

Self-study units and ‘Projektseminar’ FAQ – Prof. Dr. Ingo Berensmeyer
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Moodle enrolment key: *independent*

1. Self-study

What is ‘self-study’ ?

A self-study unit means **independent study**. Think of this as the equivalent of a seminar, only without the seminar. You choose your own topic (this needs to be OK’d by me) and reading list. You work in your own time. Do the readings as you would for a seminar, think about your topic, and then prepare a handout with a bibliography and theses for the exam.

Schedule: (IMPORTANT!) for winter//summer semesters:

By Dec. 1 // June 1: Decide on a topic. Finalise your topic with me.

By Dec. 15 // June 15: Finalise your reading list with me.

By Feb. 1 // July 7: Email your handout (incl. bibliography) to me.

How does the exam work?

You will be given a time slot for an individual oral exam at the end of the semester, either face to face or via Zoom (I will need you to agree to being examined via Zoom if necessary). Exams for Self Study Unit A and C last 20 minutes, for B 30 minutes. At the beginning of the exam, you will be asked to give a brief introductory presentation (not more than 5 minutes), followed by Q&A.

What sort of topic should you choose?

The focus should be English literature – British, Irish or postcolonial texts are welcome; American texts only as exceptions. Focus on an overarching theme, genre or author. A typical topic will include both primary and secondary literature. Here are some recent examples: “Truth and temporality in postmodernist fiction”, “Villains in early modern drama”, “Narrative identity in gender-bending novels”, “Friendship in the English Renaissance” ... Choose a topic that suits you, either to enhance your skills in an area of research that you have already been studying, or to complement your studies by focusing on an aspect or period that you haven’t been able to study in regular seminars.

How much work should you put in?

You will receive 6 ETCS (ungraded) for units A and C, and 9 ECTS (graded) for unit B. For unit B, you need to cover two different genres or periods.

The corpus of texts will vary depending on their length. For example, calculate four to six novels or plays for units A or C, and six to eight for unit B. If you’re dealing with shorter texts, e.g. lyric poems or short stories, you can include some more.

What kind of support can you expect?

There are no regular meetings or classes for self-study. However, I am available for consultation via email, or during my regular office hour. Currently, my office hour is on Tuesday 3-4 pm in Schelling 3, 057 (RG); alternatively, we can schedule contact time via Zoom. Please only use your LMU email address to get in touch with me.

2. Projektseminar

What is the ‘project seminar’?

Like the self-study units, this is not a seminar in the proper sense. For the project seminar, the expectation is that you devise your own project, carry it out, and document the outcome in a credible form. You can work on your own or in collaboration with other students. Each student will have to document their work separately at the end.

How does the exam work?

Your documentation counts for the exam (which will be graded). The documentation can be in the form of a written text, similar in form and length to an essay (5 to 10 pages); it can also be a video, a website or other digital format.

Group work is possible but individual contributions have to be clearly marked.

What sort of topic should you choose?

Think of this as different from a normal research paper and more practical in kind, more like an essay or a piece of journalism. For instance, you could seek out an event, a place or an institution that relates to English literature and find out more about it; talk to the organisers, to audience members etc., or document the Q&A at a public reading or a literature festival. You can also, of course, organise your own event, a reading night, for example, and document that. This type of course really calls for some creativity away from the beaten tracks of the university and the usual kind of research paper.

What kind of support can you expect?

See the info for self-study above; consult with me about your project and let me know if you run into problems.

Please finalise your project with me by Dec. 15 (winter semester) or June 15 (summer semester) at the latest.

Hand in your project (via email) by March 1 (winter semester) or August 1 (summer semester).