



Study abroad.

## **SYLLABUS**

### **BRITAIN TODAY: ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES**

**Instructors: Martin Upham and Judy Dobbs**

**Fall 2011**

**Contact Hrs: 40**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**LONDON, ENGLAND (ILACA)**

### **EXPECTATIONS AND OBJECTS**

Britain Today provides a context for your study options; equips you with tools to make sense of Britain's past, its politics and culture; and offers you a broader canvass to evaluate your British experience. There are two blocks: the British Present and the British Past. Topics are approached via class meetings or visits in which we exploit London's matchless resources as a world city which is also a centre of government.

While there is a formal structure to the course we will not live in isolation from the world outside. Events will illustrate or *contradict* what has been discussed in class: you are encouraged to bring your thoughts on these into class discussions. If you put your energy into this class and follow, systematically, the course of study and reading you can expect to go back home with a good general understanding of Britain, its character, the paramount influences upon it, even a better sense of the extent to which its history is also United States history.

DON'T FORGET THAT EVERY STUDY VISIT GIVES YOU OPPORTUNITIES FIRST TO MAKE YOUR OWN NOTES AND SECOND TO COLLECT MATERIAL: ALWAYS CARRY A NOTEBOOK.

### **CLASS TIMETABLE**

In the first half of the semester we will normally meet on Tuesdays from 9.30am to 10.30am and Thursdays from 3.30pm till 5.30pm, (occasionally for longer). In the second half we will start the Tuesday class at 9.00am and the Thursday class at 4.30pm. If there is an excursion the class may meet on site: make sure you know in advance if this is to be the case. Every class is mandatory. *Absence without good reason will affect your grade.*

Date	Activity	Current Events
<b>BLOCK ONE</b>	<b>The British Present (with Martin Upham)</b>	
Thursday 8 September 3.30 - 5.30 pm	<b>Introduction to course</b> <b>Britain and its island status – the first Millennium</b> <b>Study Visit: Rooms 41, 49, 50 of the British Museum</b> <b>(Iron Age, Romano-British, Saxon objects)</b> <u>Take a notebook</u>	Parliament returns from summer recess for two weeks from 5 September
Tuesday 13 September 9.30 - 10.30 am	<b>The Norman Conquest and its consequences</b> <b>DVD: The Bayeux Tapestry</b>	
Thursday 15 September 3.30 – 5.30 pm	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>Britain's political parties and the new coalition government</b>	Parliament adjourns for conference season
Tuesday 20 September 9.30 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>Nationality: Scotland – handouts</b>	
Wednesday 21 – Friday 23 September <b>Meet Kings Cross Main Line station at 8.00am</b>	<b>Edinburgh three-day excursion</b> <b>(Details available separately)</b>	
Tuesday 27 September 9.30 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>Nationality: Scotland - debrief</b>	Labour Party conference week.
Thursday 29 September 3.30 – 5.30 pm	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>What's left of Parliamentary sovereignty?</b> <b>Assignment One in</b>	
Tuesday 4 October 9.30 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>What's left of Parliamentary sovereignty? - continued</b>	Conservative Party conference week.
Thursday 6 October 3.30 – 5.30 pm	<b>No class.</b> <b>All students on Stratford two-day excursion which includes Holy Trinity church</b>	
Monday 10 October		Parliament resumes after party conference season. Prime Minister's Questions weekly on Wednesdays at noon from now on.
Tuesday 11 October 9.30 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>Local government: the London Mayor</b>	
Wednesday 12 October <b>10 am City Hall</b>	<b>Morning visit to City Hall for Mayor of London's Question Time</b> (replaces European Union class)	
Thursday 13 October 3.30 – 5.30 pm	<b>No class</b> European Union class held at this time	
	<b>Mid-term</b>	

Tuesday 25 October 9.30 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>British government and constitution III:</b> <b>Houses of Parliament</b>	
Thursday 27 October 3.30 – 5.30 pm	<b>Study visit to House of Commons chamber for a live debate (subject to be announced).</b> <b>Assignment Two in</b>	
Friday 28 October <b>ALL DAY</b>	<b>Study visit to Bath</b> (Roman, Medieval and Georgian city)	
<b>BLOCK TWO</b>	<b>The British Past (with Judy Dobbs)</b>	
Tuesday 1 November 9.00 – 10.30am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>The English Reformation:</b>	
Thursday 3 November	<b>No class because of tomorrow's visit</b>	
Friday 4 November <b>ALL DAY</b>	<b>Day Visit to Hampton Court Palace (Medieval and Renaissance)</b>	
Saturday 5 November		<b>Bonfire night (aka Guy Fawkes Day) celebrates discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, 5 November 1605)</b>
Tuesday 8 November 9.00 – 10.30am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>The Crisis of the 17<sup>th</sup> century</b>	
Thursday 10 November <b>Gallery entrance at time to be announced</b>	<b>The Crisis of the 17<sup>th</sup> century:</b> Visit to the Stuart portraits at the National Portrait Gallery	<b>Remembrance events, originating from anniversary of end of World War I (11 November) around this time</b>
Tuesday 15 November 9.00 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>The Rise of the British Empire in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries</b> <b>Assignment Three in</b>	
Thursday 17 November <b>Main entrance, 4.15pm</b>	<b>The Rise of the British Empire in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries</b> Study Visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum to see exhibits related to empire	
Friday 18 November	<b>Study Visit to Oxford</b> (Saxon, Medieval and Modern City)	
Tuesday 22 November 9.00 - 10.30 am	<b>Victorian Values:</b> some social aspects of 19 <sup>th</sup> century Britain	
Thursday 24 November 4.30 – 6.00 pm	<b>Thanksgiving – no class</b>	
Tuesday 29 November 9.00 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>20<sup>th</sup> century Britain: World War II and the Home Front</b>	
Thursday 1 December 4.30 – 6.00 pm <b>Westminster Tube Barriers</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> century Britain: World War II and the Home Front</b> Study visit to the Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms	

Tuesday 6 December 9.00 - 10.30 am	<b>Class meeting</b> <b>Youth Culture in the 1960s and the 1970s</b>	
Thursday 8 December 4.30 – 6.00 pm	<b>End of term activity</b> <b><u>Assignment Four in</u></b>	

### Sources

The recommended reading refers to the two study blocks. Sometimes introductions may be found in **A Visitor's Britain**, but beware out-dated chapters. The following books, all of which are in your student library, offer more specialised reading. *Beware random websites.*

### Block One: The British Present

For Britain and its national identities:

N. Ascherson, **Stone Voices: the search for Scotland** (2004)

J. Buchan, **Capital of the Mind** (2003)

J. Davies, **The Making of Wales** (2002)

T. Devine, **The Scottish Nation: 1700-2007** (2008)

D. Stenshouse, **On the Make** (2004)

For British government and constitution

V. Bogdanor, **The New British Constitution**

B Jones, **Politics UK**

M. Upham and P. Tatspaugh, **A Visitor's Britain**, chapter 7

### Websites

[www.directgov.uk](http://www.directgov.uk) (a portal for any aspect of British society – Scotland included)

[www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk) (direct information on politics plus links to the political parties)

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

[www.channel4.com](http://www.channel4.com)

### Television

BBC1 News at 6pm, 10pm; Channel 4 News at 7pm

BBC2 Newsnight (analysis) at 10.30 p.m.

### Radio

The Today Programme, 6.30am-9.00am on BBC Radio 4 (93.5fm).

### Block Two: The British Past

The BBC website (above) has excellent history sources on all the topics below.

**A Visitor's Britain** chapter 12

For the English Reformation

S Brigden, **New Worlds, Lost Worlds**

P Collinson (ed.), **The Sixteenth Century 1485-1603**

E Duffy, **The Stripping of the Altars**

D. MacCullough, **Thomas Cranmer**

H. Mantel, **Wolf Hall**

For the Crisis of the 17<sup>th</sup> century

M. Kishlansky (ed.), **A Monarchy Transformed**

For Empire

L. Colley, **Britons: forging the nation, 1707-1837**,

N. Ferguson, **Empire**,

P. Langford (ed.), **The Eighteenth Century**

For the Victorian Age

C. Mathew (ed.), **The Nineteenth Century**

For war and the 20<sup>th</sup> century

P Clarke, **Hope and Glory: Britain in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Assignment One-Due 4 October

Prepare a report to UK Prime Minister David Cameron which summarises in 1,000 words the state of mind of the Scottish nation, the prospects for an independent Scotland, and your recommendations if he wants to avoid it (25%)

### Assignment Two-Due 27 October

The nineteenth century Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli observed 'England does not love coalitions'. In 1000 words, does the first 18 months of Britain's first coalition government for many years vindicate his view? (25%)

### Assignment Three-Due 15 November

What do you think Queen Mary II might have said to her Dutch husband William III to help him understand his new English kingdom after the Glorious Revolution of 1688? In 1,000 words refer briefly to religion, politics and social issues. (25%)

### Assignment Four- Due 8 December

Choose one or two objects in the V&A or the Cabinet War Rooms and write 1000 words on their significance. If you choose the V&A, explain how your objects reflect attitudes of either British empire builders or the people who became part of the British empire. If you choose the Cabinet War Rooms, then your choice will reflect the importance of the Home Front during WWII. (25%)

**In all cases your sources will be class meetings, the books and websites on this syllabus, your observations on study visits and the news. Don't forget that the study visits are designed to illustrate course topics and thus are sources which can be referred to.**

**The standards for this course will not be lower than at home. An A will be awarded only for the best quality work; poor work will be appropriately graded. Please conform to the rudiments of scholarship by giving references in the style which is usual at your home school. Include a bibliography. USE THE RESOURCES WHICH ARE GIVEN TO YOU, ESPECIALLY THE VISITS YOU MAKE; IF IN DOUBT – ASK Martin or Judy. There is no need to use encyclopaediae.**