

Civil Rights Movement

Last Updated: Thu, 07/31/2025

Course prefix: HTS

Course number: 3027

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
202508

Instructor First Name: Sherie

Instructor Last Name: Randolph

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

This course explores the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the 20th century. The U.S. Civil Rights Movement was a fight for human rights that directly challenged the nation to extend its protected democratic principles and citizenship rights to African Americans. We will analyze the daily local and national organizing efforts that created and maintained this struggle for full enfranchisement.

Through a diverse array of materials, we will examine the movement's origins, along with the key issues, strategies, organizations, and activists of the time. Students will study both secondary and primary sources, including historical monographs, biographies, speeches, and documents from Civil Rights Movement organizations. As a class, we will also examine legal and extralegal violence against Blacks and the various ways in which they responded.

To supplement the readings, we will view documentary films that offer visual insight into the period and an alternative interpretive perspective on understanding the movement.

Course learning outcomes:

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

1. **Describe** the historical origins and development of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement in the 20th century.

2. **Identify** key events, strategies, organizations, and activists central to the Civil Rights Movement.
3. **Explain** the local and national efforts that sustained the struggle for African American enfranchisement and equality.
4. **Recognize** the role of legal and extralegal violence against African Americans and the range of responses to such oppression.

Critical Analysis and Interpretation

5. **Analyze** primary and secondary sources (e.g., speeches, biographies, monographs, organizational documents) related to the Civil Rights Movement.
6. **Interpret** historical narratives through documentary films and visual media to gain alternative perspectives on the movement.
7. **Develop** analytical arguments about specific aspects of the movement using textual evidence from course materials.

Research and Communication Skills

8. **Write** concise and insightful response papers that demonstrate understanding and critical engagement with assigned readings.
9. **Formulate** discussion questions that reflect deeper inquiry and analysis of course content.
10. **Cite** sources effectively to support interpretations and arguments in both written and oral formats.

Participation and Engagement

11. **Contribute** meaningfully to class discussions by bringing in observations, questions, and insights based on assigned readings and lectures.
12. **Demonstrate** consistent preparation for class by completing readings and participating in in-class assignments.

Assessment and Evaluation

13. **Recall and explain** key concepts, figures, and events through structured exams based on lectures, readings, and films.
14. **Apply** course knowledge to exam questions by synthesizing content across various media and formats.

Required course materials:

Required Texts.

- Danielle McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street, Black Women, Rape and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*.
- Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*.

- Barbara Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the 21st Century*
- Additional readings can be found on Canvas.
- This course utilizes documentaries and films as key texts. Students should take notes and analyze the documentaries alongside the lectures and written texts.

Grading policy:

Late Assignments: Late assignments will **NOT** be accepted.

Participation (20%): Students must actively and willingly take part in class discussions. You should have the day's reading and notes ready at the beginning of each class. Attending class alone does not count as participation. In-class assignments are included in participation. If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, please see me at the start of the semester so we can set up additional writing assignments.

3 Response Papers/Questions (20%): For each class marked with an asterisk (*), you will prepare a 1-page (double-spaced, Times New Roman font) response paper. Submit the short paper on Canvas by 6:00 pm on the Tuesday before class. The paper should show your understanding of an aspect of the reading and/or develop an analytical discussion question related to your point. Include a quote and page number to support your explanation. Late submissions will NOT be accepted. You may skip one. You are required to submit a total of three response papers/questions.

4 In-Class Exams (60%): There will be four in-class identification exams using blue books, covering material from class (readings, lectures, films). The lowest exam grade will be dropped. You will be graded on the top 3 exams.

Final Letter Grade Range

A 90 – 100 Excellent

B 80 – 89 Good

C 70 – 79 Satisfactory

D 60 – 69 Needs Improvement

F 0 – 59 Failing

Attendance policy:

Attendance: If you have more than three absences during the semester, your final grade will be lowered by one full letter.

Tardiness: If you are late more than three times during the semester, your final grade will be lowered by one full letter.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master the course content and support their broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.

Course content, activities, and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion