Course Title : HISTORY OF MODERN BRITAIN

Course Code : HST364

No. of Credits/Term : 3

Mode of Tuition : Sectional approach

Class Contact Hours : 3 hours per week

Category in Major Prog. : Elective

Prerequisite(s) : None

Co-requisite(s) : None

Exclusion(s) : None

Exemption Requirement(s) : None

Brief Course Description : This course will survey the course of British history since 1688. In particular, we will discuss the creation of parliamentary government, the development of Britain as an industrial nation, and the rise and fall of Britain as a Great Power. It will focus on both domestic and global/imperial aspects of British history.

Aims : To assist students to understand the course of modern British history, both as a means of understanding contemporary British in its historical context and as a means of understanding selected aspects of modernity in a focused national context.

Learning Outcomes : After finishing the course, students will be able:
1) to understand the main contours of modern British history
2) to place modern British history within European, imperial, and global contexts
3) to have a deeper understanding of such themes as nationalism, industrialization, cross-cultural exchange, total war, class society, and democratic politics, seen within a focused national context

Indicative Content : I. British Constitutionalism and Reform (1688-1832)
A. The Glorious Revolution and Parliamentary Supremacy
B. Walpole and the Creation of Political Stability
C. Popular Politics, the French Revolution,
and Radicalism
D. Reform, 1820s-1832

II. Britain and the World (1688-1850)
A. The Age of Mercantilism
B. 18th Century Diplomacy and War
C. The Rise of the British East India Company
D. The American Revolution
E. Britain’s Engagement with China

III. An Industrial Revolution? (1750-1880)
A. An Age of Manufactures
B. Domestic Industry
C. King Cotton
D. The Standard of Living Debate
E. Industrialization and British Society
F. The Poor Law and the Chartists

IV. Victorian Society (1830-1900)
A. Evangelicalism and the Crisis of Faith
B. Political Economy and “Self-Help”
C. The Reformist Impulse
D. Gender and Society
E. An Age of Equipoise?
F. Disraeli, Gladstone, and the Creation of Modern British Politics
G. The Great Depression and the Victorian Crisis (1880s-1890s)

V. The Age of Empire (1857-1960)
A. The Indian Revolution
B. The New Imperialism
C. Technology of Imperialism
D. Popular Imperialism
E. Imperialism and Social Reform

VI. Labour’s Century (1906-2007)
A. Mass Electorate, Mass Society, Mass Culture
B. The Rise of a Welfare State
C. A Land Fit for Heroes and A People’s Peace: War and Society
D. The 1945 Labour Landslide and the Origins of Consensus
E. The Permissive Society
F. Race and Britishness
G. The Winter of Discontent
H. Margaret Thatcher and the end of consensus
I. New Labour—New consensus?
VII. Britain and the World in the twentieth century (1914-present)
   A. Their finest hour: Britain in an age of total war
   B. Indian Independence and the winds of change
   C. Affluence or decline?
   D. Britain and the European Union
   E. Britain and the world in a postcolonial era

Teaching Method: This course will employ a combination of lectures and seminar discussions.

                                      2) In-class discussions focused on assigned readings.
                                      3) Examination covering the major themes covered in the readings and lectures.

Assessment: Continuous Assessment 100%

Required/ Essential Readings

Recommended/ Supplementary Readings


Wahrman, Dror, Imagining the Middle Class, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.


