

Department of Politics

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL FORM

Please upload this form to the Moodle site for your dissertation, which you can find at
moodle.bbk.ac.uk.

Name:

E-mail address

MSc or MRes programme: MRes Politics

Full-time or part-time? Part-time

Title of proposed dissertation

“Can patterns of cross-party alignment in the House of Commons be explained by a decline in partisanship?”

Description of subject area

- Broadly interested in the nature of political partisanship/loyalty/tribalism and the impact that this has on democracy (e.g. Westminster model is known for being highly adversarial; but do recent examples of cross-party working point towards enduring party system change and a shift towards a more collaborative, consensual style of politics?)
- Looking at examples/patterns/case studies of cross-party working (e.g. cooperation on legislation). Do recent examples demonstrate a decline in partisanship? (i.e. are they *genuine* cross-party initiatives to improve policy, forged from cooperation/consensus, or are they purely tactical?); and if the former, can this be explained by reduced ‘partyness’?
- Could patterns of cross-party alignment be explained by other variables? (e.g. increasing role of Select Committees, increasing homogeneity of MPs’ social backgrounds, wider partisan dealignment/anti-party sentiment amongst the public?)

What scholarly literature will you be examining?

- Have already undertaken a significant amount of reading of secondary literature e.g. key texts on representative democracy, consensus democracy, political parties, party systems, partisanship
- Beginning to focus reading now more on partisanship in the UK/House of Commons *specifically*, especially relevant journal articles

What primary research material might you use?

- Hansard records (e.g. backbench rebellions, votes against the party line, successful opposition PMBs)
- Case studies of cross-party alignment (e.g. cross-party cooperation on legislation)

Have you identified or spoken with a potential supervisor? If so, who?

Yes – Ben Worthy