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Governing Britain Since 1918

Modular Value: 40 credits
Duration: All Year
Teaching: 2 hours per week

Lecturer: **Professor Peter Burnham (/staff/profiles/government-society/burnham-peter.aspx)**

The module is concerned with the development of British politics since World War One. As the title implies the aim of the module is to study the process of governing rather than simply offer a narrative of particular events and personalities. Our focus is on high politics, that is, the core activities of the British state (or core executive) in the period since 1900.

The module examines in detail the relationship between domestic party politics, economic management and external affairs. Specific topics considered are the impact of the First World War, the interwar period, the Second World War, the postwar polity, neo-corporatism, Thatcherism and Majorism, and governing under Blair and Brown. Wherever possible students are encouraged to consult primary documents and the module includes organised visits to the National Archives (Kew) to analyse Treasury, Foreign Office and Cabinet papers.

The module is taught as a weekly two-hour seminar introduced each week with a mini-lecture by the tutor.

By the end of the module it is expected that you will be able to:

- identify the key governing regimes that have existed since 1918
- contribute to sophisticated debates on the nature of governing today
- assess the fundamental problems facing British governments since 1918 and critically evaluate responses to those problems
- conduct rudimentary archival analysis using primary documents located at the National Archives

Assessment

- Two 5,000 word essays (50% each)

You may be interested in these degrees:

- **Political Science (with specialist pathways) (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/taught/govsoc/political-science.aspx)**
- **Political Science (British Politics and the State) MA/PGDip (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/political-science-british-politics-state.aspx)**

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