

# Overview of graduate (M.A.) modules

## Information for prospective students

The courses taught at our department are officially known as **modules**. Virtually all of these modules are run as **seminars** rather than lecture courses, 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.). In the M.A. programme, courses in linguistics and in literary studies are divided into two basic categories:

- **Thematic modules:** These classes meet once a week, for 90 minutes, and cover a specific topic or topic area in linguistics or literary studies. They are worth **5 ECTS**.
- **Research-oriented modules:** These classes are worth **10 ECTS**, as they consist of two 90-minute courses each week. The two courses may be run by the same or by different instructors, and they cover two different aspects of the same overall topic. In linguistics, for example, such modules often consist of a more theoretical course that develops the conceptual foundations of a particular topic and a practical course in which students work on their individual, data-driven projects.

In what follows, you will find a list of the modules that are offered regularly at the department, along with a short description of their basic content and forms of assessment. Please note that this is not the official module catalogue, but an informal translation for orientation purposes; it is **not** legally binding. Moreover, please be aware that the specific content of each module varies each semester: For example, the module *Author/Oeuvre* in literary studies is offered very regularly, but the specific author to be dealt with changes every time.

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## 1. Modules in language practice

All practical language modules aim to enhance the students' proficiency of academic English to a near-native speaker level. They presuppose a sound command of English pronunciation, lexis, grammar, presentation skills and essay writing but polish these skills for professional purposes.

### MA.AA.SP01 Academic Writing (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module deals with methods and forms of academic writing as required for advanced term papers and the final dissertation. Students will learn the methods and conventions of contemporary academic communication. They will be able to express complex content in a grammatically correct, stylistically appropriate and coherent way. They will be able to structure content and argumentation according to the methods and conventions of academic communication. **Assessment:** Written exam (50%), term paper (50%).

### MA.AA.SP03 Grammar (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module focuses on repeating the material from the Grammar I and Grammar II modules at a level that approaches C2 proficiency. Students will gain a detailed analytical understanding of English grammar, which focuses on the command of the language. They will learn to use grammatical structures at a level close to that of a native English speaker. **Assessment:** Written exam.

### MA.AA.SP04 Oral Presentation (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The module deals with the formal, rhetorical and linguistic aspects of presenting a topic in English. Students will learn the appropriate language and turns of phrase presentation techniques for presenting a topic. They will be able to structure complex content in a rhetorically, formally and linguistically appropriate manner for a given context. **Assessment:** Presentation (60%), written exam (40%).

### MA.AA.SP05 Advanced Language Skills A (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The content of the module is determined by the students' choice from a changing range of classes in the following areas: writing skills, reading skills, listening skills, speaking skills, translation, grammar. Students will deepen their language skills in one of these areas at a level that approaches the C2 competence level.

**Assessment:** Written exam (exceptions: classes on writing skills 50% exam and 50% written composition, classes on speaking skills 40% exam and 60% oral test).

The class chosen in this module must be different from the class chosen in the modules *Advanced Language Skills B* and *C*.

### MA.AA.SP06 Advanced Language Skills B (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The content of the module is determined by the students' choice from a changing range of classes in the following areas: writing skills, reading skills, listening skills, speaking skills, translation, grammar. Students will deepen their language skills in one of these areas at a level that approaches the C2 competence level.

**Assessment:** Written exam (exceptions: classes on writing skills 50% exam and 50% written composition, classes on speaking skills 40% exam and 60% oral test).

The class chosen in this module must be different from the class chosen in the modules *Advanced Language Skills A* and *C*.

### MA.AA.SP07 Advanced Language Skills C (seminar, 5 ECTS)

The content of the module is determined by the students' choice from a changing range of classes in the following areas: writing skills, reading skills, listening skills, speaking skills, translation, grammar. Students will deepen their language skills in one of these areas at a level that approaches the C2 competence level.

**Assessment:** Written exam (exceptions: classes on writing skills 50% exam and 50% written composition, classes on speaking skills 40% exam and 60% oral test).

The class chosen in this module must be different from the class chosen in the modules *Advanced Language Skills A* and *B*.

## 2. Modules in literary (and cultural) 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 Research modules

#### MA.AA.LW00 Culture/Culture (10 ECTS)

The module delivers advanced knowledge of cultural studies issues, including relevant methodology and theory. A particular thematic emphasis is laid upon everyday culture, pop culture and subcultures.

**Competencies:** Students will learn models, theories and methods pertaining to cultural studies. They will become acquainted with the current discourse concerning everyday culture and pop culture, as well as the problematic nature of the construction of a canon. Students will develop the capacity to deal independently with cultural and literary critical elements of popular and high culture. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW01 Text/Context (10 ECTS)

The module deals with the interrelationship between literary works and their cultural environment. Students will get to know methods and specific cultural contexts, which will enable them to investigate the interplay of literary and cultural discourses through the lens of cultural studies. In order to deepen the students' understanding of this interrelationship, we will discuss literary works from Great Britain and North America

(possibly also Ireland and the New English Literatures). **Competencies:** Students will learn methods and concepts pertaining to cultural studies and get acquainted with a specific cultural question within the context of current discourses. Students will develop the capacity to recognize interdiscursive relationships and to analyse them in specific cases. Furthermore, students will conduct an independent, methodologically sound, and well-thought-out study with a focus on cultural studies and present their results in appropriate manner. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW02 Literary History (10 ECTS)

This module focuses on literary critical models of periodization and transmission, and deals with terms such as epoch and the end of an epoch. It also deals with concepts such as aesthetic innovation and literary critical change of paradigm. Students will acquire deep knowledge of literary historical methods and contexts. The material for the course will either be a certain epoch or a certain context surrounding the passing on of a narrative. **Competencies:** Students will learn about concepts involved in the creation of literary history and acquire in-depth knowledge of a literary epoch or a transmission process. Students will be able to analyse literary historical models critically, describe phenomena relating to transformation, undertake an independent study of a literary historical problem and to present their results in appropriate manner. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW03 Literary Categories and Conventions (10 ECTS)

Students learn about the formation and the creation of conventions of literary forms such as genre, styles, topoi and their categorization including the process of the creation of a canon. **Competencies:** Students will become acquainted with the terminology and the theoretical framework inherent in the construction of a canon, a central literary phenomenon within the context of a broad range of literary texts. Students will develop the ability to describe and analyse accurately phenomena of genre and style. They will undertake an independent academic study and present their results in appropriate manner. **Assessment:** Term paper.

## 2.2 Thematic modules

#### MA.AA.LW05 Intermediality (5 ECTS)

This module analyses literature or text along intermedial lines (for example: drama/theatre, text/image, text/film). The focus lies on the interrelationship between forms of media and their functions in the formation of cultural discourse, with particular attention being paid to aesthetic features. **Competencies:** Students will be familiar with methods for media analysis and description models for intermediality as well as a range of different forms of media. Students will be able to analyse topics and genres in a range of media contexts. They will also be able to recognize the relevance of certain media forms for their reception. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW06 Author/Oeuvre (5 ECTS)

The module approaches literature from the point of view of the author. The focus lies on the analysis of the context of a work and the concepts of oeuvre and authorship. **Competencies:** The students will learn the historical background to the concepts of oeuvre and authorship, will come to appreciate the uses and limits of biographical methods, and will gain an overview of an author's entire oeuvre and its reception. The students will be able to put individual works within the context of the entire oeuvre; they will be familiar with the problematical aspects of the concepts 'author' and 'oeuvre'. Also, they will be able to analyse the ways in which authors and authorship are staged/performed and instrumentalised. **Assessment:** Written exam.

#### MA.AA.LW07 Advanced Perspectives on Genre (5 ECTS)

The module develops advanced knowledge of genres and genre theory. **Competencies:** The students will learn to recognise a genre within its historical context and will be familiar with the relevant theory. They will deal with questions of genre within the context of current research and be able to use these insights independently for their own research. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW08 Theory of Literature/Methods of Interpretation (5 ECTS)

The module deals with the theories and methods of literary criticism in English studies. **Competencies:** The students will develop an understanding of complex theoretical questions and will be able to analyse elements of their exposition; they will be able to critique literary critical paradigms and conventions as well as make connections to other disciplines. **Assessment:** Written exam.

#### MA.AA.LW09 Fiction/Non-Fiction (5 ECTS)

The module delivers knowledge of the non-fictional genres (such as travel literature and (auto-) biography and the interplay between fiction and non-fiction. The main focus is placed on modes of representation and questions of reference between fact and fiction as well as the question of the suitability of literary critical approaches for non-fiction. **Competencies:** Students will learn about at least one non-fictional genre, its historical background and the relevant theoretical approaches. They will develop the skills necessary for analysing the language of fictional and non-fictional texts and techniques for establishing textual plausibility. Furthermore, they will be able to understand non-fiction and/or non-literary texts in relation to fictional literature and in its specific cultural-historical context. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW11 Intercultural Studies (5 ECTS)

This module concentrates on interculturality, transculturality and multiculturalism. **Competencies:** The students will familiarise themselves with theories of interculturality, concepts of multiculturalism as well as those of migration and transmigration, the historical backgrounds behind contemporary intercultural tensions, and methods for dealing with intercultural questions. The students will develop the ability to recognise and analyse intercultural problems in cultural and literary-critical contexts. Furthermore, they will become acquainted with the historical background to contemporary problems. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW12 Reading Course (5 ECTS)

The course offers a comprehensive and substantial overview of literary works pertaining to a particular genre or epoch through extensive reading of a variety of texts. **Competencies:** The students will get to know a broad range of literary texts from various epochs, different linguistic standards, specific topoi, genres and styles, phenomena that are typical for a particular genre as well as their implementation in different literary periods, and the development of specific motifs over time. The students will be able to connect their insights into the history of literature with the knowledge of methods and theoretical frameworks they have gained in other modules. **Assessment:** Written exam.

#### MA.AA.LW13 Interdisciplinary Perspectives (5 ECTS)

In this module, topics in literary criticism will be approached with special regard to their points of interface with other academic disciplines and/or art forms or they will be analysed from a comparative perspective. **Competencies:** Students will become acquainted with interdisciplinary approaches to their subject and the literary theories relevant for an interdisciplinary angle. They will also be able to apply research methods from at least two different academic disciplines within the framework of a thematic connection. Students will have the ability to approach a subject from the perspective of another discipline, to perceive their own subject from the viewpoint of another subject and to deal independently with a given topic from an interdisciplinary perspective. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.LW14 Language and Literature (5 ECTS)

This module concentrates on the language of literary texts. The focus is placed on rhetorical, linguistic, experimental and neologistic aspects. In so doing, students are introduced to literary, poetological, linguistic aspects as well as dealing with the history of the language and the philosophy of language. At the heart of this module lies the analysis of specific linguistic aspects of literary works. **Competencies:** Students will learn the concepts and terminology for the formal analysis of the language of literary texts, models of literary linguistics, and theories about experimental writing. Students will develop the ability to analyse independently elements of the language of literary texts and to evaluate their meaning within the context of the whole text. They will be able to apply methods of literary linguistics. Finally, students will be in the position to deal with the problems of analysis at the interdisciplinary interface between literary studies, linguistics and the philosophy of language. **Assessment:** Term paper.

## 3. Modules in 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.

### 3.1 Research modules

#### MA.AA.SW01 Corpus Linguistics (10 ECTS)

The module consists of a theoretical and a methodological seminar. The theoretical seminar deals with the foundations of corpus linguistics, i.e. different types and purposes of corpora and their annotation schemes, the relationship between corpus data and the linguistic knowledge and behaviour of speakers, and applied questions relating to the use of corpora in language learning and teaching. The methodological seminar trains students in the use of electronic corpora and allows them to conduct their own corpus-linguistic projects. **Competencies:** Students will be familiar with the purposes and limitations of corpora as data sources in linguistics, with important linguistic units examined in corpora (collocations, idioms, constructions) and with corpus-linguistic methods for their analysis. They will be able to relate corpus-linguistic findings to theoretical issues concerning linguistic knowledge and behaviour. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW02 Language Development (10 ECTS)

The module consists of a theoretical and a methodological seminar. The theoretical seminar deals with conceptual aspects of first and second language acquisition, which will be illustrated by selected examples. The methodological seminar is about corpus-linguistic and experimental methods of data analysis in the field of first and second language acquisition. **Competencies:** Students will know various theories of first and second language acquisition as well as typical developmental paths of lexical and grammatical expressions. They will develop the skills to carry out their own investigations of first and second language learner corpora, develop experimental studies on the acquisition of grammatical phenomena, and analyse acquisition data qualitatively and quantitatively. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW03 Discourse Analysis (10 ECTS)

The module consists of a theoretical and a methodological seminar. The theoretical seminar deals with different aspects of text and discourse linguistics. The methodological seminar is about analysing audio and video data of spoken language. **Competencies:** Students will know different text and discourse types, principles of how texts and discourse are structured, lexical and intonational means of textual cohesion, verbal and non-verbal means of establishing meaning. They will have the skills to collect and analyse audio and video data, analyse linguistic expressions in their communicative context, and relate verbal and non-verbal means of communication to each other. **Assessment:** Term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW04 Linguistic Typology and Language Universals (10 ECTS)

The module consists of a theoretical and a methodological seminar. The theoretical seminar deals with cross-linguistic aspects of human language and special properties of English when viewed from a cross-linguistic perspective. The methodological seminar is about the structure and use of reference grammars, analysing cross-linguistic data qualitatively and quantitatively, and setting up a representative sample of languages. **Competencies:** Students will know cross-linguistic tendencies in morphology, word order, grammatical relations and the formation of complex sentences. They will be familiar with cross-linguistically remarkable characteristics of English and various cognitive and communicative motivations for linguistic universals. Students will have the skills to analyse typological data qualitatively and quantitatively, to analyse the characteristic properties of a given language from a cross-linguistic perspective and to work with reference grammars. **Assessment:** Term paper.

### 3.2 Thematic modules

#### MA.AA.SW05 Statistics for Linguists (5 ECTS)

The module introduces students to different methods of statistical data analysis. This includes methods for the analysis of interval data that were collected experimentally, as well as methods for the analysis of categorical data. The latter are particularly important for corpus-linguistic and typological investigations. **Competencies:** Students will be familiar with different types of data and their properties, with different mono- and multi-factorial techniques for the analysis of interval and categorical data, and with the basic theoretical concepts on which the different statistical methods are based. Students will have the skills to analyse quantitative data statistically, carry out statistical analyses using the statistics software *R*, as well as to critically scrutinise statistical analyses. **Assessment:** Written exam or term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW06 Cognitive Linguists (5 ECTS)

The module is about central aspects of cognitive linguistics: categorisation, construal and aspects of cognitive grammar. In addition, psycholinguistic models of language processing and production will be discussed. **Competencies:** Students will be acquainted with different theories of categorisation (the classical approach, prototype theory, exemplar theory) and their application to linguistic categories, different construal operations in language, central principles of cognitive grammar, and some insights into language processing and production. Students will have the skills to critically scrutinise categories in scientific and non-scientific contexts, to analyse the use of construal operations in everyday language, and to view linguistic structures from a cognitive and psycholinguistic perspective. **Assessment:** Written exam or term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW07 Principles of Language Change (5 ECTS)

The module first provides an overview of typical patterns of language change on the phonological, lexical and grammatical level before it moves on to consider theoretical aspects of language change: grammaticalization, the invisible-hand phenomenon, sociolinguistic models of language change and the concept of competing motivations. **Competencies:** Students will know about social, communicative and cognitive causes and mechanisms of linguistic change, and what language change implies for general theories of language. Students will have the skills to work with diachronic language data, connect synchronic and diachronic aspects of linguistic analysis, and consider linguistic categories from a historical perspective. **Assessment:** Written exam or term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW08 English Varieties (5 ECTS)

The module is concerned with geographical, social and ethnic varieties of English. **Competencies:** Students will be familiar with linguistic features of the most important British and American English varieties, the historical background relevant to the development of English varieties, the social status of selected varieties in British and American society, the most important features of standardised Englishes spoken in former British colonies as well as theoretical aspects of analysing varieties of English. Students will have the skills to identify and describe linguistic features of English varieties, and to critically scrutinise the social status of English varieties. **Assessment:** Written exam or term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW09 Contrastive Linguistics (English-German) (5 ECTS)

The module is concerned with selected aspects of English and German phonology, morphology and syntax from a contrastive perspective. **Competencies:** Students will know about basic contrasts and commonalities of English and German word- and sentence structure as well as the historical background that has led to these contrasts and similarities in English and German grammar. Students will have the skills to analyse grammatical categories and structures contrastively, and to identify and explain the structural causes of grammatical and phonological mistakes made by second language learners. **Assessment:** Written exam or term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW10 Usage-Based Linguistics (5 ECTS)

The module deals with those aspects of communication and cognition that influence the development of the language system in language use. This includes the following factors: the frequency of words and constructions, information structure, pragmatic inferencing, analogy and priming, categorisation and iconicity. **Competencies:** Students will be familiar with the relationship between language use, language development and language structure, and with the social, cognitive and communicative foundations of grammar. Students will have the skills to analyse aspects of grammar in their interrelation with aspects of language use and language change, establish connections between data coming from several domains of linguistics (e.g. corpus linguistics, historical linguistics, language acquisition research, psycholinguistics), and view linguistic questions from a general, cognitive perspective. **Assessment:** Written exam or term paper.

#### MA.AA.SW11 Grammatical Categories in Comparative Perspective (5 ECTS)

The module is concerned with the comparative analysis of linguistic categories. The focus will be on analysing the grammar of English and its varieties from a typological perspective. **Competencies:** Students will learn about the most important theories and descriptive frameworks in the area of English grammatical categories, about the structural organisation of a given category in the standard and in selected non-standard varieties, and about the typological variation in these areas. Students will have the skills to analyse and interpret grammatical categories in theoretically appropriate ways, and to situate the grammatical organisation of English in a more general typological context. **Assessment:** Written exam or term paper.