Location | NYU London
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Class code | POL.9514.001
Instructor Details | Dr Scott Kelly
Class Details | British Politics. Location to be confirmed.
Prerequisites | None

Class Description
This course provides an introduction to British politics and carries no previous political science requirements. It will provide an introduction to the study of politics, focusing predominately on the British system of government, its institutions, and the historical processes that have shaped modern Britain. The topics included: parties and party systems, parliament, central government, nationalism and devolution and Britain’s membership of the European Union. The course topics will be approached from theoretical and historical perspective in lectures, and applied to analysis of current British politics in class discussions.

The course will be taught in the form of an informal lecture followed by a class discussion, usually initiated by a short presentation by one or more members of the class who will then guide the discussions. There will be a visit to Parliament arranged for one session, during class time, where students will be addressed by a Member of Parliament.

Desired Outcomes
It is expected that students will a good grounding in the institutions of British Government by the end of the course.

Students will be aware of the issues facing the British state, issues of constitution change and British relationship with the European Union.

Students will also be introduced to the main theoretical approaches to the study of politics and government.

Assessment Components
Class participation (including a presentation of 5 – 10 minutes) 30%

Two research essays (due week 7 and week 12) of between 1,500 – 2,000 words each 40% (20%) per paper

Final exam (unseen exam, two essay questions in 1 hour and 10 minutes) 30%

Failure to submit or fulfil any required course component results in failure of the class.
Assessment Expectations

**Grade A:** Indicates excellent work: well-structured and argued, displaying a sophisticated level of understanding and based on a high degree of individual research.

**Grade B:** Indicates good work with some individual research.

**Grade C:** Indicates satisfactory work with little indication of individual thought or reading.

**Grade D:** Indicates passable work based on an adequate understanding of the subject matter.

**Grade F:** Indicates failure with little or no understanding of the subject matter demonstrated.

Required Text(s)


Supplemental Texts(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-L Library)


Internet Research Guidelines

Please speak to Dr. Kelly about the use of internet sources in essays. Newspaper sources will be discussed in the first session. Better quality essays tend to rely more on library based research.

Additional Required Equipment

None

Session 1

**Introduction: The Westminster model in Perspective**

A. Gamble ‘What’s British about British Politics?’ in *Developments 10*

B. Jones: ‘Politics in Perspective’ in Politics UK.

Session 2

**Parliament and the Constitution**

Class discussion topic:
Should the powers of Parliament be strengthened? If so, how?

P. Norton, ‘the House of Commons’; “The House of Lords”, in Politics UK

M. Russell ‘Parliament: A significant restraint on Government’ in Developments 10

**Session 3**

**Political Parties and Ideology in the UK**

Class discussion topic:

Are there significant policy differences between the major political parties in Britain?

Part 2: ‘Defining the Political World’, Politics UK

M. Kenny ‘Ideological politics and the party system’ in Developments 10


P. Cowley ‘Political recruitment and the political class’ in Developments 10

**Session 4**

**The Myth and Reality of Cabinet Government**

Class discussion topic:

Is the office of a Prime Ministers more powerful than that of a President (within their respective polities)

P. Norton: ‘The Core Executive: Prime Minister and Cabinet’ Politics UK

B. Yong and T. Bale ‘Britain’s Experience of Coalition Government: Continuity and Change’ in Developments 10

**Session 5**

**Ministers and Civil Servants**

Class discussion topic:

Are ministers or civil servants the dominant force in the British policy-making process?

P. Norton, ‘Ministers, departments and civil servants’ in Politics UK

C. Haddon ‘Developments in the Civil Service’ in Developments 10

**Session 6**

**Interest Groups and the Policy-Making Process**

Class discussion topic:

Would British democracy benefit from a growth in lobbying and pressure group activity?

B. Jones, ‘the policy-making process’ in Politics UK

B. Jones, ‘Pressure Groups’ in Politics UK
The Politics of the Constitution

Class discussion topic:

Should the British Constitution be codified?

P. Norton, ‘the Changing Constitution’ in Politics UK

P. Norton, ‘The Crown’ in Politics UK

First Essay due

Britain and the European Union: ‘From Awkward Partner to Brexit’

Class discussion topic:

Why did Britain vote to leave the European Union?

N. Rees, ‘Britain, European Integration and the European Union’, in Politics UK

A. Geddes ‘Britain beyond the European Union’ in Developments 10

The Judiciary and the British State

Class discussion topic:

Should the Courts be able to overturn an Act of Parliament?


Electoral Reform

Class discussion topic:

Does the result of the AV referendum demonstrate that the plurality system of election is right of the UK?

M. Garnett, ‘Elections’, in Politics UK

A. Renwick ‘Voting behavior and electoral outcomes’ in Developments 10

Trip to Parliament (date to be confirmed)
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<tr>
<th>Session 12</th>
<th>Nationalism and Scottish and Welsh devolution</th>
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<td>Class discussion topic:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is devolution likely to lead to the break-up of the United Kingdom?</td>
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<td>R. Deacon, ‘Devolution’ in Politics UK</td>
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<td>C. Jeffery ‘The United Kingdom after the Scottish Referendum’ in Developments 10</td>
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**Second Essay due**

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<th>Session 13</th>
<th>Nationalism and Northern Ireland</th>
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<td>Class discussion topic:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can democracy work in divided societies like Northern Ireland?</td>
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<td>R. Deacon, ‘Devolution’ in Politics UK</td>
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<th>Session 14</th>
<th>Revision Session: The end of the Westminster model?</th>
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<td>Class discussion:</td>
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<td>Review of the course</td>
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<th>Session 15</th>
<th>Final Exam</th>
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| Classroom Etiquette | Mobile phones should be set on silent and not used in class except in emergencies Laptops can only be used for taking notes during lectures and for presentations. |

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<th>Required Co-curricular Activities</th>
<th>There will be a trip to the Houses of Parliament during class time. Students will be addressed by a Member of Parliament about the role of an MP in the British Parliamentary system.</th>
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<td>Estimated Travel Costs</td>
<td>Students will expected to find their own way to Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suggested Co-curricular Activities</td>
<td>Visits to the Royal Courts of Justice and the new Supreme Court are recommended. The London School of Economics runs a series of free evening lectures every term, often given by leading politicians.</td>
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Your Instructor

Dr Scott Kelly lectures in British Politics at NYU and advises on public policy in Westminster. He is the author of The Myth of Mr Butskell: the Politics of British Economic Policy 1950-55 (ashgate, 2002) and of various academic articles and policy papers. He is also a research fellow at the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS).

NYU GLOBAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Policies and procedures for Global Academic Centres, including policies on academic integrity and the Study Away Standard, can be found here: https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/student-services.html

Absences: Key information on NYU London’s absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found here: http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html

NYU London work submission policies can be found here: http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html

Classroom conduct: Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services.

Please refer to the NYU London Disruptive Student Behaviour Policy at https://goo.gl/Nvt5Vu for examples of disruptive behaviour and guidelines for response and enforcement.