



## **Boston University Study Abroad**

London

### **Understanding British Foreign and Domestic Policy Processes**

**CAS IR 361/PO 225 (Core)**

[Semester] [Year]

#### **Instructor Information**

A. Name	Dr Paul Cousins
B. Day and Time	[Weekday] [Times]
C. Location	[Room], 43 Harrington Gardens
D. BU Telephone	020 7244 6255
E. Email	<a href="mailto:cousinsp@bu.edu">cousinsp@bu.edu</a>
F. Office hours	By appointment

#### **Course Aim**

The aim of this course is to provide students with an introduction to the policy-making process in the United Kingdom, covering the institutions, stakeholders and processes involved in policy-making.

#### **Course Overview**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the main policy areas in Britain, together with an outline of the policy-making process, presenting this in an international context. Particular attention will be paid to foreign and defence policies. The course will focus on policy outcomes and the various ways in which they come about. Thus, there will be a brief survey of the political system and associated legal and constitutional factors, but the emphasis will be on the interaction of these institutional factors with the range of other actors in the decision-making process.

**Who are the actors involved?** The political system provides the democratic context within which decisions are taken. In addition to political parties and politicians themselves, there are many other organisations and stakeholders. At the heart of the whole process is the executive branch of government, the cabinet and civil service, presided over by the prime minister. They relate to pressure groups, companies, and trade unions and are all the time conscious of the interest in all this of the media in all its forms.

In framing policy the ‘amateur’ politicians and officials need specialist help and advice. As in Washington, there are a number of ‘think tanks’ and commercial organisations that have been established to assist government. Academics are also often invited to participate in the policy making process. Other experts are employed by government itself but any government today will require technical (especially scientific) help which can only be obtained from the wider community.

**How is public policy forged?** A complex system of on-going contacts, both official and unofficial, are maintained by the executive (especially the civil servants) with these various agencies and individuals through committees, meetings and conferences etc. Social links are also significant (London has many clubs and societies which facilitate such contacts).

The national policy-making process has to relate to other official bodies at regional and local government levels. Most national policies have implications or require the co-operation of devolved administrations and other councils, and thus there are arrangements for consultation and involvement, often involving financial help from the national government.

**What case studies will we explore?** In this course we'll consider particularly timely case studies related to UK social welfare, health policies, and defence and foreign affairs policies. For instance, at this moment in time, the UK is working to extract itself from the European Union following the referendum of 23 June 2016 and its dramatic aftermath, including the shock result of the general election of 8 June 2017. The EU has established its own complex structures to enable all 28 countries to work together effectively and withdrawal from these is a massive operation, mostly the responsibility of civil servants.

However, despite 'Brexit' there are many issues where it is necessary for the British government to work with other national governments and co-ordinate policy, especially with regard to foreign and defence matters. There are, of course, bilateral links with the many nations which have embassies here. Britain is an active member of the United Nations, being a Permanent Member of the Security Council, and its many agencies, one of which (the International Maritime Organisation) is located in London. The UK is a member of many Inter-Governmental Organisations, such as NATO, that are an integral part of the overall UK policy-making process. The World Trade Organisation is perhaps the most important such body.

Because of the similarities (but also significant differences) to the policy-making process in the USA, the course will adopt a comparative approach through class discussions and readings. Additionally, we will visit Westminster, the International Maritime Organisation and other local sites in order to understand how the landscape of the city is closely connected to its central role in UK public policy.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

#### *Hub-Aligned Course Objectives*

This course aligns with the following Hub outcomes:

Social Inquiry 1 Learning Outcome 1: *Students will identify and apply major concepts used in the social sciences to explain individual and collective human behaviour including, for example, the workings of social groups, institutions, networks, and the role of the individual in them.*

**At the end of this course students will be able to describe the main institutions involved in policy-making in Britain, explain the processes and various arrangements involved using a basic theoretical input-output model, and identify the main stake-holders and their roles. They will also be able to analyse the effects of these on related third-parties and their application to the final policies created.**

Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 1: *Students will be able to identify, grapple with, and make a judgment about the ethical questions at stake in at least one major contemporary public debate, and engage in a civil discussion about it with those who hold views different from their own.*

**Students will be able to describe and explain differing views on the major issues of public policy in Britain, such as abortion, Brexit, climate change, and other social welfare and foreign affairs policies. The basic principles underlying these ethical issues (including concepts of justice and individual freedom) will be addressed) with class discussions**

**including formal debate, through interaction with guest speakers and in written work students will be able to analyse and advocate for the various political, economic and social contexts of these perspectives (including the European dimension).**

Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 2: *Students will demonstrate the skills and vocabulary needed to reflect on the ethical responsibilities that face individuals (or organisations, or societies or governments) as they grapple with issues affecting both the communities to which they belong and those identified as “other.” They should consider their responsibilities to future generations of humankind, and to stewardship of the Earth.*

**Students will recognise from case studies, guest lecturers and discussion the nature of responsible policy-making through data and research, and will be able to enumerate and analyse the responsibilities that governments and individuals exercise when considering the complexity of public policy creation in discussion and evaluations. Reference will be made in these discussions to different approaches to moral concepts and the main traditions which underlie them.**

#### *Additional Course Objectives*

- 1 The course will provide the basic political and constitutional background necessary for the study of British public policy making;
- 2 There will be an introduction to relevant theories of the British political system (especially the ‘Whitehall’ versus ‘Westminster’ explanations);
- 3 The course will introduce the various stakeholders involved in the making of British policy.

#### **Methodology**

The teaching strategies will include a mix of lectures, seminars, excursions, and class discussions. Videos and electronic media will be referenced as their content relates to current events. Guest speakers will provide additional perspectives and a small number of visits will be made to local sites relevant to the course content. Student-centred learning is emphasised with role play, case studies and debates on aspects of policy making. Each session will start with a review of the previous class learning experience, using appropriate strategies such as minute paper. Two set texts are required for this course, plus extensive further reading: B. Jones et al *Politics UK*, and P. Dorey *Policy Making in Britain*.

#### **Grading**

The outcomes and objectives of this course will be assessed through:

- (a) two class tests in weeks 2 and 3, which will be formative in that they will allow feedback on factual information before the final examination; the tests will count 10% towards the final grade; these will relate to Social Inquiry I Learning Outcome I in their emphasis on the identification of political participants, the groups they act within and upon and the constitutional processes involved;
- (b) a short mid-course paper, to be submitted in either weeks 3 or 4, on a specific topic, 500 words (2 double-spaced pages in Times New Roman 12-point font with standard margins) and also formative in that it will provide feedback prior to the end of course paper and final examination; it will count 10%; this relates to Social Inquiry I Learning Outcome 1 in its requirement to describe an aspect of a political group or institution’s activity;
- (c) the end of course paper, allowing students to display in-depth knowledge on an approved, appropriate topic and is summative in nature with a word limit of 3000 words (12 double-spaced pages in Times New Roman 12-point font with standard margins); it will be submitted at the end

of the course and will count 30%; the paper relates to both Social Inquiry 1 Learning Outcome 1 and Ethical Reasoning Outcomes 1 and 2 as it will require the analysis of a narrow aspect within the workings of the system of political institutions and groups;

(d) the end of course examination which will cover material from across the course and is also summative, requiring students to answer two questions in the available time; it will count 40%; the examination relates to all learning outcomes in that it requires synthesising technique of policy creation and actions (Social Inquiry 1 Learning Outcome 1) with analysing varying ethical perspectives on a contemporary public policy issue (Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 1) and applying an understanding of the ethical responsibility that civil servants face when crafting policy using data gathered by experts (Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 2);

(e) 10% will be awarded for participation and is based upon class discussion and presentations, which will include tutor-moderated discussion and debate of the differing ethical stances on various contemporary public policy issues (Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 1).

The following Boston University table explains the grading system that is used by most faculty members on Boston University's Study Abroad London Programmes.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Honour Points</u>	<u>Usual %</u>
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.7	89-92
B+	3.3	85-88
B	3.0	81-84
B-	2.7	77-80
C+	2.3	73-76
C	2.0	69-72
C-	1.7	65-68
D	1.0	60-64
F	0.0	Unmarked

### **Grading Criteria**

'**Incomplete**' or **I** grades are not permitted because of the obvious difficulty in making up missed work once the student has left the country. All work must be completed on time. We also do not allow '**Audits**' (AU), '**Withdrawals**' (W), or '**Pass/Fail**' (P) grades.

The grades reflect the quality of the work. Lecturers and students should use the following criteria for an understanding of what each grade means.

**A** This exceptional grade is assigned only to work that has persistently outstanding quality in both substance and presentation. The student must demonstrate a sustained capacity for independent thought and extensive study, producing rigorous and convincing analyses in well-ordered prose.

**A-** Awarded to work that is clearly focused and analytical, and based on wide reading. The student must cover all the principal points of a question and systematically develop a persuasive overall thesis, allowing for one or two venial omissions or inapt expressions.

**B+, B, B-** This range of grades indicates that the student has shown some evidence of original thought and intellectual initiative. The student has cited sources beyond the class materials, and shown a degree of originality in perception and/or approach to the subject. The work will show thoughtful management of material, and a good grasp of the issues. The differences between a

B+, a straight B and a B- may reflect poor presentation of the material, or mistakes in punctuation, spelling and grammar.

**C+, C, C-** Work in this grade range is satisfactory, but uninspiring. If the work is simply a recitation of the class materials or discussions, and shows no sign of genuine intellectual engagement with the issues, it cannot deserve a higher grade. Should an essay fail to provide a clear answer to the question as set, or argue a position coherently, the grade will fall within this range.

Quality of presentation can lift such work into the upper levels of this grade range. Work of this quality which is poorly presented, and riddled with errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, will fall into the lower end of the range. To earn a C grade, the work must demonstrate that the student is familiar with the primary course material, be written well enough to be readily understood, be relevant to the assignment, and, of course, be the student's own work except where properly cited.

**D** A marginal pass can be given where some but not all the elements of the course have been completed satisfactorily.

**F** The failing grade indicates the work is seriously flawed in one or more ways:

- Obvious lack of familiarity with the material
- So poorly written as to defy understanding
- So brief and insubstantial that it fails to properly address the subject
- Material presented is not relevant to the assignment
- Demonstrates evidence of plagiarism (see following section in Academic Conduct Code)

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for further details as well as for policies on plagiarism.  
*\*Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.*

## **Attendance**

### *Classes*

All Boston University Study Abroad London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip in order to fulfil 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 Authorised 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). The Authorised Absence Approval Request Form is available from:

<http://www.bu.edu/london/report-absence/>

**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 (first day of sickness):** If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must phone the BU London Student Affairs Office (who will in turn contact the student's lecturer).
- **Illness (multiple days):** If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must call into to the BU London Student Affairs Office each day the student is ill. Students must also provide the Student Affairs Office with a completed Authorised Absence Approval Form and a sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class.
- 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 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.

#### *Religious Holidays*

Boston University's Office of the University Registrar states:

'The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.'

#### *Special Accommodations*

Each student will need to contact Disability and Access Services to request accommodations for the semester they are abroad. Students are advised by BU-DAS not to expect the same accommodations as they receive on campus.

BU London can only uphold special accommodations if we have received the appropriate documentation from BU-DAS. We cannot accept letters from other universities/centres.

All disabilities need to be known to DAS in Boston if they are to be used as a reason for requiring a change in conditions, i.e. reduced internship hours or special accommodations for the internship schedule.

#### *Lateness*

Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

## Course Chronology

Please Note that for each class there are specific notes on Blackboard Learn covering the topics being considered and **these must be read before the class takes place**. The amount of reading necessary will vary from topic to topic.

Session 1: The first class will provide the context for the further analysis of British policy making and will cover:

- \* aspects of British society and culture relevant to policy issues today;
- \*an introduction to the British political system:
- \*recent events and issues;
- \*the UK constitutional arrangements.

Reading: I Budge et al: *The New British Politics* pp 73 - 96;

See also: R Hefferman et al *Developments in British Politics* chapter 3

*See also Course notes on Blackboard Learn: Images of Britain; British Constitutional Arrangements; Notes on Parliament*

Session 2: This session will examine the political dimension of the policy making process in Britain and will cover:

- \*Parliament and the political process;
- \*the main political parties and elections:
- \* the political executive – Prime Minister and Cabinet
- \* political actors' relations with senior civil servants who provide the technical information on policy.

Reading: Budge et al; chapter 3 pp 49 - 72

*See notes: Political Parties; Prime Minister and Cabinet*

Session 3: In this session the non-political executive aspects of the process will be reviewed and this will include:

- \*the role of senior permanent officials as 'crown servants' in serving the nation not just the current government;
- \*the civil service and the Policy Making Process – government departments; NGO's; pressure groups and lobbying organisations;
- \* first class test.

Reading: P Dorey chapter 3 pp 51 -76

See also Dorey chapters 4 & 5; R Hefferman chapter 1

*See notes: Civil Service; The Policy Making Process*

Session 4: This class will examine aspects of the most important policy issue facing Britain today, and will look at:

- \*Britain and the European Union;
- \* the many problems concerning Brexit;
- \* social justice and health and welfare provision;
- \* the challenges of climate change and the environment;
- \* immigration policy.

Readings:

A Gore *An Inconvenient Truth*

A Cohen and G Wellman *Applied Ethics*

D Miller *Principles of Social Justice*

*See notes on Brexit*

Session 5: In this session the role of the media and the administration of government in Britain will be addressed, the second class test will take place and the short paper will be set. The class will examine:

- \*The roles played by the print media in affecting policy;
- \* the impact of radio and television;
- \* social media and public opinion.

Reading: T Shipman *All Out War* final chapter pp 579-609;

T Shipman *Fall Out Conclusion*;

The Leveson Report

*See notes on the role of the Media*

Session 6: Westminster Walk: a visit to central London to see the main institutions connected with policy making in the UK, led by a tutor with specialist knowledge (usually Dr Charlton who is a registered Blue Badge Guide).

Session 7: Britain's Defence and Foreign Policy: Guest speaker with relevant background. The UNO; Commonwealth and other agencies.

Guest Speaker: usually Dr Adrian Kendry, formerly NATO Chief Economist and currently Visiting Professor at Winchester University.

The session will consider inter alia ethical aspects of these policies (for example, providing arms to Saudi Arabia).

Reading: Dorey: chapter 8 pp 207 – 225; T Winright *Can War Be Just in the Twenty-first Century?*

R Hefferman chapter 16

Jones: chapter 14; R Hefferman chapters 14 and 15

R Self: *Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945*, the chapter on *Making Foreign Policy*.

Dorey: Conclusion

*See notes: International Agencies; Britain's Foreign and Defence Policy*

**Contingency Class Date: [Date].** Students are obligated to keep this date free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled

Session 8: Visit to the International Maritime Organisation, the only United Nations agency in London, in order to see first-hand the international aspects of policy making – details to be given in class.

Reading: students will be required to look at the IMO website before the visit takes place.

Session 9: The inter-action of moral and political approaches in the policy-making process. Review of the main types of morality; objective and subjective value systems; the process of systematic questioning and critical evaluation of issues by the executive, politicians and officials.

Reading: H LaFollete *Ethics in Practice*

P Starba *Moralit in Practice*

J Nuttall *Moral Questions*

Session 10: The final class compares British and American policy making drawing attention to the similarities and differences. In addition, there will be a review and revision session including briefing on the final examination.



Reading: R Haque & M Harrop: *Comparative Government and Politics* pp 345 – 389.

*See notes on Anglo-American Comparisons*

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

### **Required Reading**

The following texts are available in the Library.

Please purchase and read:

B Jones et al                      Politics UK  
P Dorey                              Policy Making in Britain

### **Additional Reading**

N Abercrombie                      Contemporary British Society  
T Bainbridge                        The Penguin Companion to the European Union  
H Barnett                            Britain Unwrapped  
I Budge et al                        The New British Politics  
S Bulmer & M Burch              The Europeanisation of Whitehall  
A Blair                                Companion to the European Union  
V Bogdanor                         Devolution in the United Kingdom  
D Charter                            Europe: In or Out?  
M Curtis                              Web of Deceit  
J Dickie                              The New Mandarins  
R Haque & M Harrop              Comparative Government and Politics  
R Hefferman et al                Developments in British Politics (number 9)  
M Herman                          Intelligence Power in Peace and War  
M Hill                                The Public Policy Process  
V Hudson                            Foreign Policy Analysis  
B Jones                                Politics UK  
D Kavanagh et al                 British Politics  
R North                              The Wrong Side of the Hill  
P Norton                            The Constitution in Flux  
N Nugent                            The Government and Politics of the EU  
P Hennessy                        The Hidden Wiring  
P Hennessy                        The Prime Minister  
J Pinder                              The European Union  
D Richards                         Governance and Public Policy in the UK  
R Self                                Foreign and Defence Policy Since 1945  
T Shipman                         All Out War  
T Shipman                         Brexit: What the Hell Happens Next?  
D Stone et al                        Think Tank Traditions  
Turpin & Tomkin                British Government and the Constitution  
S Weir et al                        Not in Our Name  
H & W Wallace (eds)            Policy-making in the European Union

Additional reading may be advised as necessary.

Other texts are also held in the Library which are relevant to this course.

In addition, students will be expected to read a 'serious' British broadsheet –*Times, Guardian, Daily Telegraph, Independent* – plus look at the relevant weekly publications on a regular basis. There are also very good relevant current affairs programmes on television, such as *Newsnight* on BBC 2.

Additional reading may be found on Blackboard: <https://lms.bu.edu>

### **Terms and Conditions**

I will make some time available in each session for students to raise questions etc. Should students wish to discuss matters in person I will also be available during the break mid-lecture and at the end of class. Alternatively, please feel free to e-mail me with questions. If you have problems with the availability of reading materials (all of which should be in the library) please contact me either through the Academic Affairs Office or via e-mail.

**Note:** Please turn off all mobile phones in class; laptops can only be used for note-taking and only after permission has been given by faculty.

I hope that you enjoy the class!

Paul Cousins