

# POL-UA9514L01, British Politics

NYU London

## Instructor Information

- TBA

## Course Information

- Tuesday 1 – 4pm
- Rm 105

## Course Overview and Goals

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.

### Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- It is expected that students will have 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

## Course Requirements

### Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to these assessment components:

<b>Assignments/ Activities</b>	<b>Description of Assignment</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>	<b>Due</b>
Class participation including formal presentation	Students should make informed contributions to class discussions and will each make a formal presentation of between 5 and 10 minutes	30%	
Essay 1	Research essay of between 1,500 and 2,000 words (due session 7)	20%	
Essay 2	Research essay of between 1,500 and 2,000 words (due session 12)	20%	
Final Exam	Unseen paper, two essays answers in 1 hour and 10 minutes	30%	

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class

## Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>A</b>	Example: 93.5% and higher	Indicates excellent work: well-structured and argued, displaying a sophisticated level of understanding and based on a high degree of individual research.
<b>B</b>	Example: 82.5% - 87.49%	Indicates good work with high level of understanding and some individual research.
<b>C</b>	Example: 72.5% - 77.49%	Indicates satisfactory work with little indication of individual thought or reading.
<b>D</b>	Example: 62.5% - 67.49%	Indicates passable work based on an adequate understanding of the subject matter.
<b>F</b>	Example: 59.99% and lower	Indicates failure with little or no understanding of the subject matter demonstrated

## Course Materials

## Required Textbooks & Materials

- B. Jones, P. Norton & O. Daddow: *Politics UK*, London, Pearson Education Ltd, 2018, Ninth edition ISBN-10: 1138685089
- R. Heffernan, C. Hay, M. Russell & P. Cowley (eds.), *Developments in British Politics 10*, Palgrave, 2016, tenth edition, ISBN: 978-1-137-49474-0

## Optional Textbooks & Materials

- I. Bache, S. Bulmer, S. George, O. Parker, *Politics in the European Union*, 4th edition, OUP, Oxford, 2014, ISBN: 0199689660.
- P. Norton, *The British Polity*, Prentice Hall, 2010 ISBN: 0321216660
- V. Bogdanor, *The New British Constitution*, Hart, 2009 ISBN: 9781841136714
- T. Bingham, *The Rule of Law*, Penguin, 2010 ISBN 978-0-141-03453-9
- A. Blick and G. Jones, *Premiership: The development, nature and power of The British Prime Minister*, Imprint Academic, 2010 ISBN: 9781845401689

## Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **NYUL Library Collection:** [Senate House Library](http://catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk) (catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

## Course Schedule

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1:	<b>Introduction: The Westminster model in Perspective</b>	A. Gamble 'What's British about British Politics?' in <i>Developments 10</i> B. Jones 'The changing context of UK politics' in <i>Politics UK</i>	
Session 2:	<b>Parliament:</b>  Class discussion topic:  Should the powers of Parliament be strengthened? If so, how?	P. Norton, 'The House of Commons at work, chapter 16 from <i>Politics UK</i> P. Norton, 'The House of Commons under pressure', chapter 17 from <i>Politics UK</i> P. Norton, 'The House of Lords', chapter 18 from <i>Politics UK</i> M. Russell 'Parliament: A significant restraint on Government' in <i>Developments 10</i>	

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 3:	<p><b>The Politics of the Constitution</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic:</p> <p>Should the British Constitution be codified?</p>	<p>P. Norton, 'the Changing Constitution' chapter 14 in <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p>P. Norton, 'The Crown' chapter 15 in <i>Politics UK</i></p>	
Session 4:	<p><b>Political Parties and Ideology in the UK</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic:</p> <p>Are there significant policy differences between the major political parties in Britain?</p>	<p>B. Jones, 'Defining the political world' chapters 4 -7 in <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p>M. Kenny 'Ideological politics and the party system' in <i>Developments 10</i></p> <p>P. Webb 'The Party System: turbulent multi-partyism or Duopolistic Competition? In <i>Developments 10</i></p> <p>P. Cowley 'Political recruitment and the political class' in <i>Developments 10</i></p>	
Session 5:	<p><b>The Myth and Reality of Cabinet Government</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic:</p> <p>Is the office of a Prime Ministers more powerful than that of a President (within their respective polities)</p>	<p>P. Norton: 'The Core Executive: Prime Minister and Cabinet', chapter 19 in <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p><i>B. Yong and T. Bale 'Britain's Experience of Coalition Government: Continuity and Change' in Developments 10</i></p>	
Session 6:	<p><b>Ministers and Civil Servants</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic:</p> <p>Are ministers or civil servants the dominant force in</p>	<p>P. Norton, 'Ministers, departments and civil servants' chapter 20 in <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p>C. Haddon 'Developments in the Civil Service' in <i>Developments 10</i></p>	

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
	the British policy-making process?		
Session 7:	<p><b>Interest Groups and the Policy-Making Process</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic: Would British democracy benefit from a growth in lobbying and pressure group activity?</p>	<p>B. Jones, 'the policy-making process' chapter 23 in <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p>B. Jones, 'Pressure Groups' chapter 11 in <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p>M. Grasso 'Political Participation' in <i>Developments 10</i></p>	First essay due.
Session 8:	<p><b>Britain and the European Union: 'From Awkward Partner to Brexit'</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic: Why did Britain vote to leave the European Union?</p>	<p>M. Holmes, 'Britain and the EU', chapter 28 from <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p>A. Geddes 'Britain beyond the European Union' in <i>Developments 10</i></p>	
Session 9	<p><b>The Judiciary and the British State</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic: Should the Courts be able to overturn an Act of Parliament?</p>	<p>P. Norton, 'The Judiciary', chapter 22 in <i>Politics UK</i></p>	
Session 10:	<p><b>Electoral Reform</b></p> <p>Class discussion topic:</p>	<p>M. Garnett, 'Elections', in <i>Politics UK</i></p> <p>A. Renwick 'Voting behavior and electoral outcomes' in <i>Developments 10</i></p>	

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
	Does the result of the AV referendum demonstrate that the plurality system of election is right for the UK?		
Session 11	<b>Trip to Parliament (date to be confirmed)</b>		
Session 12:	<b>Nationalism and Scottish and Welsh devolution</b>  Class discussion topic:  Is devolution likely to lead to the break-up of the United Kingdom?	R. Deacon, 'Devolution' chapter 13 in <i>Politics UK</i>  C. Jeffery 'The United Kingdom after the Scottish Referendum' in <i>Developments 10</i>	Second essay due.
Session 13:	<b>Nationalism and Northern Ireland</b>  Class discussion topic:  Can democracy work in divided societies like Northern Ireland?	R. Deacon, 'Devolution' chapter 13 in <i>Politics UK</i>	
Session 14:	<b>Revision Session: The end of the Westminster model?</b>  Class discussion:  Review of the course		

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Final Assessment:	Final exam		

## Co-Curricular Activities

- 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.
- 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.

## Classroom Etiquette

- Mobile phones should be set on silent and not used in class except in emergencies
- Laptops must only be used for taking notes during lectures and for presentations.

## NYUL Academic Policies

### Attendance and Tardiness

- Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

### Assignments, Plagiarism, and Late Work

- You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL [website](https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html) (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on [the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website](https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html) for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.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 Disruptive](#)

[Student Behavior Policy](#) for examples of disruptive behavior and guidelines for response and enforcement.

## **Disability Disclosure Statement**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

## **Instructor Bio**

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. Most recently, he has written two policy papers for the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI).