

PS410–002: British Politics

University of Kentucky

Fall 2023

MWF 10:00-10:50am, Whitehall Classroom Building 303

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Office hours: T/R: 9:30-11:30am; W: 11:00-12:00pm (or by appointment)

Course description: This course will introduce you to British politics. This course will cover a range of topics central to the structure and substance of politics in the United Kingdom: the social and political context, the basic institutions of government, public opinion and participation, interest groups, and public policy. To facilitate learning about these topics as they relate to the UK, we will examine what the UK shares and what differentiates it from other countries such as the U.S. and other European states. It has two fundamental goals: (1) to introduce students to the major questions in British politics, (2) to acquaint them with the field's best answers to those questions, and (3) to give them the tools to think critically about the answers.

Grades: Your final grade will be a function of the following components:

1. Exams (25% each)
2. Puzzle/hypothesis weekly assignment (20% total)
3. Hypothesis Development Assignments (10%)
4. Class Participation (20%)

Examinations: There will be a mid-term examination and a final examination. Exams will cover both lectures and reading materials. **I do not scale or curve exams. The grade you earn is the grade that you will receive.**

Weekly puzzle/hypothesis assignment: Due at 11:59PM on Friday. **You are required to submit 8 weekly puzzles throughout the semester** on weeks of your choice (except the following occasions: a) The first week of class; b) exam weeks). These assignments consist of typing up a puzzle that occurs to you based on the reading for the assigned topic. One way to begin is to write down a one sentence question (puzzle) prompted by the topic of the week. Then you will turn that question/puzzle into a one-paragraph statement of a relationship that you could test as a topic for comparative politics research.

These questions are intended to improve understanding of the material and inspire discussion, so they should be the most interesting questions or arguments that the student has identified based on

the weeks readings. You may also include questions of clarification if there are areas in the reading that you find difficult to understand. However, keep in mind that I will evaluate the quality of your questions as a critical part of this grade component. So put some thought into these questions and be prepared to have your question presented/asked in front of the entire class.

Hypothesis Development Assignment: For this assignment you will develop a testable hypothesis. In essence, these assignments are more detailed and developed versions of the weekly puzzle/hypothesis assignments. Feel free to ask me whether a potential topic fits these broad requirements. These are to be **3-4 page** assignments (double-spaced, Times Roman 12 point font, 1 margins) in which you a) state a formal hypothesis, b) discuss the types of evidence (i.e., case studies, survey data, etc) you would need to use to test your hypothesis and why, and c) briefly explain why the literature (i.e., readings) leads you to expect the relationship you posit in your hypothesis. Grades will be based on fulfilling all 3 parts of the assignment and on clear, concise, error-free writing, with each part and writing quality weighted equally.

Class Participation: Attendance at lectures is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for a passing grade. Ideal answers to questions on the examinations will express clear knowledge of both the assigned reading materials and the content of the lectures. In addition, the lectures will be used to deliver important class information. I will take attendance at each class, and will incorporate this into the class participation component of your final grade. I also expect active participation in the lectures and the discussion opportunities. Note, if there is a lack of active participation, especially during discussion opportunities, then I will resort to randomly “cold-calling” on students.

Final class grades will be assigned with the following grading scale:

A = 90.0 - 100
B = 80.0 - 89.99
C = 70.0 - 79.99
D = 60.0 - 69.99
E = 0 - 59.99

Please note that you receive the grade that you earned in the course. Therefore, I will **NOT** round grades at the end of the semester.

Readings: There will not always be perfect unity between the course lectures and assigned readings. Thus it will be necessary to attend all lectures and to read the assigned materials in order to be exposed to all of the material that you are responsible for in this course.

The following required text is available at local bookstores (as well as through online sources).

- Jones, Bill, Philip Norton, and Isabelle Hertner. 2022. *Politics UK*. Routledge, London and New York.

Canvas: We will be using Canvas to display grades, submit assigned work, post additional readings, and for announcements.

Other Considerations

- Out of respect for fellow students, each person will refrain from talking, making offensive remarks, and other disruptive behavior during lecture. Cell phones may not be used during class time. Inappropriate classroom behavior may result in the student being requested to leave the classroom.
- The University of Kentucky is committed to our core values of diversity and inclusion, mutual respect and human dignity, and a sense of community (Governing Regulations XIV). We acknowledge and respect the seen and unseen diverse identities and experiences of all members of the university community (<https://www.uky.edu/regs/gr14>). These identities include but are not limited to those based on race, ethnicity, gender identity and expressions, ideas and perspectives, religious and cultural beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ability, and socioeconomic status. We are committed to equity and justice and providing a learning and engaging community in which every member is engaged, heard, and valued.

We strive to rectify and change behavior that is inconsistent with our principles and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. If students encounter such behavior in a course, they are encouraged to speak with the instructor of record and/or the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity. Students may also contact a faculty member within the department, program director, the director of undergraduate or graduate studies, the department chair, any college administrator, or the dean. All of these individuals are mandatory reporters under University policies.

- Academic Integrity–Prohibition on Plagiarism: Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the University may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found on the Academic Ombud page. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Senate Rule 6.3.1 (see current Senate Rules) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or content from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work (including, but not limited to a published article, a book, a website, computer code, or a paper from a friend) without clear attribution.

Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be, except under specific circumstances (e.g. Writing Center review or peer review) allowed by the Instructor of Record or that person's designee. Plagiarism may also include double submission, self-plagiarism, or unauthorized resubmission of one's own work, as defined by the instructor.

Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, except where prohibited by the Instructor of Record (e.g. individual take-home exams). However, the actual work must be done by the student, and the student alone, unless collaboration is allowed by the Instructor of Record (e.g. group projects).

When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content, and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas, which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database will be checked for plagiarism.

- Academic Integrity–Prohibition on Cheating: Cheating is defined by its general usage. It includes, but is not limited to, the wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another on any academic work which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade. The fact that a student could not have benefited from an action is not by itself proof that the action does not constitute cheating. Any question of definition shall be referred to the University Appeals Board.
- Academic Integrity–Prohibition on Falsification/Misuse of Academic Records: Maintaining the integrity, accuracy, and appropriate privacy of student academic records is an essential administrative function of the University and a basic protection of all students. Accordingly, the actual or attempted falsification, theft, misrepresentation or other alteration or misuse of any official academic record of the University, specifically including knowingly having unauthorized access to such records or the unauthorized disclosure of information contained in such records, is a serious academic offense. As used in this context, "academic record" includes all paper and electronic versions of the partial or complete permanent academic record, all official and unofficial academic transcripts, application documents and admission credentials, and all academic record transaction documents. The minimum sanction for falsification, including the omission of information, or attempted falsification or other misuse of academic records as described in this section is suspension for one semester.
- Excused Absences: Senate Rules 5.2.5.2.1 defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: 1. significant illness; 2. death of a family member; 3. trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an educational unit, trips for University classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events; 4. major religious holidays; 5. interviews for graduate/professional school or full-time employment post-graduation; and 6. other

circumstances found to fit “reasonable cause for nonattendance” by the instructor of record. Students should notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible.

If a course syllabus requires specific interactions (e.g., with the instructor or other students), in situations where a student’s total EXCUSED absences exceed 1/5 (or 20%) of the required interactions for the course, the student shall have the right to request and receive a “W,” or the Instructor of Record may award an “I” for the course if the student declines a “W.” (Senate Rules 5.2.5.2.3.1)

If an attendance/interaction policy is not stated in the course syllabus or the policy does not include a penalty to the student, the Instructor cannot penalize the student for any unexcused absences. (Senate Rules 5.2.5.2.3.3)

- Excused Absences and W/I, All Students: If a student has excused absences for more than one-fifth of the required interactions for a course, the student can request a “W.” If the student declines a “W,” the Instructor of Record may award an “I” for the course.

- Excused Absences Due to Military Duties: If a student must be absent for one-fifth or less of the required course interactions (e.g., class meetings) due to military duties, the following procedure apply:

Once a student is aware of a call to duty, the student shall provide a copy of the military orders to the Director of the Veterans Resource Center. The student shall also provide the Director with a list of her/his courses and instructors.

The Director will verify the orders with the appropriate military authority and on behalf of the military student, notify each Instructor of Record via Department Letterhead as to the known extent of the absence.

The Instructor of Record shall not penalize the student’s absence in any way and shall provide accommodations and timeframes so that the student can make up missed assignments, quizzes, and tests in a mutually agreed upon manner.

- Verification of Absences: Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. Senate Rule 5.2.5.2.1 states that faculty have the right to request appropriate verification when students claim an excused absence due to: significant illness; death in the household, trips for classes, trips sponsored by an educational unit and trips for participation related to intercollegiate athletic events; and interviews for full-time job opportunities after graduation and interviews for graduate and professional school. (Appropriate notification of absences due to University-related trips is required prior to the absence when feasible and in no case more than one week after the absence.)
- Religious Observances: Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays. Senate Rules 5.2.5.2.1(4) requires faculty to include any notification requirements within the syllabus. If no requirement is specified, two weeks prior to the absence is reasonable and should not be given any later. Information regarding major religious holidays may be obtained through the Ombud’s website or calling 859-257-3737.
- Make-Up Work: Students missing any graded work due to an excused absence are responsible: for informing the Instructor of Record about their excused absence within one week following

the period of the excused absence (except where prior notification is required); and for making up the missed work. The instructor must give the student an opportunity to make up the work and/or the exams missed due to the excused absence, and shall do so, if feasible, during the semester in which the absence occurred. The instructor shall provide the student with an opportunity to make up the graded work and may not simply calculate the student's grade on the basis of the other course requirements, unless the student agrees in writing. According to SR 5.2.5.2.2, if a student adds a class after the first day of classes and misses graded work, the instructor must provide the student with an opportunity to make up any graded work.

- For academic policy statements on *excused absences*, *religious observances*, *verification of absences*, *Non-Discrimination Statement and Title IX Information*, and more, please see the following UK Senate page: <https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/acadpolicy>.
- Disability Resource Center: If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please inform your instructor as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide your instructor with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. It is located on the corner of Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407. You can reach them via phone at (859) 257-2754, via email (drc@uky.edu) or visit their website (uky.edu/DisabilityResourceCenter). For additional resources with regard to *Bias Incident Support Services*, *Counseling Center*, *Libraries*, *Non-Discrimination / Title IX*, and more, please see: <https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/student-resources>.
- Midterm Grades for Undergraduate Students: Midterm grades will be posted in myUK by the deadline established by the University Senate and published in the Academic Calendar.
- Required Change to Student's Final Exam Time: The Senate Rules provide a student with the right to have a final exam changed when more than two final examinations are scheduled on any one date and when two examinations are scheduled for the same time period. Senate Rule 5.2.4.7 states that "the class with the highest catalog number [should be] rescheduled at another time during the final examination period. In case this highest number is shared by more than one course, the one whose departmental prefix is first alphabetically will be rescheduled. The option to reschedule must be exercised in writing to the appropriate Instructor of Record or his/her designee two weeks prior to the last class meeting."
- GenAI: Because a major focus of this course is on developing your skills and fostering creativity in [writing, argumentation, and critical thinking], you must complete assignments for this course entirely on your own. You may not copy from any online sites (e.g. Course Hero or Chegg) or utilize composition technologies (e.g. ChatGPT or other GenAI software). Work submitted by students all process work, drafts, low stakes writing, final versions, and all other submissions will be generated by the students themselves. For the purpose of this course, any use of these sites or tools will be considered academic misconduct and consequences will follow University policies. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, contact your instructor before submitting any assignments.

Make-up Exam / Late Policy

You are expected to submit work and take exams on time. If work is submitted late, then there will be a 10% deduction in grade for each day late, unless caused by some serious impediment. If there are such impediments, then the expectation is that you email or provide some written documentation to alert me to your situation, where an extension may be offered at my discretion.

Make-up exams will only be given for university-excused absences (see policy on excused absences above). Failing to take a make-up exam at a previously agreed-to time will result in a zero. The make-up exam must be taken within one week of the original test date listed in the syllabus, except under extreme circumstances approved by the instructor. Also, keep in mind that an exam proctored outside of the normal exam time may be of a different format than the original exam.

Class Schedule

We will spend as much time as necessary on each topic for this course. Because I am unable to predict in advance how long each topic will take, the schedule below is only a rough guideline. *I expect that you will have read the assigned readings **before** the class period for which they are assigned. I also reserve the right to announce additional required readings during class meetings.*

Part I: Foundations of the UK

Week 1: Introduction to the UK

- M: Introduction to British Politics
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 1
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 1

Week 2: The UK social, economic, and political context

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 2
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 3
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 3

Week 3: The Constitution

- M: **Labor Day NO CLASS**
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 15
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 15

Week 4: Ideologies and Political Cleavages

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 4
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 4
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 5 & 6

Part II: Links between the People and the Government

Week 5: Elites in the United Kingdom

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 8
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 8
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 9

Week 6: Elections and Voting

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 9
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 9
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 9

Week 7: Media and Politics

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 10
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 10
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 10

Week 8: Political Parties

- Read:
- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 13
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 13
- F: Midterm Review

Part II: Institutions of Government

Week 9: The Crown

- M: **Midterm Exam**
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 16
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 16

Week 10: The House of Commons and Lords

- M: **Fall Break NO CLASS**
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 17
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 18

Week 11: The Executive

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 19
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 20
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 20

Week 12: Devolution and The Judiciary

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 21
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 14
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 23

Part IV: Interest Groups and Public Policy

Week 13: Interest Groups

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 12
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 12
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 12

Week 14: The Policy Making Process

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 24
- W: **Thanksgiving Break NO CLASS**
- F: **Thanksgiving Break NO CLASS**

Week 15: Brexit and the European Union

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 24
- W: *Politics UK*, Chapter 7
- F: *Politics UK*, Chapter 29

Week 16: Social Policy

- M: *Politics UK*, Chapter 26
- W: Final Review
- F: **Reading Day NO CLASS**