GOVT 490-010 Brexit: Implications for the UK and the EU

Spring 2019

Tuesday/Thursday, 10:30-11:45
Robinson Hall B122

Draft Syllabus (January 5, 2019)

The United Kingdom (UK) is due to leave the European Union (EU) on March 29, 2019. This will be the culmination of Brexit, set in motion by the result of the June 2016 referendum in the UK on whether Britain should remain in the EU. Brexit is a fascinating process. It is hugely consequential for both the United Kingdom and the EU. This course examines the constitutional, political, economic, social, cultural and other implications of Brexit. It sets Brexit in the context of the UK’s always difficult relationship with the “European project”—the process of institutionalized economic and political integration that resulted in the European Communities and later the European Union.

Instructor: Professor Desmond Dinan, ad personam Jean Monnet Chair, Schar School of Policy and Government; e-mail ddinan@gmu.edu

Office Hours and Location: Tuesday/Thursday after class (12:00-2:00) and Wednesday 16:00-18:00; Schar School office, Research Hall, room 359

Learning Outcomes: This is a GOVT 490 synthesis course. According to “Mason Core: Requirements and Information” (https://masoncore.gmu.edu/synthesis/): “The purpose of the synthesis course is to provide students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills and values gained from the Mason Core curriculum. Synthesis courses strive to expand students’ ability to master new content, think critically, and develop lifelong learning skills across the disciplines … A Mason Core synthesis course must address outcomes 1 and 2, and at least one outcome under 3. Upon completing a synthesis course, students will be able to:

1. Communicate effectively in both oral and written forms, applying appropriate rhetorical standards (e.g., audience adaptation, language, argument, organization, evidence, etc.)
2. Using perspectives from two or more disciplines, connect issues in a given field to wider intellectual, community or societal concerns
3. Apply critical thinking skills to:
   1. Evaluate the quality, credibility and limitations of an argument or a solution using appropriate evidence or resources, OR,
   2. Judge the quality or value of an idea, work, or principle based on appropriate analytics and standards”

GOVT 490 Brexit will address outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
Readings: This is a reading intensive as well as a writing intensive course. There are two required textbooks: Harold D. Clarke, Mathew Goodwin and Paul Whiteley, *Brexit: Why Britain Voted to Leave the European Union* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), and Desmond Dinan, *Europe Recast: A History of European Union*, 2d edition (Lynne Rienner, 2014). In addition, students will be required to read a number of articles, speeches, government documents, and policy papers. The readings for each week of the semester will be e-mailed to students in advance. Students are recommended to keep up to date on Brexit, and on developments more broadly in the UK and the EU, by reading relevant newspapers and newsletters, notably the *Financial Times* (FT), the *Guardian*, *Polítićo Europe*, and *EurActiv*. Students are advised to sign up for the FT’s Brexit Briefing (FT subscriptions are available free through the GMU library).

Assignments: This is a Writing Intensive course. According to “Mason Core: Requirements and Information” (https://masoncore.gmu.edu/writing-intensive-2/): “As part of the university’s commitment to student writers in all undergraduate programs, at least one upper-division course in each major has been designated as fulfilling the “writing intensive” (WI) requirement. While other courses in the major may require written projects, teachers of the designated WI courses will devote class time to instruction on how to complete assignments successfully, assign and grade a minimum of 3500 words, provide constructive feedback on drafts, and allow revision of at least one graded assignment.

The writing assignments for this course are as follows:

Assignment 1: A comparison of the Bruges speeches of Margaret Thatcher (1988) and Jacques Delors (1989) (maximum 1,500 words)  
The speeches are available at: https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107332 (Thatcher speech) and https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2002/12/19/5bbb1452-92c7-474b-a7cf-a2d281898295/publishable_en.pdf (Delors speech)  
Deadline to submit optional draft paper: Thursday, February 14  
(Return to students of draft paper, with comments: Thursday, February 21)  
Deadline to submit paper: Tuesday, February 26

Assignment 2: An Assessment of the New Settlement (maximum 1,500 words)  
Deadline to submit paper: Thursday, March 28

Assignment 3: An assessment of one of the following models for the post-Brexit relationship between the UK and the EU: the EU-Canada model; the EU-Norway model; or the EU-Japan model (maximum 2,000 words)
Deadline to submit paper: Thursday, April 25
(Return to students of final paper, with comments and grade: Thursday, February 21)
Deadline to submit optional revised final paper: Thursday, May 2

Note: There are no exams in this course

Class Format: Students are expected to read the material in advance, and to come to class prepared to discuss what they have read. Readings for each week will be e-mailed to students well before each class session. Classes will usually begin with a brief discussion of current Brexit, UK, and EU affairs, before a discussion of a particular topic, according to the course syllabus.

Class Schedule:

Weeks 1 and 2 (January 22-31)
Introduction; Brexit State of Play; Absent at the Creation—the UK and the Founding of the European Communities
Note: Class will not meet during Week 1, on January 22 and 24; class will meet for the first time on January 29.

Week 3 (February 5-7)
The UK’s long road to European Community membership

Week 4 (February 12-14)
The UK’s renegotiation and first referendum on EC membership; settling uneasily into the EC; the British Budget Question

Week 5 (February 19-21)
The UK and the acceleration of European integration; Thatcher’s and Delors’ contrasting visions of Europe

Week 6 (February 26-28)
The UK, Maastricht, and Monetary Union; New Labour and the EU

Week 7 (March 5-7)
The UK, EU enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe, and EU constitutional change

Week 8 (March 12-14)
Spring Break: No Classes

Week 9 (March 19-21)
The rise of UKIP and the 2010 UK general election

Week 10 (March 26-28)
The 2015 UK general election and the UK-EU New Settlement
Week 11 (April 2-4)
The 2016 referendum and its impact

Week 12 (April 9-11)
Triggering Article 50 TEU; the UK-EU withdrawal negotiations; the withdrawal agreement

Week 13 (April 16-18)
A disuniting UK? Scotland and Northern Ireland

Week 14 (April 23-25)
Implications of Brexit for the UK and the EU

Week 15 (April 30-May 2)
Brexit and Global Change