



# W. E. B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies

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of Africana research, teaching, and service



## AFROAM 236: History of the Civil Rights Movement

MoWe 11:15AM - 12:05PM Ag. Engineering Bldg Rm 119

Professor [Amilcar Shabazz](#)

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Office: 325 New Africa House

Fall 2009 Conference Hours: Mon., 2-3PM

TAs: DeRoy Gordon, Jason Hendrickson

and by appointment

<http://blogs.umass.edu/afroam236-shabazz/> :web: <http://people.umass.edu/shabazz/az.html>

### Course Description

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Examination of the civil rights movement from the Brown v. Topeka decision to the rise of Black power. All the major organizations of the period, e.g. SCLC, SNCC, CORE, NAACP, and the Urban League, are covered including their impact on white students and the anti-war movement. As a General Education **HSD** designated Social World component course it aims to help you to arrive at a better understanding of yourself and other people. It also aims to develop your writing and critical thinking skills through the lens of Historical Studies and the Social and Cultural Diversity of the United States. See <http://www.umass.edu/gened/> for details about Gen. Ed.

### Requirements

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1. Adherence to the class schedule is required. Be attentive in and prepared on the days of class and discussion sections. Complete all assignments. No late papers will be accepted on GP.
2. All University rules governing plagiarism must be observed. See UMass's **Academic Honesty** policies at: [http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/)
3. As we study & discuss critical and sometimes contentious subject matter we will adhere to a policy of mutual respect. Please familiarize yourself with the UMass [Code of Student Conduct](#) - Trustee Doc. #T-95-095A and the [Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination Policy Statement](#)

*The University of Massachusetts Amherst prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state or federal law in any aspect of the access to, admission, or treatment of students in its programs and activities, or in employment and application for employment. Furthermore, University policy includes prohibitions of harassment of students and employees, i.e., racial harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination.*

### Required Texts

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*The Struggle for Black Equality [SBE]* by Howard Sitkoff ISBN 10: 0-8090-8924-6

*Coming of Age in Mississippi [CAM]* by Anne Moody (revised edition, 2008)

*Carry Me Home, The Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Movement [CMH]* by Diane McWhorter  
Portions of *Ready for Revolution* by Kwame Ture/Michael Thelwell; *Letters from Mississippi*; and *Thelwell's Duties, Pleasures, and Conflicts*; as well as other pieces will be found online or in a course reader on reserve in the Du Bois Library or for purchase at Collective Copies. Go to FOOD FOR THOUGHT BOOKS, 106 N Pleasant St., 413-253-5432 for copies of the books.

## Course Overview

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This course offers an historical survey and analytical examination of one period of the struggle—which continues to this day—against racially discriminatory political and economic policies and social practices in the United States. Our focus will be on the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) of the 1960s, that period of massive and dramatic confrontation, progress, and subsequent reaction as succeeding governments—Nixon through Bush—retreated from the promise and obligations of the nation’s engagement with the baleful legacy and social consequences of racism in American culture.

Our focus will be on the movement phenomenon—that combination of people, organizations; social forces and individuals; leaders and troops which came together in the 1960s to conduct the struggle. But to understand the CRM, it is necessary to understand the causes, sources, and the historical contexts going back to the founding of the USA: the presence and effect of race, racial differences, racism, and racial injustice in American culture.

We will try to understand and “overstand” the historical developments and social realities that made the CRM necessary and possible. Why it came at the time it did, the way it did. Also, what was the character and culture of the CRM, its goals and strategies, as well as the nature, character, and sources of the opposition which developed in response to the CRM? Finally, we will ask what it all meant.

## Instructional Goals

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1. To learn the fundamentals of social justice movements in U.S. history
2. To gain a basic understanding of how race, racism, and white supremacy have influenced, especially negatively, the struggle for freedom of people of African descent in the U.S.
3. To gain a basic understanding of how the struggle for freedom of African Americans has influenced and was responded to by other groups in the United States
4. To develop proficiency at looking at issues from a multiplicity of cultural and ideological lenses, as well as the study of historical artifacts
5. To develop critical thinking skills and information literacy

## Grading

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| 1. Class Citizenship/Attendance/Brief Response Papers/Possible Pop Quizzes   | = 40% |
| 2. Mid-Term exam of short identification questions and brief essay questions | = 30% |
| 3. Individual writing assignment due at the end of the term                  | = 30% |

**Rubric: 90-100 A (or A-) / 80-89 B (or B+/-) / 70-79 C (or C+/-) / 60-69 D / 0-59 F**

\*Announced and unannounced tests and reading quizzes will be given as needed.\*

\*Details on the book review & final paper assignments will come in separate handouts.\*

## Reaching Me & My Office Hours

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I am often in my office at 324 New Africa House during business hours Mondays through Fridays. My office hours are Mondays 2-3PM or by appointment. My administrative assistant is Ms. Tricia Loveland who can be reached at [lovelan@afroam.umass.edu](mailto:lovelan@afroam.umass.edu) or (413) 545-2751 -- My direct phone line is 545-5019 and my email is provided above. Please see your TA first and copy him in on email messages.

## Syllabus Schedule

<b>Week 1:</b>	Wednesday, Sep. 9	Introduction / 1954		
<b>Reading:</b>	Course Syllabus & Schedule; <a href="#">Plessy v. Ferguson and Harlan's dissent</a>			
<b>Week 2:</b>	Monday, Sep. 14	1955;	Wednesday, Sep. 16	Montgomery
<b>Reading:</b>	"The Arc of the Universe" <Response Paper>			
<b>Week 3:</b>	Monday, Sep. 21	1956;	Wednesday, Sep. 23	Massive resistance
<b>Reading:</b>	"Open Letter to Justice Clarence Thomas" & "False, Fleeting, Perjured Clarence"			
<b>Week 4:</b>	Monday, Sep. 28	1957;	Wednesday, Sep. 30	Little Rock
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>SBE</b> , chapters 1-7			
<b>Week 5:</b>	Monday, Oct. 5	1958;	Wednesday, Oct. 7	Passive resistance
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>RfR</b> , chapter 8; "Nonviolence vs. Jim Crow;" and "The Negro & Nonviolence"			
<b>Week 6:</b>	Monday, Oct. 12	1959;	Wednesday, Oct. 14	Outsiders/Insiders
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>RfR</b> , chapter 9; "The Political Significance of the Freedom Rides"			
<b>Week 7:</b>	Monday, Oct. 19	1960;	Wednesday, Oct. 21	From Sit-Ins to SNCC
<b>Reading:</b>	"Fish are Jumpin," "The Organizer"			
<b>Week 8:</b>	Monday, Oct. 26	1961;	Wednesday, Oct. 28	MIDTERM EXAM
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>RfR</b> , chapter 10			
<b>Week 9:</b>	Monday, Nov. 2	1962;	Wednesday, Nov. 4	Mississippi Goddamn
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>CMH</b> part 1			
<b>Week 10:</b>	Monday, Nov.9	1963;	Wednesday, Nov. 11	<b>Alabama</b>
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>CMH</b> part 2			
<b>Week 11:</b>	Monday, Nov.16	1964;	Wednesday, Nov. 18	Washington
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>RfR</b> , chapter 15-16 Barack Obama's <a href="#">3/18/2008 Philadelphia speech</a> See <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWe7wTVbLUU">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWe7wTVbLUU</a>			
<b>Week 12:</b>	Monday, Nov.23	1965		[THANKSGIVING]
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>CMH</b> part 3			
<b>Week 13:</b>	Monday, Nov.30	1966-67;	Wednesday, Dec. 2	After legislation
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>CAM</b> part 1			
<b>Week 14:</b>	Monday, Dec.7	1968;	Wednesday, Dec. 9	The Music Dies
<b>Reading:</b>	<b>CAM</b> part 2			
<b>Week 15:</b>	<b>Final paper projects are due</b> by 6PM, DECEMBER 14, 2009			

*NOTE: I may make reasonable adjustments to the above schedule as the semester proceeds.*

## CIVIC-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / SERVICE LEARNING / ELECTRONIC WRITING / XTRA.CRED

I do allow and encourage students to propose projects that demonstrate your knowledge and the competencies you have developed in the course through civic service learning work as well using "new" or multi-media resources. This might involve video, a website, an electronic poster presentation, or something else. See me if you are interesting in doing such a project for credit in the course. Also, I will identify extra credit opportunities throughout the semester that can help you boost your grade and your knowledge base—just do it when it comes.