

History 343 – The Civil Rights Movement

Dr. Charles W. McKinney

Spring 2009, 313 Clough Hall
MWF 3.00 – 3.50
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays
4.00 – 5.30 and by appointment

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Course Description

This course will examine the development of the American Civil Rights Movement from roughly the World War II period through the Black Power era of the late 1960's and early 1970's. In the semester, we will examine the social, political and economic climate of the era and consider 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 *Brown v. Board of Education*, 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.

Course Requirements:

Books:

- William Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights (Civilities)*
- Lawson and Payne, *Debating the Civil Rights Movement (Debating)*
- Jeffrey Ogbar, *Black Power (Power)*
- Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom (Light)*
- Howell Raines, *My Soul is Rested (Soul)*

Reaction Papers - 30% of final grade:

Students will submit **three** 3 – 4 page reaction papers due on designated days. To do these papers, you will select a set of related readings and provide a critical reading/reaction to the intellectual and thematic terrain covered by the text(s) you select. In these papers, you will discuss and evaluate the major themes that arise in the readings and discussions, and assess them accordingly. While a (very) short synopsis of the readings can make its way into the papers, reaction papers will ultimately be graded based on the *conclusions* you draw about the readings/discussions themselves, and the ways in which they help/do not help you understand particular topics or themes. One final note on the papers: when I say they should be 3-4 pages long I mean it. *Papers that do not have at least three full pages of text will not be graded.* Although this should go without saying, I'll put it in here anyway: a title page does **not** count as page one of your paper.

In-class participation/research paper presentation - 35% of final grade

As for class participation, I expect you to attend every class meeting, to arrive on time and to come ready, having done the assigned reading and/or written assignment. Since there will be a very high premium on class discussion, it is imperative that everyone come to class ready to contribute with comments, questions and insights. Remember though, class participation is not a contest. The people who talk the most do not necessarily "win." What really counts is your ability and willingness to bring something valuable to the discussion that your colleagues and I can build upon in our efforts to bring some clarity to the issues that we are discussing. If you have an insight on the readings, or if you have a page full of questions, let your voice be heard! Of course, this level of participation will require full reading of assigned work. Also, to ensure the best possible experience for all of us, let's refrain from using inappropriate language, or any other activity that may make our classroom less than open and engaging. **A substantial portion of this grade will be drawn from the presentation you make on your research paper at the end of the semester.**

Annotated Bibliography – 15% of final grade

Prior to turning in your final paper, you will produce an annotated bibliography that discusses 10 – 12 books and scholarly articles. This exercise will provide you with a solid grounding in the literature related to your paper topic, and will enable you to craft a firm, coherent thesis statement as well. The annotated bibliography is due on **Wednesday April 1 at the beginning of class.**

Final paper – 20% of final grade

Students will submit a 10-15 page research paper that uses a substantial amount of secondary sources, primary source documents, or oral interviews to explore key issues raised (or not raised) throughout the course. I will be happy to assist you in your efforts to identify primary source materials for this paper. The final paper is due on **Friday April 17 at the beginning of class.**

Please Note: Assignment Due Dates Are Fixed.

Please do not hesitate to come by my office to discuss any of these requirements.

Honor Code:

All work turned in for this course is to be completed in accordance with the Rhodes College Honor Code. To demonstrate your commitment to the Code, each student must write “pledged” and sign his/her name on every assignment. If you have questions about plagiarism you should talk to me directly.

Policies:

Note on written work:

All written work must be composed on a computer, be double-spaced and in 10 or 12 point font. Have your name, the assignment name (and number if necessary), date, course name and email address on each document you turn in. Make sure your pages are **numbered**. Make sure your assignments are stapled. The papers that you submit should reflect your best efforts. Students who feel that they need assistance with written assignments should feel free to contact me so that we can discuss whatever challenges you may be facing.

Attendance:

Students will be allowed three unexcused absences. *All other absences after the third one must be excused. Each unexcused absence after the third one will cost you 5% of your **final** grade. If you miss three weeks worth of classes, you can be dropped from the class or flunked.* Valid excuses for missing class include but are not limited to religious observances, college-sanctioned academic or athletic travel, personal illness or injury, family illness or injury or bereavement. Excuses after the allotted three should be accompanied by a note from the Dean's office. Needless to say, infrequent class attendance will negatively impact your class participation grade.

Paper/test grades:

As a general rule, grades are not negotiable. However, I will gladly discuss the grade on any assignment 24 hours after the work is turned in.

Late Papers:

Papers are due at the beginning of class. Papers that are one day late will be penalized one letter grade. “My computer crashed the morning the paper was due”, or “the printer was out of toner” are not valid excuses for a late paper; rather, they are a testament to poor time management on your part. **Papers over one day late will receive an F.** However, please note that you must turn in all of the assigned work in order to pass the class.

Learning Differences:

I am strongly committed to accommodating students with disabilities, and ask your cooperation in making sure that I'm aware of any such accommodation you might need. For more information, please contact Student Disability Services to alert them of any needs you may have.

Additional Information:

- Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, games, and any other object that can beep, buzz, ring or vibrate. These devices are extremely disruptive when they go off in the middle of class
- The readings for the week should be done by the *beginning of each week*
- ***I reserve the right to amend this syllabus as necessary***

Class Schedule:

January

W	14	Go over the syllabus; writing exercise: what do you know about the CRM?
F	16	Library Orientation, Barret 218
M	19	NO CLASS – MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. (Morehouse, class of 1948) DAY
W	21	Challenging the Master Narrative
F	23	“Double V” For Victory: Making Democracy Real in the United States READING: Bates article (folder)
M	26	Blueprint for a Revolution READING: Randolph, “March on Washington Movement” (folder)
W	28	A Matter of Survival READING: <i>Light</i> , chap. 1
F	30	The Original “Freedom Writers:” Early Literature of the Movement READING: <i>The Christian Way of Race Relations; What the Negro Wants</i> (both in folder) <u>REACTION PAPER #1 DUE</u>

February

M	2	World War, Race War READING: Tyson, “Wars for Democracy” (folder)
W	4	Montgomery: The Boycott Heard Around the World READING: <i>Soul</i> , 37 – 61; <i>Debating</i> , 99 – 113
F	6	Beyond Montgomery – The Movement Spreads READING: <i>Light</i> , chap. 2
M	9	Race Traitors and Agitators READING: Tyson, “Dynamite and the Silent South” (folder); <i>Soul</i> , 297 – 323; “Subversive Southerner” article (titled “chapter 6” in folder)

W 11 *Brown* and the Dilemma of Integration
READING: Adam Fairclough and Charles Payne articles, *Journal of American History* available at:
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?RQT=572&TS=1168385961&clientId=390&VType=PQD&VName=PQD&VInst=PROD&PMID=28397&PCID=12977601&SrtM=0&SrchMode=3&aid=1>

F 13 *Brown*, Part II

REACTION PAPER #2 DUE

M 16 The Politics of Moderation
READING: *Civilities*, skim chap. 1, read chap. 2; *Debating*, 3 – 20

W 18 The Sit-Ins and Freedom Rides: Constitutional Crises
READING: *Civilities*, chap. 3; *Soul*, 75 – 108

F 20 Film: “Eyes on the Prize”

M 23 SNCC: The Movement’s Shock Troops
READING: *Soul*, 75 – 137

W 25 Organizing vs. Mobilizing
READING: *Civilities*, chaps. 4 – 6

F 27 Organizing vs. Mobilizing, Part II
READING: *Light*, chap. 3; *Soul*, 249 – 254, 260 – 267

REACTION PAPER #3 DUE

March

M 2 Film: “Eyes on the Prize” (No Easy Walk)

W 4 Mobilizing vs. Organizing
READING: *Debating*, 20 – 33, 115 – 129; *Soul*, 154 – 161, 179 – 193

F 6 **Midterm Exam**

M 9 Deep Work: Making Movements Away from the Cameras
READING: *Light*, chaps. 6 – 8

W 11 Women in the Movement
READING: *Light*, chap. 9

Spring Break

M 23 Nonviolence? Really? Where?
READING: “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (folder); Strain, “Pure Fire” (folder); listen to Malcolm X, “Message To the Grassroots” at:
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/malcolmgrassroots.htm>

- W 25 Freedom Summer
READING: *Light*, chaps. 10 – 11
- F 27 **Movie**
- M 30 The Movement Peaks: Internal Divisions and the Limits of Nonviolence
READING: *Civilities*, chaps. 7 – 8; *Light*, chap. 13

April

- W 1 The Origins of Black Power
READING: Robert F. Williams, "Black Power," and the Roots of the African American Freedom Struggle by Timothy B. Tyson at:
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0021-8723%28199809%2985%3A2%3C540%3ARFW%22PA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-P>
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND THESIS DUE

- F 3 The “Emergence” of Black Power
READING: *Power*, Introduction – chap. 2
- M 6 The Rise of the Black Panther Party
READING: *Power*, chaps. 3 – 4
- W 8 Black Power and the Black Freedom Struggle: Decline or Evolution?
READING: *Power*, chaps. 5 – 6; Martin Luther King, Jr. on Vietnam (folder)
- F 10 **Good Friday Break**
- M 13 Tennessee and the Black Freedom Struggle
READING: Fleming, “We Shall Overcome” (folder)
- W 15 Civil Rights and Popular Culture
- F 17 Where Did We Go From There? Assessing the Movement in a New Century
READING: “Race in the American Mind” – in folder as “243”

FINAL PAPER DUE ON Friday, April 17

- M 20 Class Presentations
- W 22 Class Presentations
- F 24 Class Presentations
- M 27 Class Presentations

May

- F 1 **URCAS**
- F 8 **Final Exam**