

PO206-15 Politics in the United Kingdom

20/21

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Muireann O'Dwyer

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This is a module about politics and power in the United Kingdom. It has perhaps never been more important, or exciting, to deepen our understanding of politics in the UK. Recent years have seen an upheaval in the major political parties, a major financial crisis and the deployment of austerity policies, an increased use in referendums to address major constitutional questions, and revived protest politics on both the left and the right. This module takes a systematic approach to understand all of these changes, combining both historical and comparative lenses to illuminate contemporary UK politics.

Module aims

The first aim of this module is to provide you with an understanding of Politics as they are conducted within the UK. The intention is to move beyond journalistic or narrowly descriptive accounts of politics in the UK towards an understanding of political processes which involves evaluation and explanation. You will be expected to familiarise yourself with some necessary elements of institutional and historical fact but, what is more important, you will be expected to acquire the skill necessary to evaluate rival explanatory accounts. The essence of success in the module is to be measured by your awareness of rival accounts and your ability to judge between

them. Secondly, you will develop a level of understanding of comparative politics, including an appreciation of the methodology of comparison and its usefulness in understanding politics in a single state.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Introduction: Module Information, and What is the Westminster System?

Week 2: Consensus or Decline: The Post War Settlement

Week 3: Crisis, What Crisis?

Week 4: Week 4 Thatcher and Thatcherism

Week 5: New Labour

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Crashes, Coalitions, and Conservative Governments

Week 8: Brexit means...?

Week 9: Devolution and the State of the Union

Week 10: Race and Class in UK Politics

Week 11: Gender and Sexuality in UK Politics

Week 12: Voters and Elections in UK Politics

Week 13: Parties and Party Systems

Week 14: The Core Executive in UK Politics

Week 15: Parliament and The Policy Process

Week 16: Reading Week

Week 17: Avenues of Influence – Pressure Groups, The Media and Lobbying

Week 18: Globalisation, Europe and the United Kingdom

Week 19: Austerity and Inequality in the United Kingdom

Week 20: Debates in UK Foreign Policy

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the constitutional apparatus of UK politics
- Show an awareness of rival interpretations of the current state of politics in the UK
- Show an ability to examine the politics of the UK within a comparative context
- Show an awareness of the most important political constraints affecting the conduct of UK government in a range of policy sectors
- Show an appreciation of the extent to which UK politics are affected by external economic and political constraints
- Show an understanding of the role played by gender, class and race in the shaping of politics of the UK

Indicative reading list

Core Textbooks

British politics

Book by Simon Griffiths; Robert Leach; Robert Leach 2018

Politics UK

Book by Bill Jones; Philip Norton; Oliver Daddow 2018

Developments in British politics 10

Book edited by Richard Heffernan; Colin Hay; Meg Russell; Philip Cowley 2016

Politics and Governance in the UK

Book by Michael Moran 2015

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

TBC

Transferable skills

Communication skills, including both written and oral presentation skills

Lateral thinking skills

Skills in the distillation and application of complex information and ideas

Critical thinking

Analytical skills

Independent research skills

Problem solving

Time management

Information Technology

Skills in academic practice

Awareness of, and sensitivity to, diversity

Decision making

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	8 sessions of 1 hour (5%)
Private study	133 hours (89%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

TBC

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
3000 Word Essay Assessment	100%		Yes (extension)

Feedback on assessment

Feedback form provided via Tabula; optional verbal consultation

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 2 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics