POSC 351 Political Theory of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Winter 2018

Tue/Thu 10:10–11:55

Office hours by appt: Mon-Thu

WCC 133

Sign-up MOODLE

Note Meeting

Location (noted as either Weitz Cafe or Willis 414)

The Course

This interdisciplinary seminar will examine the speeches, sermons, and writings of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We will study King’s ideas as part of the larger discourse of non-violence and social justice that is foundational to King’s political action. King’s articulation of these ideas can be understood in several contexts: as part of a tradition of African-American political thought, as embedded in African-American Christian tradition, as a contribution to American civil religion, as an example of self-governing, vigilant citizenship expressed by The Federalist, and as part of an American tradition of optimism and eclectic liberal philosophy and action. We will look at King’s ideas in the context of the civil rights movement using historical assessments of the movement and its goals and through the lens of contemporary models of collective action, especially the dilemmas of coordinated, voluntary political participation. One of our goals will be to draw out the complexities of these ideas to see how they challenge the practice of democracy in the US and liberal political theory today. We will also look more broadly at the pan-African anti-colonial struggle with writings from three contemporaries of King, Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, and Amilcar Cabral. The reciprocal influences of these writers help us add another dimension to our study of liberation, civil rights, and social justice as a global challenge. King challenges us to think about authority, government, and human connection in an unconventional way. His ideas were not wholly acceptable to any constituency in the twentieth century. His vision calls into question our ideas of “state” and “citizen” as well as “race” and “identity.” We have an opportunity to ask what this vision holds for the twenty-first century.

A Note on the Readings

Much of what we will read comes from my research efforts at various archives housing King’s papers and memorabilia from the Civil Rights Movement. You will also find many news articles from the era and other items that will offer clues for how to gather research materials for your own work. I have asked the bookstore to order one book for the class: David Garrow, 1986. Bearing the Cross. New York. Harper Collins. Today this book is available in many different media forms, from e-books to audio versions (if you want to have a 900 page book read to you). But I strongly recommend buying the book at the bookstore. Although many other works have been published on King, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Civil Rights Movement and specific movement activities (e.g. Freedom Summer, Birmingham, Albany, March on Washington), Garrow’s book remains the work of exemplary scholarship on these subjects. The bibliography alone (which I will update) is worth the price of the ticket (to quote
James Baldwin) and the footnotes are a book unto themselves. So, anyone who seriously wants to understand the Civil Rights Movement and race relations in the United States in the 20th century should own, read, and heavily underline a hand-held, feel-the-page-and-weight-of-the-work copy of this book.

Course Requirements

This research seminar focuses on the political thought found in King’s writings. King’s writings and life give us a unique case study for looking at many questions combining American politics and American political philosophy, bringing under scrutiny a host of modern concepts, including “the nation,” “the citizen,” and “rights.” In the global world of the twenty-first century we may also ask how these ideas (“western,” “American,” mid-twentieth-century expressions, that they are) apply in new contexts.

The American public (including scholars) have understood these ideas in several contexts of public opinion. We see differences in the response of several opinion groups within African-American communities (men and women; nationalists and integrationists; generational differences) as well as regional, class, gender, and partisan differences in the responses of “white” Americans people of color in the US who do not identify with the African-American communities of the late-twentieth century and communities that may challenge race-based identities in a global world. These differences reflect the many ways Americans understood race, gender, sexuality, class, protest, citizenship, and government in the twentieth century and raise questions about our modes of identification in a so-called post racial America. Viewing King’s writings in a global context will give us was to think about “identity” that perhaps give new inflection to his views of nation and race. The twenty-first century contexts of global and local governance connection will also give us a field for examining theories of non-violence, police powers of government, and the basis of authority generally.

Your research papers will reflect this link between theory and practice. To aid your research, you will be asked to write discussion questions for each class (forums provided on moodle) and to post an analytical paper (3-5 pages maximum) covering an aspect of the readings that will offer a starting point for one class discussion, which you will lead. In this paper you will choose one theme from the reading to explore as your thesis for the paper. You must post your paper no later than 10:00 pm TWO DAYS prior to your assigned day for leading discussion (e.g. if you lead discussion on Tuesday, post your discussion paper on Sunday evening; if you lead discussion on Thursday, post your paper on Tuesday evening). On the same day and time, you must also upload your discussion paper as an assignment, which I will evaluate. In short, the class needs to have access to your paper so that we can discuss your ideas; I need to have the paper uploaded as an assignment in order to grade it. You post it for the class and upload it as an assignment for me. It is appropriate to bring your own research to bear on this analysis of King’s ideas.

You will hand your seminar research paper in at three points (reflecting work done on two major parts of the paper and the final work) and participate in a final presentation of our seminar’s works. Here’s how this paper writing works:

On the dates specified below you will hand in, in this order, your literature review, theoretical/analytical framework, and, ultimately, the final paper in which you have revised these two important parts of any research paper and completed the exposition of your thesis and drawn a conclusion (i.e. a finished, complete paper). These are each graded assignments. It may seem strange that we would “count” a final version of the paper as on par with two of its sections. But learning to write these sections of the paper will be some of the most important work of the class. The literature review and framework assignments are not meant to be drafts, although they may certainly be revised for the final paper. In short, the final paper is in a sense only as good as the way you’ve established your analysis.

Our paper presentations will also take a novel approach. Each of you will be teamed up with another seminar member to present your seminar colleague’s paper. To give an adequate presentation of a colleague’s work, you must study their work closely and present to the group the paper that the colleague may have wished to she or he
31 December - 6 January

Part 1 Political Theory and Practical Politics: Ideas Emerge and Develop

Thurs Jan 4

Language and Perception: The Meaning of “Race”


Preface and Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and Chapters 3–4 (xi–xii and 1–

Grades will be computed as follows:

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<th>Component</th>
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<td>Seminar Paper Total</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>Lit Review Assignment</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Theoretical/Analytical Framework</td>
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<td>Final Overall Paper</td>
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<td>Presentation in Workshop</td>
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<td>Discussion Questions (weekly)</td>
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Discussion Leader Sign Up

Choose one day on which you will write a discussion analysis paper and help lead our discussion.

Let’s Talk About America: Occupy Wall Street

A film by Sam Feigenbaum and Jacob Hamalian

Literature Review Notes Power Point Uploaded 19/01/18, 06:58

These are notes from our discussion of how to write a literature review.

Examples of Papers with Various Kinds of Literature Reviews

Consult these papers for several forms of literature review. You can also open just about any paper published in *American Political Science Review*, *American Historical Review*, *Journal of American History*, or *Review of Politics* to see some form of literature review.

Self Editing Uploaded 24/01/18, 12:45

Fold into a rectangle and keep handy

A Student Paper that Has a Lit Review and an Interesting Method Uploaded 30/01/18, 12:07
7 January - 13 January

Tues Jan 9  Political Early Thought and Action

I. Writings of ML King—Approaches to Texts and History: Montgomery

Read: MLK original typescript: “Holt Street Church” December 5, 1955


MLK “Desegregation and the Future [Address to the National Committee for Rural Schools]” December 1, 1956

MLK “Statement by the President of the MIA,” original typescript, December 20, 1956 *

MLK “Comments on Bus Company’s Decision to End Segregation on Its Lines,” transcription, April 24, 1956

MLK “The Negro’s New Self Respect,” transcription, April, 27, 1956


MLK, “The Death of Evil Upon the Seashore, a sermon preached at the Service of Prayer and Thanksgiving in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, NYC” May 17, 1956.

MLK in James, M. Washington, ed. A Testament of Hope:

“Our Struggle,” 1956; “Walk for Freedom” 1956, 75–84

II. Montgomery Context


III. Approaches to Texts and Representation: Montgomery


“Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story,” Graphic Short Story, New York: Fellowship of Reconciliation circa 1957


A Sample from the renowned African American Journalist, Ted Poston. All stories are brief. Take a look.

"On the Appeal to the Supreme Court: Portraying the winner of a recent batch of antisegregation cases, which gave the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] one of Its important gains on its anniversary," The Survey, 85,1 (January 1, 1949) 18–21.

"Martin Luther King, Jr. the Preacher Who Fights," Afro-American, 8 June 1956.

"This is Montgomery," Afro-American, Jul 14, 1956.

"This is Montgomery: Separated by a 7-Foot Wall," Afro-American, Aug 04, 1956.

"This is Montgomery: The White Citizens Councils," Afro-American, Aug 18, 1956.


This is Montgomery: No Longer Afraid" Afro-American, Sep 01, 1956.

"This is Montgomery: Separate and Unequal," Afro-American, Sep 15, 1956.
ASSIGNMENT: Use ProQuest, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Historical Black Newspapers, and Readers' Guide Retrospective to find at least TWO accounts of Montgomery Civil Rights activity 1955–1956 in a “mainstream” newspaper or magazine and two accounts of the same activity in an African American newspaper. POST The citation of these articles on our forum and upload the “page view” pdf of the article under “Assignment: Comparing "Mainstream" and African American News Coverage of Montgomery.”

Question Forum Tuesday January 9
Discussion Leader Posts a 3–5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

Question Forum January 11
Discussion Leader Posts a 3–5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

Discussion Leaders for January 9 and 11 Turn in Papers
Hand in Papers Here by 11:55 pm two days before you lead discussion.

Assignment: Citations for the two "mainstream" and two African American News Stories Here
Post the complete citations for the two "mainstream" and two African American (four total) News Stories that you found on the topic of civil rights in Montgomery 1955–1956.
Also post the page view pdf of the article. Use ProQuest, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Historical Black Newspapers, and Readers’ Guide Retrospective to find at least TWO accounts of Montgomery Civil Rights activity 1955–1956 in a “mainstream” newspaper or magazine and two accounts of the same activity in an African American newspaper. POST The citation of these articles on our forum and upload the “page view” pdf of the article HERE.

Comparing the “Mainstream” and African American News Coverage of Montgomery
ASSIGNMENT: Use ProQuest, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Historical Black Newspapers, and Readers’ Guide Retrospective to find at least TWO accounts of Montgomery Civil Rights activity 1955–1956 in a “mainstream” newspaper or magazine and two accounts of the same activity in an African American newspaper. POST The citation of these articles on our forum and upload the “page view” pdf of the article HERE.

14 January - 20 January

Tues Jan 16 King’s Political Thought: The Ideas Develop
I. An Intellectual Context:

Everyone reads:


We divide these readings among groups for team reporting:


II. King's Academic Writings

Everyone reads:


The following are recommended readings, especially for those writing comps and those focusing on MLK’s religious and philosophical development and American religion, values, and belief:


III. King on Nonviolence and Self-Determination

We divide these readings among groups for team reporting:

All in James, M. Washington, ed. A Testament of Hope.


EVERYONE READS: “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence 1960”

THURS Jan 18 NOON WORKSHOP: Literature Review and Analytical Framework

30 minutes following our class in our classroom

Assignment for the Workshop: Using our main analytical expositions on King (e.g. Garrow and Branch), pick one idea, claim, point made about King or the Civil Rights Movement (e.g. King's intellectual development, King's leadership, the causes and course of the bus boycott) and state the Garrow and Branch views of that idea/claim in one paragraph (compare and contrast). Using any and all of our other texts in the class (e.g. King's speeches and sermons, newspaper coverage of events) as evidence to pose a
hypothesis in support or refute this claim. Lay out your "case" and its significance (why we should care) in two paragraphs. Post your work on the forum provided below.

Thurs Jan 18  

**King on History and Social Progress**

I. Obstacles to Success and the “New South” Concept

Read (All in James, M. Washington, ed. *A Testament of Hope*):

MLK: “Give Us The Ballot—We Will Transform the South 1957,” “Facing the Challenge of a New Age 1957,” “The Current Crisis in Race Relations 1958,” *The Burning Truth in the South 1960;*


II. Context: “The New South” and the SCLC Founding


**Look at “Memorabilia From SCLC”**

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**Question Forum January 16**

Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the COMMON readings. Each TEAM posts a synoptic point or question linking the team’s readings to the common readings.

**Discussion Leaders for January 18 Turn in Papers**

Hand in Papers Here by 10:00 pm two days before you lead discussion.

**Question Forum January 18**

Discussion Leader Posts a 3-5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

**Choose Additional Readings for January 16**

Choose one of the following four sets of readings for team reporting.

**Literature Review Exercise for Discussion**
21 January - 27 January

And Read:

Tues Jan 23  

**King on Means-Ends and Organizing:**

**SCLC, SNCC, Freedom Rides, and the “Communist Connection”**


MLK "The Social Organization of Nonviolence,” “Suffering and Faith 1960” in James, M. Washington, ed. *A Testament of Hope* Also look in the folder described below called “Suffering and Faith.”


Three versions of "Suffering and Faith:"


2) Holograph copy of the essay


**Team reporting on the following document folders.**

*Southern Christian Leadership Conference Founding documents:*


MLK “To Amzie Moore 20 May 1958,” original Typescript


Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) founding documents:


MLK re: Kennedy and Nixon 1960 documents


Re: Communism c. 1960 documents:


Representations of Direct Action in North Carolina

Everyone Familiarize yourself with these documents as examples of research materials:


Video of King Discussing Kennedy CNN

Thurs Jan 25  King on Justice and Faith—in Organizing and Action

What Counts as Failure?

A Problem in Theory?

AND “The Nation’s Future” transcript of a debate between MLK and James Kilpatrick (look up James Kilpatrick to see who he is).
November 26, 1960


Team Reporting on the Following:

Problems in Organizational Structure?


Considering the Albany Context


TEAM REPORTS:


TEAM Reports on these articles as examples of research materials:


Representations of Albany

Take a Look at the News Coverage:


**Friday Turn in Literature Review**

Literature Review

Question Forum Jan 23

Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the COMMON readings. Each TEAM posts a synoptic point or question linking the team’s readings to the common readings.

Question Forum January 25

Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the COMMON readings. Each TEAM posts a synoptic point or question linking the team’s readings to the common readings.

Choose a Document Collection January 23

Choose one of the three document collections as an example of research materials relevant to the history of the SCLC and MLK.

Choose An Additional Reading January 25

Choose one of the following texts to read and report to class

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**28 January - 3 February**

**MON Jan 28 WORKSHOP: Discuss Literature Reviews**

**Tues Jan 30**

**King on Civil Rights and American Constitutionalism**

**The Birmingham Context**


Four letters from Fred Shuttlesworth regarding Birmingham: to Martin Luther King, Jr. and Wyatt T. Walker (15 March 1963); to Martin Luther King, Jr. (7 November 1963); to L.H. Pitts (11 December 1963) and to J.L. Ware (11 November 1963).

**A Response to James Kilpatrick?**

Read: MLK “Letter from Birmingham City Jail” in James, M. Washington, ed. *A Testament of Hope*

AND “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” in the form sold for 10¢ by the Friends Service Committee with King’s signature

Selected Birmingham Police Reports on Mass Meetings 1963

*Eugene "Bull" Connor Papers "Wire Tap of King Conversation 16 April 1963."

Representations of Birmingham

We will divide these short readings among groups for team reporting:


ASSIGNMENT: Use ProQuest, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Historical Black Newspapers, Readers’ Guide Retrospective, and Lexus Nexus to find at least One account of Birmingham Direct Action 1962–1964, in a “mainstream” US newspaper or magazine, One account of the same activity in an African American newspaper, and One account in a non-US newspaper or magazine (in any language that you can read, because you will discuss in class.) POST The citation of these articles on
Thurs Feb 1

**Change and Continuity in Message and Method**

I. The Southern Contexts: Mississippi, Florida, & Selma, Alabama


"On to Washington Flyer"

II. The Beloved Community as Political Community


“Three Dimensions of a Complete Life 1959,” original typescript

“The Answer to a Perplexing Question 1963,” original typescript


III. Civil Religion and Religion in the Civil Rights Movement


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**Question Forum January 30**

Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the COMMON readings. Each TEAM posts a synoptic point or question linking the team’s readings to the common readings.

**Question Forum February 1**

Discussion Leader Posts a 3-5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

**Discussion Leaders for February 1 Turn in Papers**

Hand in Papers Here by 10:00 pm two days before you lead discussion.

**Comparing “Mainstream” US and US African American News Coverage to the Foreign Press Coverage of Birmingham**

Post citations for your news stories here.
4 February - 10 February

Mon Feb 5 Midterm Break

Tues Feb 6 Is Direct Action Enough? (How Do We Evaluate that Question?)


I. King on Civil Rights Activism in a Federal Democracy


II. The “North”


Moving Image Archives

Chicago Film Archives

On the Cicero March
Chicago Riots

Thurs Feb 8

**On the Nation and the National Challenge**


On 1968 Chicago DNC Protests

Student News Conference Right of Dissent

Stokely Carmichael Black Power 1966
Friday Feb 9 Turn in Analytical Framework (and as necessary revised Literature Review)

Analytical Framework

Turn in the Analytical Framework and, if you have revised, your Literature Review

Question Forum Feb 6

Discussion Leader Posts a 3-5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

Question Forum Feb 8

Discussion Leader Posts a 3-5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

Discussion Leader for February 6 and 8 Turn in Papers

Hand in Papers Here by 10:00 pm two days before you lead discussion.

The Persistence of Racial Resentment

New York Times Study

11 February – 17 February

Part 3 Civil Rights and International Liberation Movements

A Word: Again, let me make a suggestion about your readings. Below is the order in which we shall discuss the readings. But that is not necessarily how you should read these short books (or in the case of Cabral, the collection of speeches). Over the weekend I suggest that you read Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi (even if you read some parts quickly and re-read for class). You will have a much better sense of these authors as individuals while we discuss their works in tandem. The selections of Amilcar Cabral’s speeches are more straightforward (they are speeches after all), so you can read them for the day we discuss his work.

Mon Feb 11 WORKSHOP Discuss Analytical Frameworks

Tues Feb 13 Beyond the “National Community”

King on International Relations and Rights

Read: David Garrow. 1986. Bearing the Cross, New York: Vintage Books, Ch 10 and 11, and Epilogue, 527–574 and 575–625. (See link above)


**Thurs Feb 15**  **NO CLASS MEETING**

Begin reading the works by Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon.

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**Question Forum February 13**

Discussion Leader Posts a 3-5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

**Discussion Leader for February 13 Turn in Papers**

Hand in Papers Here by 10:00 pm two days before you lead discussion.

**Discussant Assignments for Colloquium**

Each of you is assigned a paper written by one of your peers to read and present. Discussants will present a review of the work and with comments on steps to improve the argument. Plan to make a presentation of about 10 minutes. Authors may have a 5 minutes to respond. Please also prepare and give WRITTEN comments to the authors. Here are your assignments:

- Roy Cady Kimball reads/discusses Anna Fierek
- Anna Fierek reads/discusses Roy Cady Kimball
- Luke Norquist r reads/discusses Anesu Masakura
- Anesu Masakura reads/discusses Luke Norquist
- Clara Liang reads/discusses Maya Collier
- Maya Collier reads/discusses Clara Liang
- Clara Liang and Maya Collier read/discuss William Lanzillo
- Wilson Li reads/discusses Jianxiong Zhang
- Jianxiong Zhang reads/discusses Wilson Li

**18 February - 24 February**

**Tues Feb 20**  **Violence and Nationalism**


**Thurs Feb 22 Colonial and Post-Colonial Culture, Orders and Disorders**


*The Colonizer and the Colonized.* New York: Beacon Press. 2–76.


**Fri Feb 23 Research Papers Due for Colloquium Presentations**

Research Papers Complete for Colloquium Presentation

Question Forum February 20

Discussion Leader Posts a 3–5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

Question Forum February 22

Discussion Leader Posts a 3–5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

Discussion Leaders for February 20 and 22 Turn in Papers

Hand in Papers Here by 10:00 pm two days before you lead discussion.

**25 February - 3 March**

**Tues Feb 27 National Order and Disorder**


**Thurs 28 Mar 1**  
Class Presentations  
Discussants Final Projects

**Question Forum February 27**

Discussion Leader Posts a 3-5 page paper. Each seminar member posts at least one question pertaining to the readings and the discussion leader paper.

**Discussion Leader for February 27 Turn in Paper**

Hand in Papers Here by 10:00 pm two days before you lead discussion.

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**4 March - 10 March**

**Tues Mar 6**  
Class presentations

**Thurs Mar 8**  
Papers Due; Final Comments on our Seminar

************* PAPERS DUE IN CLASS

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**FINAL PAPERS DUE IN CLASS**

WE WILL DISCUSS OUR PROGRESS ON OUR COLLOQUIAL RESEARCH VENTURE. NO LATE PAPERS.