

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Political Science 4000
Louisiana State University

Fall 2015
MWF 9:30-10:20am
Stubbs Hall 220

“One may well ask, ‘How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?’ The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are *just* and there are *unjust* laws.”

MLK

“And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.”

Isaiah

“Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline.”

MLK

INTRODUCTION

Civil Rights in the Mid-20th Century and Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Bayard Rustin, “Non-Violence v. Jim Crow” (1942, pp. 15-18 in RCR) **
- Langston Hughes, “Adventures in Dining” (1945, pp. 68-70 in RCR) **
- Jack H. Pollack, “Literacy Tests: Southern Style” (1947, pp. 85-91 in RCR) **
- Lillian Smith, “When I Was a Child” (1949, pp. 98-111 in RCR) **
- George S. Schuyler, “Jim Crow in the North” (1949, pp. 112-121 in RCR) **
- Hodding Carter, “Mrs. Means Married Woman” (1952, 134-140 in RCR) **
- Carl T. Rowan, excerpt of *Jim Crow’s Last Stand* (1953, pp. 157-203 in RCR) **
- Murray Kempton, “He Went All the Way” (1955, pp. 214-216 in RCR) **
- William Bradford Huie, “The Shocking Story” (1956, pp. 232-240 in RCR) **
- James N. Rhea and Ben H. Bagdikian, (1957, pp. 386-395 in RCR) **
- John Steinbeck, “Ain’t Those Cheerleaders Something” (1960, pp. 526-535 in RCR) **

EARLY EXPERIENCES AND RESPONSIBILITY

- MLK, *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (1958, pp. 417-490 in TOH)
- MLK, “The Negro and the Constitution” (1944, MLK Papers I)**
- MLK, “Give Us the Ballot—We Will Transform the South” (1957, pp. 197-200 in TOH)

THE PROPHETIC VOICE

Exodus, selections **

Isaiah, selections **

Amos **

MLK, "The Current Crisis in Race Relations" (1958, pp. 85-90, TOH)

MLK, "Our God is Marching On!" (1965, pp. 227-230)

MLK, "I Have a Dream" (1963, pp. 217-220 in TOH)

MLK, "A Time to Break Silence" (1967, 231-244 in TOH)

Abraham Heschel, *The Prophets*, "What Manner of Man is the Prophet?" and "Justice" **

THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN PERSONALITY

Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, selection **

MLK, "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence" (1960, pp. 35-40 in TOH)

MLK, "The Ethical Demands for Integration" (1962, pp. 117-125 in TOH)

MLK, "The Case Against Tokenism" (1962, pp. 106-111 in TOH)

MLK, *Strength to Love* (1963, chaps. 1, 6, 13, 14: pp. 491-517 in TOH)

MLK, "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech" (1964, 224-226)

MLK, "A Christmas Sermon on Peace" (1967, pp. 253-258 in TOH)

SUCCESS

Karl Marx, selection **

Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianity and the Social Crisis" (1909, pp. 1009-1015 in APT) **

Paul, Ephesians 1 **

MLK, "Speech Before the Youth March for Integrated Schools" (1959, pp. 21-22 in TOH)

MLK, "Paul's Letter to American Christians" (*GL*) **

MLK, "The American Dream" (1961 [1968], pp. 208-216)

MLK, "An Address Before the National Press Club" (1962, pp. 99-105 in TOH)

MLK, "The World House" (1967, *WDWG*, pp. 617-633 in TOH)

LAW AND POLITICS

Jesus, "Sermon on the Mount" **

Thoreau, "On Civil Disobedience" **

Augustine, selections **

Aquinas, selections **

Gandhi, selections **

MLK, "Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience" (1961, pp. 43-53 in TOH)

MLK, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (1963, in TOH)

DIRECT ACTION

MLK, *Why We Can't Wait* (1963, chaps. 1, 3, 4, 6: pp. 518-554 in TOH)
MLK, "Behind the Selma March" (1965, pp. 126-131 in TOH)
Selma (2014 film)

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE

MLK, "Walk for Freedom" (1956, pp. 82-84 in TOH)
MLK, "Nonviolence and Racial Justice" (1957, pp. 5-9 in TOH)
MLK, "The Most Durable Power" (1957, pp. 10-11 in TOH)
MLK, "The Power of Nonviolence" (1957, pp. 12-13 in TOH)
MLK, "An Experiment in Love" (1958, pp. 16-20 in TOH)
MLK, "My Trip to the Land of Gandhi" (1959, pp. 23-30 in TOH)
MLK, "The Social Organization of Nonviolence" (1959, pp. 31-34 in TOH)
Malcom X, "The Ballot or the Bullet" (1964, pp. 1338-1345 in APT)**
Stokely Carmichael, "Toward Black Liberation" (1966, pp. 1355-1360 in APT)**
MLK, "Nonviolence: The Only Road to Freedom" (1966, pp. 54-61 in TOH)
MLK, "A Gift of Love" (1966, pp. 62-63 in TOH)
MLK, "Showdown for Nonviolence" (April 16, 1968, pp. 64-72 in TOH)
MLK, *Where Do We Go From Here?* (1967, chaps. 1, 2, 5: pp. 555-617 in TOH)

REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING

MLK, "Suffering and Faith" (1960, pp. 41-42 in TOH)
MLK, "Eulogy for the Martyred Children" (1963, pp. 221-223 in TOH)

ALL THE POOR AND POWERLESS

MLK, "Next Stop: The North" (1965, pp. 189-194 in TOH)
MLK, *The Trumpet of Conscience* (1967, chaps. 2, 4: pp. 634-653 in TOH)

I SEE THE PROMISED LAND

MLK, "The Drum Major Instinct" (February 4, 1968, pp. 259-267)
MLK, "Conversation with Martin Luther King" (March 25, 1968, pp. 657-679 in TOH)
MLK, "Remaining Awake..." (March 31, 1968, pp. 268-287 in TOH)
MLK, "I See the Promised Land" (April 3, 1968, pp. 279-286 in TOH)

I MAY NOT GET THERE WITH YOU

MLK, "Where Do We Go from Here?" [last SCLC address] (pp. 245-252 in TOH)
MLK, "A Testament of Hope" (January 1969, pp. 313-328 in TOH)

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COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this course is to achieve an understanding of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and works, and his role in shaping civil rights in America. Toward this end, we draw primarily on King's books, addresses, sermons, and essays. For context, we read a selection of contemporary reports on civil rights. For depth of understanding and critical engagement, we turn to some of King's major influences (including Isaiah, Amos, Henry David Thoreau, Walter Rauschenbusch, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Abraham Heschel) and his primary challengers (Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reflection journal = 25%	Ten 1-page reflections
Midterm Exam = 20%	In-class essay, Friday, October 9
Analytical Essay = 25% - Abstract and bibliography (5%) - Rough draft (5%) - Final draft (15%)	See analytical essay dates
Final Exam = 30%	Take-home essay, due in Stubbs 240 by 9:30am, Friday, December 11

Grading Scale
A+ = 97-100
A = 93-96
A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89
B = 83-86
B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76
C- = 70-72
D+ = 67-69
D = 63-66
D- = 60-62
F = <60

Effective this fall (2015), LSU has introduced a plus/minus grading scale for final course grades. Only your final grade for the overall course will be reported according to the plus/minus scale.

Your course grade is based on your reflection journal entries (10 1-page entries, for a total of 25%), a midterm exam (20%), an 8-10 page analytic essay (25%), and a final exam (30%). You will be provided with review questions in advance of the exams. You will need a Blue Book for your midterm exam (available at the LSU bookstore). Your final exam will be a take-home exam, due in Stubbs 240, the Political Science office, no later than **9:30am, Friday, December 11, 2015**. You are encouraged to organize your own group study, as it facilitates your understanding of the material and challenges you to think about the major questions and arguments of the texts. *All* late material will be penalized. Announcements and readings for bonus opportunities will be posted on Moodle or distributed in class. I reserve the right to administer unannounced bonus quizzes.

You will receive details on the reflection **journal assignments** in class. Meanwhile, the **analytical essay** will consist of an 8-10 page exegetical and critical analysis. A list of suggested topics, as well as a detailed description of the nature of this assignment, will be provided for you. You must have your topic approved. The essay will be due on **Monday, November 23, 2015**. Important dates for the essay:

Abstract and bibliography presentation: Monday, October 26, and Wednesday, October 28, 2015 (presentation and hard copy, 5%)

Rough draft: Friday, November 6, 2015 (hard copy for comments, 5%)

Final submission: Friday, November 20, 2015 (hard copy, 15%)

READING, ATTENDANCE, AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Your success in this class depends upon your consistent attendance, participation, and integrity. Before each class period, you should read the assigned materials and thoughtfully consider their significance for our study. Our task is to read sympathetically in order to read critically – that is, to understand what each author is asking and arguing, and then to thoughtfully evaluate his work. Of course, you should **bring your copy of the text to class**. At the end of each class period I will announce the readings for the next class period.

ETIQUETTE AND ELECTRONICS IN CLASS

Classroom etiquette acknowledges that class time is set apart for a special purpose and requires students to respect others in word and in deed. Make sure you are ready to begin when our class starts and wait until it is over to pack your notes and belongings. Be attentive to what others say, and make an effort to contribute to class discussions. Know that, unless there is an emergency, leaving before class is over is unacceptable. **The use of laptops, tablets, and smart phones is not allowed in class**, except for official note-takers. Using pen and paper instead limits the distractions your laptop presents to you and your neighbor. Studies show using pen and paper also contributes to better understanding and more effective learning overall. Audio recorders are allowed, but strictly for your personal use.

MOODLE

Login to Moodle through your myLSU account to access readings and other course materials (posted as PDF files or Internet links) as well as your grades.

REQUIRED TEXTS

*** Students should print the selections marked on syllabus with a double asterisk from Moodle.*

** Students should purchase the following anthology (available at the LSU bookstore and through online retailer such as Amazon, AbeBooks, etc.).*

Martin Luther King, Jr., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* [ISBN 978-0-06-064691-2] (2003 edn.)