

HISTORY OF THE U.S. IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS ERA
HIS 356P (39940) / AFR 374D (30457) / AMS 321 (30805) / MAS 374 (36533)
FALL 2013 UTC 3.134 T TH 3:30 – 5:00
Professor Laurie Green

OFFICE HOURS

Professor Green: T 2-3, W 1-2 GAR 2.116
David Villarreal: T 5-6, Th 2-3 PCL café
History Office: GAR 1.104; 471-3261

CONTACT INFORMATION

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This semester begins on the 50th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington. Almost every American schoolchild learns about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech, but far fewer are taught even the full name of the march for "Jobs and Freedom," or who organized the event and why, let alone what convinced a quarter million people to board buses and trains around the country to travel to the nation's capitol. This coming spring and next fall, Austin and the LBJ Library will play central roles in commemorations of the 50th anniversaries of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the War on Poverty. What, then, does it mean for today to commemorate these civil rights landmarks? To provide an understanding of movements for racial justice in the mid-twentieth century and the relevance of this history for today, this course situates them within the broader historical context of American society, including the politics, popular culture and social life of that era. We consider such topics as the Cold War, the mass media, urbanization, and the Vietnam War. The course centers on the Black Freedom Movement but is taught from a comparative perspective. We thus pay considerable attention to social movements initiated by Mexican Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans. Throughout, we address such broad themes as American democracy and citizenship, race and racism, gender and sexuality, labor and class conflict. Although the class is a lecture course, students are encouraged to engage critically with course material through in-class discussions.

Course Evaluation:

- 1) Regular attendance. After two unexcused absences, 2 points will be dropped from final grade for each additional unexcused absence.
- 2) Two reading handouts (10%)
- 3) Three in-class exams (20% each, 60% total)
- 4) Five-page essay (30%)
- 5) Extra credit: You can raise your final grade by 1-2 points by attending one extra credit event and submitting a 250-word commentary. You will receive announcements of these events.

Required readings:

All readings other than books will be posted on Blackboard.

Books are available at the University Co-op Bookstore and at PCL Reserves.

Cone, James H. *Martin and Malcolm and America: A Dream or a Nightmare*

García, Mario T. and Sal Castro. *Blowout! Sal Castro & the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice*

Martin, Waldo E. *Brown v. Board of Education: A Brief History with Documents*

Sellers, Cleveland. *The River of No Return: The Autobiography of a Black Militant and the Life and Death of SNCC*

Strum, Philippa. *Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican American Rights*

Takaki, Ronald. *Double Victory: A Multicultural History of America in World War II*

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Attendance and promptness: What we do in class is essential to your learning in the course, so attendance is mandatory. Excused absences include medical emergencies, family emergencies, religious holidays, and official U.T. business. These require written notes. Class etiquette includes arriving on time and staying until the end of class. If there is a reason why you cannot arrive on time or stay until the end of class please speak to me ahead of time.

Grades:

Pluses and minuses will be used, as follows:

A = 93-100; A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82

C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72

D+ = 67-69; D – 63-66; D- = 60-62

F = below 60

Grades ending in .5 or above will be rounded up; grades ending in .49 or below will not.

Blackboard will be used extensively in this course. You will find links for the syllabus, announcements, assignments, and readings, and be able to check your grades. I also use Blackboard to send emails. You are responsible for making sure your inbox is not full.

Reading noted on the syllabus should be completed *before* class time. Required readings will be covered in exams, so you should take notes on central points.

Films are required course material and will be included on exams. If you miss a film you can watch it at the Fine Arts Library, where it will be on reserve *except where noted otherwise*.

Reading handouts: The reading handouts will be comprised of five questions. Each question asks you to write a paragraph of 5-7 sentences analyzing some aspect of the book(s). Questions will not be oriented to testing that you read the book, but will ask you to think “critically” – make an argument based on your own reading – about it. Responding to these questions will help prepare you for the kind of essay questions I ask on exams. They will be graded on a 10-point scale, with each of the five questions worth 2 points.

Paper: You will receive a detailed assignment for a paper of about 1,250 words in length that compares and contrasts the ideas of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Your analysis will be based largely on readings of original speeches, writings and interviews by the two men, although you will also read parts of a book on this subject and watch a documentary on Malcolm X. The paper addresses textbook and popular accounts of the Civil Rights Movement that present the men as polar opposites. You will have the opportunity to draw your own conclusion. Unless a written medical excuse or documentation of family emergency is provided, submitting a paper after the deadline will result in a loss of 10 points for each day they are late.

Exams: There is no final exam for this course. Instead, there are three end-of-unit exams. Each exam will have the same format. The first half will be a multiple-choice section based on terms used in my lectures. They will be included in my PowerPoint and then posted on Blackboard after the lecture. The second half will be an essay question. I will give you three study questions before the exam. Two will appear on the exam itself. You will write an essay on one of the two. *A word to the wise: don't try to guess which one I will pick – I may surprise you!* You will have opportunities to ask about the exam questions or course material during study sessions and office hours prior to each exam. Exams must be taken on the scheduled date unless a written medical excuse or documentation of family emergency or university-related conflict is provided.

You may, however, always take a make-up exam under the conditions stated below. **Bring a totally blank blue book, pen and pencil to each exam.**

Make-up Quizzes and Exams

Make-up exams are proctored by the History Department on Friday afternoons between 2 and 4:45. You must bring photo identification. If you missed the exam for an excused reason, you will not receive a point deduction. If you missed the quiz or exam for any other reason you will be docked one full grade.

Special accommodations will be provided, upon request, for qualified students with learning disabilities. Contact the Dean of Students office at 471-6259 or ssd@uts.cc.utexas.edu if you have need of accommodations for which you are not already certified. Please submit your letter about your approved accommodations early in the semester.

Academic integrity: The University of Texas adheres strictly to guidelines regarding academic integrity, including cheating and plagiarism. *These guidelines extend to all material found on the worldwide web*, as well as to all print material. Penalties for violations may include loss of credit for the course and a report to the Student Judicial Services. Please familiarize yourself with the links on the following website. http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php .

Flags carried by this course:

Cultural Diversity in the United States courses increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. Your grade comes from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

Ethics and Leadership courses are designed to equip you with skills necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. Your assignments will focus in large part on historical situations that involved conflicts over ethics in real-life situations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction

Aug. 29: Intro: Why Study the Civil Rights Movement Today?

UNIT 1: The War at Home, The War Abroad: Race and American Democracy

Week 2: World War II: A Watershed?

Sept. 3: Defending Democracy and Fighting Inequality
READ: Takaki, ch. 1, 2, 3

Sept. 5: Race and Democracy on the Home Front
READ: Takaki, ch. 4-5

Week 3: Hidden Histories

Sept. 10: Japanese Internment
FILM: *A Family Gathering*
READ: Takaki, ch. 6-7

Sept. 12: The Home Front: A Watershed for Women?
READ: "Rosie the Riveter and Other Wartime Women," in Susan Ware, ed., *Modern American Women*
FILM CLIP: *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter*
DUE IN CLASS: Reading handout on Takaki

Week 4: Racial Justice after World War II

- Sept. 17: "We Return Fighting": Veterans, Racial Militancy and Postwar Politics
READ: "Amzie Moore" chapter
- Sept. 19: Cold War, Civil Rights
READ: Mary Dudziak, excerpts from *Cold War, Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*

Week 5: Race and Culture in Postwar Society

- Sept. 24: Urbanization, Migration and Postwar Culture
READ: Pete Daniel, "Rhythms of the Land," in *Lost Revolutions: The South in the 1950s*
- Sept. 26: **EXAM #1: Bring a blue book, pencil and pen.**

UNIT 2: Disrupting Racial Structures in Postwar Society

Week 6: School Desegregation in Comparative Perspective I: *Mendez v. Westminster*

- Oct. 1: Challenging the "Mexican schools"
READ: Strum, ch. 1-4
- Oct. 3: The *Mendez* Decision: Race or National Origin?
READ: Strum, ch. 5-9

Week 7: School Desegregation in Comparative Perspective II: *Brown v. Board of Education*

- Oct. 8: The Road to *Brown v. Board of Education*
READ: Martin, 7-19, 76-86, 91-100, 110-120
- Oct. 10: Overturning "Separate But Equal"
READ: Martin, 121-23, 137-98
- DUE IN CLASS: Reading Handout on Strum and Martin books**

Week 8: Responding to Brown: A Divided South

- Oct. 15: Massive Resistance? From Emmett Till to Hoxie to Little Rock
READ: Martin, 199-223
FILM: *Hoxie: The First Stand*
- Oct. 17: Grassroots activism after *Brown*: Montgomery
READ:
1) Joann Gibson Robinson, excerpt from *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*
2) Rosa Parks, "'Tired of Giving In': The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott"

Week 9: Freedom Now!

- Oct. 22: Sit-Ins and Stand-Ins: Austin and the South
READ: Sellers, ch. 1-5
- Oct. 24: A National Movement: From Freedom Rides to the March on Washington
READ:
1) Sellers, ch. 6-8
2) March on Washington speeches (posted on Blackboard)
FILM: *Eyes on the Prize* segment, "Ain't Scared of Your Jails"

Week 10: Turning a Corner

- Oct. 29: **Exam #2: Bring a blue book, pencil and pen.**

UNIT 3: Where Do We Go From Here?

Oct. 31: Freedom Summer and Challenges to Liberalism
READ: Sellers, ch. 9-11

Week 11: Ideological Crossroads

Nov. 5: Antipoverty and Racial Justice: The Politics of Hunger
READ: Begin work on Malcolm/Martin paper. No other reading.
VIDEO: "CBS Reports: 'Hunger in America'" (1968) (Not on reserve)

Nov. 7: Black Power
READ: Sellers, ch. 12, 14-19.

Week 12: Where Do We Go From Here?

Nov. 12: Reassessing Martin and Malcolm
READ: Cone, ch. 3-4, 7-9 [read as much of this as you can for class]
FILM: *Malcolm X: His Own Story as It Really Happened*

Nov. 14: Race, Class and Vietnam
NO READING. Work on your paper instead.

Paper due FRIDAY, 11/15, 4 p.m., Hard copy only, HISTORY OFFICE

Week 13: Civil Rights or Liberation?

Nov. 19: Origins of the Chicano Movement
READ: García and Castro, 27-132 (Introduction recommended but optional)

Nov. 21: Chicano Liberation
READ: García and Castro, 133-209

Week 14: Politics of National Identity

Nov. 26: The Native American Movement – On the eve of Thanksgiving
Read: *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People*, excerpt
FILM: *Alcatraz is Not an Island*

Nov. 28: NO CLASS. ENJOY YOUR THANKSGIVING BREAK!

Week 15: Historical Memories and Present Realities in the Post-Civil Rights Era

Dec. 3: Once Again, Where Do We Go From Here?

Dec. 5: **EXAM #3 Bring a blue book, pencil and pen.**