

B.EP.301 Aufbaumodul 2: Old Norse Language and Literature

Term:	Winter 16/17	Instructor:	Dr P. S. Langeslag
Time:	Tue 10–12	Office:	SEP 2.306
Room:	VG 2.104	Phone:	0551/3919706
Credits:	4+2 if taken as Aufbaumodul 2	Office hours:	Wed 2–3
Prerequisites:	Aufbaumodul 1 (none if taken for Schlüsselkompetenzen)	E-mail:	planges@gwdg.de

Course Description

This course introduces students to the language and literature of medieval Scandinavia by way of Old Icelandic. It begins with a focus on traditional grammar and gradually transitions towards practical translation, alongside which it will offer brief introductions to the most prominent literary genres and the most significant historical developments.

Please note: this course requires extensive language study!

Aims

Students will improve their knowledge of and skills in

- Old Norse grammar;
- Old Icelandic reading comprehension; and
- Medieval Scandinavian myth and literature.

Assessment

Assessment will be in the form of a written exam. If taken as part of Aufbaumodul 2, the Old Norse exam includes assessment of the History of the English Language lecture course. The part of the exam pertaining to Old Norse will consist of seen and unseen translation, grammar questions, and questions about Old Norse written culture. Homework and occasional unmarked language quizzes in the course of the term will serve to prepare you for the exam; your performance on these and your class participation will additionally inform my interpretation of any unclear exam answers.

Required Texts and Resources

Your two portals to readings, exercises, and other resources are

- studium.langeslag.org/norse16 (“Website” or “course website”)
- studip.uni-goettingen.de (“StudIP”)

Among further important resources linked on the course website are

- flash.langeslag.org (“Flashcards”)
- paradigms.langeslag.org (“Paradigms”)

In lieu of a textbook, we will use a combination of instructor-developed materials. In the schedule overleaf, “Grammar” refers to the grammatical introduction from *Old Norse Verbs*, a forthcoming textbook. An early, incomplete draft of this is available on StudIP, where it will be updated in the course of the term as I revise and expand the text. A second central resource, listed on the schedule as “Website”, refers to grammatical introductions on studium.langeslag.org/norse16; these complement the information in the grammar. A third resource is flash.langeslag.org, referred to in the schedule as “Flashcards”. A resource that will serve less for studying than for reference at this stage is paradigms.langeslag.org, which demonstrates the workings of Old Norse verbs; wherever the grammar references a given verb, it may be worth looking it up here. These sources should suffice for most purposes, but if you are serious about learning Old Norse, you are encouraged to obtain whatever books from the bibliography at the end of this syllabus best serve your needs. The value of the various grammars and dictionaries will be discussed in session one.

Workload

For four credits, you are expected to work 4~4.5 hours per week if divided evenly over the six-month term. Since the exam takes place after only 15 weeks of work, however, that workload is in fact unevenly divided into 7~8 hours per week (contact time plus 5~6 hours of homework) between mid-October and mid-February, 0 hours in early October and from mid-February to April. Thus if all your courses wrap up in 15 weeks, you are expected to work 50~60-hour weeks during term time.

In this course, you will find that the workload ramps up as we increase our weekly amount of translation after week 7. You are therefore strongly advised to **start on the readings from Craigie early**, preferably in week 1. Texts in Craigie come with a detailed glossary, so you can start before knowing the grammar. You may find that you cannot cover more than a few texts from Craigie in a week, but if you read one text per week in the first five weeks, then triple your pace thereafter, you'll be done early and can start on *Eiríks saga* and *Helga þáttr* a week ahead of schedule.

Tutorials

An optional, no-credit, no-homework reading group meets Mondays at 6pm sharp ("s.t."), starting on Monday 25 October. Although this reading group exists independently of the Old Norse Language and Literature course, its focus at least at the start of this term will be to train students to sightread Old Norse. It thus makes for great exam preparation. Feel free to attend. The StudIP group is called "Übung: Medieval Literature Reading Group" and the room is KWZ 0.610.

Schedule

wk	date	topic	read (in English)	do/translate
1	18 Oct	Methods and Resources; Orthography and Phonology	Do feel free to read ahead! e.g. browse the website	I recommend you start on Craigie today!
2	25 Oct	Sound Laws	Grammar: Terminology; Phonetics and Phonology; Orthography	Paternoster worksheet; Flashcards: Valfells vocab 1
3	1 Nov	Pronouns and Adjectives	Grammar: Morphology; Sound Laws	Mutations worksheet; Flashcards: Valfells vocab 2
4	8 Nov	Weak Verbs	Website: Pronouns; Adjectives	Website: Learning by formula; Flashcards: phrases set 1
5	15 Nov	Nouns and the Article	Grammar: Conjugation; Website: Weak Verbs	Flashcards: verbs set 1
6	22 Nov	Strong Verbs	Website: Nouns	Craigie 1; Nouns worksheet; Flashcards: phrases 6, 7
7	29 Nov	Case and Voice; The Eddic Tradition	Website: Strong Verbs; <i>Reginmál</i> and <i>Fáfnismál</i>	Craigie 3; Strong verb worksheet; Flashcards: verbs set 2
8	6 Dec	The Grammatical Treatises	Website: Case; Excerpt from <i>The First Grammatical Treatise</i>	Craigie 4~5, 13
9	13 Dec	Law	Excerpt from <i>Njáls saga</i>	Craigie 14~16
10	20 Dec	Faith and Power	Excerpt from <i>Íslendingabók</i>	Craigie 18, 23~24
11	10 Jan	The Sagas of Icelanders	Excerpt from <i>Egils saga</i>	Craigie 25~30
12	17 Jan	The Legendary Sagas	Excerpt from <i>Völsunga saga</i>	<i>Eiríks saga víðfjrla</i> chs 1~2
13	24 Jan	Voyages	Excerpt from <i>Eiríks saga rauða</i>	<i>Eiríks saga víðfjrla</i> chs 3~5
14	31 Jan	Wrap-Up and Exam Prep		Prepare for exam
15	14 Feb	EXAM: KWZ 0.602 @ 10:15-11:45		

Diversity

This course is run with the understanding that students bring a variety of backgrounds into the classroom in such domains as socioeconomics, appearance, culture, religion, disability, gender, age, family situation, and sexual identity. With different backgrounds come different needs. If you feel your needs or those of a fellow student require special attention or are being compromised, please feel free to make this known to me by whatever channel seems most appropriate. (For more serious concerns, the Department, Faculty, and University each have their own points of contact as well.) I will treat all requests seriously and with confidentiality, and will seek to make accommodations within my abilities and reason. At the same time, you too owe it to your fellow students to treat them with respect regardless of their background and identity. University should be awesome — for everyone.

References and Further Reading

- Bandle, Oskar, Kurt Braunmüller, Ernst Håkon Jahr, Allan Karker, Hans-Peter Naumann, and Ulf Teleman, eds. *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*. 2 vols. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2002–2005.
- Barnes, Michael. *Grammar*. 3rd ed. A New Introduction to Old Norse. London: Viking Society for Northern Research / University College London, 2008.
- Cleasby, Richard, and Guðbrand Vigfusson [Guðbrandur Vigfússon], eds. *An Icelandic–English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. With a supplement by William A. Craigie. Oxford: Clarendon, 1957.
- Craigie, William A. *Easy Readings in Old Icelandic: With Outlines of Grammar and Vocabularies*. Edinburgh: Hutchen, 1924.
- Degnboll, Helle, et al., eds. *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog / A Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* [in Danish and English]. Copenhagen: Den arnemagnæanske kommission, 1989–. Accessed October 17, 2016. <http://onp.ku.dk>.
- Fritzner, Johan, ed. *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog* [in Bokmål]. Kristiania [Oslo]: Werner, 1867.
- Gordon, E. V. *An Introduction to Old Norse*. 2nd ed. Edited by A. R. Taylor. Oxford: Clarendon, 1956.
- Haugen, Odd Einar. *Grunnbok i norrønt språk* [in Nynorsk]. 4th ed. Oslo: Gyldendal, 2006.
- Heggstad, Leiv, Finn Hødnebo, and Erik Simensen, eds. *Norrøn ordbok* [in Nynorsk]. 5th ed. Oslo: Samlaget, 2008.
- Heusler, Andreas. *Altisländisches Elementarbuch* [in German]. 7th ed. Heidelberg: Winter, 1967.
- Iversen, Ragnvald. *Norrøn grammatikk* [in Bokmål]. 7th ed. Edited by E. F. Halvorsen. Oslo: Aschehoug, 1984.
- Krause, Todd B., and Jonathan Slocum. “Old Norse Online.” Accessed October 17, 2016. <https://lrc.la.utexas.edu/eieol/norol>.
- Langeslag, P. S. *Old Norse Verbs: Grammar and Reference*. Forthcoming.
- Noreen, Adolf. *Altisländische und altnorwegische Grammatik* [in German]. 4th ed. Halle: Niemeyer, 1923.
- Vafells, Sigrid, and James E. Cathey. *Old Icelandic: An Introductory Course*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Zoëga, Geir T., ed. *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*. Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 41. 1910. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004.