

# Overview of undergraduate (B.A.) modules

## Information for prospective visiting students

The courses taught at our department are officially known as **modules**. Most of these modules are run as **seminars**, i.e. class meetings that depend on the participants' interactive discussion of a given topic with the instructor and with each other. Seminars usually require a substantial amount of prior preparation of each class meeting at home (e.g. reading of primary and secondary texts, homework assignments, preparation of reports, etc.). The class itself usually meets once a week, for 90 minutes. In addition to these seminars, the department also offers a few **lectures**. These classes are usually bigger (i.e. open to a larger number of students), and they are mainly conducted in a lecturing format, with an instructor delivering information to students.

The modules we offer reflect different sections of the department and hence different subdisciplines of English and American studies, notably

- English and American literary studies
- Cultural studies
- English linguistics
- Mediaeval studies
- Language practice

In what follows, you will find a list of the modules that are available in these different sections. Note that (i) we cannot guarantee that every module will be offered in each academic year: while some modules are usually offered every single semester, others are offered less frequently; (ii) the specific content of each module varies each semester: For example, the module *Genres* in literary studies is offered very regularly, but the specific genre to be dealt with (e.g. short fiction, drama, poetry, etc.) changes every semester.

## 1. Modules in language practice

All practical language modules aim to enhance the students' proficiency of academic English. They are geared towards accuracy, fluency and general near-native competence in spoken and written English. We recommend taking the modules in the following **order**, with **maximally two modules per semester**:

### 1.1. Basic modules

#### BA.AA.KSP3 Reading (seminar, 5 ECTS)

This module simulates typical situations of text reception in English studies and develops a variety of strategies for the effective, analytical and critical reading of literary texts and scientific secondary literature. Assessment: **Written exam**.

#### BA.AA.KSP1 Grammar I (seminar, 5 ECTS)

KNOWLEDGE OF GERMAN IS AN ASSET (but not required).

The module is concerned with selected structures of the English language in its present form that will enable successful communication at CEFR levels B2 / C1. Students will develop an analytical understanding of the structures dealt with, particularly from the perspective of German-English contrasts. They will be able to differentiate correctly between structures and use them in appropriate situations. Assessment: **Written exam**.

#### BA.AA.KSP2 Academic Writing I (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module is concerned with methods and forms of academic writing as a preliminary stage to writing research papers. Students will learn basic techniques for text production and acquaint themselves with appropriate tools for the conventions of academic communication, especially the monolingual learner's dictionary and collocations dictionary, for enhancing their vocabulary. The students will be able to check the

linguistic accuracy of their writing, write in an appropriate style, achieve linguistic and logical coherence and pay attention to basic scientific rules of communication and genre conventions. Assessment: **50% written exam, 50% written essay**. Both assessments must be passed independently.

### 1.2. Advanced modules

All of the following modules require the successful completion of the basic modules above.

#### BA.AA.KSP4 Grammar II (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The knowledge and skills acquired in Grammar I will be deepened and expanded by focussing on further grammatical problem areas in order to enable successful communication at CEFR level C1. Students will increasingly be able to differentiate between grammatical structures of the English language and use them correctly and appropriately. In addition, students gain experience in the analysis and description of advanced grammatical structures. Assessment: **Written exam**.

#### BA.AA.KSP5 Aural-Oral (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module develops skills and strategies for the improvement of the students' aural and oral competence. The oral part includes the organisation of a presentation. Students will learn to understand different types of spoken language texts and different varieties of English. They will be able to communicate orally in different contexts according to the situation, especially when giving speeches and presentations in the foreign language in the course of their studies and to use appropriate vocabulary both passively and actively. Assessment: **50% presentation, 50% written exam or project work**. Both assessments must be passed independently.

#### BA.AA.KSP7 Translation German-English I (seminar, 5 ECTS)

At its core, the module focusses on the contrastive comparison of language structures and their textual embedding in German and English. Students will learn strategies and tools for the translation of moderately difficult German texts into English. They will be able to construct English translations that are grammatically correct, textually accurate, stylistically and functionally appropriate and generally free from fundamental interference from German. Assessment: **Written exam or portfolio**.

## 2. Modules in literary studies

All modules in literary studies are concerned with the scientific analysis, i.e. the professional interpretation, of literary texts of different genres, epochs, regions, cultural contexts, etc. Accordingly, they require analytical skills of literary criticism beyond a general reading ability in English.

### 2.1 Basic module

#### BA.AA.LW01 Introduction to literary studies (10 ECTS)

This module consists of two parts which have to be taken in successive semesters, i.e. they cannot be taken simultaneously. Part II presupposes the successful completion of Part I.

Students will learn basic methods and concepts of literary studies. They will gain the ability to analyse literary texts by means of relevant scientific categories and to present results adequately in written form. Students will also acquire the basic skills necessary to perform and document literature research in appropriate databases.

**Part I (lecture):** The lecture conveys basic theoretical and methodological knowledge and key concepts of the interpretation of poetry, drama and narrative fiction.

**Part II (seminar):** Students practise and deepen central concepts of text analysis on the basis of selected individual texts. The seminar also introduces fundamental techniques for literary research.

Assessment: 50% written exam of part I, 50% term paper of part II. Both assessments must be passed independently.

Note: The courses in this module can be attended by visiting students on a voluntary basis (e.g. to refresh introductory knowledge), but they **cannot receive any ECTS for them**.

## 2.2 Advanced modules

All of the following modules require the successful completion of a basic introductory module to literary studies at the students' home universities.

### BA.AA.LW02 History of English/American Literature(s) (lecture, 5 ECTS)

The module offers a systematic overview of essential epochs of the North American literatures and/or British literature (if possible, also Irish literature and new English literatures). Students will learn about literary-historical contexts, historical and cultural-historical contexts, typical characteristics of the different periods and problems of literary historiography. The students will be able to relate individual literary texts to one another, to put individual texts into historical and cultural contexts and to reflect critically on the history of literature. Assessment: **Written exam**.

### BA.AA.LW04 Reading course (seminar, 5 ECTS)

**This is NOT equivalent to the module 'Reading' in the language-practice section (compare 1.1 above).**

On the basis of a thorough reading of individual works, the module offers an overview of literary texts from important periods in the history of recent and older British literature and North American literature (if possible, also Irish literature and new English literatures). Students will get to know a number of literary texts from several literary epochs and different periods of the English language as well as the themes, genres and styles typical of the epoch in question. They will be able to connect their newly acquired knowledge of literary history to the methodological knowledge they developed in other modules. Assessment: **Written exam**.

### BA.AA.LW05 Theory (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module deepens and expands the students' knowledge of concepts and methods of literary studies acquired in the basic module. It conveys knowledge of literary theory formation based on the reading of relevant texts of English and North American literary theory. Students will get to know the classic texts of British and North American literary theory, essential theoretical currents and the main features of the history of theory formation in the British and North American context. They will be able to read literary theoretical texts critically, to draw a connection between theory formation and text analysis/interpretation and to place the formation of literary theories in a broader historical academic context. Assessment: **Written exam**.

### BA.AA.LW06 Genres (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module deepens and expands the knowledge of genre analysis acquired in the basic module. It imparts genre-theoretical knowledge whilst dealing with selected texts. Students will learn about genre theory, the history of a specific genre and essential text examples. They will develop the skills necessary to analyse texts in the context of genre, to carry out a systematic literature search on the theory, topics and characteristics of a genre, to perform a theoretically and methodologically well-founded text analysis and to adequately present their results in written form. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.LW07 Literary periods (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module imparts knowledge of literary-historical and of cultural-historical phenomena and contexts using the example of a selected epoch of British or North American literature (if possible, also Irish literature and new English literatures). Students will become familiar with essential example texts of an epoch and its literary and cultural-historical contexts. They will know how to write texts in a literary-historical context with regard to phenomena typical of the epoch, to carry out a systematic literature search on theory, styles and contexts, to perform a theoretically and methodologically well-founded text analysis and to adequately present their results in written form. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.LW08 Literature in context (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module introduces to textual analysis on the basis of cultural studies and interdisciplinary perspectives. Students will be familiarised with non-fictional genres and learn how to analyse literary texts in a wider cultural context. They will develop the skills necessary to carry out a systematic literature search on a cultural and/or interdisciplinary question, to perform a theoretically and methodologically well-founded text analysis and to adequately present their results in written form. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.LW09 Media (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module conveys the basics of media analysis and the analysis of the interrelationships of different media and media formats (such as image/text relationships, book/film, hypertext and series). Students will be able to analyse different media using individual examples, to do their own methodical investigation and to present their results appropriately in written form. Assessment: **Term paper**.

## 3. Module in cultural studies

Cultural studies are tightly interwoven with literary studies at our department, so that every class in literary studies basically also imparts a substantial amount of cultural knowledge. There is, however, a module dedicated specifically to an introduction to cultural studies:

### BA.AA.KW Cultural studies (Kulturwissenschaft) (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module introduces the basic methods and questions of cultural studies, with special reference to an Anglophone target culture. Students will encounter issues of cultural studies in a historical perspective and learn the theoretical and methodological foundations of cultural analysis as well as the history of cultural studies in a British and/or North American context. The students will develop the skills to formulate a cultural comparison and acquire the accompanying change of perspective through the confrontation with foreign cultures (intercultural key competence). They will recognise and analyse socio-cultural contexts and be able to perform a systematic literature research for a cultural studies/interdisciplinary problem. Assessment: **Written exam**.

## 4. Modules in English linguistics

All modules in linguistics are concerned with the scientific analysis of (selected aspects of) the English language. They are not to be confused with the practical language classes outlined in §1 above: Linguistics modules do not aim at improving the students' language proficiency, but to understand how the structure and use of the English language can be studied from a scientific perspective.

### 4.1 Basic module

#### BA.AA.SW01 Introduction to linguistics (10 ECTS)

This module consists of two parts which have to be taken in successive semesters, i.e. they cannot be taken simultaneously. Part II presupposes the successful completion of Part I.

Students will learn basic concepts and methods for the scientific description and analysis of the English language.

**Part I: Language structure (seminar):** After a general introduction to linguistics as a discipline and to basic properties of human language as a communication system, the class focusses on the structural building blocks of language, i.e. sounds, words, phrases, clauses and sentences. At each of these levels, it will familiarise students with fundamental analytical concepts, notably from grammatical analysis (e.g. inflectional categories, word classes, main and subordinate clauses, syntactic functions), and uncover by which principles the smaller structural units are embedded in the larger ones.

**Part II: Meaning and language use (seminar):** The class is concerned with the scientific study of word and sentence meaning (= semantics) as well as with utterance meaning in specific contexts (= pragmatics). In doing so, it also takes into account how linguistic form and meaning vary with different usage contexts (= discourse pragmatics and sociolinguistics), and finally, it familiarises students with basic concepts of doing linguistic research (data sources, research questions, hypotheses).

Assessment: 50% written exam of part I, 50% written exam of part II. Both assessments must be passed independently.

Note: The courses in this module can be attended by visiting students on a voluntary basis (e.g. to refresh introductory knowledge), but they **cannot receive any ECTS for them**.

## 4.2 Advanced modules

International students can attend the following modules without prior knowledge in linguistics. Ideally, however, students have taken an introductory class in linguistics before.

### BA.AA.HIS History of the English language (lecture, 5 ECTS)

The lecture course provides an overview of the periodical subdivision of English, its origins, its position among the Germanic languages, its prehistory as well as its development to the beginning of Early Modern English. Assessment: **Written exam**.

### BA.AA.SW02 Phonetics (5 ECTS)

This module consists of two 45min classes that are combined with one another **in the same semester**:

**Part I: Theory (lecture):** The lecture provides an introduction to English phonetics and phonology. The first part of the lecture deals with the articulation of English speech sounds. In the domain of phonology, it is concerned with segmental phonology, i.e. with the inventory of speech sounds with meaning-distinguishing function (phonemes) as well as their most important realisation variants in connected speech (allophones). Selected aspects of phonotactics and suprasegmental phonology will also be covered, especially syllable structure, rhythm and the basics of intonation. Students will be able to analyse the sound structure of spoken language, to recognise and describe phonetically variations in pronunciation of English native speakers, and recognise and describe phonetically pronunciation errors of non-native speakers.

**Part II: Practice (seminar):** The practical part of the module focusses on the students' improvement of their own pronunciation. Students select a standard variety of English (Standard American or British English) and learn to transcribe sound structures by means of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Assessment: **Written exam** (one exam that includes questions on both parts of the module).

### BA.AA.SW03 Language and communication (lecture, 5 ECTS)

This lecture course provides an overview of central phenomena, theories and analytical concepts of pragmatics and discourse analysis, notably speech-act theory, conversational implicatures, presuppositions, deixis, metaphor, irony and non-verbal communication. Students will be familiarised with different models of communication and categories of conversational analysis. Assessment: **Written exam**.

### BA.AA.SW04 Language and cognition (lecture, 5 ECTS)

This lecture course is concerned with the cognitive foundations of language. Topics typically include: (i) the structure of human categories and their expression in language, (ii) the conceptual basis of linguistic structure, (iii) the cognitive processes of language acquisition, (iv) the cognitive principles of diachronic change, (v) functional and cognitive motivations for language universals. Assessment: **Written exam**.

All of the following modules require the successful completion of an introductory class in linguistics at the students' home universities.

### BA.AA.SW05 Text and discourse analysis (seminar, 5 ECTS)

This module deals with the structure of texts and conversations. The focus is on the analysis of the linguistic and non-verbal means used to structure and organise different forms of text and communication. Students will learn the different linguistic means of text cohesion, information-structural principles of discourse organisation (theme and rheme) and different text and discourse types. They will be able to analyse the structure of texts and conversations and to recognise and reflect on strategies of text and discourse organisation. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.SW06 Sociolinguistics (seminar, 5 ECTS)

This module is concerned with the use of language in its social contexts. This involves both social and situation-specific aspects of language use. Students will be familiarised with sociolinguistic theories of language use, linguistic characteristics of different sociolects of English and sociolinguistic aspects of language change. They will be able to analyse language in its communicative and social context and to critically reflect on social assessments of sociolects and processes of language change. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.SW07 The structure of English (seminar, 5 ECTS)

This module is concerned with different aspects of the grammatical structure of English and with alternative concepts of grammatical categories. The specific focus of the module changes each semester, so that topics may range from morphology or the mental lexicon to specific grammatical categories like tense/aspect, modality, complex sentences and different theoretical approaches to the grammar of English. Students will be able to describe specific lexical or grammatical structures of English, to explain the special characteristics of English in that domain and to critically reflect on language structure more generally. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.SW08 Language acquisition (seminar, 5 ECTS)

This module introduces students to central phenomena, methods and theories of language acquisition. The specific focus of the module may rotate between first language acquisition, bilingualism and (instructed) second language acquisition. Students will be familiarised with various theoretical models of language acquisition, with typical errors and developmental processes in first (and/or second) language acquisition and with the psychological mechanisms underlying language acquisition. They will be able to work with different types of primary data in order to analyse the causes of errors and development processes in language acquisition. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.SW09 Introduction to corpus linguistics (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module offers an introduction to corpus linguistics. It is concerned with the transfer of methodological knowledge and the analysis and interpretation of quantitative corpus data. Students will get to know the structure and composition of some electronic corpora of English (e.g. the British National Corpus) and basic concepts of frequency-based linguistic analysis, such as collocations, idioms and constructions. They will be able to work with large electronic corpora, to analyse phenomena of English grammar and lexicology using corpus-linguistic methods and to describe quantitative differences between oral and written forms of discourse in English. Assessment: **Term paper**.

### BA.AA.SW10 Diachronic linguistics (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module provides a closer examination and possibly comparison of selected periods in the history of English, notably Old, Middle and Early Modern English. Students will be able to describe the phonological, lexical and grammatical characteristics of the period(s) in question, to situate them in the wider socio-historical context of the language and to link them to important literary works of the time. Assessment: **Written exam**.