

The University of Arkansas
Department of History
Fall 2007
History 3923H-The American Civil Rights Movement

I. Instructor's Information

Name: Dr. Calvin White, Jr.
Office Location: Main 509
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II. Course Description

This course will introduce students to the history and development of the civil rights movement in the United States. Also known as the black freedom struggle, the civil rights movement was an interracial movement that wrought significant change in America's political and social environments. The objective of this class is to study the beginnings of the movement and its development throughout the twentieth century. Much of the focus will be on the two prongs of the movement: the top-down reaction of the federal government and its policies concerning civil rights and the mass mobilization of people that exerted bottom-pressure on the federal government to act. In addition, we will examine the role of religion and secular ideologies as well as division and differences within the movement.

III. Required Readings

Students should purchase all books today to avoid difficulty later. Lack of books is not a legitimate excuse for incomplete work. Also, students will be required to read several different articles that I will provide.

Cone, James *Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare* (Orbis Books Maryknoll, NY, 1992).

Marsh, Charles, *God Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights* (Princeton University Press, 1999).

Sitkoff, Harvard, *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1952-1992* (Hill and Wang, revised ed., 1993).

Hudson-Weems, Clenora *Emmett Till: The Sacrificial Lamb of the Civil Rights Movement* (Bedford Publishers, 1994).

Ann Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, (New York, Dial Press, 1968).

IV. Grades

There will be three in class essay exams (100 points each), several one page critical analysis papers on assigned readings and documentary clips (25 points), a 5-7 page paper on *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (100 points) due at the end of the semester, and each student will be graded according to class room participation (25 points). This section of the syllabus can change at the discretion of the instructor.

The grading scale is a standard grading scale: 100-90=A; 89-80=B; 79-70=C; 69-60=D; 59 and below is failing. Anyone caught cheating on an exam will at the very least receive a zero, and very possibly be dropped from the class. To calculate your final grade I will add the total number of points each student scored on all assignments and divide that number by the overall total number of points possible. I will not percentage anything; everything is weighted the same.

Make-up work and tests: If for any family or medical reason you find it absolutely necessary to miss an examination, you must contact me to schedule a make-up exam (during my office hours). All students will have one week to make up the missed exam. Students will be given a zero after five days of missing an examination. Examples of unexcused absences are, but are not limited to the following: I over slept, could not find a parking space, did not feel well but did not visit student health, and I am scheduled to be in or at a wedding.

V. Classroom Behavior

Absence and Tardiness:

If you are enrolled in this class then you are required to attend scheduled class meetings. Attendance will be taken on a random basis and on the fifth absence a student will receive a failing grade for the semester. If absence is unavoidable, it is the student's responsibility to make up any missed assignments and record all missed discussion notes from a fellow student. Habitual tardiness is not only rude and unprofessional, but it can also have a negative influence on a student's grade. Five minutes after class starts I will shut the door and no student will be allowed to enter. No excuses will be accepted. If a student is tardy or leaves during the middle of class, then he/she is still responsible for any missed material and should not ask the instructor to repeat information missed while tardy or temporarily out of the classroom. You are expected to be here in class on time. **Do not come into class late.**

Discussion of Classroom Topics:

Topics will be discussed from an objective historical point of view. While I welcome any questions, I will not engage in a classroom debate with students about any scheduled readings. In addition, each student will be required to participate in class through discussion forums. It is a simple process, yet a crucial component of your grade. This forum is meant to make the student think critically about the week's topic. You will be graded according to the quality of an academic response. Take your time and think before you speak because your grade depends on it.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cheating on a quiz or exam or plagiarism on an essay (taking credit for written work that is not your own) will result in a grade of "F" for that assignment. A second offense will result in an "F" for the course.

Cell Phones and Pagers:

Cell phones and pagers are not allowed in this classroom. If a cell phone rings or a pager beeps you will be asked to leave class for the remainder of the day (*no excuses*). If it happens a second time you must have a conference with the instructor before you are allowed back into class.

Sleeping and Newspapers:

No sleeping. If you fall asleep I will ask you to leave class and count you absent for the day. If you are tired and can't stay awake, don't come. Also, doing a crossword puzzle or reading the newspaper while in class is rude. This is a collegiate class and I should not have to monitor it as if it were a high school class.

Based on your reading from Ann Moody's *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, address in your paper the following questions:

- a. Why did the author choose this title?
- b. What conditions did Moody and her family endure in rural Mississippi?
- c. What role does fear play in the lives of blacks and whites (describe by using various examples from book)?
- d. When the author ends the book, does she feel that blacks in Mississippi will begin to enjoy a better lifestyle?
- e. Finally, what was your reaction to the book?

This paper should be typewritten, doubled spaced, five to seven pages and clearly written. This is a formal paper; therefore, grammatical errors and misspelled words will hurt your overall grade. Please proofread your paper before submitting.

Week 1	August 24-28	The Civil Rights Movement
Week 2	August 31-September 4	The Impulses/World War II
Week 3	September 7 (Labor Day)-11	Jackie Robinson/Brown v. Education
Week 4	September 14-18	Emmett Till
Week 5	September 21-25	The Montgomery Bus Boycott/ Exam
Week 6	September 28-October 2	The Little Rock Central High Crisis
Week 7	October 5-9	The Greensboro Sit-In
Week 8	October 12-16	The Freedom Rides
Week 9	October 19-23	The University of Mississippi
Week 10	October 26-30	Marching to Freedom/Exam
Week 11	November 2-6	Rebellion and Reaction
Week 12	November 9-13	The Black Power Movement
Week 13	November 16-20	Affirmative Action
Week 14	November 23-27 [Wed. 25th-Fri. 27th = Fall Break/Thanksgiving]	
Week 15	November 30-December 4	Conclusion/Overview
Week 16	December 7-11 [End of classes is Tues., 8th/Dead Day is Wed., 9th]	