to pass/fail requirements)

Deadline for Assessed Work: 31 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

MA Seminar: So Long and Thanks for all the Fish: Language as Literary Theme

Instructor: Zoë Lehmann Imfeld

Time: Tuesdays 12-14

Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: In this course we will turn our attention to narrative fiction that treats language and language structures as its theme. These are texts that consider the function of language in terms of power, society, thought, and even the shaping of reality itself. We will investigate how the structures and forms of the texts themselves interact with the themes developing within their pages, and how far the reading of each text reflects the way language is experienced by the characters within it. In doing so, we will familiarise ourselves with some of the critical approaches to thinking about language function in literature, such as literary semiotics, and the role of exegesis and hermeneutics in literary criticism. (We'll also look at some examples of texts that self-consciously play with language-structure and meaning, for instance those in the Oulipo tradition.

Required Reading: Please purchase your own copy of the following novels. It is strongly recommended that you begin reading them *before* the course begins.

Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, Vintage Classics, ISBN 978-0099466031

China Miéville, *Embassytown*, Pan, ISBN 978-0330533072

Karin Tidbeck, *Amatka*, Vintage, ISBN 978-1101973950

Further material will be made available on ILIAS. Possible appearances by Borges, Calvino, Ted Chang, and maybe a splash of Wittgenstein, amongst others.

Learning Outcomes: Students will deepen their familiarity with semiotics as a method of literary criticism, and will gain insight into the ways in which recent literary fiction has explored the functions and potential functions of language.

Coursework (pass/fail): Full participation in the seminar, and completion of small written tasks during the course, such as forum entries; Essay proposal (for graded students in preparation for assessed essay, for ungraded students for a hypothetical essay. Deadline for both Monday 12 January 2026.

Assessment (graded):* 5000 – 6000-word essay

Deadline for Assessed Work: Monday, 09 February 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

MA Seminar:	Reading the Ghost in African American Fiction
Instructor:	Viola Marchi
Time:	Wednesday 12-14
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: If, as Dionne Brand has claimed, “Black experience in any modern city or town in the Americas is a haunting,” what does it mean to be haunted – and to haunt – in African American literature? This seminar explores the spectral dimension of contemporary Black literature, theory, and cultural production, where ghosts seem to be everywhere – speaking, demanding attention, and at times exacting their terrible revenge. We will investigate the ghost from different theoretical perspectives, in its many forms (as spirit, phantasm, specter, spook, etc.), and in the different etymological resonances these forms evoke (as soul, apparition, spectacle, image, illusion, etc.). Through readings across genres and media, we will consider how haunting operates both aesthetically and politically, and we will center our inquiry on what ghosts do: what cultural work they perform, how they unsettle time and history, and what they reveal about racial violence and the enduring legacies of slavery.

Please note: Not all the ghosts we will encounter in the course are purely metaphorical or benign spirits. Some of the material – particularly films – engage directly with horror and unsettling content. If you are squeamish about things that go bump in the night (or in history), consider this both a friendly warning and an invitation to reflect critically on your emotional responses to the ghost’s affective power.

Required Reading: Please purchase your own copy of the following texts, preferably in the suggested edition. Further material will be made available on ILIAS.

Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), ISBN 978-1-4088-9102-5.
Percival Everett, *The Trees* (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2021), ISBN 978-1-64445-064-2.
Jason Mott, *Hell of a Book* (London: Trapeze, 2021) ISBN 978-1-3987-0466-4.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- have familiarized themselves with the main critical approaches to the ghost and hauntology across different theoretical standpoints (deconstruction, psychoanalysis, media studies, etc.);
- have closely engaged with prominent literary texts and key critical discourses in contemporary African American literature and Black Studies;
- have further developed their analytical and research skills in the field of literary and cultural studies.

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance, completion of all primary and secondary readings, active participation in class, individual research task.

Assessment (graded):* Regular attendance, completion of all primary and secondary readings, active participation in class, individual research task and a written paper of 4000-5000 words.

Deadline for Assessed Work: Monday, 26 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

MA Seminar:	Representations of the Holocaust in American Culture
Instructor:	Axel Stähler
Time:	Monday 14-16
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: In the immediate aftermath of the cataclysmic event of the Holocaust the philosopher and sociologist Theodor W. Adorno interrogated the meaning of 'culture' after the failure of culture. In contemporary discourse, the Holocaust has long since turned into a marketable icon of suffering. Indeed, the encroachment on the victims' memory of what has contentiously been called the "Holocaust industry" or, with a gruesome pun, "Shoah business," is frequently perceived as threatening to pervert remembrance of this singular, unfathomable, and most inhumanly destructive occurrence in history. Adorno's often quoted 'dictum' that it is "barbaric" to write poetry "after Auschwitz" (1949) triggered an ongoing discussion about the value and the significance of the representation of the Holocaust in cultural production. Many of the concerns informing this debate remain controversial, among them the questions of the memory of the Holocaust and its medial representations and of the potentially therapeutic value of confronting the emotional trauma of genocide in cultural production. More recently, the generic classification of what has been described as "Holocaust literature" has been challenged and its specificity questioned.

In this seminar, students will enter into these debates by enquiring into the ability of narrative, in literature, film, and other forms of memorialization (such as museums and memorials), to represent the 'unrepresentable,' by exploring the use of these narratives as 'history,' and by investigating the so-called "Americanization" of the Holocaust.

Required Reading: Students should ensure to have read each text prior to the relevant seminar session as indicated in the schedule on ILIAS. Additional material, including the short stories, will be made available on ILIAS.

Novels:

Edward Lewis Wallant, *The Pawnbroker* (1961; PDF available on ILIAS)

Anne Michaels, *Fugitive Pieces* (1996)

Jonathan Safran Foer, *Everything is Illuminated* (2002)

Tova Reich, *My Holocaust* (2007)

Graphic Novels:

Bernard Krigstein, "Master Race" (1955)

Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus* (1996; 1986, 1992)

Short Stories:

Rebecca Goldstein, "The Legacy of Raizel Kaidish" (1993)

Thane Rosenbaum, "The Cattle Car Complex" (1996)

Erika Dreifus, "Homecomings" (2011)

Nathan Englander, "What We Talk about When We Talk about Anne Frank" (2011)

Films:

Judgment at Nuremberg, dir. Stanley Kramer (1961; excerpts)

Schindler's List, dir. Steven Spielberg (1993)

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- demonstrate critical understanding of the Holocaust and its representation in cultural production in different cultural and historical contexts;
- theorize the therapeutic effects of literary and artistic representations of traumatic events;
- confidently identify the reasons for, and the precise nature of, literary and artistic negotiations of memory, remembrance, and memorialization;
- assertively address theoretical debates on the interrelation of “fact” and “fiction” and the nature of “literature”;
- will have gained insight into the goals of cultural sustainability.

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance and active seminar participation; short presentations (POD paras) and individual research tasks.

Assessment (graded):* One mini-project (conceptualization of a Holocaust memorial; 1500 words; 35%) and one seminar paper (2500 words; 65%).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 03 October 2025 (mini-project); 11 January 2026 (seminar paper).

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

MA Seminar: New York City in Literature and Other Media

Instructors: Sofie Behluli / Malaika Sutter

Time: **Two preliminary meetings:**
1) Monday 15 September 2025, 16.00-18.00 in the plenum, room tba;
2) Monday 13 October, 30min-slot sometime between 13.00-16.00 in groups, office B262

Block Seminar: Thursday 13 November, and Friday 14 November, 9.00-18.00, room tba

Credit Points: 4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: This block seminar explores New York City's profound role as a hub of U.S. literary production, and it examines how the city appears as a setting and character throughout American literature. Students will learn how authors from diverse backgrounds have represented and reimagined the city, reflecting its complex history, cultural dynamics, and status as a center of artistic and social change. We will read key literary works, including poems by the Beat Generation and other poets (e.g. Frank O'Hara's *The Lunch Poems*, 1964), plays and musicals set in the city (e.g. *Hamilton*), and novels that focus on specific NYC neighborhoods (e.g. Ann Petry's *The Street*, 1946; Teju Cole's *Open City*, 2011; Donna Tartt's *The Goldfinch*, 2013). The exact list of primary and secondary sources will be announced by the end of July, so students have enough time to read everything before the block seminar on 13 and 14 November. Our selection of sources will provide a foundation for discussions on themes like urban alienation, racial and social inequality, and the city as a creative space for *flânerie* and visual art. Our exploration of New York City will also include other media, such as movies, TV series, visual art, and popular culture more broadly. During these two days, we aim to create a conference-like atmosphere in which we can critically interrogate representations of New York in literature and other media.

Required Reading: The exact list of primary and secondary sources will be announced by the end of July, so students have enough time to read everything before the block seminar on 13 and 14 November.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students:

- Students can analyze and critically engage with the aesthetics and themes of diverse cultural products (literature, film, etc.) that center on New York City.
- Students demonstrate in-depth knowledge of key US-American cultural, historical, and socio-political contexts as exemplified in New York City's artistic and intellectual landscape.
- Students know how to conduct independent research, design and moderate a pedagogically effective session, and actively engage in an oral, conference-like format.

Coursework (pass/fail): Attendance during both preliminary meetings and the two block days, reading and preparation of all primary and secondary readings, moderation of one session in groups

Assessment (graded):* 4000-word seminar paper (in addition to pass/fail requirements)

Deadline for Assessed Work: 31 January 2026

* Seminars comprise two parts: the seminar itself (worth 4 ECTS, pass/fail) and an assessment (worth 3 ECTS, graded); be sure to register for both parts if you are seeking a grade. The grade will be applied to all 7 ECTS. Please note the registration deadlines at *Key Dates & Deadlines*.

Other Courses

MA Workshop:	Waste Semiotics: Language, Materiality, Space
Instructors:	Crispin Thurlow / Charmaine Kong / Alessandro Pellanda Laura Wohlgemuth
Times:	This is an ENLIGHT/BIP course with six online sessions and a one-week intensive programme in Bern. <u>Online sessions:</u> Tuesdays 16:15 to 17:45 on 14, 21, 28 October and 04, 11 and 18 November <u>One-week intensive:</u> Monday 24 to Friday 28 November
Credit Points:	3 ECTS + 2 ECTS Independent Studies

This special course is only open to BA and MA students studying in the Department of English, and on a limited (see cap), competitively selected basis. Students wishing to be considered for a place in the course should email Professor Thurlow with a short (10 lines max) motivation statement by 06 August; final selection and registration will be confirmed by 08 August.

Course Description: Waste Semiotics offers a transdisciplinary, action-oriented space for students wanting to investigate the powerful connections between everyday language and communication and one of the most pressing ecological and cultural concerns of our time: waste. The course is organized as the UniBe's first Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) in collaboration with the following ENLIGHT partner universities: Ghent, Groningen, Tartu, and Uppsala. BA and MA students from these universities are already enrolled, as well as from Galway and Bratislava.

The course comprises a series of six online sessions and a five-day intensive programme in Bern, including outings, a methods workshop, and a community-engagement project. Students travelling to Bern will use their journey as a chance to complete a "trash trajectories" fieldwork exercise serving as the basis for our hands-on work together. Bern students will be expected to produce equivalent fieldwork data. For more information, see the ENLIGHT course catalogue:

<https://enlight-eu.org/students/courses/1272-waste-semiotics>.

Learning Outcomes: This workshop will be structured around five superordinate academic practices which are central to just about all academic work: observing, describing, explaining, evaluating and critiquing. By the end of this workshop, it is expected that students will:

- have a foundational understanding of the theoretical and conceptual links between "waste semiotics" and the interdisciplinary field of discard studies;
- understand how "waste semiotics" is grounded in the study of linguistic, representational and other communicative practices;
- have an appreciation for the way waste is approached in other fields such as cultural studies, geography, fine arts, and anthropology;
- develop practical and methodological skills for studying and documenting the "trajectories of waste" in urban spaces;

- recognize the concrete ways in which a semiotic approach to waste creates opportunities for wider community engagement and perhaps solutions for key ecological problems.

Coursework (pass/fail): This special course is worth 5 ECTS, which Bern students will be awarded as a mixture of Workshop (3 ECTS) and Independent Studies (2 ECTS). Students' learning will be assessed based on (a) satisfactory participation and engagement in online sessions and the intensive programme; and (b) the completion of short project report and learning reflection statement. The course will be assessed by the four Bern instructors.

Wahlbereich Lecture:	BMZ lecture 'Mittelalter in der Schweiz – Schweiz im Mittelalter'
Instructors:	Annette Kern-Stähler and other Medievalists of the University of Bern and Guest Speakers
Times:	Thursday 16.15-17.45. In addition: three post-lecture seminars starting at 17.45 and a preliminary meeting
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

BMZ: Das Berner Mittelalter Zentrum (BMZ) hat als interdisziplinäres und Synergien stiftendes Forum an der Universität Bern die Aufgabe, Forschung und Lehre sowie Öffentlichkeitsarbeit auf dem Gesamtgebiet der mittelalterlichen Geschichte und Kultur zu fördern und zu koordinieren. Dies geschieht durch gemeinsame Lehrveranstaltungen, Forschungsprojekte, Publikationen, Sprachkurse, Tagungen und Exkursionen sowie durch Gastvorträge von in- und ausländischen Gelehrten.

Course Description: Die Ringvorlesung „Mittelalter in der Schweiz – Schweiz im Mittelalter“ beleuchtet zentrale Aspekte der Mediävistik aus interdisziplinärer Perspektive. Renommierete Expert*innen aus verschiedenen Fachbereichen wie Geschichte, Literaturwissenschaft, Kunstgeschichte und Handschriftenkunde geben Einblicke in die mittelalterliche Schweiz sowie in deren Rezeption und Interpretation. Dabei wird die Schweiz sowohl als geographischer Raum im Mittelalter als auch als moderne Konstruktion eines mittelalterlichen Erbes betrachtet.

Thematisch reicht das Spektrum von mittelalterlichen Handschriften und geistlichen Strömungen über Rittertum und kulturelle Ausdrucksformen bis hin zu materiellen Überlieferungen und musealen Darstellungen.

Eine besondere Stärke der Ringvorlesung liegt in ihrem interdisziplinären Ansatz: Forschende aus verschiedenen Universitäten und Institutionen präsentieren aktuelle Forschungsergebnisse und methodische Zugänge, die eine breite Auseinandersetzung mit der Thematik ermöglichen.

Ein detailliertes Programm der Vorlesung wird rechtzeitig vor Semesterbeginn per Aushang und im Internet (www.bmz.unibe.ch) bekannt gegeben. Ziel der Veranstaltung ist es, die interdisziplinäre Vernetzung der Mediävistik zu fördern und die Studierenden an einem fächerübergreifenden Gespräch zu beteiligen; diesem Zweck dienen vor allem die an die Vorträge anschliessenden Diskussionen. Eine Rückbindung an spezifisch germanistische Fragestellungen erfolgt durch drei zusätzliche Sitzungen (voraussichtlich Freitag, 9.00-10.00 Uhr).

Ort: Hauptgebäude, Hochschulstrasse 4, Raum 220

Research Module

MA Colloquium:	Language and Linguistics
Instructors:	David Britain / Kellie Gonçalves / Crispin Thurlow
Time:	Monday 15-16
Sessions:	15 and 22 September, 13, 20 and 27 October, 10 November + one-day conference Friday morning 21 November
Credit Points:	2 ECTS

Course Description: The colloquium is for students who are either planning to write or are already in the process of writing their MA theses. The colloquium is also taught in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Language & Society (CSLS), with students from the MA Sociolinguistics programme also participating. Students are expected to be working on projects in the broadly defined fields of sociolinguistics and discourse studies. The colloquium offers students the chance to learn about general academic communication practices; to present their own work or to learn about other people's work; and to get feedback on their ideas from established researchers and peers.

- All students **MUST** attend the Introduction Session (week 1, 15 Sep)
- All students are expected to attend three foundation sessions: *What is a thesis* (Week 2, 22 Sep), *Writing Skills B* (Week 5, 13 Oct), and *Presentation Skills B* (Week 6, 20 Oct).
- Students in their penultimate colloquium semester are required to attend a *Poster Design* session (Week 9, 10 Nov).
- Students in their final semester must attend an *Analysis Workshop* (Week 7, 27 Oct), bringing a polished research design and indicative examples of completed data analysis.
- All colloquium students must then participate fully in the one-day colloquium conference scheduled for semester Week 10: Friday 21 November am.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will:

- know the general expectations for MA theses in sociocultural linguistics;
- have acquired basic skills and best-practice techniques for academic writing;
- have acquired basic skills and best-practice techniques for academic presentations;
- be familiar with a variety of methodologies, research designs and analytic procedures in sociocultural linguistics.

Coursework (pass/fail): To pass, all colloquium students must be present for the whole conference whether or not they are presenting their work. All students must also attend the three foundation sessions. Students can be exempted from these foundation sessions if they furnish documented evidence that they have attended each of the sessions twice before (e.g., once during their BA and once during their MA).

- Students presenting their theses at the conference (i.e., presentation or poster) will be expected to prepare – and submit by fixed deadlines – an abstract and then a copy of their slideshow or poster. Poster students must attend the Poster Design session; presenting students must attend the Analysis Workshop.
- Students not presenting (i.e., in their first semester of the colloquium) are required to undertake a supplementary research exercise to warrant the 2 ECTS earned. Details are posted on the colloquium's ILIAS site.

Failure to attend the introduction, the foundation sessions (without a pre-approved exemption for ENS students), the poster design session (if relevant), the analysis workshop (if relevant), or any part of the one-day conference will result in extensive make-up tasks (e.g., a six-page annotated bibliography; typed reports on three or more conference presentations).

Deadline for Assessed Work: All work should be completed by the time of the conference and no later than 17:00 on the Friday of semester week 14.

MA Colloquium:	North American Literature (Rippl/Behluli/Sutter)
Instructors:	Gabriele Rippl / Sofie Behluli / Malaika Sutter
Time:	Thursday 10-12
Sessions:	18 September, 02, 16 and 30 October, 20 November, 04 December
Credit Points:	2 ECTS

Course Description: The MA Colloquium is a continual course over the duration of three semesters. Students can choose in which semester to attend the colloquium; it is recommended that they take the opportunity to present their MA thesis in their final semester. The course is a problem-oriented research colloquium in which students will have the chance to talk about their work, discuss theories and methodologies and peer-review their written work and presentation skills. **Students should attend the colloquium with the professor with whom they are writing their theses.**

Learning Outcomes: To hone students' skills in problem framing and articulating research questions and hypotheses; to further their understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches; to help MA candidates to improve the structure and style of their final academic papers.

Coursework (pass/fail): Cumulative coursework

Deadline for Assessed Work: Throughout semester

MA Colloquium:	North American Literature (Claviez/Stähler/Marchi)
Instructors:	Thomas Claviez / Axel Stähler / Viola Marchi
Time:	Thursday 10-12
Sessions:	18 September, 02, 16 and 30 October, 20 November, 04 December
Credit Points:	2 ECTS

Course Description: The Research Colloquium will give students who are either planning to write or are already in the process of writing their MA theses the chance to present their work and to get feedback on their ideas both from professors and from peers. In addition, key theoretical and methodological approaches will be discussed where they prove relevant for students' work. **Students should attend the colloquium with the professor with whom they are writing their theses.**

Learning Outcomes: To hone students' skills in problem framing and articulating research questions and hypotheses; to further their understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches; to help MA candidates to improve the structure and style of their final academic papers.

Coursework (pass/fail): Cumulative course work

Deadline for Assessed Work: Throughout semester

MA Colloquium:	Medieval and Modern English Literature
Instructors:	Annette Kern-Stähler / Zoë Lehmann
Time:	Thursday (see times below)
Dates:	18 September 10:30 – 11:30, 09 October 09:30 – 12:00, 23 October 09:30 – 12:00, 13 November 09:30 – 13:00
Credit Points:	2 ECTS

Course Description: The Research Colloquium is a continual course over the duration of three semesters. Students can choose in which semester to attend the colloquium; it is recommended that they take the opportunity to present their MA thesis in their final semester. The course is a problem-oriented research colloquium in which students will have the chance to talk about their work, discuss theories and methodologies and peer-review their written work and presentation skills. **Students should attend the colloquium with the professor with whom they are writing their theses.**

Learning Outcomes: To hone students' skills in problem framing and articulating research questions and hypotheses; to further their understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches; to help MA candidates to improve the structure and style of their final academic papers.

Coursework (pass/fail): Cumulative course work

Deadline for Assessed Work: Throughout semester

PhD STUDIES

PhD and Research Colloquium: Language Variation and Change

Instructor: David Britain

Time: Tuesday 14-16

Course Description: This colloquium is for students preparing for and/or writing a PhD thesis under Prof Britain's supervision. We will discuss our own work-in-progress, important recent theoretical publications, as well as prepare abstracts and presentations for forthcoming conferences. The workshop is also open to advanced MA scholars intending to work on a PhD related to a currently running project or a theme in Prof Britain's area of expertise. Contact him for further details.

Learning Outcomes: Students attending this colloquium will receive advanced group- and individual-focussed input into PhD research projects, peer-supported learning and acquire soft skills in academic professional development, conference presentation, and article writing.

PhD and Research Colloquium: **Language and Communication**

Instructor: **Crispin Thurlow**

Time: **Monday 14-16**

Course Description: This advanced research colloquium is for visiting scholars and/or candidates working on their post-doctoral or doctoral research in Language and Communication. We meet weekly to discuss core theoretical readings, examine key methodological issues, and/or review each other's current work-in-progress. From time to time our sessions are organized around presentations by invited speakers.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that participants will:

- receive direct supervisory and peer mentoring on their research projects;
- develop their theoretical and methodological expertise;
- practise their academic writing and conference-presentation skills;
- acquire a range of "soft skills" in academic professional development.

PhD and Research Colloquium: **Literary Theory**

Instructor: **Thomas Claviez**

Time: Monday 13-16

Course Description: This colloquium is for PhD students, post-doc researchers and other advanced students and researchers who are working on a paper, a PhD thesis, their second book (Habilitation), etc. We will discuss our own work-in-progress as well as recent theoretical publications.

Learning Outcomes: Doctoral candidates participating in this colloquium will:

- receive direct supervisory and peer mentoring on their research projects;
- develop their theoretical and methodological expertise;
- practise their academic writing and conference presentation skills;
- acquire a range of soft skills in academic professional development.

PhD and Research Colloquium: **Medieval Studies**

Instructor: **Annette Kern-Stähler**

Time: Wednesday 18-20

Course Description: This colloquium is for PhD students, post-doc researchers and other advanced students and researchers who are working on a paper, a PhD thesis, their second book (Habilitation), etc. We will discuss our own work-in-progress as well as recent theoretical publications.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, it is expected that students will:

- receive direct supervisory and peer mentoring on their research projects;
- develop their theoretical and methodological expertise;
- practise their academic writing and conference presentation skills;
- acquire a range of soft skills in academic professional development.

PhD and Research Colloquium: **Modern English Literature**

Instructor: **Zoë Lehmann**

Time: Block seminar

Sessions: By appointment

Course Description: This colloquium is for PhD students, post-doc researchers and other advanced students and researchers who are working on a paper, a PhD thesis, their second book (Habilitation), etc. We will discuss our own work-in-progress as well as recent theoretical publications. Advanced MA students who are considering a PhD are asked to contact Professor Richter about an invitation to the colloquium.

Learning Outcomes: In this colloquium, young scholars will be encouraged to develop an independent and professional stance on their research. They will receive direct supervisory and peer mentoring on their research projects, develop their theoretical and methodological expertise and practice their academic writing and conference presentation skills.

PhD and Research Colloquium: **Key Issues in American Studies**

Instructor: **Gabriele Rippl**

Time: Thursday 16-18

Course Description: This colloquium is for PhD students, post-doc researchers and other advanced students and researchers who are working on a paper, a MA or PhD thesis, their second book (Habilitation), etc. We will discuss our own work-in-progress as well as recent publications on literary and cultural theory.

Learning Outcomes: Doctoral candidates and postdocs participating in this colloquium will:

- receive direct supervisory and peer mentoring on their research projects;
- develop their theoretical and methodological expertise;
- practice their academic writing and conference presentation skills;
- acquire a range of soft skills in academic professional development;
- learn about cultural dimensions of sustainability.

Staff Research Interests and Professional Activities

Sofie Behluli: Anglophone literature from 1900 to the present, the contemporary North American novel, postmodernism and post-postmodernism, intermediality, materiality, aura.

Olivia Biber: Victorian literature and culture, literature and economics, feminist economics, gender studies, queer theory.

David Britain: Language variation and change; English dialectology (esp. of Southern England; East Anglia and the Anglophone Southern Hemisphere); sociophonology; dialect contact; new dialect formation and second dialect acquisition; language and dialect obsolescence; the emergent dialects of diaspora communities; and the interface between dialectology and human geography; Associate Editor of the Journal of Sociolinguistics.

Michael Boog: his research interests include contemporary Anglophone novels, world literary theory and irrealist aesthetics.

Thomas Claviez: Literary theory; aesthetics and ethics; 19th and 20th century American literature; American film; ecocriticism; native American literature; American history of ideas; postcolonial theory; representations of cosmopolitanism; hospitality and otherness.

Marijke Denger: Anglophone and Dutch colonial literatures, contemporary postcolonial literatures, comparative imperialisms, postcolonial theory, concepts of identity and community.

Mary Flannery: intersections between literature, reputation, and emotion in later medieval England (roughly 1350-1550); postmedieval reception of medieval literature.

Kellie Gonçalves: interface between sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, human geography and mobility studies, specifically within the fields of discourse, globalization, migration, multilingualism, education and tourism studies.

Hannah Hedegard: Sociophonetics; Forensic Phonetics; World Englishes; Language in the Asylum process.

Annette Kern-Stähler: Medieval English literature and culture, more specifically concepts of space, medieval authorship, text and image, the five senses, medieval disability studies, gender studies; science and literature; interrelations between bioethics and literature; British writers and the Second World War; British-German relations.

Charmaine Kong: sociocultural linguistics; language and materiality; the political economy of language; sociolinguistics of globalisation; linguistic ethnography; semiotic landscapes; discourses of invisibility; discard studies.

Zoë Lehmann Imfeld: Literature and theology, literature and philosophy, literature and science, science fiction, fictionality, the long 19th-century.

Beatriz Lorente: Language and migration; language and work; sociolinguistics of globalization; language policy; the politics of English.

Gwynne Mapes: Media discourse; language ideology; class and elitist discourse; food studies; consumption studies; preferred method: critical discourse analysis of written and/or spoken language.

Viola Marchi: Literary theory; contemporary American literature; Native American literature; ethics and literature; postmodern fiction and aesthetics.

Nicole Nyffenegger: Human skin in literature, discourses of the human body, representation of pain in literature and on stage, constructions and performativity of gender and identity, animals in literature, concepts of authorship. Gender studies, human-animal studies, cultural studies, materiality studies, new materialisms.

Alessandro Pellanda: Social Semiotics, (Multimodal) Critical Discourse Analysis, Environmental Discourse Analysis (Waste, Recycling, Climate change), Semiotic Landscapes, Discourse Ethnography and Qualitative-Ethnography, Cultural Sociology, Critical Theory

Hannah Piercy: Medieval English literature and culture, especially medieval romance, gender studies (including masculinity), medieval sexualities, embodiment, the history of emotions, medieval readers, textual transmission, the medical humanities, race and the global Middle Ages, material culture, nature and the environment, medievalism in the modern world.

Virginia Richter: British literature and culture in the Restoration and the Long Eighteenth Century; Victorianism; modernity; contemporary literature and film; literary and cultural theory; gender studies; postcolonial studies/cosmopolitanism; literature and science; especially Darwinism; literary representations of animals; literature and the environment; in particular the beach as an in-between space.

Gabriele Rippl: Intermediality (text-image relations; ekphrasis in particular); graphic novels; cultural studies; literary theory; interculturality and postcolonialism; cosmopolitanism; transculturalism; history and anthropology of the media; literature and anthropology; early modernity (frühe Neuzeit); 19th and 20th century women writers in English; semiotics; autobiography research; feminist literary theory; transculturalism.

Axel Stähler: Representations of the Holocaust in American literature and culture, Modern Jewish literature in North America, the Anglophone world, Israel, and Germany, Zionism and literature, Constructions of the American West, Fundamentalism and American literature, American crime fiction, American graphic novels, Colonialism and postcolonial literature, Intermediality.

Malaika Sutter: North American literature and cultural history (19th to 21st centuries), feminist and queer literary theories, Intermediality, memory studies, nostalgia, historiography, citizenship, and incarceration in North American literature and culture.

Crispin Thurlow: Critical discourse studies; critical intercultural studies; sociolinguistics; linguistic anthropology; meta-language; language ideology; multimodality (e.g. *visuality*; *space/place*; *material culture*); language and globalization; language and new media; youth and adolescent communication; sex|uality; class inequality.

Danielle Tod: Sociolinguistics; English dialectology; language documentation; language policy and planning.

Marion Troxler: Critical body studies, gender studies, feminist theory, hybrid bodies, blue humanities.

Christiania Whitehead: Middle English religious literature, allegory, hagiography, lyric, devotional writing, mysticism.

Laura Wohlgemuth: Sociocultural linguistics, critical sociolinguistics, discard studies, language materiality, studies of value, waste and domestic life. Preferred method: (multimodal) critical discourse analysis

Staff Address List Autumn Semester 2025

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Footnotes to Timetable

Key:

Classes in **bold** are for MA students

Classes in *italics* are for Doctoral students

Ⓔ denotes lectures with pre-1800 content

FS = free-standing

Focus Module

Language and Linguistics: The Economies of Language

Language Module:

Writing Skills I

Grammar I

BA Core Curriculum:

Introduction to Language and Linguistics (Lecture)

Introduction to Literature (Lecture)

Earlier Englishes (Lecture)

MA Foundation

Literary Theory

Language and Society

Block Workshops, Seminars, Study Trips and other irregular courses (see Course Booklet for more information):

^[1] **Hedegard/Tod: Language Contact in the Arctic (MA Seminar Linguistics)**

05 September (zoom meeting); Monday 15 September 12-14; Saturday 20 – Friday 26 September excursion; Monday 20 October 12-14

^[2] Britain/Thurlow/Gonçalves: BA Colloquium

14-15 on 15 and 22 September, 13 and 20 October, 03 November + one-day conference on Friday afternoon 21 November

^[2] **Britain/Thurlow/Gonçalves: MA Colloquium**

15-16 on 15 and 22 September, 13, 20 and 27 October, 10 November + one-day conference Friday 21 November

^[3] Behluli/Sutter: **New York City in Literature and Other Media (MA Block Seminar Literature)**

Preliminary Meetings: 15 September 16-18, 13 October 30 minute slots between 13-16; Block Seminar Thursday 13 and Friday 14 November 09-18

^[4] Thurlow/Kong/Wohlgemuth/Pellanda: Waste Semiotics: Language, Materiality, Space (BA Workshop/Independent Studies 3+2 ECTS TBC)

Online sessions for weeks beginning 13, 20 and 27 October and 03, 10, 17 November times TBC. One-week intensive 24-28 November times TBC.

^[5] Tod: Statistics for Sociolinguistics (BA Workshop)

15, 22 and 29 October; 05 November

^[6] Kern-Stähler/Lehmann: BA and **MA Colloquium Medieval and Modern English Literature**

BA Colloquium dates: 18 September 09:30 – 10:30, 16 October 09:30 – 12:00, 20 November 09:30 – 12:00, 18 December 09:30 – 13:00

MA Colloquium dates: 18 September 10:30 – 11:30, 09 October 09:30 – 12:00, 23 October 09:30 – 12:00, 13 November 09:30 – 13:00

^[9] Kern-Stähler: BMZ: Schweiz im Mittelalter – Mittelalter in der Schweiz (BA and **MA** Lecture)

Thursday 16.15-17.45. In addition: three post-lecture seminars starting at 17.45 and a preliminary meeting

Additional information for regular courses (see course booklet for more information)

^[7] Rippl/Behluli/Sutter: BA and **MA Colloquium** North American Literature (Rippl/Behluli/Sutter)

BA colloquium dates: 25 September, 09 and 23 October, 06 and 27 November, 11 December

MA colloquium dates: 18 September, 02, 16 and 30 October, 20 November, 04 December

^[8] Claviez/Stähler: BA and **MA Colloquium** North American Literature (Claviez/Stähler/Marchi)

BA colloquium dates: 25 September, 09 and 23 October, 06 and 27 November, 11 December

MA colloquium dates: 18 September, 02, 16 and 30 October, 20 November, 04 December

TIMETABLE AUTUMN SEMESTER 2025

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
08-10					
10-12	Hedegard: Introduction to Language and Linguistics (Core Curriculum) Britain/Thurlow: Language and Space/Place (MA Seminar Language and Linguistics) Stähler: The Early American Novel (BA FS Seminar Literature)	Lorente: Modern English Grammar (Language Module) Nyffenegger/Hesse: Richard III in History and Drama (BA FS Seminar Literature) Britain: Language and Society (MA Foundation Lecture Language and Linguistics)	Piercy: “I hear it said that you are a very wicked woman”: Reading <i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i> (BA FS Seminar Literature) Hedegard: The Linguistics of Seeking Asylum (BA FM Seminar The Economies of Language and BA FS Seminar Language and Linguistics) Claviez: After the Linguistic Turn: Literary Theory in the 20th Century (MA Foundation Lecture Literature)	Lorente: Writing Skills I (Language Module) Kern-Stähler/Lehmann: BA Colloquium Medieval and Modern English Literature ^[6] Rippl/Behluli/Sutter: BA Colloquium North American Literature (GR/SB/MS)^[7] Claviez/Stähler/Marchi: BA Colloquium North American Literature (TC/AS/VM)^[8] Kern-Stähler/Lehmann: MA Colloquium Medieval and Modern English Literature^[6] Rippl/Behluli/Sutter: MA Colloquium North American Literature (GR/SB/MS)^[7] Claviez/Stähler/Marchi: MA Colloquium North American Literature (TC/AS/VM)^[8]	Nyffenegger: Beyond the Bard: A Broader Introduction to Early Modern Literature (BA FS Seminar Literature) Lorente: Qualitative Methods (CSLS MA Seminar Linguistics)
12-14	Gonçalves: Language and Art (BA FM Seminar The Economies of Language and BA FS Seminar Language and Linguistics) Lehmann: Reading the Romantics (BA FS Seminar Literature) Hedegard/Tod: Language Contact in the Arctic (MA Seminar Language and Linguistics with excursion)^[1] 13-16 Claviez: PhD and Research Colloquium Literary Theory	Lorente: Writing Skills I (Language Module) Mapes: Language at Work (BA FM Seminar The Economies of Language and BA FS Seminar Language and Linguistics) Lehmann: So Long and Thanks for all the Fish: Language as Literary Theme (MA Seminar Literature)	Lorente: Writing Skills I (Language Module) Hedegard/Tod: Dialect and Performance (BA FS Seminar Language and Linguistics) Marchi: Reading the Ghost in African American Fiction (MA Seminar Literature)	Lorente: Writing Skills I (Language Module) Nyffenegger: <i>Beowulf</i>’s Entangled Worlds: Objects, Places, Creatures (BA FS Seminar Literature) Gonçalves: Analyzing Stickers (MA Seminar Linguistics)	
14-16	Troxler: “And then, and then, and then...”: A Narratological Exploration of Storytelling (BA Workshop) 14-15 Britain/Gonçalves/Thurlow: BA Colloquium Language and Linguistics ^[2] 15-16 Britain/Gonçalves/Thurlow: MA Colloquium Language and Linguistics ^[2] Stähler: Representations of the Holocaust in American Culture (MA Seminar Literature) Thurlow: PhD and Research Colloquium: Language and Communication 13-16 Claviez: PhD and Research Colloquium Literary Theory	Whitehead: Earlier Englishes (Core Curriculum) Thurlow/Kong/Pellanda/Wohlgemuth: Language and Materiality (BA FM Lecture The Economies of Language, BA FS Lecture Language and Linguistics; MA Lecture Language and Linguistics) Nyffenegger: Chaucer’s and Shakespeare’s Troy (BA FS Seminar Literature) Kern-Stähler: The Medieval Book (MA Seminar Literature) Britain: PhD and Research Colloquium Language Variation and Change	Lorente: Writing Skills I (Language Module) Claviez: American Genesis (BA FS Lecture Literature and MA Lecture Literature)^[9] Tod: Statistics for Sociolinguistics (BA Workshop)^[5]	Stähler: Introduction to Literature (Core Curriculum) Rippl/Sutter: The Politics of Nostalgia and Solastalgia: Literary and Cultural Perspectives (BA FS Seminar Literature)	
16-18	Behluli/Sutter: New York City in Literature and Other Media (MA Block Seminar Literature) ^[3]	Lorente: Writing Skills I (Language Module) Thurlow/Kong/Wohlgemuth/Pellanda: Waste Semiotics: Language, Materiality, Space (BA Workshop/Independent Studies 3+2 ECTS TBC) ^[4]	Tod: Statistics for Sociolinguistics (BA Workshop)^[5] Rippl/Behluli: Contemporary North American Graphic Narratives (MA Seminar Literature)	16.15-17.45 Kern-Stähler: BMZ: Schweiz im Mittelalter – Mittelalter in der Schweiz (BA and MA Lecture) ^[9] Rippl: PhD and Research Colloquium Key Issues in American Studies	
18-20			Collegium Generale: (BA Electives Lecture) Kern-Stähler: PhD and Research Colloquium Medieval Studies		