

University of Florida, Spring 2020
AFA3333 (25669): The Black Power Movement in America (ONLINE)

Instructor: Allen Kent

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Digital Office Hours: Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30pm (Skype: k.allenkent); In person by appointment

Objectives:

The Black Power Movement is one of the most interesting and often misunderstood movements in US history. Popular narratives and many scholarly works paint this movement as violent, racist, exclusionary, and comprised of groups dedicated to the overthrow of American society. It is often seen as a reactionary movement that halted the progress of a passive, integrationist Civil Rights Movement. However, historians are revising ideas about the Black Power Movement, especially in drawing connections between Civil Rights and Black Power and in examining how Black Power organizing continued into the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. This course will examine this movement, its major themes, its roots in previous black organizing strategies, different groups and figures associated with Black Power, and how this organizing continued into an era of conservative national politics. The Black Power Movement was certainly something different than its predecessors; but in order to understand how this movement developed, we must explore its foundations in the black freedom struggle, as well as how Black Power advocates altered their techniques in a society greatly changed by the Civil Rights Movement. This cultural, political, and social movement encompassed many different groups and ideas, and the purpose of this course is to examine the concept of Black Power and situate it within the narrative of American History.

History is a chain of events; what happened yesterday shapes today, and today's decisions will definitely affect tomorrow. To decipher the economic, social, and political climate of today's world, it is necessary to understand this building narrative of history. The other important thing to remember is that these topics are open for discussion. Dates, facts, and people are definitely important; however, the main objective is to be able to have a conversation about historical ideas and events and to place them into context. Undoubtedly, students completing this course will enhance their reading, writing, and verbal communication skills, as well as their ability to create and sustain an argument, using evidence to support their case.

Required Texts:

The following books should be available at the UF Bookstore. You can also purchase new and used copies online through most bookselling websites. If you have trouble finding the books, let me know sooner rather than later.

- Peniel Joseph, *Waiting til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006)
- Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999)
- Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981) **[AVAILABLE ONLINE THROUGH UF LIBRARY]**
- Stokely Carmichael and Mark Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967)
- Curtis Austin, *Up Against the Wall: Violence in the Making and Unmaking of the Black Panther Party* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2006)

Course Requirements and Expectations:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Plagiarism or any other type of cheating plainly and simply will not be tolerated. Any range of things, from copying other people's work to having people do your work for you, can count as cheating. The University of Florida sets strict guidelines on this sort of thing, and it could affect more than just your grade in this course.

Your final grade will reflect the time you spent working with the videos and readings and how much you engaged with the material. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Respect is a very important part of any college class. Respect your fellow students, respect me, and respect yourselves. This class is based on discussing the events of American history, and while people will certainly disagree, part of what you are learning here is how to have civilized and productive conversations.

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations 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/results/>

All assignments are due at the end module date. There is a built-in two-day window to turn in late assignments; however, you will be penalized 10% for every day that an assignment is late.

Grade breakdown is as follows (see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> for more information on UF policies about grading):

	Grade Scale:	A (4.0) = 93 - 100	A- (3.67) = 90 - 92
Quizzes	15%		B+ (3.33) = 87 - 89
Writing Assignments	30%		B (3.0) = 83 - 86
Discussion Boards	35%		B- (2.67) = 80 - 82
Final Project	20%		C+ (2.33) = 77 - 79
			C (2.0) = 73 - 76
			C- (1.67) = 70 - 72
			D+ (1.33) = 67 - 69
			D (1.0) = 63 - 66
			D- (.67) = 60 - 62

Assignments:

- Grades will be based on the above breakdown.
- Quizzes are either multiple choice, matching, or short answer. They will test your knowledge of specific information, such as dates, names, and places.
- Writing assignments will range from one to two paragraphs to multiple pages. They will challenge you to elaborate on certain events or concepts in this movement.
- Discussions are crucial to a college class; the information presented in lectures serves as contextual information to assist in talking about these topics with me and your classmates, to understand why these events and ideas mattered, both then and now. Some will consist of recorded video clips; others will simply use message boards. Instructions for how much to post will be provided.
- A final project will challenge you to further examine an idea, group, or individual associated with the Black Power Movement. You will use outside sources to write a 3-5 page paper and craft a presentation for your classmates.

Course Schedule and Module Breakdown

Module One (January 6 – 19): The Roots of Black Power

Reading: Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*, Introduction through Chapter 3

Module Two (January 20 – February 2): Armed Self-Defense and Robert F. Williams

Reading: Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*, Introduction through Conclusion

Module Three (February 3 – 16): Black Separatism, the Nation of Islam, and Malcolm X

Readings: Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*, Chapters 4 through 6

Ibram H. Rogers, "'People All Over the World are Supporting You': Malcolm X, Ideological Formations, and Black Student Activism, 1960-1972," *The Journal of African American History* Vol. 96, No. 1 (Winter 2011), pp. 14-38

Module Four (February 17 – March 1): Student Involvement and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

Readings: Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*, Chapters 7 & 8

Carson, *In Struggle*, Chapter 1 through 13

Module Five (March 2 – 22): SNCC and the Transition to Black Power

Readings: Carmichael and Hamilton, *Black Power*, Preface through Chapter 3.

Hasan Kwame Jeffries, "SNCC, Black Power, and Independent Political Party Organizing in Alabama, 1964-1966," *Journal of African American History* Vol. 91, No. 2 (Spring 2006), pp. 171-193

Module Six (March 23 – April 12): The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense

Readings: Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*, Chapters 9 & 10

Austin, *Up Against the Wall*, Introduction through Conclusion.

Module Seven (April 13 – 22): Black Arts, Black Pride, and Black Power Legacies

Readings: Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*, Chapter 11 through Epilogue

Daniel Matlin, "Lift up Yr Self!" Reinterpreting Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones), Black Power, and the Uplift Tradition," *Journal of American History* Vol. 93, No. 1 (June 2006), pp. 91-116

Final Assignments due April 26