

<p><b>Course Title:</b> Contemporary England</p>
<p><b>Instructor:</b> Justin J. Lorentzen</p>
<p><b>Instructor Contact Details</b></p> <p><b>Email:</b> johanlorpheejus@aol.com</p> <p><b>Contact phone number:</b> TBC</p> <p><b>Office hours/office location:</b> By Appointment</p>
<p><b>Course Description:</b></p> <p>Britain is at a crossroads politically, socially and culturally. This course attempts to come to terms with the legacy of Britain's imperial past and simultaneously analysing contemporary Britain in the light of the challenges that the country faces from a variety of political, economic and cultural sources.</p> <p>Key features for analysis will include: Britain's traditional political institutions and the process of reform; the importance of social class, race and ethnicity; 'popular culture' v 'high culture'. In addition, understanding the <i>Urban</i> experience will play a central role in the course.</p>
<p><b>Course Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide students with a broad understanding of contemporary British social processes;</li> <li>• To offer students a framework with which to analyse and reflect on their experience of 'cultural difference'.</li> <li>• To enable students to actively engage in the social ecology of everyday life</li> </ul>
<p><b>Course Learning Outcomes:</b> Ultimately, the course should provide students with a series of critical perspectives that will enable them to analyse, criticise, empathise and celebrate contemporary Britain.</p>
<p><b>Required Text(s):</b></p> <p>Reading will be provided throughout the course, however you may find the following text Useful:</p> <p>Lynch, Phillip and Fairclough, Paul <b>UK Government and Politics</b>, Phillip Allan Updates 2011</p> <p>Heffernan Richard (et al) <b>Developments in British Politics</b>, Macmillan 2011</p> <p>Gamble, Andrew (Editor} Wright, Tony (Editor} <b>Britishness: Perspectives on the British Question ngman 1997</b> (Political Quarterly Monograph Series) Wiley- Blackwell 2009</p>

Storry, Mike (ed) **British Cultural Identities**, Routledge 2006.

Kingdon, John, **Governments and Politics in Britain: An Introduction**. Cambridge: Polity Press 2003

Pimlott, Ben, **The Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth II**. London: Harper Collins 1996

Gamble, Andrew (Editor) Wright, Tony (Editor) **Britishness: Perspectives on the British Question** (Political Quarterly Monograph Series) Wiley- Blackwell 2009.

Miller, David, **Citizenship and National Identity**. Malden Mass: Polity Press 2000

Smith, Anthony D, **Myths and Memories of Nation**. Oxford/New York: OUP 1999 Kennedy-Pipe, Caroline, **The Origin of the Present Troubles in Northern Ireland**. London/NY: Lo

**Additional/Recommended Readings:**

Ignatieff, Michael, **Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism**. London: BBC Books 1993

Gilroy, Paul **After Empire**. London: Routledge 2004

Adonis, Andrew & Pollard Stephen, **A Class Act: The Myth of Britain's Classless Society**. London: Penguin 1998

Marwick, Arthur, **Culture in Britain since 1945**. Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1991

Hewison, Robert, **Culture and Consensus: England, Art and Politics since 1940**. London: Methuen 1997

Young, Jock, **The Exclusive Society: Social Exclusion, Crime and Difference in Late Modernity**. London: Sage

**Instructional Methods: Lectures, presentations and seminar style discussion.**

**Week-by-Week Class Plan:**

**Introduction to the British Political System**

**Class 1**

The role of the Monarchy; 'The Diana Effect'; The Commons; The Lords and Reform.

**Class 2**

Britain's Unwritten Constitution; The Electoral System and Political Parties. Monarchy, Politics and Newspaper Culture. The Question of National Identity

**Class 3**

The Issue of National Identity; What Does it Mean to be British? Excerpt from the film **Trainspotting** (1996).

#### Class 4

The Different Ways that Identity is Negotiated in Culture and Society. Film Showing: **Hardeep Singh does Race** (Channel 4, 2005)

#### Ireland: Nation or Province?

#### Class 5

The History of the 'Troubles' with Reference to Religion and the clash of National Identities.

#### Class 6

The Prospects for Peace. Division and Commonality.

#### The Diaspora. Britain and Multi-Culturalism

#### Class 7

A (Dis)United Kingdom? The North/South Divide and the 'Celtic Fringe'. Devolution or Independence? The Scottish and Welsh Nationalisms.

#### Class 8

Post-War Immigration and Multiculturalism; The Diaspora experience.

#### Investigating the City - Contemporary London

#### Class 9

Understanding the social ecology of the city. The city as text, and the fluidity of personal identities. A plastic city (Raban)?

#### Class 10

London and the Mythologies of Transgression. The concept of **Psychogeography**. Historical Examination of TWO defining urban myths. The '**Jack the Ripper**' case and the **Kray Twins** as metaphors of East/West social divisions. The continuities of class, criminality and social exclusion, and political corruption. **Occult London**. The past and modern myths. **The Sherlock Holms affect. Heritage or Melancholia**  
Afternoon walking tour of London's East End

#### Social Class and the Uses of Sub-Culture

#### Class 11

Historically rooted roles of Class in 'English' Society, the Church, Army, Public Schools. *The Establishment*. Excerpts from *Little Britain* (BBC).

#### Class 12

Youth and Popular Culture. Music, Fashion, Sub-culture and Style.

Field Trips to be confirmed.

### Assignments and Due Dates:

Mid-term Paper

**Write a paper (2,000 words) using ONE of the following titles:**

**1. "The British Constitution is *unwritten and unknowable*" (Kingdom)**

Discuss in relation the major sources of the British Constitution paying particular attention to the role of **Convention and Royal Prerogative.**

**2. Assess the arguments for and against the abolition of the monarchy.**

**3. Critically outline the major features of the British Parliamentary System (Commons, Lords, Monarchy).**

### Possible Co-curricular Activities and Tentative Dates:

Trip to Parliament.

### Assessment Plan:

- Attendance and Participation: 20%
- 

### Academic Integrity:

By enrolling at FIE, you have joined an academic community and you are expected and required to act honestly regarding the work you submit for assessment in your courses. Academic integrity is closely related to the concept of good academic practice.

Any attempts to Cheat; Fabricate; Plagiarise; Collaborate without Authorisation; Participate in Academically Dishonest Activities; and/or Facilitate Academic Dishonesty will be viewed as a breach of this regulation.

Most students do not have any problems understanding the rules and expectations about acting honestly at university. If you have any questions you must talk to your faculty or a member of FIE's Academic Team.

### FIE Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance is essential in order to achieve a passing grade in a course. A class constitutes lectures, student presentations, discussions, seminars, field visits, tests, and examinations. In addition, **under UK Border Agency regulations class attendance is mandatory.**

In addition to physical presence in class, a student's class **participation score** is based on the mastery of assigned course readings as reflected in a consistent, valid contribution to class discussions, in-class exercises, and in asking questions that enrich the on-going discourse. Occasional participation will have a negative impact on a student's participation score.

**Class attendance is formally recorded and incorporated into a student's final grade.**

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class. Any student arriving late to class by five minutes or more will be marked absent for that session, unless the tardiness is excusable. (Note that commute time from a residence hall/class/placement site is not usually a valid excuse.)

In the event of an anticipated absence, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the faculty member in advance to request approval. Absence from class does not relieve a student of responsibility for assignments. Unexcused absences/assignments will be appropriately reflected in grading. Class absences are deemed excused at the discretion of the faculty member and may require documentation.

An excused absence or an excused reason for being late to class is any documented emergency and/or acute illness or injury directly involving the student. **Unexplained absence is not permitted.**

**FIE Grading Rubric:**

Letter Grades	Knowledge & Content	Methodology & Structure, Language & Style	Understanding, Reflection & Critique	Integrative thinking & demonstration of experiential learning
<b>A</b>	<p>Interesting topic handled with intelligence, originality, and depth; wealth of supporting material, smoothly integrated into the text; tone is evident and maintained throughout; no factual inaccuracies</p>	<p>Material is unified and well-focused; organization is clear, logical and purposeful throughout the essay; well-chosen examples. Uses sophisticated sentences effectively; usually chooses words aptly; observes conventions of written English and manuscript format; makes few minor or technical errors</p>	<p>Well-chosen examples; persuasive reasoning used to develop and support thesis consistently: uses quotations and citations effectively; causal connections between ideas are evident</p>	<p>Gives full insight into the nature of an event, experience, or artefact; achieves complete integration of knowledge from diverse disciplines to interpret an issue. Shows clear understanding of cultural impact through appropriate examples</p>
<b>B</b>	<p>Content is above average; worthwhile topic; satisfactory depth of development; supporting details for the thesis and topic sentences are specific, concrete, and plentiful; has only minor factual inaccuracies</p>	<p>Material is unified and well-focused; pattern of organization is clear, logical, and well executed; makes an effort to organize paragraphs topically. Some mechanical difficulties or stylistic problems; may make occasional problematic word choices or awkward syntax errors; a few spelling or punctuation errors or cliché; usually presents quotations effectively</p>	<p>Pursues thesis consistently: develops a main argument with clear major points and appropriate textual evidence and supporting detail; makes an effort to organize paragraphs topically</p>	<p>Gives some insights into the nature of an event, experience, or artefact; achieves partial integration of knowledge from diverse disciplines to interpret an issue; some understanding of cultural impact through appropriate examples</p>
<b>C</b>	<p>Worthwhile topic; supporting material for thesis and topic sentences is general and abstract rather than specific and concrete; most information is correct</p>	<p>Organization is clear, logical, and coherent; some ideas unsupported; fails to integrate quotations appropriately. More frequent wordiness; several unclear or awkward sentences; imprecise use of words or over-reliance on passive voice; one or two major grammatical errors</p>	<p>Only partially develops the argument; shallow analysis; some ideas and generalizations undeveloped or unsupported; makes limited use of textual evidence; fails to integrate quotations appropriately</p>	<p>Able to explain to a limited extent, the quality of a performance, event, or artefact; gives few insights into event, experience; discusses few qualities of an experience; a limited understanding of cultural impact with few examples</p>
<b>D</b>	<p>Trivial subject; very few supporting details for the thesis and topic sentences; has some correct &amp; incorrect information</p>	<p>Not logically organized; digresses from one topic to another; no clear organizational pattern. Some major grammatical or proofreading errors (subject-verb agreement; sentence fragments);</p>	<p>Frequently only narrates; digresses from one topic to another without developing ideas or terms; makes insufficient or awkward use of textual evidence</p>	<p>Little integration of experience and narrative; limited insight of issues and insufficient understanding of cultural impact</p>

		language marred by clichés		
<b>F</b>	Consists of unsupported generalities and/or the repetition of commonplace ideas; lacks originality and insight; information is inaccurate or absent	Does not follow the instructions; rambling, disorganized and incoherent. Numerous grammatical errors	Little or no development; may list incorrect facts or misinformation; uses no quotations or fails to cite sources or plagiarizes	Little or no integration experience and narrative; lack of insight and fails to understand cultural impact

**Late Submission of Written Work:**

Written work may be submitted later than the due date only with express permission from the faculty. Credit is not given for work received late, except in exceptional circumstances of personal illness or similar (which must be made known to FIE at the time). Documentation of exceptional circumstances from a third party, such as a doctor's note will be required. Any extensions made beyond the last class meeting must be committed to writing and include information on the exceptional circumstances that require the extension, the nature of work yet to be submitted, and the date by which the work will be received. If said work is not received by the agreed extension date, barring further exceptional circumstances, the work will not be given credit.

**Disability/Special Needs Statement:**

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability/special need should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please ensure you have provided FIE with documents that establish the special accommodations made for you at your home institution.

**Writing/Language Support**

At FIE we pride ourselves on our strong academics, but the UK way may be a little different from what you are used to. For this reason, we offer the Writing Support Tutor (WST) programme. Some people think WSTs only provide assistance for "poor" writers or for whom English is not the first language, but all writers, from beginners to professionals, profit from having other people review their work. No matter your level of writing expertise, FIE's WSTs help with all phases of the writing process. In addition, FIE allows the use of a foreign language/English dictionary in exam situations for students where English is not their primary language UNLESS the use of the dictionary would give the student a significant advantage (e.g. where the exam is aimed at getting the students to define terms that might be found in the dictionary).

For an appointments email [writingsupport@fie.org.uk](mailto:writingsupport@fie.org.uk). More information on WST support is available online at [www.fie.org.uk/student\\_center/london\\_students/writer](http://www.fie.org.uk/student_center/london_students/writer)