

Martin & Malcolm: Religion and Human Liberation (RELG 491/AFAM 398)
University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina
Spring 2021

Instructor: Dr. Harry Singleton

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Course Description

This course surveys the lives and public careers of two of the most influential Black and American leaders of the twentieth century: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. The student will be exposed to both the similarities and differences of their upbringings for the purpose of demonstrating how these experiences shaped each man's social and religious philosophy. Also the intricacies of segregation, from Reconstruction to Plessy vs Ferguson to Brown vs Board of Education, and its crippling effect on black Americans will be discussed for the purpose of helping the student to understand the social, political, legal, and religious climate that Martin and Malcolm inherited and how each sought to transform it. The course will conclude with an analysis of the role that religious faith played throughout their lives and how, though they were adherents of different religious faiths, their understandings of the way faith is lived were remarkably similar.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- 1) demonstrate a working knowledge of the intricacies of segregation;
- 2) identify the formative factors that shaped the social and religious philosophies of both men;
- 3) convey the significance of religious faith and how it is lived out by both men.

Course Requirements

Five Phase Papers (Lowest Score Dropped - 20% each)

Final (Exit Exam) 20%

Papers

A paper of three to five pages is required of each student for each of the phases listed below. The topic of the paper is to be worked out between the student and the instructor or maybe determined directly by the instructor. All papers must be typed in font size 12 and double-spaced with a cover page, one-inch margins and proper documentation. Papers will be graded on spelling, grammar, documentation, clarity of comprehension, and aesthetic quality. **Late papers will NOT be accepted!**

Exam

A cumulative exam on the key points of the course and personal reflection will be administered at the end of the course.

Grade Scale

A 100-90

B+ 89-86 B 85-80

C+ 79-76 C 75-70

D+ 69-66 D 65-60

F 59-below

Attendance

Given that regular attendance is imperative for student success, **students will be allowed two unexcused absences. After the second unexcused absence, a point will be deducted from the student's final average for each subsequent absence or the student may be dropped from the class!** When in class, students are expected to take lecture notes, listen attentively and participate in class discussions. Students doing neither of these and constantly disrupting the general decorum of the classroom may be dismissed from the classroom by the instructor.

Electronic Devices

Other than a laptop or recording device for lectures and class discussions, electronic devices are strictly prohibited in the classroom. **In particular, cell phones and listening devices are prohibited from use during class!** They are to be turned off or placed on silent mode when entering the classroom and not used for the duration of the class. Students in violation will be disciplined or dismissed from the class.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity: According to the Carolina Creed, plagiarism is the most serious academic offense a student can commit in this or any other university and has serious repercussions. See <http://www.sa.sc.edu/creed/THETENETS.HTM>. Plagiarism is when you take credit for the work or wording of another person although you are not the original author – that can mean the work or wording of a scholar or author or the work or wording of a fellow classmate. So, when in doubt always paraphrase (put in your own words) and cite (give written credit).

Accommodations: Accommodations are available for students with a documented different ableness. If you need accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Office of Student Disability Services: 777-6142, TDD 777-6744, email sasds@mailbox.sc.edu, or stop by LeConte College Room 112A. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Student Disability Services.

Discussion Ground Rules: We will confront controversial questions head on in this class. But, here are at *least* two basic ground rules to ensure our discussions are civil: (1) if you cannot deal with “the heat” of an opinion (it contradicts your beliefs), try to at least deal with “the light” (understand why others hold that view); and (2) feel free to challenge ideas, but do not attack other people (especially fellow classmates). Use language in our discussions that conveys your viewpoint but does not make others feel personally belittled or berated.

Diversity & Inclusivity: In this class the aim is to create a sense of community where each student is valued and respected no matter what she or he believes and/or self-identifies. We want

a civil atmosphere where persons are free to share thoughts and opinions without offending others or being offended by others. Our objective is not to agree at all times – not at all. But rather to not be disagreeable in our discussions and debates. Since the objective for all of us is to be clearly understood, use language that respects the diversity of each of your classmate’s backgrounds including (but not limited to) differences of: race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, class/socioeconomic background, gender and gender identity, religious background, and age to name some. If you are not certain of the preferred term to use in referring to others, politely ask them. They will respond in a way they feel is appropriate.

Academic Resources

Student Success Center

In partnership with U of SC faculty, the Student Success Center (SSC) offers a number of programs to assist you in better understanding your course material and to aid you on your path to success. SSC programs are facilitated by professional staff, graduate students, and trained undergraduate peer leaders who have previously excelled in their courses.

Writing Center

[Writing Center \(http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/write/university-writing-center\)](http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/write/university-writing-center)

This course has many of writing assignments. The University Writing Center is an important resource you should use! It's open to help any U of SC student needing assistance with a writing project at any stage of development. The main Writing Center is in Byrnes 703.

Counseling Services

The University offers counseling and crisis services as well as outreach services, self-help, and frequently asked questions.

[Counseling Services](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_health_services/medical-services/counseling-and-psychiatry/index.php)

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Required Course Text

James H. Cone, *Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare*.
New York: Orbis Books, 1991.

Course Outline

Phase I - King and Malcolm - The Context They Inherited

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
1	Lecture: From Segregation to Desegregation Handouts: Brown vs Board Milam, Bryant	Course Introduction and Syllabus
2	Video: Eyes on the Prize Part I	Brown vs Board Emmett Till, Rosa Parks PAPER ONE DUE Tuesday, January 26

Monday, January 18, King Day Holiday (NO CLASSES)

Phase II - Martin Luther King, Jr.: Life and Career

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
3, 4	Cone, Chapter One	Birth and Upbringing
5	Cone, Chapter Three	The Career of A Dreamer PAPER TWO DUE Tuesday, February 16

Phase III - Malcolm X (Little): Life and Career

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
6	Cone, Chapter Two ***Monday, February 15, President's Day (NO CLASSES)***	Birth and Upbringing
7	Cone, Chapter Four ***Thursday, February 25, Wellness Day (NO CLASSES)***	The Life of A Bad Nigger
8	Lecture: Trouble in "Paradise"	PAPER THREE DUE Tuesday, March 9

Phase IV - Martin Luther King, Jr.: Faith and the Authentic Religious Life

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
9	Cone, Chapter Five Video: I Have a Dream ***Friday, March 12, Wellness Day (NO CLASSES)***	Formative Factors Love for Our Enemies
10	Cone, Chapter Eight Handout: Speaking the Truth	Life After the Dream
11	Cone, Chapter Nine	The Move Toward Malcolm

Phase V - Malcolm X: Faith and the Authentic Religious Life

<u>Week(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>
12	Cone, Chapter Six ***Tuesday, March 30, Wellness Day (NO CLASSES)***	Formative Factors Why A Nightmare? It's Nation Time! PAPER FOUR DUE Thursday, April 1
13	Cone, Chapter Seven Video: Malcolm X - Make It Plain	Nation Time No More! El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz
14	Cone, Chapters Ten, Eleven	The Move Toward Martin

Week(s)
15

Reading(s)
Course Wrap-up

Topic(s)
Their Enduring Legacies
PAPER FIVE DUE
Tuesday, April 20

Wednesday, April 21, Wellness Day (NO CLASSES)

*****Last Day of Instruction***** Monday, April 26

*****Reading Day***** Tuesday, April 27

*****Final Examinations***** Wednesday, April 28-Wednesday, May 5

*****Commencement***** Friday, May 7, Saturday, May 8

Although this is the stated outline, it is subject to change as dictated by either time availability or unforeseen circumstances.