

## JMMZ217 Current Debates in British Politics and on the Constitution

(British Politics, Brexit, and the UK Constitution)

Winter Term 2018

**Instructors:** **Iain McLean** and **Scot Peterson**, Department of Politics & International Relations, Oxford University. Course assistant at Charles University: Jan Váška (jan.vaska@fsv.cuni.cz).

### Requirements:

(exam, 6 ECTS)

1. Full attendance record (exceptions need to be discussed in advance with the instructors or the course assistant), active participation in seminars (20 per cent of final mark)
2. Final essay on topic assigned by instructors. Length 2000 words (+/- 10 per cent). Citations required (recommended standard ISO 690-2). To be sent to Jan Váška by **28 January 2019 (24:00)**. Essays should be submitted in Word, RTF or PDF format (80 per cent of final mark).

### Classification:

<b>91 – 100 %</b>	<b>A – Excellent.</b> The student has shown excellent performance, originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the subject.
<b>81 – 90 %</b>	<b>B – Very Good.</b> The student understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought. Above the average performance, but with some errors.
<b>71 – 80 %</b>	<b>C – Good.</b> Generally sound work with a number of notable errors.
<b>61 – 70 %</b>	<b>D – Satisfactory.</b> The student has shown some understanding of the subject matter, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently original work. Overall good performance with a number of significant errors.
<b>51 – 60 %</b>	<b>E - Sufficient.</b> Acceptable performance with significant drawbacks. Performance meets the minimum requirements.
<b>0 – 50 %</b>	<b>F – Fail.</b> The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter of the course.

### Programme:

All classes are held in Room STAN317 (Staroměstské náměstí 4/1, for instructions how to get to the location see

<https://mapy.cz/zakladni?x=14.4206289&y=50.0869211&z=18&source=addr&id=9108273&q=starom%C4%9Bstsk%C3%A9%20n%C3%A1m%C4%9Bst%C3%AD%204%2F1> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTan0k0yzSA&feature=youtu.be>)

**Lecture 1 (IM).** Monday 22 October, 10:00-12:00

**Two elections, one referendum, and the possible break-up of the United Kingdom**

**Lecture 2 (IM).** Monday 22 October, 14:00-15:45

**More detailed analysis: Brexit and the Irish border**

**Lecture 3 (IM).** Tuesday 23 October, 10:00-12:00

**Federalism in the UK: Brexit and Scotland**

**Lecture 4 (IM).** Tuesday 23 October, 14:00-15:45

**Picking up the pieces in England and Wales**

**Lecture 5 (SP).** Monday 19 November, 10:00-12:00

**Internal Structures of the UK Government: Executive, Parliament and the Courts**

- A. The Cabinet System: How Decisions Are Made?
- B. Legislation: Statutes and Statutory Instruments Implementing Brexit
- C. Judicial Power: Miller and Beyond

**Lecture 6 (SP).** Monday 19 November, 14:00-15:45

**The British Party System: Theory and Practice**

- A. Strong Parties?
- B. Internal Governance and Leadership Elections
- C. National and Devolved Parties

**Lecture 7 (SP).** Tuesday 20 November, 10:00-12:00

**Multiple Choice: How Decisions Are Made**

- A. Electoral Systems
- B. Referendums
- C. A People's Vote or a General Election: Impacts and Implications

**Lecture 8 (SP).** Tuesday 20 November, 14:00-15:45

**Conclusions and General Discussion of Recent Developments**

- A. How Will This All End? Norway (EEA)? Switzerland (EFTA)? Canada (FTA)?
- B. What Changes Might Brexit Make to UK governance?

**Reading list for lectures 1-4: books**

- I. McLean, M. Kenny and A. Paun ed. *Governing England* Oxford University Press for the British Academy 2018 [proof copies]
- I. McLean, chapter in M. Keating ed., *Handbook of Scottish Politics* [Word document]
- I. McLean, J. Gallagher, and G. Lodge, *Scotland's Choices* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 2014. *Edinburgh University Press*.

- R. Ford and M. Goodwin, *Revolt on the right: explaining support for the radical right in Britain* Routledge 2014
- I. McLean *What's wrong with the British Constitution?* Oxford University Press 2012
- P. Lynch, *SNP: the history of the Scottish National Party* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2013 Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press.
- R. Hazell, *Constitutional futures revisited*. Basingstoke: Palgrave 2008.
- R. Hazell, *The English Question*. Manchester University Press, 2006.
- A. Jackson, *The two unions: Ireland, Scotland, and the survival of the United Kingdom, 1707-2007*. Oxford University Press, 2013

#### Reading list for lectures 1-4: government and parliamentary sources

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-governments-preparations-for-a-no-deal-scenario> UK government papers on preparing for Brexit with no deal
- <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/exiting-the-european-union-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/department-sectoral-analyses-17-19/publications/> Landing page for the UK government's 39 sectoral assessments, reluctantly provided to a parliamentary committee.
- <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/en/brexitpublic/brexitstudies.html> the European Parliament's Brexit impact paper
- <https://www.sustainablegrowthcommission.scot/report/> The governing Scottish National Party's growth commission

#### Other online sources

- <http://ggcpp.nuff.ox.ac.uk/index.php/working-papers/> Papers by IM and Jim Gallagher on Brexit problems for Ireland and Scotland.
- <http://constitution-unit.com/>. Blogs on UK constitutional affairs
- <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/>
- <https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk/>. Blogs on politics from our Oxford department.
- Scottish Government, *Scotland's Future: your guide to an independent Scotland* (downloadable from <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/0043/00439021.pdf>)
- British Academy and Royal Society of Edinburgh, *Enlightening the Constitutional Debate*. (2014). Free to download from <http://www.royalsoced.org.uk/cms/files/events/reports/2013-2014/The%20Book.pdf>

#### Reliable news sites

- BBC News: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk> (Free)
- *The Guardian* news: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk> (Free)
- *Daily Telegraph* news: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/> (First few articles free)
- *Scotsman* news: <http://www.scotsman.com/> (Free)
- *Irish Times* news: <http://www.irishtimes.com/> (Free to begin with – for op-eds by Fintan O'Toole on Brexit & Ireland see <https://www.irishtimes.com/profile/fintan-o-toole-7.1010663>)
- *Economist*: <http://www.economist.com/> (charge)
- *Financial Times*: <https://www.ft.com/> (charge)

### UK position papers on Brexit

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/article-50-and-negotiations-with-the-eu>

### Web sources for more detail

- Irish border: <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/brexit-and-the-history-of-policing-the-irish-border>
- Northern Ireland Select Committee:  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmniaf/48/4802.htm>
- Scottish public expenditure: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Economy/GERS>
- Scottish public opinion: <http://whatscotlandthinks.org/>
- Election and referendum results: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics/eu\\_referendum](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics/eu_referendum);  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2015>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/events/scotland-decides>
- 'English votes on English laws':  
<https://www.parliament.uk/about/how/laws/bills/public/english-votes-for-english-laws/>

### Class 5

Start with Rutland, below, as a good introduction. Then move on to Heffernan and Payne. We will discuss priorities for Classes 6–8 in our first session.

- a) Bevir, Mark. 'The Westminster Model, Governance and Judicial Reform' *Parliamentary Affairs* 61 (2008), pp. 559–577
- b) Heffernan, Richard. "Exploring (and Explaining) the British Prime Minister." *British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 7, no. 4 (2005): 605–20.
- c) Payne, Sebastian. "The Supreme Court and the Miller Case: More Reasons Why the UK Needs a Written Constitution." *The Round Table* 107, no. 4 (2018): 441–50.
- d) Rutland, Peter. "Britain." In *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*, edited by Jeffrey Kopstein, Mark Irving Lichbach and Stephen E. Hanson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

### Class 6

- a) Brandenburg, Heinz, and Robert Johns. "The Declining Representativeness of the British Party System, and Why It Matters." *Political Studies* 62, no. 4 (2014): 704–25.
- b) Denham, Andrew. "From Coronations to Close Encounters: Party Leadership Selection in British Politics." [In eng]. *British Politics* 8, no. 2 (2013): 164–80.
- c) Raymond, Chris. "Why British Politics Is Not a Two-Party System." [In eng]. *Political Insight* 7, no. 3 (2016): 28–31.

### Class 7

- a) Ahmed, Amel. "Reading History Forward: The Origins of Electoral Systems in European Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 43, no. 8–9 (2010): 1059–88.
- b) Gifford, Chris. "The United Kingdom's Eurosceptic Political Economy." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 18, no. 4 (2016): 779–94.

- c) Independent Commission on Referendums. "Report." London: University College London, 2018, chapters 1–3.

### **Class 8**

Additional materials to be provided during Class 5, based on recent developments

- a) Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, Charlotte Galpin, and Ben Rosamond. "Performing Brexit: How a Post-Brexit World Is Imagined Outside the United Kingdom." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2017): 573-91.
- b) Curtice, John. "A Question of Culture or Economics? Public Attitudes to the European Union in Britain." *The Political Quarterly* 87, no. 2 (2016): 209-18.

A link to the readings that are not purely web-based can be found here:

<https://1drv.ms/f/s!AmqQIFC-lyKmgrAkQMfHz3Nz4tALZg>

### **Proposed essay topics:**

#### ***Essays for Iain McLean***

1. The UK voted to leave the EU, but the vote in Scotland, London, and Northern Ireland was in favour of remaining in the EU. What happens now?
2. What lessons does the separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1992/3 have for the possible separation of Scotland and the rest of the UK?
3. Is the rise of populist parties in the UK, including UKIP and the Scottish Nationalists, similar to the rise of populist parties in central and southern Europe, or different?
4. Do you expect the 'Brexit' vote to lead to similar votes in other EU member states? If so, which ones, and why?
5. Could the UK become a federation? If so, what lessons are there from other federations (e.g., USA, Germany, the Hapsburg Empire....)
6. In Northern Ireland, Lebanon, and Bosnia, governments have to comprise politicians from different religions. Can this solution to inter-religious conflict be made to work? If so, how?
7. The UK government and the EU negotiators have agreed that freedom of movement across the Irish border will be secured even if there is no Brexit deal. How could this be done?
8. What do think will happen to the UK's nuclear submarines and warheads in Scotland, which the Scottish government is asking to remove?
9. Why do you think most Scottish people voted against independence in 2014, and yet the pro-independence party dominates Scottish politics in 2015?
10. How can the Scottish Parliament be made more responsible for the taxpayers' money that it spends?
11. Can 'English Votes on English Laws' be made to work? If so, how?

**You may choose a different topic, but only after getting Iain's approval in class**

#### ***Essays for Scot Peterson***

1. Will Brexit weaken or strengthen cabinet government in the UK? Why?
2. What changes can we expect in the current party system after Brexit?
3. Should judges have an influence on the outcome of Brexit?

4. What problems can arise when the government decides?
5. When are referenda politically useful? Are general elections better for deciding broad questions of policy?

**We will discuss alternative topics during the final class.**