

The Civil Rights Movement
History 350, Fall 1998

Russell Wigginton

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00-4:00 p.m.; by appointment

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Course Description

The Civil Rights era is considered by many as the most tumultuous yet empowering period for blacks in the United States. To explain this phenomena, the course will examine the social, political, and economic climate of the 1950s through the 1960s, and analyze how both blacks and whites were affected. Specifically, the course will focus on various organizations and the strategies they implemented which resulted in events such as the Brown v. Board of Education case, the Greensboro sit-ins, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Additionally, the course will analyze the subtle and not-so-subtle reactions to initiatives that allowed African-Americans to attain many of the rights and privileges that have become commonplace in today's society.

Readings

Chafe, William, Civilities and Civil Rights

Garrow, David, The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It

Haley, Alex, The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Hersey, John, Letter to the Alumni

King, Martin Luther, Why We Can't Wait

Grading

Grades will be determined from the following course requirements:

1. **45%** - Three (15% each) 5-6 page "reaction" papers. Throughout the semester, students will write essays in response to questions that arise from the readings, lectures, and discussions. Note: Be sure to use a "normal" size font. If you have any questions about the font you plan to use, please ask before turning in the paper.
2. **20%** - Exam I. A mid-semester examination that will consist of a few short answers as well as a more lengthy essay. Students will be expected to incorporate the readings, lectures, and discussions.
3. **25%** - Exam II. A Final examination that will cover material from the entire semester, however, the focus will be on the second half of the course. This exam will be the same format as the mid-semester examination.

4. **10%** - Attendance/Participation. Although lectures will take up much of class time, student discussions of issues raised throughout the semester will be a critical part of the class. Thus, students are expected to attend class and be prepared to discuss major themes from the readings.

5. **Extra Credit (15%)** Students will have the opportunity to perform volunteer service (8 hours) with a pre-approved, civil rights related community service organization (ie, the Boys and Girls Club). In addition to the service hours, students will write a 3-4 page essay explaining the significance of the organization and the duties that the student performed. Those who choose to complete these requirements may substitute the volunteered time and paper for **one** “reaction” paper (assuming that the volunteer hours are completed and the essay is of better quality than the reaction paper).

***Late Policy** - There will be no extensions given on any written assignments without penalty (one letter grade per day). The only exceptions will be those deemed “acceptable” by the College Handbook.

Class Assignments

Origins of the Civil Rights Movement

- 8/26 Introduction
- 8/28 Protest Tradition; no reading
- 8/31 WWII Era Initiatives; no reading

Brown Decision and the Aftermath

- 9/2 Garrow, chapter 1; pages 19-52
- 9/4 Garrow, chapters 2 -3; pages 53-90
- 9/9 Garrow, chapters 4-6; pages 91-134
- 9/11 Garrow, chapters 7-9; pages 135-179
- 9/14 **Paper 1 Due (15%); no reading**

A Southern Paradox

- 9/16 Chafe, Introduction-chapter 1; pages 3-41
- 9/18 Chafe, chapter 2; pages 42-70
- 9/21 Chafe, chapters 3-4; pages 71-118

- 9/23 Chafe, chapter 5 ; pages 119-152
- 9/25 Chafe, chapter 6; pages 155-171
- 9/28 Chafe, chapter 7; pages 172-202
- 9/30 Chafe, chapter 8; pages 203-236
- 10/2 Chafe, chapter 9; pages 237-249
- 10/5 **Exam 1 (20%)**

King v. Malcolm X

- 10/7 King, chapter 1; pages 15-26
- 10/9 King, chapters 2-3; pages 27-58
- 10/12 King, chapter 4; pages 59-75
- 10/14 King, chapter 5; pages 76-95
- 10/16 King, chapters 6-7; pages 96-125
- 10/21 King, chapter 8; pages 126-152
- 10/23 **Paper 2 Due (15%); no reading**
- 10/26 Haley, chapter 1; pages 1-23
- 10/28 Haley, chapters 2-4; pages 24-72
- 10/30 Haley, chapters 5-6; pages 73-110
- 11/2 Haley, chapters 7-8; pages 111-136
- 11/4 Haley, chapters 9-12; pages 137-214
- 11/6 Haley, chapters 13; pages 215-239
- 11/9 Haley, chapter 14; pages 240-270
- 11/11 Haley, chapters 15-17; pages 271-348

11/13 Haley, chapter 18-19; pages 349-389

11/16 **Paper 3 Due (15%); no reading**

White Response

11/18 **Field Trip!**

11/20 Hersey book; pages to be assigned

11/23 Hersey book; pages to be assigned

11/30 Hersey book; pages to be assigned

12/2 Hersey book; pages to be assigned

12/4 Civil Rights Today; article to be assigned

12/7 “Catch Up” Day

12/9 **Volunteer Paper Due; Final Review**

12/16 **Final Exam 1:00-3:30 p.m.**