

COURSE DESCRIPTION & TENTATIVE SCHEDULE 2019

'PLAYS AND POLITICS: UNDERSTANDING BRITAIN'

This will be the tenth year of an intensive summer program that was established in 2007. A team of Oxford University teachers, led by Neil McLynn (who taught in the Keio Law faculty for 17 years), have created an intensive program which is specially designed to allow Keio students to enjoy an authentic taste of the educational methods of one of the oldest and most famous universities in the world. The students will all participate together in a combination of intensive classes which will require them to use both their minds and their bodies, and which will demand all their passion and their energy.

In the mornings they will be participating in debates based on some of the key decisions which helped to shape Britain, at the crucial moments of its long history. This is not, it must be emphasized, a matter of learning dates and names. By looking at the past, they will be shown how they can understand the present; and they will be required to reconsider some of the decisive moments in history, and to argue persuasively about what should have been done. The debates will be followed by lectures by Oxford university teachers, who will analyse the subjects that the students have just debated and introduce the background to the following day's topic. In the afternoons the students will take part in drama workshops, where (under the guidance of a professional theatre director) they will learn how to make a play come alive before an audience, and how to transform themselves into a different character; they will also have a chance to see for themselves professional productions of the plays that they are studying. A team of Oxford university students will act as assistants to help with both the debates and the drama classes.

In this combination of classes, specially designed for Keio students, we hope to give the participants a direct experience of Oxford-style education, in a university where for almost 800 years students have been trained to argue effectively and to act boldly. The students will stay in modern accommodation (single bedrooms, each with its own shower/toilet) which is attached to Lincoln College, established in 1427. We take our meals in the college, and can enjoy the atmosphere of the Medieval buildings. We have restricted the numbers to just 20 students, in order to ensure that each participant can receive individual guidance, and play a full part in all the activities. Every student will have a particular role in the history debates each morning, and will be required to prepare for this; every student will also appear in the performances that will be the final result of the drama course. There is no room for laziness on this program! On the other hand, we do not require native-level fluency in English, extensive knowledge of British history, or experience of participating in drama. We do require enthusiasm, eagerness, flexibility, and above all a willingness to take part positively in this unique experiment.

Course Description

WEEK 1: MORNINGS, 9.30am-11.30am

History and Politics: "Power Games in Medieval England"

Each session will consist of two parts. The students will be given a debate topic for each day, and they will hold their debates in groups in the first part of the class. After the teacher has commented on these debates, he will give his lecture. At the end of the lecture the teacher will provide materials for the next debate, to be held on the following day. The students will be assigned their roles, and will be expected to research and prepare their performance (with help from the student assistants) by the following morning. Because Oxford is itself a

Medieval city, the historic buildings around them will help the students to experience for themselves the atmosphere of Medieval England.

WEEK 1: AFTERNOONS, 2.15pm-4.30pm

Drama Workshop: from Page to Stage

We shall take as a text a play that is being performed at the Globe theatre in London (probably a Shakespeare play), and we shall devise our own methods of performing it—students will learn how to transform themselves into the characters from the play, and how to use their words and bodies to tell a story in such a way that the story comes alive for the audience. The classes will be workshops: we shall be MAKING our own drama, not just studying a text. We shall attend the Globe production of the same play, in order to compare our own interpretations with that of a professional company.

WEEK 2: MORNINGS, 9.30am-11.30am

History and Politics: “The Birth of Modern Britain: Revolution, Authority and Liberty”

The pattern for each day will be as in Week 1, but with the focus now on the 17th century, from the death of Elizabeth I in 1603 to the ‘Glorious Revolution’ of 1688. There will be a topic for debate each morning, and each session will end with a series of questions which will provide the basis for the following day’s debate.

WEEK 2: AFTERNOONS, 2.15pm-4.30pm

Shakespeare Workshop:

The basic pattern will be as in Week 1: we shall hold a drama workshop in each session, in which the students will be encouraged to develop their skills both as actors and directors: they will take scenes from a Shakespeare play, and will find their own way of acting these out. Students will be expected to have read the text before they come to Britain. We shall visit a professional production of the play being studied, probably by the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford.

2019 Tentative schedule

Date	Day	Morning Activity (9.30am-12.00am)	Afternoon Activity (2.00pm-4.30pm)
23-Aug	Fri		Arrival (Heathrow) To Oxford (by hired coach)
24-Aug	Sat	Orientation: debate	Orientation: drama
25-Aug	Sun	Free day	
26-Aug	Mon	Lecture 1	Workshop Making English Drama
27-Aug	Tue	Lecture 2	Workshop
28-Aug	Wed	Lecture 3	Workshop/see a performance of the play in London
29-Aug	Thu	Lecture 4	Workshop
30-Aug	Fri	Lecture 5	Workshop play
31-Aug	Sat	Free day	
1-Sep	Sun	Free day	
2-Sep	Mon	Lecture 6	Workshop Shakespeare Workshop
3-Sep	Tue	Lecture 7	Workshop
4-Sep	Wed	Lecture 8	Workshop
5-Sep	Thu	Lecture 9	Workshop/ See a performance of the play at Stratford
6-Sep	Fri	Lecture 10	Mini-show Shakespeare play
7-Sep	Sat	Departure (Heathrow)	
8-Sep	Sun	Arrival (HND)	