

<b>Veranstalter</b> .....	<b>PD Dr. Monika Pietrzak-Franger</b>
<b>Thema</b> .....	<b>Graphic Novels: Recent UK/European Trends</b> [ENG-6/a, AA-V3a/b, ENG-12, AA7, AA-10, LAA9, LAA12, AA-MA3, AA-MA4, AA-W, AA-WB]
<b>Art der Veranstaltung</b> .....	<b>Seminar II</b>
<b>Veranstaltungsnummer</b> .....	<b>53-548</b>
<b>Zeit</b> .....	<b>Do 10-12</b>
<b>Raum</b> .....	<b>Phil 1250</b>
<b>Beginn</b> .....	<b>7. April 2016</b>

### **Course Description:**

In recent decades, graphic novels have been gaining on popularity. It is now not only the comic/graphic novel aficionados that take interest in this form but also filmmakers, scholars and a broad spectrum of niche audiences (from children to refugees and patients). In this seminar, we will look at recent thematic and aesthetic trends in graphic novels. We will start by examining the characteristics and the ways of reading/studying graphic fiction. After that, we will look at the innovative scholarly dissertation by Nick Sousanis *Unflattening* (2015), which will help us consider not only the hierarchy of signs in the Western culture along with the various ways of seeing and acquiring knowledge but which will also be a springboard for discussions about what it means to be human today. After this, we will spend the remainder of the seminar spotlighting one of the most recent subgenres of graphic novels, namely, graphic pathographies – i.e. graphic narratives of illness (be it mental illness, disability or the various crises that we face today). Apart from reading a couple of such narratives (e.g. Ellen Forney’s 2012 *Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo and Me, A Graphic Memoir* about bipolar disorders; or Rachael Bell’s 2015 *The Inflatable Woman* about breast cancer) and discussing the ways in which mental and physical disorders are rendered in an imagetext form, we will ask who and how is addressed by these renditions. Students will have a chance to prepare a group presentation about another graphic novel/other graphic novels – chosen and analysed by them. Suggestions are welcome.

### **Course Requirements:**

**Studienleistung:** regular and active participation (no more than two missed classes), preparation of the reading material for the seminar, completion of short homework assignments, expert-group presentation.

**Prüfungsleistung:** Term paper

**Reading:** While other graphic novels will be announced during the first session (and you can send me an email with suggested readings until mid-March 2016), I would be grateful if you could purchase and read (we will start discussing the book during the second week of our studies):

**Sousanis, Nick. *Unflattening*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2015.**