

Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

Chair of English and Historical Linguistics and Head of Department
Professor Dr. Manfred Krug



Prof. M. Krug • English Linguistics • Universität Bamberg • 96045 Bamberg

**To all First-Semester Students
of English and American Studies**

of the Winter Term 2020/2021

at the Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

An der Universität 9
D-96045 Bamberg
Telefon: (+49) (0) 951 / 863-2165
Telefax: (+49) (0) 951 / 863-2167
E-Mail: manfred.krug@split.uni-bamberg.de

8 October, 2020

[This welcome address will soon be accessible as a video, too.]

Dear First-Semester Students,

As the current Head of Department, I wish to extend an as warm as possible welcome to all our new students on behalf of my colleagues from the Institute of English and American Studies!

I am giving this short welcome address in English because not all of our new students speak German and I wish to make everyone feel equally and utterly welcome.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 situation, this has to be a virtual video welcome. But rest assured that the University of Bamberg and our department are doing their utmost to make you feel like real students and not just virtual ones!

To alleviate potential fears on your side: Thanks to the combined efforts of staff and students alike, we managed to successfully teach last semester under even worse circumstances, when everything had to be arranged at very short-term notice. We were therefore very positively surprised to see that many classes achieved better average marks than in previous semesters, which we thought of as “normal semesters” until recently.

The good marks may have partly been due to the sad fact that less distraction was available, so students perhaps studied English rather than Bamberg nightlife. Fortunately, the situation is better at the time of this recording than it was in early May, and we very much hope that this will remain true during the winter term. Last semester, I conducted various polls in my English Linguistics Introduction and one predictable result was that many first-semester students felt disconnected from their fellow students.

Most people will agree that good marks are not everything, and that an important part of studying is the exchange with other students – not only on university matters but also on public and private matters. Let me therefore strongly encourage everyone to seize the opportunities we are creating for you to make new contacts so long as they exist! We do not know how the Corona situation will develop and many experts are pessimistic for the coming winter. I therefore strongly encourage you to meet with study groups and fellow presenters in real life as early and as long as you can. And please continue to do so online or on the phone if meeting people in person becomes difficult or even impossible. Social contacts are crucial for everyone's well-being. This is a truism. And here is another one: All first-semester students are in the same situation. So do not hesitate to make the first step – with all due respect and appropriate politeness, of course.

Let me finish on a positive note: There is no reason to be afraid of studying in our department in these times. University life is a formative period for every student and tertiary education is the highest level of education. It is therefore necessarily challenging at times. My colleagues and I, however, will do our utmost to make studying manageable and indeed a fascinating experience for you – if you contribute your part too. We have put materials online, for instance, that were unavailable to previous student generations. This facilitates preparation, understanding and memorization, and it may indeed improve grades. So fear not! Not all is worse than it used to be.

To sum up and conclude: There is no need to worry; but there is every reason to pay close attention to the wealth of information which will be provided (and which you can later also review on the Institute's homepage) in the presentation accompanying the introductory days for first-semester students (aka *Erstsemestereinführungstage*), in the tutorials, and also in the first proper classes. Please make sure that you attend those classes and that you make use of the available sources of information. We lecturers are more than happy to give advice, too, and we are offering special consultation forums this semester. If you take studying English seriously, I am absolutely confident that you will also be able to *enjoy* studying English here.

On behalf of my colleagues, I wish you all the very best for the coming years, and I look forward to meeting many of you soon in my Introduction to English Linguistics.

With all best wishes,

Prof. Manfred Krug

(Head of Department)