“History of the Civil Rights Movement”

Spring 2016 Syllabus for AFROAM 236-02 (19405)
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Class Meeting Time: Tuesday/Thursday 11:30 - 12:45
Classroom: Wheeler B05
Instructor: Robert Williams (Please call me Bob)
Email: rwillila@acad.umass.edu (response time within 48 hrs)
Office: New Africa House Room 307
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:00 - 2:00; other days by appointment

Please feel free to contact me about any questions that you have, at any time. I check my email frequently. (You should know that I typically won’t reply after 5pm or on the weekend.) I am also very happy to meet with you in my office. If you can’t make the office hours, just let me know; we’ll schedule something else. Please check your email often. It is part of your role as a student to check your email throughout the week for information about the course.

Course Description

The Civil Rights Movement is one of the most transformative grassroots activist movements in the history of the United States. While the development of the modern movement was influenced by the socio-economic and cultural shifts experienced by the United States in the aftermath of World War II, it has deep roots in a tradition of Black activism and resistance dating back to the Abolitionist Movement of the Antebellum period. Out of these traditions evolved a complex and robust mass movement to liberate the millions of African Americans from profoundly violent systems of racism that bound them legally and socially to the status of second-class citizens, and economically to generational cycles of grinding poverty. This mass movement drove a historical process that transformed the political, social, and economic terrain of the United States, and inspired similar movements for liberation, justice, and equality globally.

This course is designed to have two primary objectives: First, to engage students with the historical roots of the movement, the political and socio-economic forces that influenced its birth and development, the historical process of the movement itself, and the major organizations and communities involved in the struggle. Additionally, we will analyze the successes and failures of the Movement, its strengths and weaknesses, and how the Movement has continued to influence the landscape of political protest today. The second objective will be to facilitate the composition of a major piece of professional quality writing, and all of the skill sets required to achieve this goal. These include developing skills in how to conduct research, analyze and use primary and secondary sources, construct an annotated bibliography, draft a detailed outline, transform that outline into a draft, and edit that draft to a finished product. The goal of this process is that students will be able to engage with the material as serious scholars in a way that best supports their educational and professional goals. Thus,
students will work with the instructor to develop a topic that both conducts an analysis of an aspect of the Civil Rights Movement, yet is also relevant to their chosen field of study or personal interests. Ultimately, this project is intended to be useful to students as they will learning how to properly craft a large piece of expository writing, and they will have a professional grade writing sample for use in pursuing their future endeavors.

In addition, this course has the same credit hour level, and is of the same difficulty level, as the main campus Afro-Am 236 course.

**Learning Outcomes**

This course supports the General Education learning outcomes:

1. Fundamental questions, ideas, and methods of analysis in the humanities and fine arts, social sciences, mathematics, and natural and physical sciences;
2. The application and integration of these methods of analysis to real world problems and contexts;
3. Creative, analytical, quantitative, and critical thinking through inquiry, problem solving and synthesis;
4. Pluralistic perspective-taking and awareness of the relationship among culture, self, and others;
5. Understanding and evaluating the consequences of one’s choices and the implications of one’s actions.
6. Opportunities to develop and practice the skills of critical thinking, reasoning, communication, and integration of knowledge and perspectives, including:
   a. Communicating persuasively and effectively orally and in writing;
   b. Working effectively and collaboratively (in groups, across perspectives);
   c. Developing information and technological literacy

By pursuing the following:

**Objectives**

**Knowledge-based objectives:**

1. Students will have an understanding of the origins of the modern Civil Rights Movement including the political, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions on which the movement was predicated.
2. Students will understand the strategic calculations of the groups that comprised CRM. Specifically, they will examine the choices made by communities and individuals at different times as responses to unique historical circumstances.
3. Students will understand the impact and legacy of the CRM on American society and political culture.

**Skills-based objectives:**
1. Students will complete this course being able to write a professional quality piece of original scholarship. This skill set includes:
   a. Conducting research
   b. Source citation and creating an annotated bibliography
   c. Developing a detailed outline
   d. Transforming a detailed outline into a written piece
   e. Self and peer review and editing
2. Students will be able to engage readings for the purposes of research and analysis.
3. Students will be able to apply their chosen fields of study in a deep analysis of a specific aspect of the modern Civil Rights Movement.
4. Students will learn the critical thinking, problem solving, inquiry and analysis.

Additionally, this course applies:

1. Interdisciplinary approaches to each topic discussed, thereby broadening students’ intellectual scope and critical possibilities.

2. Critical questions and honest disagreement that challenges conventional intellectual and research methods, which carve fresh spaces for different and useful entry points in both Black Studies and the History of the Civil Rights Movement.

3. Multiple perspectives in order to recognize our culture in relation to other cultures. This course shall reach beyond the perspectives of the mainstream Western tradition (Europe and North America) that may focus on the differential life experiences of those whose national, geographic or economic status places them out of the mainstream of Western industrial societies.

RAP Objectives:

1. Support students in achieving a smooth transition to college life.
   a. This includes work/life balance as well as academic success. As this course is designed around a single written piece broken up into multiple assignments (see below), I will check in with the class about this periodically.
2. Ensure first year students are aware of the multitude of resources and opportunities that are available at UMass Amherst.
   a. As both part of encouraging your success in the course and encouraging your success at UMass, I will introduce you to the Learning Resource Center, the Writing Center, and other resources referenced in the Student Resource Booklet.
3. Develop an awareness and appreciation for the specific skills (inquiry and analysis, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, etc.) that are found in all Gen Ed courses.
   a. Practice of these skill sets is imbedded in the assignments, and specifically addressed during our fortnightly workshops.
4. Promote the practice of thinking about, talking about, and making connections between classes and life experience in order to deepen engagement, understanding and ultimately increase the value of a college education.
4. This is one of the primary purposes of the essay. In addition, I will ask you to reflect on this in discussion and in writing over the semester in our blog, and during several of our workshops.

5. Provide first-year students with structured guidance in the development/advancement of various skills necessary to be successful in their college experience and be prepared to be engaged members of a global community upon graduation. I will utilize material from the Student Resource Booklet to incorporate these topics as they come up in our course.

All of these components are built into the Course Objectives and Assessments. This course was specifically designed to promote these 5 objectives. This is what you signed up for, so if at any point you feel this course is not meeting one or more of these goals, please let me know and I will work on fixing it. In addition to teaching a History of the Civil Rights Movement, I want to foster a smooth transition to college for each of you, and to help you build skills and knowledge necessary for your future success.

Requirements and Expectations

- This Course is designed to facilitate the composition of a major piece of writing by its completion. As such, writing benchmarks are built into the schedule (see below). These benchmarks are not suggestions, but represent graded assignments that must be met.
- Class attendance and participation are required. Each unexcused absence after the first will lower your class participation grade by 5 points. Any missed classes must be cleared prior to the date missed, or be the result of an emergency. Excused absences (including emergencies) may be made up during office hours.
- It is imperative that all readings are completed, as students are required to write reaction blogs to those readings.
- Inappropriate or distracting electronic device use will not be tolerated. Basically, if you are not paying attention because an electronic device is distracting you, you are not present.
- As we study & discuss critical and sometimes contentious subject matter, we will maintain a classroom environment that ensures civility and mutual respect. This is imperative in order to ensure we have a learning environment that is safe and productive. Please familiarize yourself with:
  - The UMass Guidelines for Civility and Respect: [http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/campus-policies/classroom](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/campus-policies/classroom)
  - the UMass Code of Student Conduct - Trustee Doc. #T-95-095A
  - the Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

Academic Honesty Policy

- While students are required to collaborate as a component of this course, 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/)
● Information on how to cite sources may be found at: http://www.umass.edu/history/research/writing_resources.html
● The University has an excellent Writing Center with very helpful staff. You can find them at: http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/
● We will be spending a great deal of time on the writing component of the course. If you have any questions about how and when to cite sources, at any time, please do not hesitate to ask me. It is far better to ask than to risk a plagiarism charge or a bad grade.

Accommodation Policy Statement

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), Learning Disabilities Support Services (LDSS), or Psychological Disabilities Services (PDS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Required Texts

● Harvard Sitkoff, The Struggle for Black Equality
● Aldon Morris, Origins of the Civil Rights Movement
● Selected readings on MOODLE and distributed in class

Grading Criteria

● Attendance and Participation: 15%
  ○ An essential component of the course is scholarly collaboration, as students will be relying on each other’s insight and feedback. Thus, students will be assessed both on their attendance (which includes being prepared for class) and on how well they collaborate with their peers. This includes: providing feedback during peer review, sharing resources, and contributing during discussions.
  ○ As a component of participation, students are required to do the reading and take notes. Every class, students are expected to bring two items from these notes they wish to discuss. These can be questions, events, people, or thematic issues.
● Reaction Blog Posts: 25%
  ○ Each unit, students will be required to write a short one-page reaction blog to the readings and discussions. This blog will address the essential questions of the unit.
● Research Paper: 60%
  ○ The research paper is the primary assessment of the course, but it is not graded solely as a stand-alone product. The overall assessment of the paper is broken up between the unit benchmarks and the final product:
    ▪ Benchmarks: 30% (Each Benchmark 5%)
    ▪ Final Paper: 30%

Points to Grade Values: A (95 and up); A- (90-94); B+ (86-89); B (85); B- (80-84); C+ (76-79); C (75); C- (70-74); D+ (66-69); D (65); D- (60-64).
Research Paper Components and Timeline

1. Preliminary Meeting with Instructor: Due by end of Unit 1, February 2nd
   a. Meet individually with instructor to discuss selecting a paper topic based on individual academic interests

2. Paper Topic Proposal: Due by end of Unit 2, February 18th
   a. Based on meeting with instructor, provide a brief (one paragraph) description of the topic that you plan to pursue for your research paper.

3. Annotated Working Bibliography: Due by end of Unit 3, March 3rd
   a. Compose a working bibliography, consisting of at least 5 primary and 5 secondary sources.
   b. Include a 1-2 sentence description of each source detailing how it pertains to your research

4. Introduction and Detailed Outline: Due by end of Unit 4, March 22nd
   a. Based on your research to this point, Develop a working outline that will essentially be the skeletal structure of your final paper. It must include:
   b. An introductory paragraph for your paper which includes a well-developed thesis statement that you will seek to address throughout the remainder of the paper.
   c. The skeleton of each proof paragraph which must contain:
      1. A Topic sentence
      2. Bullet points summarizing claims being made
      3. Sources to be referenced to support claims

5. Rough Draft: Due by end of Unit 5, March 31st
   a. Building on your introductory paragraph and detailed outline, write a rough draft of your final paper to be peer reviewed and edited.

6. Peer Edits: Due by April 7th
   a. Using the rubric and editing framework we provide, edit at least two papers from other students.

7. Second Draft: Due by end of Unit 6, April 21st
   a. Based on peer reviews and editorial comments, refine your rough draft for a second round of reviews and editing.
   b. Students must have brought their rough draft to the writing center prior to submission of the Second Draft
8. Final Paper: *Due by May 5th*
   a. After two rounds of peer editing and review, polish your paper into a finely-tuned product and submit for final grading.

Class Schedule with Assigned Readings & Assignments (Subject to Change)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Introduction to course, Syllabus review, Why do we study the Movement?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 19</td>
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| January 21 | **Unit 1: Origins of the Civil Rights Movement**  
             **Class One: "Living Jim Crow: Performances of Race and Gender"** |
| Week 2  | **Class Two: "Early Black Activism and the Long Civil Rights Movement Debate"** |
| January 26 |                                                                 |
| January 28 | **Class Three: "The American Racial Landscape and the Origins of the Modern Civil Rights Movement"** |
|           | ● Brown v. Board (Allen’s Reading)(Interest/Convergence dilemma? In Class?)  
           | ● Dudziak, Mary L. “Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative” in *Stanford Law Review*, November 1988 |
| Week 3  | **Workshop: "Using Sources in Research: Analysis and Criticism"** |
| February 2  |                                                                 |
| **Meeting with Instructor Deadline** |                                                                 |
| February 4 | **Unit 2: Building a Movement**  
             **Class One: "Origins of Major Organizations"** |
<p>|           | ● Morris, <em>Origins of the Civil Rights Movement</em>, Chapter 1 |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>February 9</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Two: &quot;Catalyzing Events and Early Organizations&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Watch: Eyes on the Prize, Episode 1 ○ <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n945ffvrixY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n945ffvrixY</a></td>
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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>February 16</th>
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<td>No Class. Monday Schedule</td>
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<th>February 18</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paper Topic Proposal Due</td>
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**Workshop: "Cooperative Communities"**

**Task:**
- Both sections of Civil Rights Movement will meet. Students with common topics will form research groups to coordinate research, share resources, and provide peer support.
- Instructions on Annotated Bibliographies
| Week 6 | Unit 3: The Emergence of SNCC and the Youth Arm of the Movement  
Class One: "The Origins of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee"  
- *Hands on the Freedom Plow*  
- Sitkoff, Chapter 3 “Bigger than a Hamburger” |
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<td>February 23</td>
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| Week 7 | Class Two: "Intergroup Dynamics in the Movement"  
- Morris, Chapter 6 “Organizational Relationships: the SCLC, the NAACP, and CORE”  
- Sitkoff, Chapter 5, ”We Shall Overcome”  
  |
| March 1 | Class Three: "Freedom Summer: Organizing at the Micro and Macro Levels"  
- Sitkoff, Chapter 6 “How Many Roads”  
- *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC*, Chapter 2 “Voter Registration Is Direct Action”  
- Chana Kai Lee, “Anger Memory and Personal Power”  
- Watch: Eyes on the Prize, Episode 5  
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDKObod9sAw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDKObod9sAw)  
  |
| March 3 | Workshop: "How do we get involved?: Engaging in Protest Past and Present"  
- Review the following Websites. Focus on planning and organizing efforts:  
  - [http://commons.occupy.com/](http://commons.occupy.com/)  
- Both Sections will engage in a Panel Discussion on organizing and activism around black liberation  
- Get handouts on writing expectations  
  |
| Week 8 | Unit 4: The Movement Beyond the South  
Class One: "De facto Jim Crow and the Northern Black Experience"  
- Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name* “Fifth, Avenue Uptown” and “East River, Downtown”  
- HARYOU, *Youth in the Ghetto: A Study of the Consequences of Powerlessness and a Blueprint for Change*, “Cries of Harlem”  
- Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*. Chapter 3 “Lynching, Northern Style”  
<p>|
| March 8 |  |</p>
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<tr>
<th>March 10</th>
<th>Class Two: &quot;Black Activism and Organizing Beyond the South&quot;</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Joseph, <em>Wait till the Midnight Hour</em>, Chapter 1 “Forerunners”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Thomas J. Sugrue, <em>Sweet Land of Liberty</em>, Chapter 9 “Fires of Frustration and Discord”</td>
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</tbody>
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|  | ● Watch Eyes on the Prize, Episode 8: “Two Societies”
|  | ● [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4P_rR1h8eNs4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4P_rR1h8eNs4) |

| SPRING BREAK | ENJOY YOUR WELL-DESERVED BREAK!!!! (But still, work on your Outlines) |
| 12-20 |  |

| Week 9 | Class Three: "Riots or Rebellions?: Analyzing Urban Resistance" |
| March 22 |  |
| Introduction and Detailed Outline Due |  |
|  | ● Watch: Eyes on the Prize, Episode 7: The Time Has Come
|  | ● [http://vimeo.com/44781802](http://vimeo.com/44781802) |

| March 24 | Workshop: Writer’s Salon |
|  | ● Students will meet with writing group to discuss each other’s outlines |

| Week 10 | Unit 5: Black Power |
| March 29 |  |
| Class One: "The Strategic Debate Over Non-violent Resistance, Part 2: Rethinking Strategy in the absence of White Allies" |  |
|  | ● Malcolm X |
|  | ● H. Rap Brown, *Die Nigger Die*, Chapter 8 |
|  | ● King, *A Testament of Hope*, “Nonviolence: The Only Road to Freedom” |

<p>| March 31 | Class Two: &quot;What is 'Black Power'?&quot; |
| Rough Drafts Due |  |
|  | ● Joseph, Peniel E., <em>Waiting 'til the Midnight Hour</em>, Chapter 7 “What We Gonna Start Sayin’ Now is Black Power!” |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>April 5</th>
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|  | *Watch: Eyes on the Prize, Episode 9: Power!*  
  ● Watch *The Dutchman* and “Nation Time” |

| April 7 |
| Peer Edits Due |
|  | *Workshop: "Editing Skills"* |
|  | ● The Writer’s Handbook: Finishing your Paper  
  [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Proofreading.html](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Proofreading.html)  
  ● The Purdue OWL: Editing and Proofreading  
  [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/994/06/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/994/06/)  
  ● Students will break up into their groups to discuss their edits. |

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<th>Week 12</th>
<th>April 12</th>
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|  | **Unit 6: Legacies of the Movement: Protest and Resistance Today**  
  **Class One: Black Studies, Black Scholarship, and the Black Campus Movements** |
  ○ Chapter 4 “The Revolution at San Francisco State College”*Class Two: "Outgrowths of the Movement"* |
|  | ● Combahee River Collective Statement  

| April 14 |
|  | *Class Three: "The Rise of the Cultural Right and the establishment of The New Nadir"* |
|  | ● Bastorf and Goldzwig, “Reagan’s Rhetorical …”  
  ● Klinker, *The Unsteady March*, Chapter 9 “Benign Neglect” |

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<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>April 19</th>
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<tr>
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<td><em>Workshop: &quot;Resistance Politics through Art&quot;</em></td>
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<td>● Panel Discussion on Black Art</td>
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| April 21 |
| Second Drafts Due |
| April 26 | **Final Class**  
|          | "Where do we go from here? Modern Activism and Oppressed Peoples Movements"  
|          | ● Harding, Vincent, *Hope and History*  
|          | ● Chapter 2 “Advanced Ideas About Democracy”  

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