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