

Guidelines for the examiner (*sensurveiledning*) for:

ENG 2501, British Politics

The exam for this course consists of two parts, a term paper and a 2-hour written exam, where the paper counts for 60% of the final mark, while the exam counts for 40%. Candidates must pass both parts of the exam individually in order to obtain an overall pass mark.

The exam as a whole emphasises *relevance* in the answers. Both the term paper topics (the students choose one from a selection), and the exam questions are specific, in the sense that they ask the student to address one clearly delimited issue. This means that candidates may be penalised for a lack of focus in their answers to the exam questions, or in their term paper.

The term paper should also be organised as thematic discussion, adhering to a classic humanities-type arrangement of the text, consisting of an introduction, a main part and a conclusion. References and a complete bibliography must be included, but we do not require students to use any specific system of referencing. They have a free choice in this, but consistency is expected. For the term paper, students are also required to consult, and use at least one source of good academic quality beyond the set reading for the course. The term paper tests the candidates' ability to construct an academic analysis of the topic they have chosen, with all means of aid available. Emphasis in the assessment should be placed on (in a declining order of importance): intellectual focus, structure, depth of analysis, depth of knowledge, language, and technical set-up (references and bibliography).

The written exam is a test of knowledge and understanding based on the set reading for the course. The candidates will be presented with a set of 4 questions, where they need to answer 2. They should not attempt to answer more than two questions. It is necessary to pass both the two questions they choose to answer in order to pass the take-home exam. While relevance is equally important as for the term paper, the written exam is not a test of the candidates' ability to present a convincing academic analysis in the same way. Instead, it aims to check that the candidates are familiar with the content of the course in a broad sense, and that they have a clear understanding of the topic the question asks them to address. A demonstrated ability to phrase the answer in an independent fashion should therefore be valued higher than mere reproduction from memory. Language also counts in the written exam, and the examiner may compare the standard of English in the term paper with the written exam. While a higher standard may be expected in the term paper, the discrepancy should not be too marked.

For the general description of marks at ILOS, see:

<https://www.uio.no/studier/eksamen/karakterskala/fagspesifikk-karakterbeskrivelse/hf-ilos-endelig-felles-karakterbeskrivelse.pdf>

The essay topics for the term paper are enclosed with this document.

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Course organiser

Term paper – essay topics

ENG 2501 students are required to write ONE full-length essay of 5 standard pages as part of their exam in ENG 2501. The other part is a 2-hour take-home exam, which is held at the end of the semester. The essay counts for 60% of the final mark, while the written exam counts for 40%. In the exam, you will be asked to answer two out of four questions.

All students need to submit a first draft of their essay, and the deadline for this submission is **8 March by 16:00**. The essay should be submitted under the label/heading 'Term paper' in Canvas. (Note that submitting a first draft is an obligatory exercise for this course.)

Sometime after submission, you will get full feedback on your text, including comments on content, language, presentation and the use of sources. Feedback will be given directly in Canvas.

You then have the remainder of the semester to revise your essay, before the final submission on **25 May at 11:00**. Note that the final submission is in Inpera, NOT Canvas. (See further instructions for the final submission on the course web pages.)

The essay topic must be chosen from the list below.

For your essay, we expect you to look for material beyond the set reading for the course, and a good place to start is the University Library pages for British and American studies. Generally speaking, your essay is likely to improve with the use of *different* sources of information about the *same* topic, not the least, perhaps, because all the essay questions below will require you to *discuss* some or other issue/problem. For an intermediate course such as this one, we will be stressing the importance of this discussion more than we did for, say, the introduction course (ENG 1505), so this is a point worth bearing in mind. The *minimum* requirement is to use, and refer to one source of good academic quality, which is not part of the set reading for the course.

Set-up & requirements

Now that you have commenced on an intermediate/2000-level course, you will presumably have had some experience in writing an academic text, and are familiar with requirements relating to referencing etc. In addition to this, however, there are a couple of specific requirements for the set-up of your ENG 2501-essay, which you need to make a note of. They are:

- **Length** should be 5 standard pages +/- 10%, excluding footnotes/references and bibliography. One standard page is defined as 2300 characters excluding spaces.
- Use at least **1.5** line spacing and font size **11** or **12**. (Note that you may end up on more or less than 5 pages depending on the width of the margins used, type of font and, indeed, the number of footnotes on each page. It is the number of characters that defines the 'standard' page. $5 \times 2300 = 11500$ characters.)
- **Page numbers** must be included on every page.

- For the **first** draft: identify clearly who you are, and which essay topic you have chosen! This is best done by setting up a **separate front page** with your name, and the number and title of the essay topic you have chosen.
- See specific requirements for the second and **final** submission on the course web pages.
- The essay must include a **bibliography** of consulted works at the end.
- Make sure to give **references** to the works you use in the text (as mentioned above).
- Finally: **Style**: We aim to write formal prose, so it is best to avoid abbreviations such as 'don't', 'can't', 'it's' etc. Write 'do not', 'cannot', 'it is' and so on. Best to avoid colloquialisms and slang as well.
- More detail on formal requirements can be found in the booklet *Essay writing: Guidelines for Students*, which can be down-loaded from the course Canvas-room.

ESSAY TOPICS

1. Discuss the extent to which Margaret Thatcher's rise to power as, first leader of the Conservative Party and then prime minister, constituted a break with the so-called post-war 'consensus' in British politics.
2. The policies of Margaret Thatcher's governments have often been subsumed under the title of 'Thatcherism', but did they really warrant an *ism* of their own? Discuss.
3. John Major has often been described as a 'weak' prime minister. Give an assessment of Major's premiership, discussing whether the poor press he received was justified, or not.
4. Discuss the extent to which New Labour's 'Third Way'-approach represented a new departure in British politics.
5. New Labour under the leadership of Tony Blair was sometimes described as 'all presentation and no content'. What was meant by this phrase, and to what extent would you say that it was justified? Discuss.
6. When he became leader of the Conservative Party in 2005, David Cameron sought to 'modernise' the party. Discuss what this policy of modernisation entailed.
7. Many thought that the forming of the first Coalition government in Britain since WW2 in 2010 heralded the beginning of a new era in British politics. Discuss what was new, and not so new, about the Coalition government from 2010 to 2015.
8. Discuss the extent to which 'the awkward partner' is a good description of the UK's approach to membership of the EU in the period covered by the course.
9. Discuss the EU-policies of *one* of the British prime ministers in the period covered by this course. Would you say that their approach was dominated by positive or negative attitudes to the EU?