Catholic University of America
Syllabus proposal, Spring 2019.

Teaching Supplement to the Internship Seminar
Contemporary Britain under Brexit: Divisions, Challenges and Prospects

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Overview

In June 2016, a referendum was held by which the UK voted to leave the European Union; the UK had been a member for decades, and the referendum result largely took pollsters and pundits by surprise. It by no means reflected a consensus amongst British voters however: the 'leave' vote was 51.9% compared to 48.1% for 'remain'. Nevertheless, the result was a clear victory for 'leave', and the British government honoured the electorate's decision and held long negotiations with the EU to determine the future relationship between the UK and the EU.

On December 12, 2019, voters elected all 650 seats of the House of Commons. Boris Johnson's Conservatives won their first sizable majority in decades, taking dozens of seats from Labour, thereby all but assuring that Britain will leave the EU. The current default position is that if no deal is passed by Parliament, the UK will leave the EU without one on 31 January 2020. If the Withdrawal Agreement is ratified, there will be a "transition or implementation period". This period begins when the UK leaves the EU and ends, by default, on 31 December 2020.

This course will examine contemporary Britain in the grips of this significant transition. Students will analyse the motivations for the referendum, the role of demographics and inequality on voters' preferences, the key actors and proponents, domestic and international reaction to the outcome, and the latest negotiating positions of the UK and the EU.

Brexit will most certainly have a meaningful impact on British politics, society and its economy; indeed, there are few issues in contemporary Britain that will not conceivably be affected by Brexit. Students will examine the potential scenarios and their implications—not only for Britain, but also specifically for London and Scotland, as well as for the EU—on issues that the UK and the EU have traditionally closely cooperated, including trade relations, immigration, human rights, and foreign and defence policy.

Teaching Arrangements

All sessions will consist of a seminar discussion and/or an off-site visit. Attendance is compulsory, and an attendance record will be taken at the beginning of every session.

It is essential that all students prepare for each session with the help of the reading list. The instructor will lead the discussion, but students are expected to engage actively and independently with each other. A list of required reading is provided for each topic. You are expected to read additional items to further your knowledge and to enable you to participate in class discussion and debate. You will need to read more for your essay. The list is not exclusive and you are encouraged to find other sources, both books and articles, which may help with your essay and other coursework.

Assessment

One 3000-word essay; questions will be self-developed. Deadline: TBD. The essay should demonstrate the synthetic and analytical skills of the students, their familiarity with the relevant literature, clarity of expression as well as their ability to address and evaluate various positions, to debate, and to develop argumentation.

Anglo Educational Services

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Attendance and absence

- UK Border Agency regulations require that we keep a full record of class attendance.

- Authorized absence may be caused by illness, scheduled medical/dental appointments, attendance at academic conferences, and observing University-approved religious holidays. They can only be authorized in advance.
- Unauthorized absence results from a failure to contact Anglo Educational <u>before </u>a class that you do not attend or from absence without acceptable excuse. Unacceptable excuses include: personal travel, visits from guests. Please note that unauthorized absences may put you in breach of your visa conditions.

Attendance at all classes is mandatory, and unauthorized absences will affect your grade as follows.

Unauthorized Absences - Effect on Grade
0-1	[A is A; B is B]
2-3	Subtract 1 letter grade [A becomes B; B becomes C]
4 or more	Subtract 2 letter grades [A becomes C; B becomes D]

Seminar Calendar		
	Topics	**Student Assignments**
7 Jan	**Introduction**	**Film**: Brexit: An Uncivil War (2019) **Readings**: UK Government – "Plan for Britain" website Europa (EU official website) – UK – Brexit – overview European Commission – Brexit negotiations website
14 Jan	**Brexit and the legacy of Empire**	**Field trip:** Greenwich
21 Jan	**Security impetus for European integration**	**Field trip:** Imperial War Museum
28 Jan	**Brexit and ideology**	**Film:** They Shall Not Grow Old (2018)
4 Feb	**European national cultures**	**Field trip**: British Museum, Parthenon Marbles **Readings**: https://www.nationalgeographic.com/archaeology-and-history/magazine/2017/03-04/parthenon-sculptures-british-museum-controversy/#
11 Feb	**The refugee crisis and EU politics**	**Film:** PBS Frontline 'Exodus'
18 Feb	**Human rights**	**Field trip:** Old Bailey
25 Feb	**Understanding the Brexit vote** Prof Matthew Goodwin	**Readings**: Goodwin, Brexit vote explained (2016)

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3 March	**Brexit & The City**	**Field trip**: Bank of England & Guildhall
10 March	**Britain and Immigration**	**Field trip:** Migration Museum
17 March	**Transatlantic security**	**Field trip**: Churchill War Museum
24 March	**European Security**	**Film**: BBC World War III
31 March	**British environmentalism**	**Field trip**: Regent's Park
7 April: Exam (no seminar)		