HIS 3623.001
History of the Civil Rights Movement
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Syllabus – Fall 2023

Course Description

This course will examine the history of the struggle for civil rights in the United States from the conclusion of the Civil War to the present day, focusing on the movement led by African Americans in the middle decades of the twentieth century. It will explore the movement's historical roots in the political, social, and economic changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It will consider the long history of Black agitation for equality that grew into a mass movement after World War II. It will examine the tensions and conflicts within the Black community over the movement's goals and tactics, the role the federal government played in the movement, the rise and growth of Black radicalism, and the role of gender in the movement. While some attention will be given to the efforts by other oppressed groups to achieve civil rights, the focus in this course will be on the Black experience.

To study this topic, the course will utilize a broad range of materials and sources: lectures and readings, primary and secondary sources, discussions and multimedia resources. It will be inclusive of people at all strata of society—farmers and politicians, laborers and writers, well-known civil rights leaders and ordinary activists—because everyone contributed to the story of the civil rights movement.

- **Credit hours**: 3
- **Prerequisites/co-requisites**: None.

Course Objectives

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

- Explain the significant themes, patterns, and events in civil rights movement history.
- Analyze historical evidence, ideas, and arguments.
- Recognize and utilize the variety of sources historians use to learn about the past.
- Construct historical arguments based on critical interpretations of primary and secondary sources.
- Identify connections between present day concerns and the past. That is, they should be able to think historically.

Course Format

This course is fully online in asynchronous format. There are no required meeting times. All course materials, including lectures, assessments, and activities, are provided asynchronously through Canvas. Students are responsible for completing all required components of the course by the deadlines listed in the course schedule and/or syllabus.

Navigation Instructions: When you log in to Canvas you will arrive at the Home page. Use the course menu on the left-hand side to go to other locations in the course.

Communication Plan

Course Questions:
Communication with me and your classmates is highly important in this course. The Discussion topic "**Course Questions**" allows you to post any question you may have about the course. I will check this Forum regularly and respond to your questions. I encourage you to help answer your classmates' questions as well.

Email:

You may email me at gregg.michel@utsa.edu for questions not addressed in "**Course Questions**" or to discuss privately any concerns or questions you have about the course. I typically will respond to email within 24 hours, though it may be longer if it is the weekend.

Office Hours:

I am available to meet with you in office hours (via Zoom) every **Thursday from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**. No appointment is necessary. Or you may schedule an appointment for an alternate time via this link.

Course Materials

- **Books (*some title available through JPL reserves*):**
  - Adam Fairclough. *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890-2000*
    - ISBN 978-0-14-200129-5 paperback
  - Michael K. Honey. *To The Promised Land: Martin Luther King and the Fight for Economic Justice*
    - ISBN 9780393356731 paperback; ISBN 9780393651270 ebook
  - Anne Moody. *Coming of Age in Mississippi*. 9780440314882
  - Laura Wexler. *Fire in a Canebrake*
    - ISBN 9780684868172 paperback
- **Module Lectures:** Available in Canvas
- **Primary Sources:** Available in Canvas
- **Multimedia Resources:** Available in Canvas

Technology Requirements and Support

- Basic computer skills.
- Computer with speakers or headphones.
- Internet access. Wired or reliable wireless connection recommended for online tests/assignments. **Deadlines will not be extended because of a failed or disrupted internet connection.**
- Firefox, Safari, Chrome, and Edge are recommend browsers; see the Canvas browser and computer requirements for information on mobile devices and other computer requirements.
- Optional: The Canvas app, available from your favorite app store.
- If you encounter a problem with Canvas, please submit a ticket to University Technology Solutions (UTS) Tech Café. A screenshot of the issue may accelerate the troubleshooting process. Another resource is to use the Chat support feature in Canvas.
- I recommend that you bookmark the Canvas Student Guide as it has useful information on how to use Canvas.

University Technology Solutions (UTS) Contact Information

- Email UTS Tech Café at techcafe@utsa.edu
- Call UTS Tech Café at 210.458.5555
- Visit the UTS Tech Café
- For more information on accessing desktop computers on campus in the labs and the library, visit the UTSA Student Connect Computer Lab information page.

Grading Information

Letter Grade Distribution

Final grades will be based on students earning a grade out of 100%:

Letter Grade "A" Distribution	Letter Grade "B" Distribution	Letter Grade "C" Distribution	Letter Grade "D" Distribution	Letter Grade "F" Distribution
A+ = 97% - 100%	B+ = 87% - 89%	C+ = 77% - 79%	D+ = 67% - 69%	F = 59% or below
A = 93% - 96%	B = 83% - 86%	C = 73% - 76%	D = 63% - 66%	---------
A- = 90% - 92%	B- = 80% - 82%	C- = 70% - 72%	D- = 60% - 62%	---------

Note: Numerical scores between two letter grades will be rounded to the nearest letter grade.

Grading Schema

Activity	Points Each	Weighted Amount
Syllabus Quiz	100	5%
Discussion	100	10%
Collaborative Work	100	10%
Racial Violence Study	100	15%
Memoir Analysis	100	20%
Video Essay	100	25%
Thematic Essay	100	15%
Total	**N/A**	**100%**

Assignments & Assessments

Syllabus Quiz
Ten true/false or multiple choice questions focused on the most information to successfully participate in the course.

Discussions
Students will use Discussions in Canvas to engage in conversations about the civil rights movement with the instructor and their peers. These discussions will enable students to engage one another about the course material and thereby enhance their own understanding of the subject matter. Students are required to make at least 10 post to the Discussions over the course of the term. It is the student's responsibility to follow the Discussions and to decide when to contribute. Please note: Discussions stay open for approx 1-2 weeks; once they close, no additional posts are permitted.

Collaborative Work
Most weeks, students will work in small groups to complete assignments designed to strengthen their analytical and communication skills. Assignments will be due by 11:59 p.m. each week on the date listed in the course schedule. Groups of 6-8 students will be set at the start of the semester and no changes will be allowed except in extraordinary circumstances. Group members will have the opportunity to confidentially assess one another at the end of the semester. Except if noted otherwise, all group members will receive the same score or grade for submitted work. No extensions are allowed except as permitted by the university's excused absence policy.

Racial Violence Study
Students will conduct primary source research and write a 4-5 page paper on an instance of racial violence in the United States between 1880 and 1950. Students will use the Equal Justice Initiative's Lynching in America database as the

starting point for identifying an incident to explore in more detail through newspapers and other primary sources. Additional information on this assignment will be provided during the semester. <u>No extensions are allowed except as permitted by the university's excused absence policy</u>. Students who find the topic of racial violence to be unsettling and uncomfortable may contact me to discuss an alternative assignment option

Memoir Analysis

Students will write a 4-5 page paper that assess the memoir *Coming of Age in Mississippi* <u>and</u> contextualizes within the larger history of the civil rights movement. Students may use only materials from the class, such as readings, lectures, and primary sources for this paper—no outside sources permitted. Additional information on this assignment will be provided during the semester. <u>No extensions are allowed except as permitted by the university's excused absence policy</u>.

Individual in the Movement Video Essay

Students will choose one person from a list of civil rights activists and create a project focusing on that individual's role in the civil rights movement. These individuals, many of whom students will encounter during the semester, will not be the usual "cast of characters" in popular retellings of the Movement. Instead, these will be people whose role may have had a local impact rather than national one or whose contributions went unappreciated for many years. Students will conduct primary source research and create a narrated video essay that utilizes multimedia elements such as images, audio, and video to present the individual's movement biography, connects the person's work to themes explored in this class, and highlights their significance to the history of the civil rights movement. The list of activists and additional information on this assignment will be provided during the semester. <u>No extensions are allowed except as permitted by the university's excused absence policy</u>.

Thematic Essay

Students will write a 4-5 page paper that identifies a theme from the book *To the Promised Land* and connects it to the history of the civil rights movement as studied in this class. In their paper students should clearly explain the theme and give examples of it that draw on lectures, readings, and other course materials. Students are not permitted to use outside sources. <u>No extensions are allowed except as permitted by the university's excused absence policy</u>.

Changes

The syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes will be posted in the Announcement section of the Canvas. It is your responsibility to check Canvas for syllabus changes.

Content Warning

Please be aware that this course may include discussions and materials that address disturbing or offensive topics related to racial inequality, violence, and discrimination. I encourage you to engage thoughtfully, respectfully, and compassionately as we navigate through the important history this course covers. If any of the course materials or discussions cause anxiety, offense, or other difficulties for you, please reach out to me or the university's counseling services. Your well-being is important to me, and I am committed to providing you a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment.

Video/Audio Recordings and Copyright

Only students registered for the class will have access to the password-protected recordings. Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recordings. Unless Student Disability Services has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Student Disability Service accommodation. If the instructor or a UTSA office plans any other uses for the recordings, consent of the students identifiable in the recordings is required prior to such use unless an exception is allowed by law. For more information on your privacy and class recordings, review Student Privacy (FERPA) in Virtual Classrooms and Other Educational Recordings.

The contents of this course, including recordings, readings, images, and other materials, are subject to the copyright law of the United States (Title 17 U.S. Code) are for use of students in HIS 3623 only. Further reproductions or distribution is prohibited.

Scholastic Dishonesty

All work turned in for evaluation is expected to be the original work of the student and must avoid all forms of scholastic dishonesty.   According to the UTSA <u>Student Code of Conduct</u>, Sec. 203, Scholastic Dishonesty "includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student . . . or the attempt to commit such an act."

Additionally, you may not record, print, take screenshots of, or describe or convey to other students any portion of a quiz or test. The course uses digital tools described in this syllabus or in the Canvas component. Use of other digital tools is not permitted without the approval of the instructor.

Any act of scholastic dishonesty will result in an automatic "F" for the assignment or evaluation and may also include the initiation of disciplinary proceedings or other measures deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Artificial Intelligence Tools

Generative AI tools like ChatGPT, Bing chat, Claude.ai, and DALL-E 2 use machine learning models to produce new content like text or images in response to a prompt or instructions. AI cannot substitute for engaging the course material but, used properly, AI can facilitate learning and make students more efficient and productive. Students in this class are permitted, and in certain instances, required to use AI tools in fulfilling the course requirements. Such use must be acknowledged and credited through citations.

It is important to learn to use AI responsibly and ethically and to be aware of its limitations:

- Accuracy – AI tools are notorious for producing factually wrong information and for flat-out making up ("hallucinating") facts and even citations. Fact-check all AI output using trusted, reliable sources. You are responsible for any factual errors or omissions produced by AI that you submit in your work.
- Outdated – related to accuracy is the fact that some AI tools are trained on data only through 2021.
- Bias – AI can perpetuate biases if biases are present in the data on which the tool is trained.
- Prompt Quality – Poor prompts yield poor results; simple, unclear queries lead to useless responses.

If you use an AI tool in the development or creation of any work for this course—including discussion posts, collaborative assignments, individual papers and projects—you must include a citation and a transcript of the AI conversation in an appendix to your submission. Citations should be in this format:

- Name of tool, "text of prompt," date of query.
- Ex. ChatGPT-3, "Why did the Civil War start in 1861," September 1, 2023.

Using an AI tool in any part of an assignment without proper attribution is a form of scholastic dishonesty and subject to the sanctions outlined in the "Scholastic Dishonesty" section of the syllabus.

Interpersonal Interactions and Netiquette

Treat your classmates with the professionalism and courtesy with which you yourself would want to be treated. It is vital that we respect the opinions of others during classroom discussions, whether online or in person. It is central to the university's mission that we encourage everyone to openly share their ideas and opinions without penalty or judgment, but learning should always be based on facts and research. It is possible to disagree without being disagreeable. Note that Blackboard Learn software automatically stores course access records, discussion postings, other course content.

Disability Services

The University of Texas at San Antonio in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities. Only students who have officially registered with Student Disability Services and requested accommodations for this course will be eligible for disability accommodations. Instructors must be provided an official notification of accommodation through Student Disability Services. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations

can be found on the Student Disability Services webpage or by calling (210) 458-4157. Accommodations are not retroactive.

In order to prepare the required documentation and receive the requested accommodations in a timely manner, please notify your instructor and the Student Disability Service office as soon as possible.

UTSA Resources & Information for Students

- **History Department Office**: open Monday – Friday from 8:00am – 5:00pm. Contact: Nicole Poole,   Senior Administrative Associate and Dr. Wing Chung Ng, Chair; (210) 458-4033. See our Department Website: http://colfa.utsa.edu/history/. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @utsa_history.
- **Undergraduate Advisor of Record**: Dr. Gabriela Gonzalez (gabriela.gonzalez@utsa.edu) is available to consult with students about courses and degree plans.
- **The Writing Center**: The Writing Center offers online tutoring. To make an appointment, go to the TWC website and register for the online scheduling system, WCOnline. Once registered, you can access our schedule and make appointments. If you have any questions about TWC's scheduling system or about the tutoring process, please call the Writing Center at (210)458-6086 or email martha.smith@utsa.edu.
- **UTSA Library**: Access UTSA Library for resources and information. Use your UTSA abc123 credentials to access some material.
- **Library Tutorials for Research**: Visit the library's online tutorials for useful tutorials on finding information and conducting research.
- **Counseling Services**: Counseling Services provides confidential, professional services by staff psychologists, social workers, counselors and psychiatrists to help meet the personal and developmental needs of currently enrolled students. Services include individual brief therapy for personal and educational concerns, couples/relationship counseling, and group therapy on topics such as college adaptation, relationship concerns, sexual orientation, depression and anxiety. Counseling Services also screens for possible learning disabilities and provides limited psychiatric services. Visit Counseling Services (http://www.utsa.edu/counsel/) or call (210) 458-4140 at the Main Campus or (210) 458-2945 at the Downtown Campus.

For additional information, including please refer to the UTSA Policies website.

Pro Tips for Success in This Course

- Regularly check Canvas for announcements and updates.
- Participate in all required components of the course.
- Don't wait to the last minute to submit an assignment because this will leave little time to solve a technical problem. As noted in syllabus, deadlines will not be extended due to technical problems.
- Be polite and respectful in all communications with the instructor and other members of the class.
- Speak up if you are having problems. Ask questions and utilize Office Hours.
- Take responsibility for your own learning. Take the course seriously.
- Manage your time wisely. You need strong time management skills to stay on-track in asynchronous classes.