

Structure

The BM7 consists of the following parts:

- Seminar/Übung "Introduction to the Critical and Scholarly Discussion of Literature" (2 SWS, winter term only)
- Tutorial "Research Methods" (1 SWS, winter term only)
- Vorlesung "Historical Backgrounds and Critical Concepts" (1 SWS, summer term only)
- Übung "Key Concepts in Cultural Studies" (2 SWS, summer term only)

In order to complete BM7, all parts of this module must be completed successfully.

Aim

The aim of this module is to prepare students for participation in critical and scholarly discussions of literature and other cultural texts by helping and encouraging them:

- to develop an understanding of the issues and questions dealt with in literary and cultural studies.
- to acquire and consolidate the basic knowledge and skills necessary for such an understanding.
- to apply their acquired knowledge and skills in order to address scholarly and critical issues in the fields of literary and cultural studies.

Knowledge

In the Seminar/Übung "Introduction to the Critical and Scholarly Discussion of Literature", students will be made familiar with

- different conceptions and definitions of 'literature' and 'culture'
- the traditions of the debates on literature and various forms of cultural texts
- the spectrum of genres and periods in literary and cultural history
- literary schools and movements
- critical schools and movements
- changing historical conditions of performance, as well as of production, circulation and reception of books and various other cultural texts

In the tutorial "Research Methods", students will be equipped with skills for finding and processing information.

The Vorlesung "Historical Backgrounds and Critical Concepts" and the Übung "Key Concepts in Cultural Studies" integrate the aspects outlined above into wider historical, critical and theoretical contexts.

Skills

The range of skills required for understanding issues and participating in the scholarly and critical discussion of literature and culture includes:

Research Skills

- finding information (library and reference skills)
- processing information (selecting and making excerpts of primary and secondary material; using secondary material for discussion)
- presenting information (orally and in writing)

Critical and Analytical Skills (Reading Strategies)

- recognising and describing the specific character of communication in different genres and media (e.g. narrative, dramatic, poetic, visual, etc.).
- recognising and describing techniques of generating meaning through characterisation, figurative speech and performance in various media.
- situating literary and cultural texts in the contexts of their production, circulation and reception.
- identifying contexts in which literary and cultural texts could play a role today, e.g. in scholarly discussions, in projects of work one could do in a seminar paper

Requirements, Portfolio

The portfolio of requirements for BM7 consists of four items:

- "Introduction to the Critical and Scholarly Discussion of Literature": written test (30%); RPO (20%)
- "Key Concepts in Cultural Studies": written test (30%); RPO (20%)
- "Research Methods": certificate of successful completion (pass/fail, i.e. not graded)
- Active participation in all parts of the module is a prerequisite

Active Participation

- Preparation of handouts and relevant texts
- In preparation for the written test: three assignments (optional)
- In preparation for the RPO: finding and focusing on a topic (by week 10); presenting your RPO project (week 14)
- Regular attendance and completion of homework assignments in the tutorial "Research Methods"