



Boston University Study Abroad
London

Boston University Study Abroad London
Britain and the European Question: The Confluence of History and Politics
CAS IR 392/HI 243 (*Elective B*)
Spring 2013

Instructor Information

A. Name Dr Michael Thornhill

Course Objective

To provide an overview of Britain's relations with Europe between 1945 and 1991 in the context of European supranational integration, the evolution of the Cold War, and Britain's on-going desire to maintain a world role.

Course Overview

The course examines Britain's relations with Europe – both west and east – from the end of the Second World War to the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991, the moment when the European Economic Community (EEC) became the European Union (EU). This name-change proved contentious in that it brought about greater political integration and so exacerbated tensions within British domestic politics about national sovereignty and Britain's place in the world. This timeframe also coincided with the Cold War, a global struggle which had European issues at its centre. We will assess how the German problem lay at the heart of not only the Cold War, but also over both tracks of post-1945 European integration: one track was intergovernmental in character and focused overtly on security (the NATO alliance); the other was supranational and was ostensibly motivated by economic concerns (the European Coal and Steel Community and then the EEC). The role of the United States in these political, economic and military developments will be an underlying theme throughout.

Course Methodology

The course is taught in nine classes, followed by a written examination lasting two hours. Most classes will begin with a formal presentation after which there is usually a discussion period based on an assigned reading or readings. Documentaries will also be used to support student learning. Students are required to attend all sessions and participate in discussions. This aspect will account for 10% of the final grade. A further 10% will be awarded for a presentation based on primary source materials. A 2000-word essay (about 8 typed pages, double-spaced in 12 point font) must be submitted to the lecturer at the start of class 8 (a further 40% of the grade). In the written examination (worth 40%) students must answer two essay-type questions from a selection covering all aspects of the course. No notes will be allowed in the examination room.

Set Texts

John W. Young, *Britain and European Unity 1945-1999* (Macmillan, 2000)

John le Carré, *A Small Town in Germany* (originally published in 1968: Penguin edition 2011)

Class Schedule

* Denotes compulsory class readings and/or documentaries which will be viewed in class

Class 1: Monday 25 Feb

- The impact of Europe's second 'Thirty Years War'

(Topics: the German problem; the human and economic consequences of war; the demise of the European states system; differing postwar attitudes to national sovereignty amongst European states; Western tensions with the Soviet Union; attempts to reform the British empire; relations with the United States).

* Documentary in class: 'The Price of Peace' in *NATO: From Cold War to Hot – The First 60 Years* (released 2010: NATO archive propaganda film made by John Edwards).

Class 2: Monday 4 March

- Britain Leads Europe, 1945-1949

(Topics: Britain's ambitions to be a third superpower; the onset of the Cold War; the British empire's crisis of readjustment; Marshall aid; the US connection in British eyes; the creation of NATO).

* Young, chapter 1.

* John Kent and John Young, 'The Third Force and the Origins of NATO: In Search of a New Perspective' in Robert O'Neill and Beatrice Heuser (eds), *Securing Peace in Europe, 1945-62* (London, 1992).

* Documentary in class: 'The Lost World of Communism' – The East Germany episode (BBC2, transmitted 2007).

Class 3: Monday 11 March

- Missing the European bus, 1950-1957

(Topics: attitudes to the ECSC in the context of the nationalization of British coal and steel; Britain's continuing imperial preoccupations; the failure of the EDC; Eden's Messina snub; Anglo-French relations and Suez; and the Treaty of Rome).

* Young, chapter 2.

* Piers Ludlow, 'Paying the Price of Victory? Postwar Britain and Ideas of National Independence in Dominik Geppert (ed), *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-1958* (Oxford, 2003).

* 'Alternatives to the European Defence Community', memorandum by Anthony Eden, 27 August 1954

* Documentary in class: 'With Friends Like These: Affairs with the French' (BBC2, transmitted 2003).

Class 4: Monday 18 March

- From Empire to Europe, 1957 to 1963

(Topics: Britain's shifting trade patterns; Suez and the decline of British political will; rapid disengagement from empire; the creation of EFTA; the decision to apply for EEC entry in 1961;

De Gaulle's first rejection in 1963).

* Young, chapter 3.

* Feature film to be shown in class: *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* [directed by Sam Wanamaker and released in 1965]

Class 5: Monday 25 March

- Two rejections and then British entry, 1963-1973

(Topics: De Gaulle and French nationalism; French attitudes to the Anglo-American relationship; CAP and British attitudes; France and NATO; Europe as a trading rival to the US; the manner of the British applications; the significance of political changes in France and Germany in 1969; Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik and its Western corollary; Edward Heath and Britain's belated entry).

* Young, chapters 4.

* John le Carré, *A Small Town in Germany* (London, 1968)

* Documentary in class: 'Krautrock: The Rebirth of Germany' (BBC4, transmitted 2009)

Class 6: Monday 8 April

- Workshop on British cabinet documents

(Students will be shown how to use the National Archives on-line catalogue and then guided on how to assess various government record groups with a view to presenting their research in the following week's class)

* 3pm: Field trip to Churchill Museum

Class 7: Monday 15 April

- Britain and European integration, 1973-86

(Topics: Strategies of national modernization and macroeconomic policy; the sources of Euroscepticism; the Euro-enthusiast discourse; Thatcher and the budget question; Thatcher and the Single European Act.)

* Young, chapter 5.

* 'Britain's Decline: Its Causes and Consequences', memorandum by Nicholas Henderson, 31 March 1979

* Class presentations based on British official documents.

Class 8: Tuesday 16 April

- The end of the Cold War and the deepening of European integration, 1986-91

(The intensification of the Cold War in the early 1980s; the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s; Thatcher and the German question, 1989-90; the Conservative government's civil war in the run up to Maastricht).

* Young, chapter 6.

* 'Summary on Germany', memorandum by Charles Powell, 25 March 1990

Documentary to be showed in class: 'With Friends Like These: Don't Mention the War' (BBC2, transmitted 2003)

Class 9: Monday 22 April

- Stocktaking: Which was more important to European peace – NATO or the EEC?

* Young, chapter 7 and ‘Conclusions’.

* Situation comedy to be viewed in class: *Yes Minister*, ‘The Devil You Know’ (BBC1, transmitted 1981)

* **Contingency Class Date:** Students are required to keep **24 April** free to attend a make-up class should any class need to be rescheduled.

Examination: Thursday 25 April

Exam times and locations will be posted on the BU London website and in the Student Newsletter two weeks before exam dates.

Course Reading

The class readings other than the Young set text are posted on the course webpage:

<https://lms.bu.edu>

(you must be logged in to view this page)

See especially, but also use your own research skills in the BU library:

Stephen George, *An Awkward Partner: Britain and the European Community* (Oxford, 1990)

Piers Ludlow, *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik and Westpolitik, 1945-1973* (2007)

Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe’s Name* (London, 1993)

Hugo Young, *This Blessed Plot* (London, 1998)

Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London, 2005)

Stephen Wall, *A Stranger In Europe: Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair* (Oxford, 2008)

Dominik Geppert (ed), *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-1958* (Oxford, 2003)

Oliver Haddow, *Britain and Europe since 1945: Historiographical Perspectives on Integration* (London, 2004)

John Killick, *The United States and European Reconstruction, 1945-1960* (Edinburgh, 1997)

Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism:

<http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester>

Attendance Policy

Classes

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

Authorised Absence:

Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date

(except in the case of absence due to illness, for which students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor's note as soon as possible). **Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence**

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- Illness, supported by a local London doctor's note (submitted with Authorised Absence Approval Form).
- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)
- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

The Directors will only in the most extreme cases (for example, death in close family) allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.

Unauthorised Absence:

Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a 'Fail' in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

Terms and Conditions

Appointments for interviews for internships should not conflict with attendance at classes.

Course work must be delivered before agreed deadline. Failure to hand on time will result in deducted marks.

I will make some time available in each session for students to raise questions etc. Should students wish to discuss matters with me in person I will also be available during the break mid-lecture.

Michael Thornhill
Dec 2013