

GEOGRAPHY OF GREAT BRITAIN
GHY 499
SUMMER 2006
SYLLABUS

Professor

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British Guest Lecturers

Dr. Ken Panton; Dr. Keith Cowlard; Dr. Peter Allen; Dr. John Bale

6.0 Hours Credit

British Studies Mission Statement:

The mission of the British Studies Program offered by The University of Southern Mississippi and its consortium partners is to provide students and faculty with the opportunity to live and learn in London, a British center of life, culture, and commerce, and to study social, economic, political, and artistic institutions throughout the United Kingdom.

Course Description

The course provides a series of classroom presentations and day trips in London and involves a guided ten-day fieldtrip through England, Wales, Scotland, and the Shetland Islands off the northern coast of Scotland. Students are given the opportunity to study the physical and human environments of Great Britain and to see the varied landscapes on the island. Rural and urban settlements will be visited; regional variations in culture, economic and industrial development, and land use will be examined. Also, urban form, relic landscape features, agricultural and industrial location, and government planning are studied. While on the fieldtrip the class maintains a rigorous schedule with early days and long evenings. Some strenuous walking is required.

Course Objectives

Study in the British Studies Program in London offers students a unique opportunity to enrich their knowledge of a subject area while engaging in academic and social activities that expand their multicultural and interdisciplinary perspectives. Whether in the areas of business, the arts and humanities, or the social and behavioral sciences, all courses in the British Studies Program emphasize critical thinking, effective writing, interdisciplinary insights, and awareness of the many cultures that have influenced the British Isles. Great Britain, particularly the cosmopolitan city of London, provides an ideal laboratory for such studies and encourages students to understand the history of humankind from a global point of view.

Required Readings:

1. Carter, H. (1986) Cardiff: local, regional and national capital. In Gordon (ed.) Regional Cities of the U.K. London: Harper and Row.
2. Champion, A.G., and Townsend, A.R. (1990) Contemporary Britain. New York: Edward Arnold.
3. Johnston, R.J., and Doornkamp, J.C. (1982) The Changing Geography of the United Kingdom. London: Methuen.
4. Mather, A.S. (1991) Pressures on British forest policy: prologue to the post-industrial forest? Area 23 (3) pp. 245-253.
5. Panton, K.J., and Cowlard, K.A. (1997) The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: England and the United Kingdom. In Panton and Cowlard (eds.) Historical Dictionary of the United Kingdom. Lanham: Scarecrow Press.
6. Sobel, D. (1996) Longitude. New York: Penguin.
7. Studlar, D.T. (1996) Britain in Historical and Geographical Context. In Goodman and Palmer (eds.) Great Britain: Decline or Renewal? Boulder, CO: Westview Press

Plus selected readings to be assigned in London.

Course Evaluation

Evaluation of student performance is based upon three components:

- 1) Students will be required to keep a field notebook during the trip. Entries should focus on changes in landscape, points of interest, land use, comparisons of the physical landscape, and other topics that we discuss on the geography field trip. These notebooks are to be augmented with photographs and a few daily exercises. The notebooks are due along with the research paper in early September. After grading, the notebooks will be returned to the student. **(30%)**
- 2) Research paper due after the course returns to the United States. Topics are instructor approved and must focus upon an aspect of the course experience. The paper must be 9 to 12 pages double-spaced. All papers are to be typed and will be due in early September, 2006. **(40%)**
- 3) Final Exam – consisting of short answer and essay questions. **(30%)**

Fieldtrips and Activities

LONDON BASED

Day trip to Greenwich Observatory via Thames River Ferry

Day trip to Southdowns (heavy walking)

Historical London field trip led by Dr. Keith Cowlard

If possible, day trip to Kew Gardens

10 DAY FIELDTRIP

Day 1 **London - Mainland Shetland Islands.** We will arrive via airplane in Sumburgh on the southern tip of the mainland Shetland Islands and spend the morning visiting Jarlshof, an UNESCO World Heritage Site dedicated to Mesolithic and Neolithic man. Here, dozens of houses dating back over 5,000 years share the landscape with Bronze Age cemeteries, standing stones, 2,000-year old brochs, and Viking ruins. We will discuss the evolution of

human settlement in the British Isles. Then the group will spend the late afternoon visiting the impressive tombolo at St. Ninian's Island. Overnight at the Lerwick Youth Hostel.

Day 2 Mainland Shetland – Unst In the morning, the class will board a bus, and via a series of ferries, travel to the northernmost island in the Shetlands, Unst. Here we will check into the Gardiesfauld Youth Hostel. We will spend the rest of the day hiking to the Hermaness and Hamar of Keen national parks. Here we will discuss the geology of the Shetlands and the concept of island biogeography. Overnight in Unst.

Day 3 Unst – Aberdeen After an early morning tour of the Valhalla Brewery (Great Britain's northernmost brewery), the group will spend the day traveling back to mainland Shetland. We will board a late afternoon flight, and arrive in Aberdeen Scotland. We will check into the Aberdeen Youth Hostel and the students will be given the rest of the evening off. Overnight in Aberdeen.

Day 4 Aberdeen – Stirling The fieldtrip will travel from Aberdeen through the Scottish Highlands stopping at Glencoe, Fort William, and Loch Ness. The focus of the day will be to examine glacial topography and plant geography. Some hiking is expected. We will arrive in the medieval town of Stirling in the early evening and check into the Halls of Residence at the University of Stirling. Overnight in Stirling.

Day 5 Stirling The day will be devoted to an examination of this medieval town, guarded by one of Scotland's most impressive castles, Stirling Castle. The morning session will conclude with a guided tour of the castle. The afternoon will be spent examining the important historical role that the town has played in the history of Scotland. We will tour the William Wallace Memorial in the late afternoon. Overnight in Stirling.

Day 6 Stirling – Keele The fieldtrip will transfer to Keele, England with planned stops in Lockerbie, Scotland and the Scottish boarder town of Moffat, with its traditional wool industries. We will also briefly tour the English Lake District, and then check into the Halls of Residence at Keele University. Overnight in Keele.

Day 7 The Pottery Industry Stoke-on-Trent (near Keele) has the world's densest concentration of ceramics industries. In the morning, there will be a visit to the Gladstone Pottery Museum to see traditional methods of china making. The focus of this day will be to examine the relationships between the natural environment and the location factors of this china making center. That evening we will attend a lecture at the University of Keele from Dr. John Bale, one of the world's experts in sports geography. Dr. Bale will discuss the history and diffusion of British sport. Overnight in Keele.

Day 8 Keele – Cardiff, Wales The group will travel along the Welsh borderlands to the town of Ludlow, with its imposing castle. We will also pass through the town of Ironbridge, home of the Industrial Revolution and the market town of Hay-on-Wye. Next, check into the Halls of Residence at the University of Cardiff. Overnight in Cardiff.

Day 9 Brecon Beacons and Big Pit In the morning, the class will be taken underground on a tour of a coal mine. In the afternoon, the emphasis will be on the changing landscapes of the Welsh Highlands. Overnight in Cardiff.

Day 10 **Cardiff - London** The focus will be on the landscape of southern England. The group will visit the market town of Marlborough, the Stone Age circles at Avebury and the Roman and Georgian cities at Bath. Check back into the dorms in London.

Things to Know

The fieldtrip will return to London before the mini-break. This course is designed for the non-geographer, but does provide an in-depth look into the human and physical geography of Great Britain.

This course offers the student an excellent opportunity to see and study London and then depart on a fieldtrip which will travel from Wales to the Lake District to Edinburgh and on to the Orkney Islands. It is perhaps the most geographically comprehensive study tour of London and Great Britain offered within the British Studies Program. To facilitate the fieldtrip, it is necessary for the class to travel in a minibus for 10 days and 2500 miles. We must travel light.

Students will only pack a small duffel for the fieldtrip and leave their remaining clothes in secure storage at King's College. We will stay in Halls of Residence while away from London. Breakfast is generally provided on these days. This is a course recommended only for students content with rigorous walking, long days, and enjoyable fieldwork. The weather certainly changes daily, especially in the Scottish Highlands; therefore, students are expected to bring warm, waterproof clothing and shoes. Expenses away from London will basically be for meals and souvenirs. Allow about £20 - £25 per day for these costs.

The London-based field trips will allow us to study historic central London and the gentrified Docklands, as well as visit the Greenwich Royal Observatory where students will have an opportunity to study the history of navigation, longitude, and time. A trip to the Kew Garden will provide an opportunity to understand the role Great Britain played in plant dispersal throughout their empire, as well as examine flora from around the world. Trips to the south include South Downs and their chalk cliffs and Brighton (London's seaside resort) for its tourism and economic development.

Field and travel days will be long and intense, but this course offers ample free days in London for the student to explore and sightsee, shop, see plays and participate in London culture or just relax.

AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) If a student has a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies. Mailing address: 118 College Drive #8586, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001; Telephone (601) 266-5024; TTY: (601) 266-6837; Fax: (601) 266-6035.