

University of Florida  
Department of History  
Fall 2015

### **AMH 4575: The Civil Rights Movement**

Professor Lauren Pearlman

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M,W,F: 5 (11:45-12:35)

Class Room Building 105, Rm 210

**Office Hours:** Mon and Wed 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

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### **Course Description**

This semester, we will employ a grassroots approach to understand one of America's most defining social and political movements: what scholars call the "long civil rights movement." Rather than focus solely on the best-known moments of the 1950s and 1960s, this course will cover key events, issues, and organizations from the New Negro to the New Jim Crow. We will examine the origins of the movement, especially in relation to World Wars I and II; the development and impact of the mass mobilization efforts of the movement's defining phase; and more contemporary civil rights issues. Our goal is to understand the development of the movement as well as the priorities of and outcomes for the everyday, ordinary black citizens who struggled for freedom and the skilled African American activists who helped them organize and mobilize to transform society during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. What, for example, was the importance of labor activism and international politics, the role of women, and the ideological and tactical transition to black power? How did the African American freedom movement intersect with and influence debates about gender, labor, sexuality, and foreign policy? To answer these and other questions, the course will encompass political, social, and artistic aspects of the movement and examine both historical documents (speeches, letters, reports, pamphlets, and newspaper articles) and creative works (poetry, cartoons, and music). In doing so, we hope to better understand the movement's successes, failures, and its legacy for this nation.

**Course Objectives:** You are about to learn a lot about one of America's most defining social and political movements. Here are some of our goals for the semester:

1. You will not only acquire an understanding of key developments in the long civil rights movement but also understand *how* they shaped the world in which we live.
2. You will develop the ability to read and analyze primary documents, situate them in historical context, and develop critical interpretations of their significance.
3. You will learn to compare and contrast specific goals, strategies, and political ideologies of the long civil rights movement.

### Required Readings

We will read a variety of books, articles, and primary documents. There are five (5) required texts available for purchase at the UF Bookstore or from an online retailer. Note: Amazon.com offers competitive pricing on many of these books, including the option to rent books and purchase used copies. If you decide to purchase your books online, please make sure that you purchase the correct edition and that you allow enough time for shipping. In addition to these books, there will be various readings, images, and other primary documents available online via Canvas, the course e-learning site, at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. These are required readings and will form the basis of many assignments. Whether you print them out as hard copy or not is up to you, but please be sure that you can access them in time for class.

- William H. Chafe, Raymond Gavins, Robert Korstad, eds., *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell About Life in the Segregated South* (New York: The New Press, 2001, 2014).
- Glibert King, *Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America* (New York: Harper Collins, 2012)
- Danielle L. 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* (New York: Vintage Books, 2011).
- Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, 2011).
- Hasan Jeffries, *Bloody Lowndes: Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama's Black Belt* (New York: NYU Press, 2009).

### Course Assignments:

- This is an upper-level course. As such, this class requires a serious commitment of time and energy. Please have your syllabus on hand and be sure to keep up with all of the reading and writing deadlines.
- **Readings:** Each week, you will be assigned roughly 100-150 pages of reading. You are expected to read all of the assigned readings before class and arrive in class with questions, comments, and opinions about what you have read. Make sure to allow enough time in your schedule to read thoroughly and critically.
- A five hundred (500) word essay analyzing primary documents is due on **September 16**. Your essay will be graded according to the content of your ideas *and* the quality and

accuracy of your prose. Late papers will not be accepted. Further instructions regarding format and content will be distributed before the paper is due.

Generally speaking, I will look for the following in your papers:

1. Analysis. Does the paper make a convincing and coherent argument?
  2. Evidence. Is the argument well supported by evidence? Is evidence used effectively?
  3. Organization. Is the paper structured in logical way?
  4. Content and originality. Does the paper make an original contribution or insight? Does the author's own opinion and voice come through?
  5. Mechanics and style. Is the paper free of spelling and grammar errors? Is it clearly written?
- A one thousand (1000) word paper on the *Devil in the Grove* is due on **October 5**. We will talk in more detail about this assignment before the paper is due. Late papers will be penalized one third of a letter grade for every day that they are late.
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  - An in-class midterm exam is scheduled for **October 16**.
  - A fifteen hundred (1500) word critical analysis essay of primary documents is due on **November 16**. We will talk in more detail about this assignment before the paper is due. Late papers will be penalized one third of a letter grade for every day that they are late.
  - A take-home final is due on **December 14**.

**Grades:** Your grade in this class will be determined largely by your performance on a variety of written assignments and exams. These exercises will allow you to hone your critical thinking and writing skills and allow you to reflect thoughtfully on the long civil rights movement. Improvement over the course of the semester is not only encouraged but also rewarded.

Your grade for this class will be determined as follows:

Participation and Attendance	15%
Paper #1	10%
Paper #2	15%
Paper #3	20%
Midterm	20%
Final Paper	20%

### UF Grading Scale

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I	N	G	S	U
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

A100-94, A-: 90-93

B+: 87-89, B: 84-86, B-: 80-83

C+: 77-79, C: 74-76, C-: 70-73

D+: 67-69, D: 64-66, D-: 60-64

F: below 64

## Course Policies

- **Assignments:** Please turn your work in on time. It is in your best interest (so that you do not fall behind) and mine (so that I can provide feedback in a timely manner). Plan ahead and keep up with the work for this course.
- **Correspondence:** I will send important course announcements and other correspondence to you via your UF email account. If you do not use this as your primary account, please make sure that you have your UF email forwarded to you.
- **Attendance and Participation:** Attendance is required, expected, and central to your learning experience. In addition to showing up for class on time, be ready to articulate and defend your ideas, as well as to listen to and work with the ideas of others. You are allowed two unexcused absences for the semester. Each additional unexcused absence will negatively affect your final participation grade. Six or more unexcused absences will result in failing grade for the class. I will not contact students during the semester to apprise them of their attendance status; it is the responsibility of the students to keep a record of their absences. Religious holidays, UF athletic travel conflicts, and written explanations from a certified health professional are eligible for an excused absence when cleared with the instructor ahead of time. See UF attendance policy at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
- **Late Work and Make-up Policy:** Unless stated otherwise, late papers will be penalized one-third-letter grade per day late. If you know you must have an excused absence, contact me beforehand to make arrangements to turn in work before class.
- **Mobile Electronic Device Policy:** Laptops are allowed in class exclusively for note-taking purposes. The use of such electronic devices should not be a distraction to other students or to the instructor. If I feel like the use of electronic devices is detrimental to the learning environment, then I reserve the right to prohibit their use at any time. Please turn your cell phone off prior to the start of class and do not check it during class time.

## How to get in touch with the instructor:

- Come to office hours. I truly enjoy getting to know more about students outside of the classroom. You are encouraged to stop by with any questions that you may have about assignments, readings, classroom discussions, or other pertinent topics. If you need to cover material from a missed class, however, please consult a classmate instead. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, we can set up an appointment at a mutually agreeable time.
- Email me at [lpearlman@ufl.edu](mailto:lpearlman@ufl.edu). I will get back to you within 24 hours, though my response may be slower during the weekend.
- Talk to me just before or just after class.

## Students with Disabilities

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

### **Academic Honesty**

The University, as well as your instructor, values and expects academic integrity. Ethical violations include cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and academic misconduct (including turning in the work of others as your own and reusing old assignments). These will not be tolerated and will result in a failure of the assignment and the risk of an automatic failing grade in the course, and possible expulsion from UF. To avoid plagiarism, you must not copy the words, phrases, arguments, ideas, or conclusions of another person or source (including Internet sources) without properly crediting the person or source with both quotation marks and a footnote. Make sure that you properly cite direct quotations, paraphrased information, and facts that are not widely known. I will provide you with guidelines for proper citations and formatting prior to your submission of all written work, but you may contact me at any time for clarification. For more information on UF's honest policy, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>. For more information on how UF's Judicial Affairs processes cases of plagiarism, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>.

### **Student Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

### **Course Schedule**

#### Week One: The Roots of Racism

- August 24     None
- August 26     Chafe, Remembering Jim Crow, intro and ch 1, xxi-61
- August 28     Chafe, Remembering Jim Crow, ch 2 and 3, 62-169

#### Week Two: The Jim Crow South

- August 31     Chafe, Remembering Jim Crow, ch 4, 170-228
- September 2   Chafe, Remembering Jim Crow, ch 5, 229-298
- September 4   Chafe, Remembering Jim Crow, ch 6, 299-338

#### Week Three: World War I and the New Negro

- September 7   No Class

September 9 W.E.B. Du Bois, "Close Ranks," and "Returning Soldiers"; Marcus Garvey, selected documents (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/garvey/filmmore/ps.html>); Claude McKay, "If We Must Die"; Alain Locke, "Enter the New Negro"

September 11 Beth Tompkins Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP, 1933-1941," *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 2 (April 1997)

#### Week Four: World War II and Double Victory

September 14 Bruce Nelson, "Organized Labor and the Struggle for Black Equality in Mobile During World War II," *Journal of American History* (December 1993)

September 16 James Thompson, Letter to the Editor, *Pittsburgh Courier* (January 31, 1942)

#### **PAPER #1 DUE**

September 18 McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, prologue and ch 1, xiv-47

#### Week Five: The Postwar Promise

September 21 Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, intro and chapter 1, 1-17, 18-46

September 23 Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, ch 3, 79-114

September 25 King, *The Devil in the Grove*, 1-83

#### Week Six: Groundwork: The Road to Brown

September 28 King, *The Devil in the Grove*, 84-192

September 30 King, *The Devil in the Grove*, 193-282

October 2 King, *The Devil in the Grove*, 282-362

#### Week Seven: Making the Modern Movement, 1954-56

October 5 McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, ch 2-3, 48-134

#### **PAPER #2 DUE**

October 7 McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, ch 4, 135-159

October 9 McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, ch 5, 160-190

#### Week Eight: Groundwork: The Roots of Self-Defense

October 12 Timothy Tyson, "Robert F. Williams, 'Black Power,' and the Roots of the African American Freedom Struggle" *The Journal of American History*, 85, no. 2 (September 1998); Excerpt from Williams, *Negroes with Guns* (New York: Marzani & Munsell, 1962); Williams, "Is Violence Necessary to Combat Injustice? For the Positive: Williams Says 'We Must Fight Back'"

October 14 Frantz Fanon, "Reciprocal Bases of National Culture and the Fight for Freedom," the Congress of Black African Writers, 1959

October 16: Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, ch 4, 115-151

#### Week Nine: Cold War Civil Rights

October 19 Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, ch 5, 152-202

October 21 Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, ch 6, 203-248

October 23 **MIDTERM EXAM**

#### Week Ten: Making the Modern Movement, 1960-61

October 26 Barbara Ransby, "Behind the Scenes View of a Behind the Scenes Organizer," in *Sisters in Struggle: Invisible Black Women in the Civil Rights Movement 1945-1970*, ed. Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin

October 28 Sit-in documents posted on Canvas

October 30 Freedom Ride documents posted on Canvas

#### Week Eleven: Making the Modern Movement, 1963-65

November 2 McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, ch 6-7, 191-245

November 4 Jeffries, *Bloody Lowndes*, intro and ch 2, 1-6, 39-80

November 6 No Class

#### Week Twelve: Making the Modern Movement, 1963-65 (cont)

November 9 "The Unknown Origins of the March on Washington: Civil Rights Politics and the Black Working Class," *Labor: Studies in Working Class History of the Americas* 7:3 (Fall, 2010); Birmingham documents posted on Canvas

November 11 No Class

November 13 Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act documents posted on Canvas

Week Thirteen: From Freedom Now to Black Power

November 16 Jeffries, Bloody Lowndes, ch 3, 81-116

**PAPER #3 DUE**

November 18 Jeffries, Bloody Lowndes, ch 4 and 5, 117-178

November 20 Charles Cobb, "Guns Kept People Alive During the Civil Rights Movement," NPR interview (<http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=319072156>); Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet," and "What Does Mississippi Have to Do With Harlem?"; Interviews from "The Negro and the American Promise," 1963 ([http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/mlk/sfeature/sf\\_video.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/mlk/sfeature/sf_video.html))

Week Fourteen: From Freedom Now to Black Power (cont.)

November 23 Jeffries, Bloody Lowndes, ch 6-7 and epilogue, 179-252

November 25 No Class

November 27 No Class

Week Fifteen: Things Fall Apart?

November 30 Black Power documents posted on Canvas

December 2 Black Power documents posted on Canvas

December 4 Black Power documents posted on Canvas

Week Sixteen: The New Jim Crow

December 7 Michelle Alexander, "The New Jim Crow," *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law* 9, no. 1 (Fall 2011)

December 9 Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case For Reparations," *Atlantic* (June 2014) (<http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>)

**FINAL DUE AT NOON MON DECEMBER 14TH. PLEASE SUBMIT HARD COPY AT MY OFFICE 218 KEENE-FLINT HALL AND VIA EMAIL AT [lpearlman@ufl.edu](mailto:lpearlman@ufl.edu)**