

Veranstalter.....	Prof. Dr. Eva Berlage
Thema.....	'How prescriptivism can get it all wrong': Rules and Usage in the 21st Century [AA-V1ab, AA-V2ab, ENG-10, ENG-11, AA9, LAA8, LAA11, AA-W, AA-WB]
Art der Veranstaltung.....	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer.....	53-517
Zeit.....	2st. Mi 10-12
Raum.....	Phil 1269
Beginn.....	01.04.2015

### **Commentary:**

This course contrasts the way in which grammar is and has been approached by prescriptivists from the 18th to 21st centuries with its actual usage in present-day English.

The course focuses on a series of grammatical phenomena which include the following:

- preposition stranding (e.g. *the postcard I searched for*)
- split infinitives (e.g. *to not help*)
- the use of 'whom' (e.g. *the man whom I have seen*)

In order to explore the use of these grammatical constructions in present-day English, we will look at the evidence provided by multi-million word electronic corpora. Students will be expected to team up as groups and to perform corpus analyses on one selected phenomenon. Subsequently, the results will be presented in class.

The main objective of this course is to make students aware of the discrepancies that exist between what is stated in prescriptive grammars/styleguides and what we actually find occurring in language use. Corpus investigations will reveal that even large-scale descriptive grammars (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985) often fail to account for the vast amount of variation present in contemporary English.

### **Course requirements:**

- Regular attendance
- Presentation in class
- Term paper

Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit:	Siehe Liste
Sprechstunden während der Semesterferien:	Siehe Liste