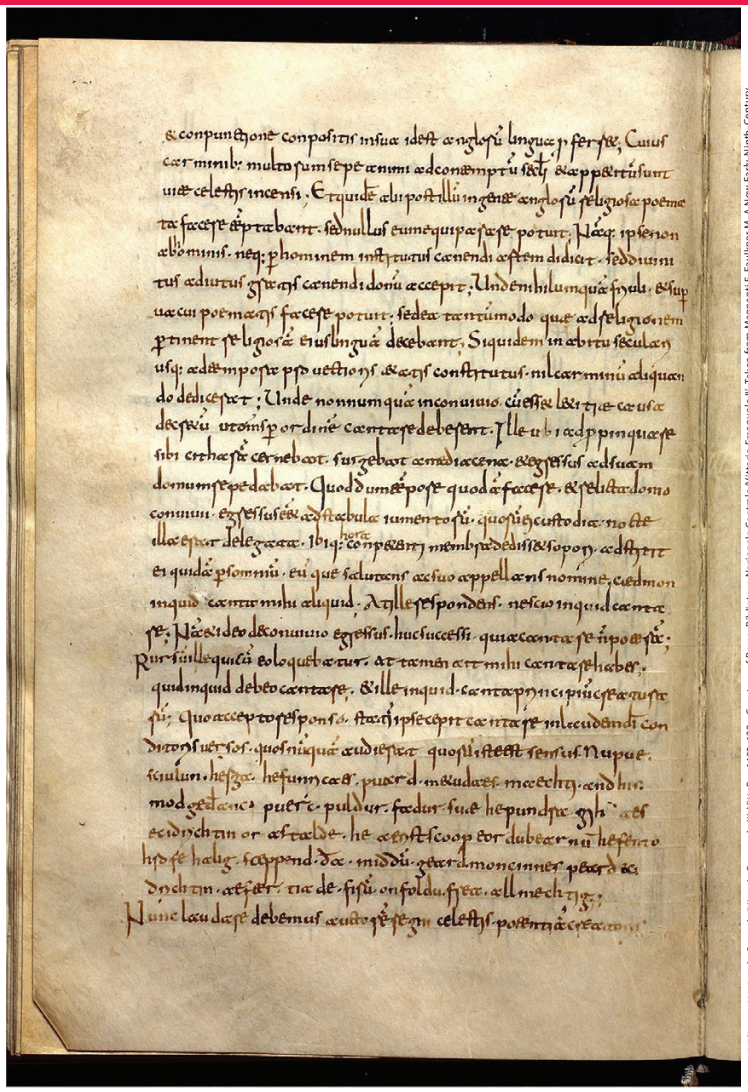
Department of English
14.09.2026-18.12.2026

UNIVERSITÄT
BERN

Course Booklet
Autumn Semester 2026



Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale 'Vittorio Emanuele II', Vitt. Em. 1452, 122v. Courtesy of Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale 'Vittorio Emanuele II'. Taken from Magnanti E, Faulkner M. A New Early Ninth-Century Manuscript of Cædmon's Hymn: Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Vitt. Em. 1452, 122v. Early Medieval England and its Neighbours. 2026;52:e9. doi:10.1017/ean.2025.10012

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Welcome from Head of Department

Dear students and staff,

In April this year, two scholars from Trinity College Dublin rediscovered an early ninth-century manuscript of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*Ecclesiastical History of the English People*), which had long been presumed lost, in the National Library of Rome.[1] The cover image shows fol. 122v. If you look closely, you might be able to spot a few lines of Old English in the otherwise Latin text (lines 22-27), beginning with 'Nupue' (line 22) and ending with 'allmechtig' (line 27). The scribe was probably a monk from northern Italy, who – judging from the erroneous use of <p> for <p> – seems to have been unfamiliar with English orthography. The Old English words he transcribed are one of the earliest surviving poems in the English language, 'Caedmon's Hymn'.

The *Ecclesiastical History*, which Bede completed in 731 CE, tells us that Caedmon was an illiterate cattle herder at Whitby Abbey in Yorkshire. A divine visitation inspired him to compose and sing a hymn in praise of God's creation, beginning

Nupue. / sciulun. herga. hefunricaes. puard. metudaes. maechti. and his. / mod geðanc.

(Now let us praise Heaven-Kingdom's guardian, the Maker's might and his mind's thoughts) and ending with 'frea. allmechtig.' (the Lord almighty).[2]

I have picked this cover image for two reasons: a) it demonstrates that libraries continue to yield unexpected discoveries, which is exciting and encouraging to established researchers and students alike; and b) 'Caedmon's Hymn', a song inspired by God and praising God, encapsulates the close connection between religion and literature that is at the heart of this semester's Focus Module 'Literature and Religion'.

While the Focus Module lecture is devoted to the medieval period, the satellite seminars explore the intersections between literature and religion in a variety of periods, regions, and genres: from medieval saints' lives and early modern religious writing to North American life writing and literature and fundamentalism. No less exciting and wide-ranging are this semester's workshops, seminars, and lectures in linguistics and literature, which extend from 'language and gender' to 'children, language and society', from 'Sutton Hoo' (with study trip) to 'contemporary North American Ecological Literature', and from 'Earlier Englishes' to 'discourse methods'.

We are lucky to be members of a thriving community of students and researchers. Thanks to our students, guest lecturers from all over the world experience our department as a place of intellectual curiosity and lively academic exchange.

As a department, we are committed to research-led teaching. We enjoy a reputation of excellence in research fields ranging from intermediality and sensory studies to postcolonial studies and theories of community, from language variation and dialect formation to critical discourse studies and language ideology, from forensic phonetics to food studies, and from gender studies to the environmental humanities. Our research excellence is frequently recognized through prestigious awards and appointments. This year, Prof. Crispin Thurlow is the Ander Visiting Professor in Geomedia Studies at Karstad University, Sweden; Prof. Ursula Kluwick,

[1] Magnanti, Elisabetta, and Mark Faulkner. "A New Early-Ninth-Century Manuscript of Cædmon's Hymn: Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Vitt. Em. 1452, 122v." *Early Medieval England and its Neighbours* 52 (2026): e9. Web.

[2] Following the translation by Roy Liuzza in *Old English Poetry: An Anthology* (Broadview, 2014).

University of Bremen, has been awarded the British Society for Literature and Science Book Prize for her monograph *Haunting Ecologies: Victorian Concepts of Water* (University of Virginia Press), which has its origin in her Bern habilitation thesis (section Modern English Literature).
Congratulations!

Our departmental staff continues to be incredibly successful in receiving grants, including the increasingly competitive SNSF project grants. This academic year, four new projects have been awarded SNSF funding (2025-2030):

- Prof. Dave Britain, 'Curlew: A Census of Urban and Rural Language in England and Wales' (with Adrian Leemann, Bern; Paul Foulkes, York; and David Willis, Oxford (2026-30) (PhD researchers: Jess Freathy and Liz Blackwell; affiliated postdoc: Dr Ryan Shaw-Hawkins)

- Prof. Annette Kern-Stähler, 'Becoming Axolotl: Empathy, Simulation, and Embodiment in Medieval Narratives' (with Catalin Taranu, Bucharest and Mirko Sardelic, Zagreb) (2025-29) (doctoral researcher: Abbie Fray; postdoctoral researchers: Dr. Oana Cojocaru, Dr. Alexandra Ilina, Dr. Hannah Piercy)

- Prof. Annette Kern-Stähler, 'Searching for the Medieval English Aesthetics of Revulsion (SMEAR): Disgust in the Middle English Literary Tradition' (senior researcher: PD Dr. Mary Flannery, doctoral researcher: tbc)

- Prof. Axel Stähler, 'Jewish Writing in the Global South: Exploring Contiguities of Indian Jewish Writing with Maghrebin Jewish and Subaltern Indian Writing' (doctoral researchers: Aishwarya Khale and Yasmine Slimani)

Congratulations also to Dr. Hannah Piercy, who has secured a grant from swissuniversities for organising writing retreats for early career scholars.

2025-26 SNSF Open Access publication grants for book-length studies were awarded to

- Prof. Annette Kern-Stähler
- Dr. Hannah Piercy
- Prof. Axel Stähler

We could not run any of these projects or, indeed, any of our seminars, without our dedicated administrative staff: Gabriela Burkhart, Sannie Germann, and Bettina Rhyn-Holzer. We are incredibly grateful for your support. As directors' assistant, Anja Burkhart has offered invaluable support to the directors of the department. Thank you! Sadly, Anja will leave the department at the end of the spring semester. We wish her all the very best for the launch of her teaching career in Lucerne.

Our wonderful student committee supports our students and liaises with academic and administrative staff and the SUB. They regularly organise popular events, such as Christmas parties, book fairs, and workshops; they offer a peer support service; and they maintain our departmental Tea Corner. On behalf of all staff, I extend a warm thanks to all members of the student committee.

I wish you all a good start to the autumn semester!

Prof. Dr. Annette Kern-Stähler,
Head of Department Bern, May 2026

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.

Course registration procedures are **effective** for all BA and MA students. The table below outlines the opening and closing times for registration.

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

	FOUNDATION COURSES COLLOQUIA TUTORIALS	**ALL OTHER COURSES**	**ASSESSMENTS**
OPENS	**08:00 on the first workday in August** for autumn semester (3 August 2026) **08:00** on **the first workday in January** for spring semester (4 January 2027)		
CLOSES	**23:59** on **second Friday** of the semester (25 September 2026 for autumn 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**	**Before closing window**	**Before closing window**

Contact Sannie Germann (sannie.germann@unibe.ch) about any registration issues.

Priorisation Policy

All course registrations are on first comes, first served basis.
Registration for BA seminars and workshops is only possible if you completed the BA foundation courses (Language Module and Core Curricullum). Please contact Sannie Germann for support if needed.
MA courses are intended for advanced students, so check course details carefully.
VML students (*Vorgezogene Master Leistungen*) are 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 and can't deregister anymore?

Contact the students' administrator immediately.

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.vonruette@unibe.ch

Sabine von Rütte is on maternity leave until October 2026.
Students with last names from M-Z students should contact Helen Shepherd until then.

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 exceptions 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

FOKUS Video on KSL, ILIAS and the Course Booklet
https://ilias.unibe.ch/ilias.php?baseClass=ilrepositorygui&cmdNode=zo:nj&cmdClass=ilObjContentPageGUI&cmd=view&ref_id=3475287

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/arl_advanced_reading_list/index_eng.html

FOKUS Video on ARL
https://ilias.unibe.ch/ilias.php?baseClass=ilrepositorygui&cmdNode=zo:nj&cmdClass=ilObjContentPageGUI&cmd=view&ref_id=3471005

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

FOKUS Video on Stay Abroad
https://ilias.unibe.ch/ilias.php?baseClass=ilrepositorygui&cmdNode=zo:nj&cmdClass=ilObjContentPageGUI&cmd=view&ref_id=3600227

FOKUS Videos
https://ilias.unibe.ch/ilias.php?baseClass=ilrepositorygui&ref_id=3451782

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 2026

Project propositions	30 March '26
Supervisor deadline	30 April '26
Study counsellor and secretariat deadline	14 October '26
Thesis submission deadline	04 January '27

SUBMISSION IN SPRING 2027

Project propositions	30 October '26
Supervisor deadline	16 November '26
Study counsellor and secretariat deadline	15 March '27
Thesis submission deadline	28 May '27

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 2027

Department registration deadline	09 June '26
Dean's Office registration deadline	09 June '26
Thesis submission deadline	20 December '26

GRADUATION IN AUTUMN 2027

Department registration deadline	27 November '26
Dean's Office registration deadline	27 November '26
Thesis submission deadline	07 July '27

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**.*

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, check the HELP booklet or watch this video.

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 *Writings 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. Any non-attendances, even with a doctors' note, count towards the 2 allowed absences.

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 Alison,

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 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).
To get the information you need on how to apply for Access Arrangements, see this video.

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 2026

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

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)**

Sabine von Rütte / D 213
sabine.vonruette@unibe.ch

Sabine von Rütte is on maternity leave until October 2026.
Students with last names from M-Z students should contact Helen Shepherd until then.

KSL Enquiries
Enrolment for Theses
Sannie Germann
031 684 82 45 / D 201
sannie.germann@unibe.ch

Library Enquiries
Sabrina Mutti
031 684 83 72 / B 271
sabrina.mutti@unibe.ch

Gabriela Scherrer
031 684 94 42 / B 271
gabriela.scherrer@unibe.ch

For information about staff consultation times please consult the departmental website.

Academic Staff (AS26)

Dr. Sofie Behluli*
North American Literature and Culture
Liz Blackwell
Modern English Linguistics
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
Salah Essa, M.A.
Modern English Linguistics
Prof. Dr. Mary Flannery
Medieval English Studies
Abbie Fray, M.St.*
Medieval English Studies
Jessica Freathy, M.A.
Modern English Linguistics
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
Ryan Shaw-Hawkins*
Modern English Linguistics
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
Marion Troxler, M.A.*
Modern English Literature
Sabine von Rütte, M.A.
North American Literature and Culture
PD Dr. Christiania Whitehead*
Medieval English Studies
Laura Wohlgemuth, M.A
Language and Communication

** Teaching this semester*

Administrative Staff | Autumn Semester 2026

Administrators

Gabriela Burkhart	Please see the website for office hours
Sannie Germann	

Drittmittel Administration

Bettina Rhyn-Holzer	By appointment

Directors' Assistant

tba

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

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 contact with the department's staff, 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 students 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 provide channels for academic help and organise events to connect with peers. 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: @enstuco_unibe

Join the WhatsApp Info Channel!
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 2026

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 and
- 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 and
- 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 and
- 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:	**Nicole Nyffenegger**
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. 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 with other media. The lecture course will be accompanied by a tutorial (details tba in first week of term).

Required Reading: All students must have read William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by the second week of term, your knowledge of it may be subject to examination. The recommended edition is the Third Arden Series one (edited by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 2016, ISBN-13: 978-1472518385).

References will be made also to other texts on the departmental reading list. Please make sure you have a personal copy of all "core texts for literature" on that list:

https://www.ens.unibe.ch/unibe/portal/fak_historisch/dsl/ens/content/e41030/e72711/e598299/e785801/AdvancedReadingList_eng.pdf

Learning Outcomes: This lecture aims to familiarise students with central concepts and tools for the analysis of literary texts of various genres. Students should 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 have to pass the graded exam.

Assessment (graded): This lecture is part of the Core Curriculum. The final exam will consist of short answer questions.
Exam Date: 03 December 2026
Resit Date: 10 December 2026
Second Resit Exam: 17 December 2026

Focus Module

BA Lecture: **Medieval Literature and Religion**

Instructors: **Annette Kern-Stähler / Hannah Piercy**

Time: Tuesday 14-16

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

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

(18) Pre-1800 content

Course Description: Middle English literature is profoundly influenced by Christianity. This lecture series will explore the relationship between medieval literature (primarily in Middle English) and religion from a variety of perspectives. We will consider how medieval literature is used for religious purposes; how it portrays religious themes, practices, and beliefs; how it presents and conceptualises non-Christian religions; and what role women played in the composition and reception of religious literature. The course will cover a wide variety of medieval literature, from didactic religious texts to less obviously religious genres, like romance, the premier "secular" genre of medieval England — but a genre that, despite its apparently secular focus, is still deeply influenced by and interested in Christianity and in relations between Christians and non-Christians. Other reading will include devotional literature, including meditations, religious lyrics, hagiographies (saints' lives), and religious drama. The lecture will serve the purpose of cultural sustainability by providing new perspectives on historic literature, including probing how accessible medieval literature's religious focus is to diverse modern audiences.

Required Reading: Reading will be uploaded to ILIAS; please make sure to complete the introductory reading before the first session.

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

- will have read a wide variety of medieval literature from different genres;
- will have considered different critical perspectives on medieval literature and religion;
- will have explored how medieval literature serves religious purposes, portrays religious themes, and presents non-Christian religions;
- will have deepened their knowledge of how literature and religion intersect, and how knowledge of religious practices can strengthen literary understanding;
- will have gained insights into the goals of the environmental humanities and cultural sustainability.

Assessment (pass/fail or graded): * 60% required to secure a 4.0/pass. Exam format TBC, but likely to take the form of regular quizzes during lecture hours and a short final exam.
Exam date: 08 December 2026
Resit date: 15 December 2026

* 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: **Literature and Fundamentalism (BA FM Seminar Literature and Religion)**

Instructor: **Axel Stähler**

Time: Wednesday 16-18

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: Contesting Samuel P. Huntington's notorious claim that our days are determined by the "clash of civilizations" (1996), Tariq Ali suggested that instead we may be living in a time of the "clash of fundamentalisms" (2002). Recent global developments have brought fundamentalist world views once again to the fore. Discourse on this variegated phenomenon is, however, fraught with misconceptions and generalizations which generate fear and intolerance and which tend to deepen the rift not only between those considered to be fundamentalists and those who are not but continues to polarize other groups which are 'tainted' by association. Not surprisingly therefore, fundamentalism has become the focus of much scholarly attention. Yet, although a phenomenon commonly recognized to be centered on texts, the multi-faceted and at times paradoxical relationship of fundamentalism with literature remains as yet largely unexplored.
Against the background of the all-pervading topicality of fundamentalism, brutally insisted on, inter alia, by the havoc wrought by the destruction of the World Trade Center (2001) and other terrorist attacks as well as recent military campaigns and apocalyptic scenarios, but also less dramatically, for instance, by the opening of the Creation Museum in Kentucky (2007), this course aims to further our understanding of a highly present but ill-defined phenomenon by identifying and analyzing some of the recurrent mechanisms which determine the interrelation of fundamentalism and literature.

Content warning: Some of the texts on the reading list may offend religious sensibilities.

Required Reading: The seminar is organized in thematic blocks; all texts within a thematic block must be prepared in advance of the first session of the respective block (see schedule on ILIAS).

- The Book of Revelation (Bible)
- Joseph Birkbeck Burroughs, *Titan, Son of Saturn* (1905; PDF)
- Flannery O'Connor, *The Violent Bear it Away* (1955/1960)
- Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, *Left Behind* (1995)
- Tova Reich, *The Jewish War* (1995)
- Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007)
- Pearl Abraham, *American Taliban* (2010)

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

- demonstrate critical awareness of the cultural and historical contexts which inform the interrelation of fundamentalism and literature since the beginning of the twentieth century;
- understand concepts of modernity, anti-modernism, and identity;
- show critical awareness of the function of literature as a form of resistance;
- confidently identify and analyze constructions of the 'other' in literature;
- enquire critically into literary representations of diverse fundamentalisms;

- demonstrate critical understanding of the use of specifically literary strategies in fundamentalist literature and in literary representations of fundamentalisms;
- appreciate the similarities and affinities as well as the generic differences and incompatibilities of fundamentalism and literature;
- will have gained insights 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 (40%; 1500 words): design of a cover and blurb for one of the texts on the reading list in addition to a rationale and critical reflection;
one essay (60%; 2500 words): Students will devise a topic of their own choice (in consultation with the course convenor) and will discuss at least one primary text with reference to relevant secondary literature.

Deadline for Assessed Work:
mini-project: 09 November 2026
seminar paper: 18 January 2027

* 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 Aesthetics of Martyrdom in Contemporary Anglophone Fiction**
Instructor:	**Viola Marchi**
Time:	Wednesday 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: The seminar explores how contemporary Anglophone writers reimagine martyrdom beyond traditional religious frameworks and how the figure of the martyr is mediated across different cultural contexts and narrative forms. The course pays particular attention to the entanglements of martyrdom and terrorism in post-9/11 global political discourse, where acts of violence are often framed through competing narratives of sacrifice, fanaticism, and resistance. Across the semester, we will study how martyrdom is narrated, performed, and visualized, and how aesthetic strategies can be employed to shape violence and death as meaningful or senseless, sacred or absurd. We will also consider the role of spectacle in constructing understandings of self-sacrifice, alongside the politics of mourning that determine which deaths are rendered grievable or worthy of remembrance. Ultimately, the course invites students to reflect on the affective and representational frames that actively shape our conceptions of ethical responsibility and political violence in a globalized yet polarized world.

Content Warning: Please be aware that this seminar deals with some heavy topics, including death, terrorist attacks, and suicidal thoughts, as well as broader themes of grief and political violence.

Required Reading: Please purchase your own copy of the following novels, preferably in the suggested edition, and start reading them before the beginning of the semester. Further material will be made available on ILIAS.

Akbar, Kaveh. *Martyr!* Vintage Books, 2024. ISBN 978-0-593-68577-8
Hanif, Mohammed. *Rebel English Academy*, Grove Press, 2026. ISBN 978-1-80471-116-3
Shamsie, Kamila. *Home Fire*. Bloomsbury, 2025 [2017]. ISBN 978-1-4088-8679-3

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

- can critically analyze how contemporary Anglophone literature reconfigures martyrdom within and beyond traditional religious and political frameworks;
- are able to identify and analyze the narrative and aesthetic strategies through which fiction represents violence and death as meaningful or senseless;
- have interrogated the role of media, spectacle, and visual culture in shaping representations of self-sacrifice and political violence;
- have further developed their skills of close reading and textual analysis, academic discussion, and seminar paper writing.

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

Assessment (graded):* Regular attendance, completion of all primary and secondary readings, active participation in class, individual research tasks, and a written paper of 3000 words.

Deadline for Assessed Work: Monday, 25 January 2027

* 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: **Between Devotion and Doubt: Religious Writing in Early Modern England**

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: Early modern religious writing was shaped by the tensions between the Protestant Reformation and enduring Catholic (recusant) traditions, and by the religious uncertainties these produced for individual believers and church communities alike. The project of the King James Bible (1611) profoundly reshaped ideas of scriptural authority, and devotional poems, sermons, and psalms became sites where faith was negotiated. This course examines short texts and excerpts by John Donne, George Herbert, Aemilia Lanyer, John Milton, Mary Sidney Herbert, Lancelot Andrewes, Thomas More, and others. Structured around pairings of texts, it brings competing models of devotional writing into dialogue. Donne's sermons and Holy Sonnets, for example, marked by spiritual anxiety, are read alongside the ceremonious preaching of Lancelot Andrewes at the Jacobean court. Mary Sidney Herbert's psalm translations and Aemilia Lanyer's protofeminist retelling of the Fall are considered in relation to the King James Bible, highlighting women's interventions in biblical interpretation. We investigate how literary form and genre shaped the articulation of personal faith and institutional religion, and how devotion and doubt were mutually beneficial in some of these texts. Our readings of primary texts are supplemented by critical scholarship that situates these them within their social and cultural contexts.

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

- explored, through close textual analysis, key works of early modern religious writing;
- examined how literary texts engage with the religious conflicts of the Reformation;
- analysed how different genres (sermon, sonnet, psalm, devotional lyric) shape expressions of faith and doubt;
- compared paired texts across divides of confession, social status, and gender;
- further honed their skills in close textual analysis, academic discussion; presentation, and research-based writing.

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance (no more than two sessions can be missed), active participation, thorough preparation of set readings, short presentations and writing tasks depending on student numbers.

Assessment (graded):* All of the above plus a paper of 3500 words. Parts of the preparatory writing exercises in class will count towards the overall grade.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 20 January 2027

* 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:	**Poetry and Religion: From medieval lyrics to metaphysical poetry**
Instructor:	**Nicole Nyffenegger**
Time:	Tuesday 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 explores how medieval and early modern English poetry gave voice to religious experience across almost a thousand years, from Old English verse to Middle English lyrics to the devotional poetry of the seventeenth century. Religious poems allowed writers to explore encounters between the human and the divine in concentrated ways. Beginning with the Old English poems *Caedmon's Hymn* and *The Dream of the Rood*, we will examine the emergence of a Christian literary tradition that transformed biblical narratives into vivid poetry. We then turn to Middle English devotional lyrics, including *Stond wel, Moder* and *I Sing of a Maiden*, which invite their audiences to participate emotionally in central moments of salvation history. Finally, we consider the dramatic changes brought about by the Reformation through the metaphysical poetry of John Donne and George Herbert, whose works combine reflections on mortality and salvation with witty and inventive uses of poetic form and language. We will focus on the close analysis of poetry, supplemented by critical texts concerned with the individual poems, their authors and audiences, and their historical and cultural contexts.

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

- analysed medieval and early modern religious poetry through close reading;
- identified major developments in medieval to early modern devotional literature;
- discussed key concepts such as devotion, affect, embodiment, and metaphysical wit;
- compared different poetic responses to shared religious themes, including creation and fall, sin and salvation, and the personal relationship to God;
- practiced communicating their interpretations academically in discussion, presentations, and writing.

Coursework (pass/fail): Short presentations, handouts, writing exercises, depending on student numbers and needs.

Assessment (graded):[*] All of the above plus a paper of 3500 words.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 20 January 2027

[*] 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:	**Convention and Subversion: Gender and Genre in Medieval Saints' Lives**
Instructors:	**Abbie Fray and Hannah Piercy**
Time:	Wednesday 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: Medieval saints' lives (also known as hagiographies) were one of the most popular genres of literature in the medieval period. This seminar course will explore why these stories appealed to their medieval readers, examining how saints' lives experiment with genre and gender, questioning established concepts in both categories. While these narratives often seem highly conventional and formulaic, individual hagiographies sometimes innovate by incorporating elements of other medieval genres; they also exceed gender binaries and highlight the diverse and complex nature of gender identity and expression in the Middle Ages. Ranging from Old English texts (available in translation) to Middle English works, this course will focus on lives like those of Saints Judith, Christopher, Euphrosyne, Mary of Egypt, Margaret, Katherine, Marin(a), and Eustace, as well as *The Book of Margery Kempe*. The course will also introduce students to a variety of critical perspectives on medieval saints' lives, incorporating scholarship on monstrosity, disability, queer theory, violence, and spectacle, and thinking about questions of intersectionality.

Content Warning: Medieval saints' lives often contain a lot of violence. Though they portray gender in diverse ways, some texts include transphobic perspectives, which we will discuss critically.

Required Reading: 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**.
Please purchase a copy of Hugh Magennis, ed. *The Old English life of St Mary of Egypt: An edition of the Old English text with modern English parallel-text translation*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002.

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

- will have read and engaged with a variety of saints' lives, covering both Old and Middle English (although Old English texts can be read in translation);
- will have gained experience reading and translating Middle English;
- will have practiced textual analysis, academic discussion, and seminar paper writing skills;
- will understand the generic conventions of medieval hagiography;
- will have engaged with a variety of perspectives on gender in hagiography;
- and will have explored a range of critical and theoretical perspectives on medieval saints' lives.

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

Assessment (graded):* All of the above plus EITHER a 3000 - 3500-word paper OR a creative response to a medieval saint's life and a critical commentary of 1500 - 2000 words that explores how your creative piece engages with its medieval source material.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 17:00 on Friday, 22 January 2027

* 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: **Multilingual Societies & Practices**

Instructor: **Kellie Gonçalves**

Time: Thursdays 12-14

Credit Points: 3 ECTS

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

Course Description: Most societies nowadays are multilingual given widespread globalization and migration processes on a global scale. According to the *Linguistic Society of America,* "multilingualism isn't unusual; in fact, it's the norm for most of the world's societies. It's possible for a person to know and use three, four, or even more languages fluently" (2022). This course traces the historical development of multilingual studies from the 1960s up until the present day. It offers a post-modern perspective of language(s) and multilingual practices within different socio-cultural and political contexts on a global level. The course will allow students to engage directly and critically with past and current debates about multilingualism as well as presenting students with different theoretical frameworks and methodological trends in the field of multilingualism studies with regards to diverse multilingual societies and practices. The course will focus on a range of multilingual contexts, some of which include a) multilingual practices within families and family language policy (FLP), b) multilingual workplaces c) multilingualism, literacy, and education, d) digital multilingual practices, e) multilingual art, and f) multilingual advertising. A written exam is scheduled for the end of term.

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

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

- Will be able to engage critically with theoretical concepts within the field of multilingualism studies;
- Will become familiarized with different theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches used within the field;
- Will better understand the societal relevance and consequences of multilingual practices within diverse contexts on a global scale.

Assessment (pass/fail or graded): 70% required to secure a 4.0/pass.

Exam date: 03 December 2026

Resit date: 10 December 2026

* 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 Lecture:	**Short Forms – Long Forms**
Instructors:	**Gabriele Rippl / Sofie Behluli / Malaika Sutter**
Time:	Monday 10-12
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

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

Course Description: This lecture course is dedicated to "long" and "short" forms in contemporary North American literature and other media, discussing them in connection with questions of cultural sustainability. It examines how different temporalities, scales, and modes of attention shape aesthetic experience and cultural value today. The instructors and some invited guest speakers will discuss long novels, short stories, short poems, notes, flash fiction, graphic narratives, films and series, social media modes, essays, art essays, and more against the backdrop of various theories that try to capture this complex cultural landscape and media ecology. Cultural formats such as Christian Marclay's *The Clock* (2010) and the many successful TV series attest to a new monumentalism and stand in stark contrast to extremely short and minimalist forms, as for example flash fiction, aphorisms, haikus, etc. While looking at this wide array of media, genres, and forms, we ask: What aesthetic strategies distinguish shortness from length beyond word count or runtime? Can short forms achieve poetic complexity comparable to long works? How do fragmentation, serialization, and modularity blur the boundary between long and short forms? According to Jonathan Kalb, a scholar of contemporary theatre, people today appreciate monumental cultural forms as "slow food" and "antidotes to the image-swarm, split-screens, quick-cuts, bullet-lists and call-waiting" that characterize "the endemic 'hurry sickness' of the [contemporary] media era". Today, people tend "to be busy, distracted and regretful about lacking the time and patience to read long books", hence they consume "lengthily immersive" cultural forms and formats (Kalb in *Anglia* 131.2+3, 2013). While Kalb's assessment of the contemporary is convincing, this lecture is interested in discussing how his diagnosis of our time relates to another fact of contemporary culture, namely the thriving and sustainable nature of many cultural forms that are characterized by (at times extreme) brevity. But does brevity lend itself to sustainability? Or is it just a way of 'cultural fast-food' – quickly consumed, discarded, and forgotten? Conversely, are long forms truly resistant to such logics, or do they depend on similar economies of attention and circulation? Ultimately, what does it mean to spend more or less time with a work of art in the age of acceleration – and how do different forms demand, reward, or resist such investments?

Required Reading: We will provide all primary and secondary sources as of late August 2026. The material uploaded on our ILIAS platform must be carefully prepared for each session.

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

- gain insight into literature as an agent of cultural sustainability;
- learn about contemporary short and long forms in North American literature and culture;
- learn about different genre rules and the ecology of media;
- learn about the dynamic interactions between short and long forms;
- and have a good overview of a wide range of contemporary literary and media genres.

Assessment (pass/fail or graded): * Written exam; 60% required to secure a 4.0/pass

Exam date: 30 November 2026

Resit dates: Resit 1: 07 December 2026
Resit 2: 14 December 2026

* 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:	**Waste Semiotics: Language, Materiality, Space (ENLIGHT BIP)**
Instructor:	**Crispin Thurlow**
Times:	This is an ENLIGHT/BIP course with six online sessions and a one-week intensive program in Bern. Online sessions: Tuesdays 16:15 to 17:45 on 08, 15, 22, 29 September, and 06, 13 October One-week intensive: Monday 19 to Friday 23 October
Credit Points:	4 ECTS

This course is capped according to ENLIGHT procedures.

This seminar is for MA students or advanced BA students. For more information see the main listing on the official ENLIGHT website: https://enlight-eu.org/students/courses/1272-waste-semiotics. Spaces for Bern students are limited. Students wishing to be considered for a place should email Professor Thurlow with a short (max 10 lines) motivation statement by 07 April 2026; final selection will be made immediately in order for students to meet the ENLIGHT registration deadline on 15 April.

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 a Blended Intensive Program (BIP) in collaboration with ENLIGHT partner universities. This means it comprises a series of six online sessions and a five-day intensive program in Bern (with outings, a methods workshop, and a community-engagement project). Like incoming students from other universities, Bern students must make themselves available for the full on-site program: Monday 19 to Friday 23 October. Students are required to complete a "trash trajectories" fieldwork exercise before the on-site week.

Learning Outcomes: The course will be structured around five key academic practices: observing, describing, explaining, evaluating and critiquing. In this regard, 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 literary studies, anthropology, geography, fine arts, and so on;
- develop practical and methodological skills for documenting and analyzing discard representations and practices;
- and recognize the concrete ways in which a semiotic approach to waste creates opportunities for wider community engagement and perhaps solutions for key social-ecological challenges.

Coursework (pass/fail): Students' learning will be assessed as pass/fail based on their active participation in ALL online sessions (including the "getting-to-know-you" engagement) and in the FULL on-site programme in Bern. The final assessment is determined by the University of

Bern host instructor. There will be no formal written assignments or examinations, although students may be asked to prepare a short learning reflection statement at the end. Again, please see official ENLIGHT course listing for more information (link above). The ENLIGHT course is offered as 3 ECTS; Bern students will be expected to undertake a small additional assignment to bring the course to a regular 4-ECTS seminar load.

BA Seminar: **Discourse Methods**

Instructor: **Gwynne Mapes**

Time: Tuesday 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: From gossip to globalization! This hands-on, survey seminar is designed to introduce students to the study/analysis of everyday spoken and written discourse. We are all dependent on language not just to describe the world, but also to represent (or misrepresent) it and to justify our place in it. Even more importantly, however, we use language to *do* things: specifically, to construct our identities, to establish and maintain our relationships, and, unavoidably, to exert power and control over others. This is language as social action and as social institution, and both are the focus of *discourse studies*. In this eclectic field we might examine people gossiping with friends while sitting in front of the TV or we might examine the way TV news-reports represent major social issues like globalization. In fact, this seminar will cover a diverse range of everyday "micro" and "macro" contexts while exploring a number of key approaches and methodologies in discourse studies. In the first half of the semester, we will focus on spoken discourse (e.g. pragmatics, conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics) before turning to written discourse (e.g. digital discourse, multimodality and corpus analysis) in the second part of the semester.

Required Reading: The course will rely on a series of articles and chapters made available on ILIAS. We will be working with the following textbooks extensively:

> Cameron, Deborah. (2001). *Working with Spoken Discourse*. London: Sage.
> Cameron, Deborah & Panović, Ivan. (2014). *Working with Written Discourse*. London: Sage.

It is not necessary to purchase these books, unless students prefer to do so. All assigned chapters will be posted on ILIAS or distributed in class.

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

- understand the theoretical principles of discourse and 'language as social action';
- know key scholars and different discourse analytic approaches;
- have hands-on experience with discourse analysis;
- learn how identities and relationships are achieved discursively;
- recognize how language, technology, and other modes interact in discourse;
- demonstrate increased awareness of the ways language is used in everyday contexts;
- understand how power is exercised through language.

Coursework (pass/fail): In order to satisfy the basic (4 ECTS) academic requirements for this seminar, students will be expected to follow a schedule of independent reading each week which will be discussed and elaborated in class. To help structure these discussions, ahead of

each meeting students will be required to complete a reading quiz based on an assigned case-study (11 in total). Additionally, each week students will complete an in-class exercise (12 in total) which will be designed to facilitate the application of key concepts/methods.

Assessment (graded):* In order to satisfy the additional workload for earning 7 ECTS, students must complete a final examination in Week 14 based on core readings and additional material covered in class.

Deadline for Assessed Work: This seminar is designed around cumulative (i.e. week-by-week) coursework which must all be completed by the last day of the seminar.

* 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:	**Multilingual Writing**
Instructor:	**Kellie Gonçalves**
Times:	Mondays 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: Multilingual writing isn't just about writing, but entails thinking about cross-cutting themes associated with it, which include visuality, materiality and creativity. Over the course of time, we have witnessed and experienced first-hand how multilingual (literacy) practices have shifted in the twenty-first century. Indeed, technological developments have altered the ways in which we express our ideas, thoughts, emotions, concerns and index socio-cultural identities across different scales and at particular moments in time. Much of what we do today with regards to multilingual writing is so mundane, we may not stop to think about it as part and parcel of our daily, digital, visual, creative, semiotic, and also, collaborative and fluid social practices. This course will allow students to engage directly with current theoretical and methodological trends in the sub-field of multilingual writing, where prominence is placed on the visual aspects of writing with regards to analyses in examining the social meanings of spelling, and how script choices relate to specific social aspects including identity and geographical belonging (Sebba 2007). In this course, we will cover a range of domains where multilingual writing emerges, including a) digitally mediated communication, b) linguistic/semiotic landscapes, c) multilingual art, d) scripts and orthography. The course will draw on examples from various areas across the world to illustrate the diversity of contexts where multilingual writing appears. We will employ different analytical approaches to diverse data sets of multilingual writing throughout the course. One aim of this course is to connect the different perspectives in order to find some common ground concerning the study of multilingual writing, its various forms and functions. Students are required to carry out fieldwork and conduct a pilot project on multilingual writing.

Required reading: All texts will be made available on ILIAS

Learning outcomes: After completing the course, students are expected to have acquired the following skills:

- identify the theoretical and methodological challenges in studying multilingual writing as well as the societal relevance of it;
- be able to critically engage with theoretical concepts and current debates about multilingual writing;
- describe and discuss different types of multilingual writing in diverse international contexts;
- engage with multilingual writing and digraphia/biscriptality in digital communication, art, media, public signs;
- gain research competencies through conducting empirical work,

- practice discursive competencies during class discussions and poster presentations

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance, active participation in class discussions, data collection, data analysis and a poster presentation.

Assessment (graded): [*] Regular attendance, active participation in class discussions, data collection, data analysis, a poster presentation and a written seminar paper.

Deadline for Assessed Work: Monday, 18 January 2027

[*] 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 and Gender**
Instructor:	**Ryan Shaw-Hawkins**
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 role of gender and language in society, focusing on how linguistic variation and change can be conditioned by a speaker's gender. Gender has always been a central social variable in previous research. This course will take students through the journey of how gender has been considered to affect linguistic variation from its inception to the most cutting-edge, present-day contemporary research. This course will at first consider gender as variable within a variationist sociolinguistic paradigm, introducing students to foundational sociolinguistic papers and as the course develops, we will briefly explore other disciplines such as sociophonetics, discourse analysis and psycholinguistics.

The course will be divided into three distinct parts based on how gender has been conceptualised in linguistics: first as binary, then as a spectrum and finally as a 'multiverse'. In the first third of the course, we explore seminal research which considered gender as a macro social category. In this section we will tackle the controversial concept of sexual dimorphism and the relation of power and hierarchy to gendered language. In the second section of the course, we will dive into research which shows gender to be a much more complex micro category, which in some cases can be locally defined and in others manifests as a highly dynamic and fluid social category. This section will include the introduction to Communities of Practice and theories such as Performativity. In the final third of the course, we will continue our journey to the most cutting-edge research in contemporary sociolinguistics looking at gender beyond the binary. In this section we will explore Queer Linguistics and introduce students to the analytical framework of Intersectionality. The seminar will provide students with a broad overview of one of the most scrutinised social variables analysed in sociolinguistics and will provide students an opportunity to critically reflect on gendered patterns of language use within their own communities.

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:

- understand and gain an overview for the broad use of gender as a variable in linguistic research;
- critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of previous research investigating gendered effects on speech;
- practice analysing linguistic variation and interpretating how gender might have influenced variation.

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance, class participation, completion of required reading, oral presentation (either standard 10-minute talk, prerecorded podcast-style discussion or conference-style poster presentation).

Assessment (graded):* Regular attendance, class participation, completion of required reading, oral presentation (either standard 10-minute talk, prerecorded podcast-style discussion or conference-style poster presentation), paper of 3500 words (+/- 10%).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 18 January at 23:59

* 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:	**Voicing Character: Speech, Identity, and the Novel**
Instructors:	**Hannah Hedegard / Zoë Lehmann**
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: This course explores how identity is constructed through language—both in real life and in fiction. Blending sociolinguistics and literary analysis, we examine how characters speak themselves into being: how dialect, accent, style, and discourse shape interpretation, and how authors use these tools to craft memorable, believable figures on the page. The course is made up of two-week blocks that each centre on a particular text, with the first week taught from a literary perspective, and the second from that of sociolinguistics. The course will draw on British fiction and (socio)linguistic data to consider how linguistic performance shapes identity, and how the social function of linguistic performance is negotiated in literature.

Required Reading: Please purchase your own copy of:
Anthony Burgess, A Clockwork Orange, Penguin Modern Classics, 978-0141182605
Zadie Smith, *White Teeth,* Penguin, 978-0-14-029778-2
Please do your best to get hard copies, i.e. paperback editions (they are easily available). Some not-evil options for purchase are blackwells.co.uk (new) and worldofbooks.com/ch (second hand). Further material will be made available on ILIAS

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

- will develop an understanding of the scholarly relationship between linguistics and literature;
- will gain insight into the use of linguistic markers as textual strategy in literature;
- will practice engagement with interdisciplinary approaches to discipline-specific critical material.

Coursework (pass/fail): Full participation in the seminar; completion of small written tasks during the course; either literature or linguistics essay proposal (for graded students in preparation for assessed essay, for ungraded students for a hypothetical essay).

Deadline for essay proposal: 15 December 2026 at 18:00

Assessment (graded):* 4000-word essay

* 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:	**Arts and Crafts in Contemporary Anglophone Literature**
Instructors:	**Sofie Behluli / Malaika Sutter**
Times:	Block Seminar, always on Mondays: Preliminary Meeting 12-14 on 05 October; Double sessions (12-16) on 02, 09, 16, 23 & 30 November and 07 & 14 December
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: This block seminar (one preliminary meeting + seven double sessions) explores representations of the visual arts and crafts in contemporary Anglophone literature. Bringing together poems, short stories, novels, essays, and memoirs, the course examines how literary texts engage with painting, sculpture, and textile artworks. Drawing on intermediality studies, ekphrasis theory, and theories from textile studies, we will investigate how texts translate visual and material forms into language and what is at stake in these transformations. In a cultural moment often described as saturated with images, why do contemporary writers continue to turn to the visual arts to tell their stories? What kinds of aesthetic, epistemological, and political work do these engagements perform? In addition, we will discuss the history of separating fine arts from crafts and the subsequent devaluation of crafts. Furthermore, we will explore the close connection between text and textile, paying particular attention to the textile arts' potential to convey issues of gender and race. We will read seminal poems by John Keats, John Ashbery and Carol Ann Duffy; engage with memorable short stories by Faith Ringgold, Alice Walker and A. S. Byatt; dive into evocative novels by Donna Tartt and Margaret Atwood; and examine the non-fictional work of Michel Foucault, Siri Hustvedt, and Laura Cumming. In our discussions of these literary texts, we will not only focus on visual, medial and aesthetic concerns, but also touch on categories of experiences relating to gender, class, race, and more. Ultimately, this seminar also serves to complicate the simplistic binary opposition between 'description' and 'narration', showing how much overlap exists between the two and how much cultural work, playfulness, and creativity emerge in these overlaps.

Required Reading: Please note that the reading load for this class is heavy, so students should reserve enough time during the semester to complete all the readings. Many primary and secondary sources will be provided as scans on Ilias, **but you must purchase the following two novels yourself and read them before the first session:**

- Atwood, Margaret. *Alias Grace*. 1996. London: Virago Press, 2009.
- Tartt, Donna. *The Goldfinch*. St. Ives: Abacus, 2013.

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

- familiarize themselves with the main concepts, theories and critical approaches to ekphrasis, word-image relations, and intermediality studies;
- understand the history of the fine arts vs. crafts and the major theoretical discussions concerning the crafts;

- understand the history and role of the fine arts and textile arts in the Anglophone literary contexts;
- develop a sensibility for spotting and interpreting verbo-visual passages in fictional and non-fictional texts;
- and revise a simplistic understanding of the binary opposition "narrative vs. description".

Coursework (pass/fail): Regular attendance, completion of all primary and secondary readings, active participation in class, moderation of one session.

Assessment (graded):* Regular attendance, completion of all primary and secondary readings, active participation in class, moderation of one session, written paper of 2500 words.

Deadline for Seminar Paper: 17:00 on Friday, 15 January 2027

* 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: **Irrealizing Labor in Contemporary (Anglophone) World Literatures**

Instructor: **Michael Boog**

Time: Wednesday 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: What can magical portals teach us about the office as a place of work? What insights can we gain from a plant-grown biotechnological workforce in relation to the global division of labor? And to what extent does a folding city explain how access to different kinds of work defines the quotidian experience of different workers in different ways?
Today, a surprising number of irrealist texts – that is, texts that rely on the fusing of sociological reality with fantastical, imaginary modes of representation – are tackling issues related to work head-on, and precisely through their irrealism.

In this seminar, we explore how contemporary literary texts from diverse social contexts use irrealist aesthetics to engage with the topic of work. Work, as Elaine Scarry lucidly argued, is both a core theme in literary history and yet a surprisingly difficult thing to represent; it is, in this sense, always there, but often not in salient ways. We analyze the different strategies texts use to critically reflect, represent, negotiate, and narrate work and how this is done, specifically, in irrealist narratives. In so doing, we consider the affordances of irrealism in relation to issues such as the gender division of labor, tensions between productive and reproductive types of work, global supply chains, and (super-)exploitation along racialized lines. Our readings of shorter and longer pieces of fiction are going to be informed by a history of philosophical, sociological, and theoretical engagements with work. Alongside novels and short stories, we therefore consider concepts such as 'concrete' and 'abstract' labor (Karl Marx), the 'work society' (Kathi Weeks), or 'bullshit jobs' (David Graeber) in order to make sense of our primary literary material.

Required Reading: Please purchase your own copies of the following two novels. Copies will be available for purchase at the Libromania bookstore in Länggasse. Other readings will be uploaded on Ilias.
Larissa Lai, *Salt Fish Girl*, Dundurn Press. 978-0-88762-382-0
Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West*. Penguin Books. 978-0-241-97906-8

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

- are familiar with some of the key concepts with which work is described and analysed in the humanities;
- understand and are able to explain the histories, definitions, and aesthetics of work;
- have a sense of the uses and functions of irrealist strategies in the representation and critique of labor;
- have improved their critical thinking, discussion, and academic writing skills;

- can critically examine orally and in writing how literary texts and other media reflect on and represent work.

Coursework (pass/fail): Thorough preparation of the texts, regular attendance, active participation in class, shorter written assignments as well as one 2–3-page piece of writing outlining a (potential) avenue of engagement with a piece of fiction for a longer written assignment, short presentations.

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

Deadline for Assessed Work: 17 January 2027

* 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:	**Introduction to Ecocriticism**
Instructor:	**Marion Troxler**
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: Shortly summarised, ecocriticism is "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (Glotfelty 1996). Since its beginnings in the 20th century, ecocriticism has become a highly interdisciplinary field, and responds to current issues concerning environmentalism, sustainability, and (social) ecology.
In this course, we will look at different branches of ecocriticism, such as animal studies, the blue humanities, and ecofeminism, and try out different readings of our primary texts (tbc) through the lenses of various ecocritical approaches. As such, the readings will include theoretical inputs, which we will apply in our close readings. At the end of the course, students will be familiar with different strands of ecocriticism and their specific terminology, and will be able to apply the concepts to other texts.

Content Warnings: The discussions of these texts may include the topic of sexual assault. Appropriate care will be taken in approaching this discussion.

Required Reading: Sackville, Amy. *Orkney*. London: Granta, 2014; Menmuir, Wyl. *The Many*. Cromer: Salt Publishing, 2016.
These texts must be read before the first session; your knowledge of it may be subject to examination. Should you use different editions, it is your responsibility to translate the page numbers of your editions to ease the discussion in class. Please make sure you have printed editions available to work with in class. Additional material will be uploaded on ILIAS.

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;
- can describe a variety of strands of ecocriticism;
- use the precise and appropriate terminology in their ecocritical analyses of texts;
- can apply concepts from ecocriticism to different literary texts.

Coursework (pass/fail): Full participation in the seminar (regular attendance, preparation of readings, participation in group discussions), and completion of small written tasks during the semester.

Assessment (graded):* In addition to the above, a 3500-word seminar paper (80%) and a short oral exam (20%).

Deadline for Assessed Work: 08 January 2027. Oral exam during the semester.

* 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:	**When the Century Turns: Speculating Futures ca 1900 and 2000**
Instructor:	**Marion Troxler**
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: When a century ends and a new one begins, anxieties and desires about the future emerge particularly strongly. Imaginations of the future, as "the most concrete time of conjunction" (Augé, *The Future*, 1), can be understood as "expressions of the essential solidarity between the individual and society" (3). Literary texts are especially pertinent in negotiating these two dimensions and often "reengage with differing elements of the past as a way of moving into the future" (Friedman, *Contemporary Revolutions*, 6). Looking at two novels published around the turn of two centuries, ca 1900 and 2000, we will consider how the looming presence of a new century fuels the imagination of possibilities. Reading H.G. Wells's *Time Machine* (1895) and Nalo Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber* (2000) side by side, we will consider how these literary texts each project contemporary social issues into speculations of the future.

Content Warnings: Sexual assault, child abuse, abortion. Language now considered racist occurs in *Time Machine*.
Should you be concerned about any or all these themes in the reading and the discussions, please contact the instructor. Appropriate care will be taken in approaching the discussions in class.

Required Reading: Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*. [1895]. London: Penguin Books, 2005.
Hopkinson, Nalo. *Midnight Robber*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 2000.
The texts must be read before the first session; your knowledge of it may be subject to examination. Should you use different editions, it is your responsibility to translate the page numbers of your editions to ease the discussion in class. Please make sure you have printed editions available to work with in class. Additional material will be uploaded on ILIAS.

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

- can describe the relevant historical and social contexts of ca 1900 and 2000 in relation to the primary texts;
- can productively compare texts of different historical and social contexts;
- can critically assess the possibilities and limitations of literary texts in imaginations of possible futures;
- can provide concise, critical analyses of text excerpts from the primary literature both in written and in oral form.

Coursework (pass/fail): Full participation in the seminar (regular attendance, preparation of readings, participation in group discussions) and completion of small written tasks. Small groupwork in preparation for specific sessions will occur.

Assessment (graded):[*] In addition to the above, submission of a short abstract during the semester and a 3500-word seminar paper.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 15 January 2027

[*] 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: **Statistics for Linguistics**

Instructor: **Hannah Hedegard**

Time: Friday 09-12 on 18 September, 02, 23 and 30 October, 20 and 27 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 linguistic 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: All texts will be made available on ILIAS before the start of term.

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

- 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:	**The Literature and Culture of Early Medieval England (with excursion to Sutton Hoo)**
Instructor:	**Nicole Nyffenegger**
Time:	Tuesday 12-14 and excursion to Sutton Hoo 09 – 12 September
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: Early medieval literature, like all literature, emerged from embodied experiences of landscape, weather, and the objects of everyday life. This course explores the literature and culture of early medieval England by bringing texts into dialogue with place. At the beginning of term, we will visit Sutton Hoo, one of the most significant Anglo-Saxon archaeological sites, and the reconstructed settlement of West Stow, engaging with how Old English texts and early medieval artefacts have shaped the presentation of these sites to modern audiences. Back in Bern, we will read excerpts from *Beowulf* and shorter poems in light of our own embodied experiences of these sites, allowing us to approach literary representations of early medieval England through an awareness of place and objects. The excursion and part of the sessions will be shared with MA students, who will work more closely on specific artefacts, offering additional perspectives on the relationship between literature and material culture.

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

- gained an understanding of key aspects of early medieval culture;
- examined how Old English literature engages with landscapes and objects;
- analysed the relationships between text, object, and place;
- reflected on how embodied experiences such as site visits shape our interpretation of literature;
- explored, through close textual analysis, key passages from *Beowulf* and other Old English poems;
- further honed their skills at textual analysis, academic discussion and presentation.

Coursework (pass/fail): participation in the excursion, thorough preparation of on-site presentation and class readings, active participation, regular attendance (no more than two absences)

Wahlbereich BMZ Lecture:	**Counting and measuring: Quantification in the Middle Ages**
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 First session on 24 September
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: Diese Vorlesung untersucht aus interdisziplinärer Perspektive, wie mittelalterliche Gesellschaften Größen erfassten, ordneten und interpretierten. Im Zentrum steht dabei nicht nur das Rechnen im engeren Sinn, sondern ein breites Spektrum an Quantifizierungspraktiken, die von ökonomischen und administrativen Verfahren bis hin zu ästhetischen, musikalischen und symbolischen Ordnungen reichen.

Als interdisziplinäres Forum bringt die Ringvorlesung Forschende aus Geschichte, Kunstgeschichte, Germanistik, Theologie, Musikwissenschaft und verwandten Fächern zusammen. Ziel ist es, die Vielfalt mittelalterlicher „Messkulturen“ sichtbar zu machen und zugleich zu fragen, inwiefern Quantifizierung als epistemisches Instrument diente, um Welt verständlich, vergleichbar und gestaltbar zu machen.

Ein besonderer Fokus liegt auf der Einsicht, dass Zahlen und Maße im Mittelalter nicht nur technische Werkzeuge, sondern zugleich kulturell geprägte Ausdrucksformen waren. Quantität war oft untrennbar mit Qualität, Symbolik und Wahrnehmung verbunden.

Ort: Hauptgebäude, Hochschulstrasse 4, Raum 220

Wahlbereich Lecture:	**Der menschliche Körper: Vorstellungen und Grenzen**
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

Das Programm wird im August 2026 verfügbar sein. Weitere 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 / Hannah Hedegard / Crispin Thurlow**
Time:	Monday 14-15
Dates:	14 & 21 September, 12 & 26 October, 02 November 14-16. Conference on 27 November 09-11
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 four foundation sessions: General Introduction A (Week 1, 14 September), What is a thesis? A (Week 2, 21 September), Writing Skills A (Week 5, 12 October), and Presentation Skills A (Week 7, 26 October).
- Students in their final semester must also attend an Analysis Workshop (Week 8, 02 November), 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 11: Friday 27 November afternoon).
- Students in their first colloquium semester must submit their Project Propositions (see below) by 31st 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 four foundation sessions. Students should always attend the first session 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 30 March 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:	24 September, 08 & 22 October, 19 November, 03 & 17 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:	24 September, 08 & 22 October, 19 November, 03 & 17 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:	17 September 09:30-10:30, 15 October 09:15-12:00, 12 November 09:15-12:00, 10 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:	**Kellie Gonçalves / Nicole Nyffenegger**
Dates:	Introductory Q&A: 12-13 on Friday, 25 September (Zoom) Exam Date: 16-17 on Tuesday, 01 December Resit Date: 16-17 on Tuesday, 23 February 2027
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

Intersectional Seminar

MA Seminar:	**Literature, Language and Perception**
Instructors:	**Hannah Hedegard / Zoë Lehmann**
Time:	Wednesday 14-16
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: This course investigates the ways in which linguistic markers (and indicators) inform perception of character, in relation to factors like education, class, age and sexuality. We will examine how language variation influences assessments of identity and social positioning, and in turn how these features are employed as literary devices. By 'reading' literary characters through both a sociolinguistic and a literary lens, we will explore how the terminology and concepts from each discipline travel between each other, and what sympathies and challenges are uncovered that can inform our work as scholars of English.

Required Reading: Please purchase your own copy of:
William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Arden 978-1408133491
Additional texts TBC

Please do your best to get a hard copy, i.e. a paperback edition (they are easily available). Some not-evil options for purchase are blackwells.co.uk (new) and worldofbooks.com/ch (second hand) Further material will be made available on ILIAS

Further reading will be made available on ILIAS

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

- will deepen their understanding of the scholarly relationship between linguistics and literature;
- will develop methods for identifying how perception is influenced by particular (socio)linguistic features;
- will gain insight into the function and effect of linguistic characterisation as literary strategy and
- will practice engagement with interdisciplinary approaches to discipline-specific critical material.

Coursework (pass/fail): Full participation in the seminar; completion of small written tasks during the course; essay proposal (for graded students in preparation for assessed essay, for ungraded students for a hypothetical essay).
Deadline: 15 December 2026 18:00

Assessment (graded):* To take as a literature course: 5000 – 6000-word essay
To take as a linguistics course: 4000-word analytical report
Deadline for Assessed Work: 29 January 2027 at 18:00

Specialisation Language & Linguistics

MA Foundation Lecture: **Language and Society**

Instructor: **David Britain**

Time: Monday 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: 10-12 on Monday, 07 December 2026

Resit Date: 14-16 on Friday, 18 December 2026

MA Lecture:	**Multilingual Societies & Practices**
Instructor:	**Kellie Gonçalves**
Time:	Thursdays 12-14
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

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

Course Description: Most societies nowadays are multilingual given widespread globalization and migration processes on a global scale. According to the *Linguistic Society of America,* "multilingualism isn't unusual; in fact, it's the norm for most of the world's societies. It's possible for a person to know and use three, four, or even more languages fluently" (2022). This course traces the historical development of multilingual studies from the 1960s up until the present day. It offers a post-modern perspective of language(s) and multilingual practices within different socio-cultural and political contexts on a global level. The course will allow students to engage directly and critically with past and current debates about multilingualism as well as presenting students with different theoretical frameworks and methodological trends in the field of multilingualism studies with regards to diverse multilingual societies and practices. The course will focus on a range of multilingual contexts, some of which include a) multilingual practices within families and family language policy (FLP), b) multilingual workplaces c) multilingualism, literacy, and education, d) digital multilingual practices, e) multilingual art, and f) multilingual advertising. A written exam is scheduled for the end of term.

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

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

- Will be able to engage critically with theoretical concepts within the field of multilingualism studies;
- Will become familiarized with different theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches used within the field;
- Will better understand the societal relevance and consequences of multilingual practices within diverse contexts on a global scale.

Assessment (pass/fail): Pass/Fail: 70% required to secure a 4.0/pass.

Exam date: 03 December 2026

Resit date: 10 December 2026

MA Seminar:	**'The': Empirical explorations of a small word**
Instructor:	**David Britain**
Time:	Tuesday 10-12
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: *The* is often claimed to be the most frequently occurring word in the English language, some estimates claiming that it accounts for 6-7% of all words in the written language. It is usually examined in its role as a marker of *definiteness*, in contrast to those of *a* and *an* as markers of *indefiniteness*. More recently, though, it has also been shown to be implicated *sociolinguistically*: Acton (2019), for example, has examined how its use or non-use signals inclusion or exclusion, Gardner and Tagliamonte (2022) show how it varies with *my* as determiners of certain types of possessed nouns, and Cox et al (2023) (along with a number of others) have pointed to ongoing linguistic change in the *pronunciation* of *the*.

Following a brief introduction to the history, linguistics and sociolinguistics of *the*, this seminar will investigate *the* empirically, looking for evidence of linguistically and sociolinguistically constrained variation and change. Students on the course will be furnished with a number of large corpora of spoken English and will investigate one aspect of *the* from a chosen corpus. We will, therefore, discuss how to investigate and analyse *the* as a linguistic variable, discuss what the results show us about change in English, and we will present the results of our analyses to the rest of the group. We will then go through the process of writing up the results as a series of short articles. We will therefore think about article structure, balance, writing style, presentation etc. A good deal of this work will be conducted within the class, both the data analysis and the writing, so that empirical hurdles can be overcome together and issues arising from the writing process can also be addressed.

Required Reading: All students, in time for the session in Week 2, need to have read the following articles. They will be put on ILIAS in good time before the start of the semester.

Acton, E. (2019). Pragmatics and the social life of the English definite article. *Language* 95: 37-65.

Cox, F., Penney, J. and Palethorpe, S. (2023). Fifty years of change to prevocalic definite article allomorphy in Australian English. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 53: 804-834.

Gardner, M. and Tagliamonte, S (2020). The bike, the back and the boyfriend: confronting the definite article conspiracy in Canadian and British English. *English World-Wide* 41: 225-254.

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

- will have gained knowledge about the historical development and the grammatical and pragmatic use of the definite article in English;
- will have gained knowledge of the sociolinguistics of the definite article in English, and its variability around the English-speaking world;
- will have conducted an empirical analysis of 'the' from a corpus of spoken English;
- will have written up the results of their analysis in journal article format.

Coursework (pass/fail): Attend, participate, conduct an empirical analysis of 'the' from a chosen corpus of spoken data, short presentation.

Assessment (graded):* Attend, participate, conduct an empirical analysis of 'the' from a chosen corpus of spoken data, short presentation, written article.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 18 December 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:	**Waste Semiotics: Language, Materiality, Space (ENLIGHT BIP)**
Instructor:	**Crispin Thurlow**
Times:	This is an ENLIGHT/BIP course with six online sessions and a one-week intensive program in Bern. Online sessions: Tuesdays 16:15 to 17:45 on 08, 15, 22, 29 September, and 06, 13 October One-week intensive: Monday 19 to Friday 23 October
Credit Points:	4 ECTS

This course is capped according to ENLIGHT procedures.

This seminar is for MA students or advanced BA students. For more information see the main listing on the official ENLIGHT website: https://enlight-eu.org/students/courses/1272-waste-semiotics. Spaces for Bern students are limited. Students wishing to be considered for a place should email Professor Thurlow with a short (max 10 lines) motivation statement by 07 April 2026; final selection will be made immediately in order for students to meet the ENLIGHT registration deadline on 15 April.

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 a Blended Intensive Program (BIP) in collaboration with ENLIGHT partner universities. This means it comprises a series of six online sessions and a five-day intensive program in Bern (with outings, a methods workshop, and a community-engagement project). Like incoming students from other universities, Bern students must make themselves available for the full on-site program: Monday 19 to Friday 23 October. Students are required to complete a "trash trajectories" fieldwork exercise before the on-site week.

Learning Outcomes: The course will be structured around five key academic practices: observing, describing, explaining, evaluating and critiquing. In this regard, 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 literary studies, anthropology, geography, fine arts, and so on;
- develop practical and methodological skills for documenting and analyzing discard representations and practices;
- recognize the concrete ways in which a semiotic approach to waste creates opportunities for wider community engagement and perhaps solutions for key social-ecological challenges.

Coursework (pass/fail): Students' learning will be assessed as pass/fail based on their active participation in ALL online sessions (including the "getting-to-know-you" engagement) and in the FULL on-site programme in Bern. The final assessment is determined by the University of Bern host instructor. There will be no formal written assignments or examinations, although

students may be asked to prepare a short learning reflection statement at the end. Again, please see official ENLIGHT course listing for more information (link above). The ENLIGHT course is offered as 3 ECTS; Bern students will be expected to undertake a small additional assignment to bring the course to a regular 4-ECTS seminar load.

MA Seminar:	**Children, Language, and Society**
Instructor:	**Gwynne Mapes**
Time:	Monday 12-14
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: Children's language acquisition and socialization have long been topics of interest across various subdisciplines of linguistics. Foundational scholarship (e.g. Brice Heath 1983; Ochs & Schieffelin 1984) demonstrates the meaningful ways in which children become linguistically and culturally competent members of their community through interactions with caregivers, teachers, and peers. Indeed, alongside the construction of individual identity, children's language socialization is key to the development of culturally-appropriate (and sanctioned) social practices. Adopting a holistic and multidisciplinary approach, this seminar focuses not only on seminal sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological research, but also on more contemporary discourse and semiotic-centered perspectives. In the first half of the seminar we attend to classic literature pertaining to caregiver speech, notions of self, as well as language acquisition/socialization outside the home. In the second half we turn to children's roles as consumers and digital citizens, as well as the ways in which youth language is imbricated in global discursive processes. The course thus allows for students' engagement with a range of discourse data, all aimed at connecting micro-linguistic practices to the more macro social structures of contemporary life. This seminar is writing intensive, and intends to offer advanced MA students the chance to practice applying theory to various sorts of linguistic data. Students will be assessed based on in-class reading application exercises as well as data-driven group presentations.

Required Reading: The course will rely on a series of articles and chapters made available on ILIAS.

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

- have a broad grasp of the general theories pertaining to children's language acquisition;
- understand the importance of language development to children's socialization in various communities of practice, including home, school, and elsewhere;
- develop a good critical awareness of children's role in society as consumers and digital citizens;
- are attuned to the ways in which youth language is connected to globalized discursive practices;
- can successfully apply theoretical knowledge to individual investigations of discourse data pertaining to children's language in society.

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 application exercises;
- demonstrate your active engagement in lectures and in-class activities;
- prepare and deliver a data-driven group presentation and 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 children's discourse data.

Deadline for Assessed Work: Friday, 22 January 2027

* 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.*

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.

MA Seminar:	**Qualitative Methods in Sociolinguistics**
Instructor:	**Erez Levon**
Time:	Tuesday 14-16
Credit Points:	4 ECTS w/o seminar paper / 7 ECTS w seminar paper
Language:	English

Course Description: This course provides students with an overview and hands-on experience in different critical and qualitative sociolinguistic methods. Topics to be covered include language description, ethnography, qualitative interview methods, focus group methods, interactional sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, narrative analysis, critical discourse analysis and multimodal analysis. The course adopts an experiential approach, allowing students to practice these different analytic methods on small datasets that they will collect themselves throughout the course.

This 7 ECTS version of this course is required for MA Sociolinguistics Mono and Major students (Study Plan 2021). The 4 ECTS version of this course is required for MA Sociolinguistics Minor students (Study Plan 2021).

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

- have knowledge of the various qualitative methods most commonly used in sociolinguistics and the social sciences, including the theory behind these methods;
- have experience in conducting original qualitative data collection and analyses;
- be able to critically evaluate qualitative interpretations in existing research;
- know how to extrapolate and support findings using qualitative techniques;
- be empowered to think analytically about complex sociolinguistic datasets.

Seminar (4 ECTS): 4 practical data collection/analysis exercises conducted during the semester (100%)

Seminar w seminar paper (7 ECTS): 4 practical data collection/analysis exercises conducted during the semester (60%). Written seminar paper: Qualitative Project Design (40%)

MA Seminar:	**Language and Nationalism**
Instructor:	**Erez Levon**
Time:	**Wednesday 10-12**
Credit Points:	4 ECTS w/o seminar paper / 7 ECTS w seminar paper
Language:	English

Course Description: This course offers a critical examination of the different ways in which language participates in the formation and circulation of nationalist discourses. The courses is structured into three thematic blocks of three weeks each: Block 1: Building the Nation, considering the role language plays in the formation of national identities; Block 2: Branding the Nation, examining how attention to language is strategically played to create and popularize a particular national "brand"; and Block 3: Navigating the Nation, investigating how individuals negotiate dominant national norms in their daily lives. Students will read primary literature from linguistics, anthropology, political science and other disciplines to develop an understanding of how the relationship between language and nationalism can be studied.

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

- understand basic theoretical concepts in the study of nations and nationalism;
- be familiar with research on language and nationalism in different cultural and geopolitical contexts;
- acquire expertise with various methodological tools for examining national(ist) discourses and how individuals navigate them;
- be able to relate broader theoretical concepts to concrete empirical examples;
- have honed their skill in synthesising information from primary literature and producing concise reflections on key topics.

Seminar (4 ECTS): Group presentation (10%); Three brief critical thematic reflections (30% each)

Seminar w seminar paper (7 ECTS): Group presentation (10%); Three brief critical thematic reflections (20% each); Written seminar paper (30%)

MA Seminar:	**Language and Gentrification**
Instructor:	**Kellie Gonçalves**
Time:	**Wednesday 10-12**
Credit Points:	4 ECTS w/o seminar paper / 7 ECTS w seminar paper
Language:	English

Students who took this course as a BA student in the spring of 2026, cannot take the course as an English MA course.

Course Description: The term gentrification was coined by British sociologist, Ruth Glass in the 1960s after observing the influx of a new 'gentry' that were well educated and financially better off than their working-class neighbors in different London neighborhoods. Today, gentrification processes continue to take place in various parts of the world in both urban and rural areas. In fact, because people, capital, material, ideas, and an array of other semiotic and cultural resources circulate the world faster than before, metropolitan centers around the world are being restructured and thus "recast", with gentrification processes emerging as a significant factor and type of "global urban strategy". Why does this matter and what does it have to do with language? Language and urban identity have long been at the forefront of sociolinguistic inquiry, but as we know identity (whatever kind) is never static. In this course, we will be exploring gentrification processes in primarily urban centers that have experienced major changes in their socio-demographic makeup as a result of socio-economic and political processes since the onset of neoliberal politics and policies that have affected revitalization processes on the one hand, and human displacement on the other. The aim of this course is therefore to understand how gentrification processes occur at different local, regional, national and global levels where residents are rapidly renegotiating their social, cultural, ethno-racial and urban identities of place. This requires an unpacking of how language and other discursive and semiotic processes work together in the shaping and creation of place and belonging. This entails capturing the more visible role that language and its ideological underpinnings specifically play in the expression of both individual and group identities as well as place-making practices. As such, the course will allow students to critically engage with current debates on gentrification and the varied methodological approaches used to understand these processes from an interdisciplinary perspective. The course draws on work from sociolinguistics, social semiotics, sociology, human geography and urban studies. Students are required to carry out a pilot study and conduct fieldwork that is connected to the themes covered in class. The course assessment is based on fieldwork, data analysis and a poster presentation.

Seminar (4 ECTS): The course assessment is based on fieldwork, data analysis and a poster presentation.

Specialisation Literature

MA Foundation Lecture:	**After the Linguistic Turn: Literary Theory in the 20th Century**
Instructor:	**Thomas Claviez**
Time:	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: 10-12 on 16 December 2026

Resit Date: 10-12 on 13 January 2027

MA Lecture:	**Medieval Literature and Religion**
Instructors:	**Annette Kern-Stähler / Hannah Piercy**
Time:	Tuesday 14-16
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

Course Description: Middle English literature is profoundly influenced by Christianity. This lecture series will explore the relationship between medieval literature (primarily in Middle English) and religion from a variety of perspectives. We will consider how medieval literature is used for religious purposes; how it portrays religious themes, practices, and beliefs; how it presents and conceptualises non-Christian religions; and what role women played in the composition and reception of religious literature. The course will cover a wide variety of medieval literature, from didactic religious texts to less obviously religious genres, like romance, the premier "secular" genre of medieval England — but a genre that, despite its apparently secular focus, is still deeply influenced by and interested in Christianity and in relations between Christians and non-Christians. Other reading will include devotional literature, including meditations, religious lyrics, hagiographies (saints' lives), and religious drama. The lecture will serve the purpose of cultural sustainability by providing new perspectives on historic literature, including probing how accessible medieval literature's religious focus is to diverse modern audiences.

Required Reading: Reading will be uploaded to ILIAS; please make sure to complete the introductory reading before the first session.

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

- will have read a wide variety of medieval literature from different genres;
- will have considered different critical perspectives on medieval literature and religion;
- will have explored how medieval literature serves religious purposes, portrays religious themes, and presents non-Christian religions;
- will have deepened their knowledge of how literature and religion intersect, and how knowledge of religious practices can strengthen literary understanding;
- will have gained insights into the goals of the environmental humanities and cultural sustainability.

Assessment (pass/fail or graded): [*] 60% required to secure a 4.0/pass. Exam format TBC, but likely to take the form of regular quizzes during lecture hours and a short final exam.

Exam date: 08 December 2026

Resit date: 15 December 2026

[*] 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 Lecture:	**Short Forms – Long Forms**
Instructors:	**Gabriele Rippl / Sofie Behluli / Malaika Sutter**
Time:	Monday 10-12
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

Course Description: This lecture course is dedicated to "long" and "short" forms in contemporary North American literature and other media, discussing them in connection with questions of cultural sustainability. It examines how different temporalities, scales, and modes of attention shape aesthetic experience and cultural value today. The instructors and some invited guest speakers will discuss long novels, short stories, short poems, notes, flash fiction, graphic narratives, films and series, social media modes, essays, art essays, and more against the backdrop of various theories that try to capture this complex cultural landscape and media ecology. Cultural formats such as Christian Marclay's *The Clock* (2010) and the many successful TV series attest to a new monumentalism and stand in stark contrast to extremely short and minimalist forms, as for example flash fiction, aphorisms, haikus, etc. While looking at this wide array of media, genres, and forms, we ask: What aesthetic strategies distinguish shortness from length beyond word count or runtime? Can short forms achieve poetic complexity comparable to long works? How do fragmentation, serialization, and modularity blur the boundary between long and short forms? According to Jonathan Kalb, a scholar of contemporary theatre, people today appreciate monumental cultural forms as "slow food" and "antidotes to the image-swarm, split-screens, quick-cuts, bullet-lists and call-waiting" that characterize "the endemic 'hurry sickness' of the [contemporary] media era". Today, people tend "to be busy, distracted and regretful about lacking the time and patience to read long books", hence they consume "lengthily immersive" cultural forms and formats (Kalb in *Anglia* 131.2+3, 2013). While Kalb's assessment of the contemporary is convincing, this lecture is interested in discussing how his diagnosis of our time relates to another fact of contemporary culture, namely the thriving and sustainable nature of many cultural forms that are characterized by (at times extreme) brevity. But does brevity lend itself to sustainability? Or is it just a way of 'cultural fast-food' – quickly consumed, discarded, and forgotten? Conversely, are long forms truly resistant to such logics, or do they depend on similar economies of attention and circulation? Ultimately, what does it mean to spend more or less time with a work of art in the age of acceleration – and how do different forms demand, reward, or resist such investments?

Required Reading: We will provide all primary and secondary sources as of late August 2026. The material uploaded on our ILIAS platform must be carefully prepared for each session.

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

- gain insight into literature as an agent of cultural sustainability;
- learn about contemporary short and long forms in North American literature and culture;
- learn about different genre rules and the ecology of media;
- learn about the dynamic interactions between short and long forms;
- and have a good overview of a wide range of contemporary literary and media genres.

Assessment (pass/fail or graded): * Written exam; 60% required to secure a 4.0/pass

Exam date: Lecture exam: 30 November 2026

Resit date: Resit 1: 07 December 2026
Resit 2: 14 December 2026

* 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 Short Story in US-American Literary History**
Instructor:	**Prof. Dr. Thomas Claviez**
Time:	Thursday 14-16
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: The seminar will follow the development of the US-American short story through its evolution in literary history, from its early beginnings in the 17th century through to Postmodernism. It is designed to familiarize students – through a very popular genre within the US – with particular literary-historical periods and their aesthetic characteristics, as well as close-reading strategies for this specific genre.

Required Reading: All primary and secondary texts will be uploaded on ILIAS; all texts, and your knowledge about them, may be subject to unannounced examination. As this is a seminar, oral participation will make up 30% of the final grade.

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

- acquire strategies how to close read the specific genre of the short story, as well as some of its historical background and evolution in the US;
- have familiarized themselves with some of the most important features of literary-historical eras from Puritanism to Postmodernism;
- gained analytic and critical acumen to locate texts within their literary periods.

Coursework (pass/fail): Constant presence and participation are required; more than two unexcused absences will lead to deregistration and a fail. In addition, a convincing presentation is required to ensure a pass.

Assessment (graded):* For the graded assessment, what is required is both a presentation and a seminar paper on MA level and length. Please familiarize yourself with the requirements for an MA level seminar paper on the Department's website.

Deadline for Assessed Work: 31 January 2027

* 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:	**Contemporary North American Ecological Literature**
Instructor:	**Gabriele Rippl**
Time:	Monday 14-16
Credit Points:	4 ECTS (+ 3 ECTS for graded assessment)

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: Cultural Sustainability and the Environmental Humanities have emerged as new interdisciplinary fields and have become global intellectual movements in the Anthropocene. Many literary and cultural scholars have helped to shape the new fields and see their work as a challenge to the understanding of the environmental polycrisis as exclusively techno-scientific. By putting the spotlight on the role of culture, history, and the arts, scholars such as Ursula Heise highlight the important role of the humanities and the arts in shaping our understanding of the serious global environmental crises. Through the lenses of literary texts (see below), we will discuss how literature manages to negotiate different aspects of the environmental challenges (pollution, plastic waste, radioactive fallout, extreme weather conditions, etc.) and how it helps to shape ecological imaginaries and invites readers to engage with ethical questions. Anglophone narrative fiction and poems from different decades of the 20th and 21st centuries together with their 'green' aesthetics will be the objects of our investigations.

Required Reading: The primary texts must be read before the first session; your knowledge of it may be subject to examination.
A.S. Byatt's "Art Work" (in: *The Matisse Stories* 1993); excerpts from Don DeLillo's *Underworld* (1997); Margaret Atwood's *The Year of the Flood* (2009); Thomas King's *The Back of the Turtle* (2014); Richard Powers' *Bewilderment* (2021).
Please purchase Atwood's, King's and Powers' novels; Byatt's story and the excerpts from DeLillo's novel – together with some theoretical material – will be uploaded on the ILIAS platform at the beginning of August 2026. We will also discuss a few poems which will be uploaded on our ILIAS platform in due time.

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

- have gained insight into the goals of the environmental humanities and cultural sustainability research;
- have familiarized themselves with the concepts of eco-ekphrasis, literary ecology, the ecological imaginary and literary ethics;
- have learnt how to apply those concepts to works of narrative fiction and poetry;
- know how to elaborate on the significance of the environmental humanities and cultural sustainability in general.

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: 15 January 2027

* 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: **Jewish American Drama**

Instructor: **Axel Stähler**

Time: Monday 10-12

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

This course is capped at 20 participants.

Course Description: Jewish American playwrights have contributed to American drama for a long time. But it was only since the beginning of the twentieth century that what may be called Jewish American drama began to emerge. The origins of this development arguably are to be seen in the rise to prominence of Yiddish drama among Jewish immigrants in America at the end of the nineteenth century. Subsequent decades saw in conjunction with progressive acculturation the slow demise of Yiddish theater culture, but simultaneously, and especially since the last quarter of the twentieth century, also the proliferation of plays by Jewish playwrights which contributed not only to the majority culture, but which may also be designated specifically Jewish American.

What makes the dramatic imagination of Jews in America sufficiently distinct so it may be described as Jewish American drama rather than plays by American Jews? What does it mean when previously supposedly isolated voices appear to coalesce into a distinct tradition? How may this tradition be described? How can its specificity be established? How can the danger of essentialism be skirted? What are the repercussions for the larger phenomenon of American drama? In this seminar, we will discuss these and more questions with particular focus on thematic preoccupations of Jewish American drama, such as identity, assimilation, family, and intergenerational conflict as well as the legacy of the Holocaust and the clash between secularism and orthodoxy; but we will also look at cross-cultural fertilization, and cultural sustainability as well as that most elusive and problematic of terms: Jewishness.

Required Reading: Individual texts must be read and prepared for discussion for the respective seminar sessions (see schedule on ILIAS); please note that play texts are generally much shorter than novels – the workload is much less than it seems! Texts will be provided.

- Mordecai Manuel Noah, *She Would Be a Soldier* (1819) [**this text is not obligatory**; it offers an early example of a popular play by a Jewish writer that was patriotically American rather than Jewish, though its author quixotically sought a solution to the global Jewish plight by attempting to establish a Jewish state on Grand Island in the Niagara River just a few years later.]
- Jacob Gordin, *The Jewish King Lear* (1892; see Shakespeare, *King Lear*)
- Jacob Gordin, *God, Man, and the Devil* (1900)
- Aaron Hoffman, *Welcome Stranger* (1920)
- Rose Franken, *Another Language* (1932)
- Paddy Chayefsky, *The Tenth Man* (1959; see S. An-sky, *The Dybbuk*)
- Arthur Miller, *Incident at Vichy* (1964)
- Wendy Wasserstein, *Isn't it Romantic* (1981)
- Herb Gardner, *Conversations with my Father* (1992)
- Daniel Goldfarb, *Adam Baum and the Jew Movie* (2000; see Elia Kazan [dir.], *Gentleman's Agreement*)

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

- attained a judicious understanding of the issues attending the blending of cultural identities in the context of American literary production;
- become critically aware of the issues of defining Jewish and Jewish American literature;
- developed an appreciation of Jewish cultural creativity in the American context and beyond;
- achieved an informed overview of Jewish American drama and a number of paradigmatic texts;
- honed their analytical and interpretive skills;
- gained insights 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: concept for the staging of one of the plays on the reading list (1500 words; 40%); this may alternatively also be conceived (in excerpts and as group work) as a recorded radio play with a co-authored rationale;

one seminar paper (2500 words; 60%).

Deadline for Assessed Work:
mini-project: 09 November 2026
seminar paper: 18 January 2027

* 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:	**The Early Medieval World: Literature, Objects, Art (with excursion to Sutton Hoo)**
Instructors:	**Annette Kern-Stähler/Nicole Nyffenegger**
Time:	Tuesday 12-14 and excursion to Sutton Hoo 09 – 12 September
Credit Points:	3 ECTS

Course Description: Early medieval literature, like all literature, emerged from embodied experiences of landscape, weather, and the objects of everyday life. This course explores the early medieval world by bringing literature into dialogue with artefacts, asking how literature and objects together shape cultural meaning. At the beginning of term, we will visit Sutton Hoo, one of the most significant Anglo-Saxon archaeological sites, and the reconstructed settlement of West Stow, engaging with how Old English artefacts and texts have shaped the presentation of these sites to modern audiences. Back in Bern, we will engage with selected objects and works of art and bring them into conversation with excerpts from *Beowulf* and shorter poems, drawing on our own observations of how objects are displayed at these sites. The excursion and part of the sessions will be shared with BA students, who will focus more closely on the relevant texts, offering additional perspectives on the relationship between literature and artefacts. Our discussions will be informed by critical scholarship engaging with the intersections of art, archaeology, and literature.

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

- analysed the relationships between object, text, and place in early medieval culture;
- examined the roles of objects in Old English literature;
- reflected on how encounters with medieval artefacts shape our interpretation of literature;
- read and discussed relevant critical scholarship;
- further honed their skills at academic discussion and presentation.

Coursework (pass/fail): participation in the excursion, thorough preparation of on-site presentations and class readings, active participation, regular attendance (no more than two absences).

Wahlbereich BMZ Lecture:	**Counting and measuring: Quantification in the Middle Ages**
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 First session on 24 September
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: Diese Vorlesung untersucht aus interdisziplinärer Perspektive, wie mittelalterliche Gesellschaften Größen erfassten, ordneten und interpretierten. Im Zentrum steht dabei nicht nur das Rechnen im engeren Sinn, sondern ein breites Spektrum an Quantifizierungspraktiken, die von ökonomischen und administrativen Verfahren bis hin zu ästhetischen, musikalischen und symbolischen Ordnungen reichen.

Als interdisziplinäres Forum bringt die Ringvorlesung Forschende aus Geschichte, Kunstgeschichte, Germanistik, Theologie, Musikwissenschaft und verwandten Fächern zusammen. Ziel ist es, die Vielfalt mittelalterlicher „Messkulturen“ sichtbar zu machen und zugleich zu fragen, inwiefern Quantifizierung als epistemisches Instrument diente, um Welt verständlich, vergleichbar und gestaltbar zu machen.

Ein besonderer Fokus liegt auf der Einsicht, dass Zahlen und Maße im Mittelalter nicht nur technische Werkzeuge, sondern zugleich kulturell geprägte Ausdrucksformen waren. Quantität war oft untrennbar mit Qualität, Symbolik und Wahrnehmung verbunden.

Ort: Hauptgebäude, Hochschulstrasse 4, Raum 220

Research Module

MA Colloquium:	**Language and Linguistics**
Instructors:	**David Britain / Kellie Gonçalves / Hannah Hedegard / Erez Levon / Crispin Thurlow**
Time:	Monday (14-*) 15 -16
Sessions:	14 & 21 September, 12 & 26 October, 02 & 09 November, Conference on 27 November 11-14
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. 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 new students MUST attend the Introduction Session (Week 1, 14 September)
- All students are expected to attend three foundation sessions: What is a thesis? (Week 2, 21 September), Writing Skills (Week 5, 12 October), and Presentation Skills (Week 7, 26 October).
- *Students who did not write their BA dissertations in English Language and Linguistics here in Bern are encouraged to also sit in on the BA Colloquium foundation sessions that take place from 14-15 just before the MA Colloquium foundation sessions listed above
- Students in their penultimate colloquium semester are required to attend a Poster Design session (Week 9, 09 November).
- Students in their final semester must attend an Analysis Workshop (Week 8, 02 November), 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 11: Friday morning of 27 November).

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

four foundation sessions. Students should always attend the first session in each colloquium semester, but do not have to do the other sessions more than once during their MA studies. Students presenting their research 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.

> ***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 presenting at the conference) 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 project propositions must be submitted (to the ONE potential supervisor) by the time of the colloquium conference. In the following semester, once the supervision has been agreed, students are expected to develop a research plan which serves as the basis for the poster presented at the next colloquium conference.

Failure to attend the foundation sessions, 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; this includes the Project Propositions for students in the first colloquium semester.

MA Colloquium:	**North American Literature (Rippl/Behluli/Sutter)**
Instructors:	**Gabriele Rippl / Sofie Behluli / Malaika Sutter**
Time:	Thursday 10-12
Sessions:	17 September, 01, 15 & 29 October, 12 & 26 November
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:	17 September, 01, 15 & 29 October, 12 & 26 November
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:	17 September 10:30-11:30, 01 October 09:15-12:00, 22 October 09:15-12:00, 12 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: Tuesday 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: **Key Issues in American Studies**

Instructor: **Gabriele Rippl**

Time: Thursday 14-16

Course Description: This colloquium is for PhD students, post-doc researchers and other advanced students and researchers who are working on a paper, a 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.

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: **American and Jewish Literature**

Instructor: **Axel 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. Advanced MA students who are considering a PhD are asked to contact Professor Stähler about an invitation to the colloquium.

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

- received direct supervisory and peer mentoring on their research projects;
- developed their theoretical and methodological expertise;
- practised their academic writing and conference presentation skills;
- acquired a range of soft skills in academic professional development.

Staff Research Interests and Professional Activities

Sofie Behluli: Anglo-American literature from the 19th century to the present, intermediality and ekphrasis, gender and women's writing, life writing, affect studies, originals/copies/aura.

Michael Boog: Contemporary Anglophone novels, world literary theory and irrealist aesthetics.

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.

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.

Salah Essa: Sociolinguistics, Social Dialectology, Sociophonetics

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

Abbie Fray: Medieval Literature; Trans* and Queer Theory; Histories of Gender and Sexuality; Medieval to Early Modern England; Premodern Popular Political History; Affective Theory; Disability Theory; Cognitive Theory; Sensory Literary Studies; The Body and Embodiment.

Jess Freathy: Variationist sociolinguistics; dialect levelling and contact; language, place, and identity; indexicality and enregisterment; metalinguistic practices.

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 Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO).

Annette Kern-Stähler: Medieval English literature and culture, more specifically the senses in the Middle Ages, sensory literary studies, gender and space, text and image, medieval disabilities; interrelations between science/medicine and literature; British-German inter-war and post-war relations; interrelations between science/medicine and literature.

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: Social class and elite discourse; food studies; consumption studies; workplace discourse; Preferred methods: ethnography, interactional sociolinguistics, 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; medieval romance; gender studies (in a broad and inclusive sense); sensory studies; medieval sexualities; consent and coercion; the body and embodiment; the history of emotions; the medical humanities; race and the global Middle Ages; medieval readers; textual transmission; 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 and eco-ekphrasis in particular); environmental humanities; Anglophone world literatures; cultural studies and cultural sustainability; literary theory; graphic novels; interculturality and postcolonialism; transculturalism; history and anthropology of the media; literature and anthropology; 17th, 19th and 20th century women writers in English; autobiography research; feminist literary theory.

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.

Marion Troxler: Blue Humanities, Gender Studies, Ecofeminism, Animal Studies, Critical Body Studies, Merfolk Literature, Contemporary Fiction, Romanticism, Victorian Literature, Mythologies.

Sabine von Rütte: American and Anglophone literature of the 20th and 21th centuries, feminist theory, race, class and gender representation in literature and popular culture, memory and identity, life writing, film studies, cultural studies, motherhood studies.

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

Laura Wohlgemuth: language materiality; value discourse; language/semiotic ideology; consumption studies; discard studies. Preferred methods: (mediated) discourse analysis of spoken and written language.

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