



**LNDN SOCY 3350
UNDERSTANDING MODERN BRITAIN:
IDEALS AND ICONS**

CAPA LONDON PROGRAM

Course Description

One of the most effective ways of understanding a nation is by examining the images, values, symbols, and individuals by which a nation represents itself. This multi-disciplinary course explores a variety of forms of national representations – ‘ideals and icons’ – to investigate the ways in which modern Britain and British identities have been imagined, constructed, and experienced at home and internationally. This theme is examined through specific topics including: imperialism and its legacy; the development of consumer culture; immigration and racial politics; the monarchy and government, and varieties of political and cultural dissent. The course also gives students the opportunity to engage directly with the heritage industry and contemporary British culture, utilizing London’s cityscape and its vast array of distinct neighbourhoods, cultural venues, and historical sites as primary tools of analysis. Classes are arranged thematically, combining contextual lectures, film, seminar discussion, and weekly field studies. Emphasis will be placed on understanding and interpreting the legacy of Britain’s past upon the ways in which the contemporary nation and British identities are structured in the twenty-first century.

Requirements and Prerequisites

There are no specific requirements and prerequisites. This interdisciplinary course assumes and requires no previous knowledge or background in the humanities, political or social sciences, just interest and enthusiasm.

Course Aims

This course enables students to gain a richer and more complex understanding of the culture and society they are entering by enrolling at CAPA London and introduce a variety of interpretative frameworks for understanding modern Britain, key debates in modern British society and politics, and current events in the British news. Students will appreciate the pluralistic and multicultural nature of British society, appreciate the diversity of British culture and society and the interaction of social, economic, political, and cultural changes in reshaping British identities. Topics are examined in a global context, including empire and its legacy, postcolonial migration and the significance of European and Anglo-American relations in transforming British culture and society. Students will also encounter and utilise a range of conceptual and theoretical perspectives to understand the ways in which British identities have been imagined in the past and are being transformed today. Students will be able to apply these insights in cross-cultural contexts, including that of their home cultures in the USA.

Learning Outcomes

- a. Students will be able to recognise and describe the impacts of globalisation on British society, economy, cultures and politics and analyse their significance.

- b. Students will be able to understand and appreciate the various ways in which British history is represented to them in museums, heritage sites and popular culture and to interpret their significance for understanding Britain today.
- c. Students will be able to interpret the urban environment of London as a showcase of aspects of British society, economy, cultures and politics.
- d. Students will gain an appreciation and understanding of British cultures and identities as multiple, dynamic and contested aspects of British society.
- e. Students will be introduced to relevant concepts and ideas and will develop the ability to apply them appropriately to the analysis of modern British society, politics and cultures.

Developmental Outcomes

- f. Students will be able effectively to present their ideas and research findings in oral and written form.
- g. Students will be able to interrogate a range of research sources, such as the cityscape, academic sources and contemporary British media.
- h. Students will undertake collaborative group work to produce presentations on course themes.
- i. Students will encounter and appreciate that there are multiple, diverse and contested perspectives on aspects of British society today, and will be able to compare and contrast their findings with relevant American – and other global - perspectives.

Class Methodology

There will be a mix of introductory lectures, class discussion, student presentations and a substantial part of the learning will be experiential, that is, in the form of field studies around London. You are expected to learn actively during all of these activities: always ask questions and take notes.

Field Components

CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in field activities for this course is required. You will actively explore the Global City in which you are currently living. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course. Students are also strongly encouraged to participate in **co-curricular** program activities and should take advantage of relevant events and activities on the My Education planner in order to gain further insights into the nature of contemporary British culture, politics and society.

Field studies form an important element of the course; attendance at these classes is mandatory. Field studies present a valuable opportunity for students to immerse themselves in the varied spaces and places of contemporary Britain and provide direct interaction with a wide range of culturally diverse communities. They also illuminate the ways in which British society and identities are showcased in contemporary London. Through field studies, students will learn about the forces which have structured, and continue to influence, British culture, politics and society and will interpret the sites visited through class discussion as well as in written work. There will also be a meeting in class with a homeless person and an opportunity to discuss issues of homelessness with her.

NB. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are recorded on the class register at the beginning of each class and field study. Students arriving late to any class must ensure they are recorded on the register at the end of class.

Assessment/Grading Policy

Descriptor	Alpha	UK	US	GPA
Excellent	A	75+	93+	4.0
	A-	70-74	90-92	3.7
Good	B+	66-69	87-89	3.3
	B	63-65	83-86	3.0
	B-	60-62	80-82	2.7
Average	C+	56-59	77-79	2.3
	C	53-55	73-76	2.0
Below Average / Poor	C-	50-52	70-72	1.7
	D+	46-49	67-69	1.3
	D	40-45	60-66	0.7 1.0
Fail	F	<40	<60	0

Grade Breakdown and Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Assessment Task	Grade %	Learning Outcomes	Due Date
Seminar Participation	20%	a-e, f, i	Weekly
Oral Presentation	25%	all	Weeks 13, 14
Field Study Paper, 3-4 pages	25%	a-e, f, g, i	Week 6
Research Paper, 5-6 pages	30%	a-e, f, g, i	Week 14

Assignments

All assignments should be submitted directly to the instructor at the beginning of class according to the due dates listed below. Please keep a hard copy of all assignments.

Participation:

Participation in lectures and field classes is an expected component of the course and will enhance students' understanding of the material for their research projects and presentations. Lectures and field studies encourage discussion based on students' observations as well as insights from course materials. Students are expected to have completed the readings prior to each class and to contribute to discussion in an informed manner through relevant comments, questions, and analysis.

Field Class Analysis: 4 pages max.

Due: week 6

This paper is based on an analysis of either the Westminster or East End Walking Tour. Your paper should provide an original interpretation of how the field class enhances your understanding of a specific aspect of Britain in historical and/or contemporary perspectives. Papers should be analytical rather than descriptive, based on a well-defined argument, and supported by specific details from the tour and your own observations. Specific assignment details and questions will be provided on a separate handout. **This assignment is worth 25% of the final grade.**

Research Paper: 6 pages max.

Due: week 14

This essay involves an analysis of a specific icon or ideal which embodies a particular aspect of modern Britain or British identity. Research papers must combine analyses of primary and secondary sources, and may incorporate images and photographs, together with students' own observations from field classes and other experiences in Britain. Suggested topics include: iconic individuals – Winston Churchill, Mick Jagger, or fictional characters, such as Sherlock Holmes; structures – St. Paul's Cathedral, Harrods, the Palace of Westminster; events – the Blitz, the 2010 election, the Falklands War; regions or neighbourhoods – Brick Lane, Camden Market, "the North"; or attributes/values – sense of humour, xenophobia, free speech.

Elements of popular culture, such as films, television shows, albums, exhibitions, and style could also be used effectively for this assignment. Students may develop their research project from one of the topics examined in class, drawing on relevant readings and field study material, or may select their own topic. Due to the short length of the term, students are urged to consult with me early in the term to determine potential topics for their research. **This assignment is worth 30% of the final grade.**

Class Presentation:

In the final week of the course, each student will deliver a presentation to the class based on the research they have undertaken for their research paper. Presenters will address the main points of interest and significance of their chosen topic, demonstrating how it connects with the main themes and ideas of the course. Presenters should incorporate questions for the class to create discussion and debate.

Presentations should be approx. 20 minutes duration, and students are encouraged to be creative in their presentation technique through the use of audio/visual display etc. Students will be evaluated on their ability to introduce and analyse their topic, assess its significance for an understanding of modern Britain and British identities, connect the topic to the main themes of the course, and generate discussion with the class. **The presentation is worth 25% of the final grade.**

Recommended Reading:

Acred, Cara *Homelessness in Britain* (Cambridge: Independence Educational Publisher, 2014)

John Benson, *Affluence and Authority: A Social History of Twentieth-Century Britain* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2005)

Christopher Breward, *Fashioning London: Clothing and the Modern Metropolis* (Oxford: Berg, 2004).

David Cannadine, *In Churchill's Shadow: Confronting the Past in Modern Britain* (London: Penguin, 2002).

D. Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2001).

Philip Cohen *London's Turning. The Making of Thames Gateway* (London 2008)

Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707 –1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

Geoff Dench *The New East End: Kinship, Race and Conflict* (London 2006)

Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Routledge, 2002).

Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2002).

Stuart Hall *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2013)

James Hampshire, *Citizenship and Belonging Immigration and the Politics of Demographic Governance in Postwar Britain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Ted Harrison *Remembrance Today: Poppies, Grief and Heroism* (London 2012)

Christopher Harvie & Colin Matthew, *Nineteenth-century Britain: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).

Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 1995).

E. J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire. From 1750 to the Present Day* Rev. ed., (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999).

Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918 – 1957* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Susan Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain, 1640-1990* (London, Routledge, 1998).

Kynaston, David *City of London. The History.*

W. R. Louis, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire, vol. III: The Nineteenth Century*, eds. A. Porter & A. Low (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Andrew Marr, *A History of Modern Britain* (London: Macmillan, 2008).

Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain* (London: HarperCollins, 1999)

Erica Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War?: National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain, 1939 -1945* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003).

Cathy Ross, *Twenties London: A City in the Jazz Age* (London: Philip Wilson, 2003).

Sheila Rowbotham, *A Century of Women: The History of Women in Britain and the United States* (London: 1999).

Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had it So Good: A History of Britain from Suez to the Beatles* (London: Abacus, 2006).

D. Sandbrook, *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties* (London: LittleBrown, 2006).
Jonathan Schneer London 1900

Nick Tiratsoo, ed., *From Blitz to Blair: A New History of Britain since 1939* (London: Phoenix, 1998).

Paul Ward *Britishness Since 1870* (Abingdon 2004)

Wendy Webster, *Imagining Home: Gender, 'Race' and National Identity, 1945 -1964* (London: UCL Press, 1998).

Wetherly, Paul *Islam and the West* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012)

Jerry White, *London in the Twentieth Century-A City and its People* (London: Penguin,2001).

Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration to Britain* (London: Abacus, 2005).

Lindy Woodhead, *Shopping, Seduction & Mr. Selfridge* (London: Profile Books, 2008).

Useful Websites for British History & Contemporary Culture:

BBC history <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/>

The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

19th C History <http://www.victorianweb.org/>

Immigration and Race <http://www.blackpresence.co.uk/>

Political History <http://bubl.ac.uk/link/b/britishpoliticalhistory.htm>

Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/>

Moving Here: 200 years of migration to England
<http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/EventsExhibitions/Community/MovingHere.htm>

Weekly Course Schedule

The Making of Modern Britain and British Identity

Reading: Ward, Paul Being British in Britishness Since 1870

City Walk – from Roman London to Globalised Metropolis. Visit to the Museum of London

Reading: Kynaston, David Top Dollar in City of London. The History

Politics, Culture and Mayhem: a Walk in Westminster

Reading: Schneer, Jonathan The Face of Imperial London in London 1900. The

Imperial City

Britain's Multiple Cultures – Language, Ethnicity, Race and Creed: Multiculturalism in Britain

Reading: Rattansi, Ali. What is Multiculturalism? in Multiculturalism – A very Short Introduction

East End Walk TBC

Reading: Dench, Geoff et al Old Bethnal Green and New from The New East End. Kinship, Race and Conflict

Monarchy and British Identity

Reading: Hitchens, Christopher The Monarchy. A critique of Britain's favourite fetish

Week 7 **Break week: no class**

Remembering War the British way. A Visit to the Imperial War Museum TBC

Reading: Harrison, Ted. The Remembrance Debate from Remembrance Today

Inclusion and Exclusion – the Politics and Practices of Immigration

Reading: Winder, Robert The Identity Parade in Bloody Foreigners. The Story of Immigration to Britain

Meeting with a Homeless Person

Reading: Cara, Acred (ed) About Homelessness in Homelessness in the UK

Islam in Britain. Visit to a Mosque

Reading: Wetherly, Paul et al , Introduction Islam, the West and Multiculturalism in Islam and the West

Policing in London. A lecture and meeting with a former senior officer in London's Metropolitan Police.

Reading: Hall, Stuart et al The Origins of Social Control in Hall, Stuart Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order

Individual Presentations.

Final class and individual presentations

Attendance, Participation & Student Responsibilities

Attendance: CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and potentially a failure for the course.

Missing classes for medical reasons: If you need to miss a class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, **you must send an e-mail** to let the Associate Director of Academic Affairs (ADAA) know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting at the following e-mail: excused.absence@capa.org. Note that calling the CAPA Centre (0207 370 7389) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. In the event of a missed class or field trip, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

Class Participation: Students are expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments BEFORE the class, and come in on time.

Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

Academic Integrity: A high level of responsibility and academic honesty is expected. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honour in his or her scholastic work and class

behaviour. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

Use of electronic equipment in class: All devices such as laptops, i-pods, i-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Associate Director of Academic Affairs at the beginning of Term.

Use of Electronic Translators: In Language courses students are NOT allowed to use electronic translators for writing texts in the target language: those submitting compositions and texts of whatever kind translated in such a fashion will receive a final F grade for the course.

Late Submission: Late submission of papers, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

Behaviour during Examinations: During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.