



**Boston University** International Programs  
London

**Boston University British Programmes**  
**Britain and the European Question: The Confluence of History and Politics**  
**CAS IR 392 (*Elective B*)**  
**Spring 2011**

**Instructor Information**

A. Name	Dr Michael Thornhill
B. Day and Time	Mondays, 1.30pm to 5.30pm
C. Location	Courtfield room, 74-76 Courtfield Gardens, SW5 0NL
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E. Email	[REDACTED]
F. Webpage	<a href="http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/ir392">http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/ir392</a>
G. Office hours	By appointment

**Course Objective**

To provide an overview of Britain's relations with Europe between 1945 and 1992 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 1992, the moment when the European Economic Community (EEC) became the European Union (EU). This name-change proved contentious in that it signaled ambitions for greater political integration and so exacerbated longstanding 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. 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 7 (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.

## **Class Schedule**

\* denotes compulsory class readings (either handouts or on the BU course webpage) and/or documentaries which will be viewed in class

### **Class 1: 21 February**

- 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).

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

### **Class 2: 28 February**

- 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 alliance in British eyes; the creation of NATO).

\* 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).

### **Class 3: 7 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).

\* 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).

### **Class 4: 14 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).

\* 'Suez: A Very British Crisis' (BBC2, transmitted 2006) This documentary highlights how Britain fell out with both the United States and France over the failed invasion of Egypt in 1956, with highly significant consequences for European politics.

### **Class 5: 21 March**

- Workshop on British government 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)

\* Students must bring their computer to this class.

### **Class 6: 28 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).

\* Class presentations based on previous week's research into primary resources.

### **Class 7: 4 April**

- The scholarly debates about Britain's European Identity

(Topics: missing the European bus; strategies of national modernization and macroeconomic policy; the sources of Euroscepticism; the Euroenthusiast discourse; party politics and the domestic objectives of foreign policy; misperceptions of sovereignty and federalism).

\* 'Krautrock: the rebirth of Germany' (transmitted by BBC 4 in 2009). This documentary examines how a radical generation of musicians created a new German musical identity out of the ruins of war; the subject matter relates back to the previous class's discussion of political changes in West Germany in the 1960s and early 1970s, the disillusionment with the US during the Vietnam era, and Britain's continuing preoccupation/fixation with wartime memories of Germany).

### **Class 8: 11 April**

- The end of the Cold War and the deepening of European integration

(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; Thatcher's three phases regarding European supranational integration – getting a rebate, the Single European Act, and the Tory government's civil war in the run up to Maastricht).

\* Timothy Garton Ash, 'Why Britain is in Europe' (2006)

### **Class 9: 18 April**

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

\* William Wallace, *Rescue or retreat: The nation state in Western Europe, 1945-1992*

\* Michael Howard, *1945-1995: Fifty Years of European Peace*

\* **Contingency Class Date: Wednesday 20 April.** Students are obligated to keep this date free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled.

### **Examination: 21 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**

Some Additional readings may be posted on the course webpage:

<http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/ir392>

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

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)

Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World* (London, 2004)

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, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism:

<http://www.bu-london.co.uk/files/images/ACADEMICHANDBOOKSP11.pdf>

### **Terms and Conditions**

Attendance at all classes is mandatory. Students missing lectures without a doctor's letter or authorisation from the Director or from the Placements Team will automatically be docked a - or a + from their final grade.

Persistent lateness will also be penalised in the final grade. **Students must check their email and the weekly Student Newsletter for field trip updates and reminders.** A register of attendance will be taken at the beginning of each session, and marks will be awarded for attendance. Absence can be conveyed by advising a senior member of staff in the Academic Affairs Office with a request that the information be passed on to me. Leaving it to another class member to convey messages will not be acceptable.

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

Any student who is unable to attend a class, or take part in an Assignment because of religious reasons, must give notice of the fact in advance. He/she will be required to make up for time lost. In this situation arrangements must be made with another student for class notes to be shared.

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  
February 2011