



**US HISTORY 264.01E, A Nation Divided: Civil Rights  
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2013**

**Instructor:** Merry Ressler  
**Office Location:** Ferguson Social Science Bldg., Room 145  
**Office Hours:** MWF 9:15 - 9:45, 1:00 - 3:00 or by appointment  
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**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Materials – Textbooks, Reading, Supplementary Readings:**

*Textbook, Required:* *Eyes on the Prize, America's Civil Rights Years 1954-1965*, Juan Williams, Penguin Books,  
ISBN: 978-0-14-009653-8  
*The Civil Rights Movement in America*, Charles W. Eagles, University Press of Mississippi,  
ISBN0-87805-298-4  
*The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, Nancy MacLean, Bedford St. Martin's,  
ISBN: 978-0-312-44801-1

**Course Description:**

This course is designed as a broad interdisciplinary course in the historical development of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the twentieth century, as it pertained to blacks, women, LGBT, native Americans, and migrant workers. Assignments will focus on reading, writing, analysis and critical thinking.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will be able to form substantive and evidence-driven arguments to propose solutions to problems or explain phenomena.
2. Student communications will follow conventions of grammar and syntax appropriate to the audience, purpose, and message.
3. Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civil issues.

4. Students will be able to understand their role in their own education.

*Students will be assessed on SLOs 1-3 by an essay; this may be part of an exam, a research paper, or other assignment. SLO 4 will be assessed by a form at the end of the semester. Yay!*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Instructional Methods / Activities / Assessments

The purpose of this course is to help the student understand the social, political, legal, cultural and economic ideas and events of American society through the lens of minority rights. Through the use of lecture, discussion, reading of both primary and secondary sources, examination, quizzes, research paper, group activity and class discussion, the student will:

1. see the way the past shaped and transformed the values and institutions of American civil rights during this period;
2. look at issues from a variety of perspectives, such as those of class, gender, and ethnicity;
3. practice and improve both oral and written communication skills; and
4. learn study skills, including internet, library and other research skills.

### Grading

The student's grade will come from a combination of points earned via a variety of opportunities. These will include:

#### A. Exams (300 points)

Students will take **TWO** examinations. The material for each will come from the readings (both text and supplemental) and/or lectures. Students will need a blue book for each exam and blue or black ink only. The exams will be monitored and graded by the instructor and/or a graduate assistant. Make-up exams require a reasonable excuse, documented by a letter from a doctor, a coach, a parent, or at the discretion of the instructor; there will be **no make-up for the final exam**.

#### B. Reading quizzes (100 points)

Students will take a series of short quizzes given throughout the semester over **assigned readings** for the day, or a **movie/video** viewed in class. Each quiz is worth 10 points. The top ten grades from the supplemental readings will be added together to produce your final reading quiz grade. There will be more than ten opportunities to earn points, but only the top ten grades count—not the cumulative score. If fewer than ten quizzes are taken by the student, the instructor will record zeros to come to a total of ten grades.

#### C. Book reviews (200 points)

Two brief book reviews will be due over books chosen from a list provided by the instructor. Students will specify which book they have chosen and clear it with

the instructor before going forward with the reviews. Specifics for this review and pertinent dates will be found online in eCollege. Students may turn in their review early, but not more than one week late. Late papers lose one full grade.

**E. Group Activity (100 points)**

The students will be divided into groups on the first class day. Each group will select two movies from a list provided by the instructor, and a project reviewing the merits, and a comparison of the movies will be presented (see Calendar for your group’s date of presentation). Further directions will be forthcoming.

**F. Research Papers (100 points)**

Each student is required to write one short research paper. The topics and subject matter will address one aspect of the Civil Rights Movement during the twentieth century with a comparison and an update of current legislation effecting that issue. The paper requires a cover page and bibliography. Detailed instructions for the papers will be found in eCollege.

**G. Grade percentages**

Exam One	150 points	150
Exam Two	150 points	150
Reading quizzes	10 points each (possible 100)	100
Book Reviews (2)	100 points each	200
Group Project	100 points	100
Research Project	100 points	<u>100</u>
		800 possible points

A = 720 - 800
B = 650 - 719
C = 550 - 649
D = 450 - 549
F = under 450

***Students may view their own grades and progress through eCollege throughout the semester.***

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS, ACCESS, NAVIGATION AND RULES**

***Word Processing:***

You will need access to a word processor and printer to do the persona/research paper, and to participate fully in the group exercise. You should be able to insert footnotes in your papers.

***eCollege:***

This course is web-enhanced through eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To access eCollege you will need an internet connection, preferably high speed, and your CWID (Campus Wide IDentification) and password. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your

password, please contact Technology Services at 903-468-6000 or [helpdesk@tamuccommerce.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuccommerce.edu). To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuccommerce.edu/login.aspx>. eCollege will be used to send you announcements and reminders, to post grades, and to provide access to course materials (except required readings) such as handouts and assignments. In addition, eCollege will be the primary means for me to communicate with you outside the classroom. **Be sure that you can access the email account the university has on record for you, and check it frequently.** For supplementary reading assignments and instructions for various projects, I will post in eCollege under Doc Sharing. You **MUST** understand how to access this feature! Quizzes will be done online according to the date due on calendar.

**Cell phone** usage: Please turn off cell phones during class. **Laptops:** Laptops, iPads, and other electronic devices are permissible for taking notes. At no time should volume of any device be a distraction to other students. Your personal volume should not be a distraction, either (no rattling snacks, talking to friends, that sort of thing).

### **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

Feel free to email me at my University email address with any questions or concerns. I check email frequently and try to respond within a day of receiving your query. Or, you may make an appointment to meet with me at my office at the University: Ferguson Social Science Building, Room 126.

I will accept and respond to emails from parents, too, but students should remember that this is a college level class, and they will be expected to behave with the responsibility inherent in being a college student/adult. No information about the student or the student's work, attendance, or other information will be discussed with a parent without the student's signed consent. Otherwise, I will respond by saying I am bound by privacy laws and confidentiality to disclose no information.

### **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

#### **Course Specific Procedures:**

##### ***Classroom Behavior***

All students are expected to observe basic tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).

##### ***Academic Honesty***

In all courses, I expect that all work that you do and turn in is your own. It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and this instructor that no form of plagiarism, cheating, collusion, or any other form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as deliberately taking the words or ideas of someone else and passing them off as your own. Cheating is obtaining unauthorized assistance on any assignment. Collusion is the selling of academic products with the intention that they be submitted to satisfy an academic requirement. Students are expected to uphold and support the highest academic standards at all times. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty will automatically fail the assignment in question, will likely fail the entire course, and will be subject to disciplinary action by the University (See Texas

A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]). Further information on the History Department plagiarism policy can be found on the History Department web page. If you are even unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please ask me.

### **Writing Center**

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the resources of the Writing Center for assistance with drafting their papers. The Writing Center is a resource for you. They will not write your paper; they will help you improve your writing skills. If you use the Writing Center, please plan ahead. They can only help you if you see them in advance and have time to incorporate their suggestions into the final paper. More information can be found at <http://www.tamuc.edu/litlang/CSC/>.

### **University Specific Procedures:**

#### **Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Gee Library  
Room 132  
Phone: 903-886-5150 or 903-886-5835  
Fax: 903-468-8148  
[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

***The following calendar is specific to the **Fall, 2013** semester and should be referred to frequently by the student. However, the instructor reserves the right to change the calendar as the need arises. **CHECK Ecollege FOR UPDATES TO THE CALENDAR!** Weather, illness, or other issues may change the due dates and schedule of classes or assignments.***

***I suggest you print out the calendar and keep track of the due dates for assignments and/or exams.***

HIST 264-01E	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
WEEK 1	<i>Aug. 25</i>	<i>Aug. 27</i>	<i>Aug/ 29</i>
	<i>First Class Day</i> —discuss syllabus, assign groups	Discussion of slavery through the Civil War	Reconstruction through <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> ; declare book choices
WEEK 2	September 2	Sep 4	Sep 6
	<i>No class - Labor Day holiday</i>	<i>Movie:</i> Slavery by Another Name	<i>Movie:</i> Slavery by Another Name, part 2
WEEK 3	Sep 9	Sep 11	Sep 13
	The Great Migration	<i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> ; Little Rock Central H.S. integration	Freedom Riders; MLK's letter from Birmingham Jail
WEEK 4	Sep 16	Sep 18	Sep 20
	Children's Crusade; George Wallace's "Stand in the Schoolyard Door"	March on Washington; 4 Little Girls Die in Birmingham	Civil Rights Act of 1964
WEEK 5	Sep 23	Sep 25	Sep 27
	Malcolm X; Bloody Sunday; Voting Rights Act of 1965	Black Panthers	<i>Movie:</i> COINTELPRO, The FBI's War on Black America
WEEK 6	Sep 30	October 2	Oct 4
	Death of MLK, RFK; Civil Rights Act of 1968	Student protests; busing; <b>BOOK REVIEW 1 DUE</b>	<b>Group Work Day</b>
WEEK 7	Oct 7	Oct 9	Oct 11
	End of busing; end of affirmative action; election of Barack Obama	Recent Civil Rights legislation; <b>LAST DAY FOR BOOK REVIEW</b>	<b>GROUPS 1 AND 2</b>

WEEK 8	Oct 14	Oct 16	Oct 18
	Midterm Review	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	<b>GROUPS 3 AND 4</b>
WEEK 9	Oct 21	Oct 23	Oct 25
	History of the Women's Movement; Declaration of Sentiments	Suffrage and the Women's Movement	<b>GROUPS 5 AND 6</b>
WEEK 10	Oct 28	Oct 30	November 1
	<i>Movie:</i> Iron-Jawed Angels	<i>Movie:</i> Iron-Jawed Angels	<i>Movie:</i> Iron-Jawed Angels
WEEK 11	Nov 4	Nov 6	Nov 8
	Birth Control and the Women's Movement	Working and the Women's movement	Politics and the Women's movement
WEEK 12	Nov 11	Nov 13	Nov 15
	Education and Future of the Women's movement	Gay/Lesbian movement	Gay/Lesbian movement; <b>BOOK REVIEW 2 DUE</b>
WEEK 13	Nov 18	Nov 20	Nov 22
	History of the Native Americans and the U.S.	Problems within the Native American populace	<i>Movie:</i> Children of the Plains <b>LAST DAY FOR BOOK REVIEW</b>
WEEK 14	Nov 25	Nov 27	Nov 29
	Native American movement: AIM	Civil Rights music; <b>RESEARCH PAPER DUE</b>	<i>Thanksgiving break</i>
WEEK 15	December 2	Dec 4	Dec 6
	Migrant Workers; History of the bracero <b>LAST DAY FOR RESEARCH PAPER</b>	Migrant Workers; Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers	<b>REVIEW</b>
<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	<i>December 9 10:30 - 12:30</i>		