

UMBC UGC New Course Request: From Black Power to Black Lives Matter: The Black Freedom Struggle in the Post-Civil Rights Period (Course #: HIST 400 / 600)

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Proposed Effective Date: Fall 2016

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COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number(s)	449 / 649
Formal Title	From Black Power to Black Lives Matter: The Black Freedom Struggle in the Post-Civil Rights Period
Transcript Title (≤30c)	From Black Power to Black Lives Matter
Recommended Course Preparation	HIST 201 or any 300 level Humanities or SS course
Prerequisite NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	none
Credits	3
Repeatable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes * <input type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3 This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.
Grading Method(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> * Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (no longer than 75 words):

This course explores the myriad and changing ways that African Americans struggled for equality in the fifty years after the civil rights reforms of the mid-1960s. It pays particular attention to issues of political economy and structural shifts in U.S. politics in order to situate black activists activism in context.

RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE

a) Why is there a need for this course at this time?

No such course exists on this subject at UMBC. (The Political Science Department offers "African American Politics," "Race and Law," and "Blacks and Public Policy," all of which focus on electoral politics and / or law and policy formation, and cover an undefined period of time, though it appears from course descriptions that the time period is much broader than the post-civil rights period. The proposed course focuses on the post civil rights period exclusively and explores electoral *and* movement politics. It also stresses an exploration of change over time, seeking an understanding of how African American political engagement changes in response to the end of legal segregation, the emergence of a post-industrial economy, and the rise of conservatism.) The proposed course is relevant to contemporary discussions of racial inequality and racial politics, both of which are the subject of significant public and scholarly debate today.

b) How often is the course likely to be taught?

Every other year.

c) How does this course fit into your department's curriculum?

It complements the existing courses in Post World War II United States history (HIST 347) by allowing students to explore a specialized topic within the period covered therein. It also compliments the Civil Rights Movement

(HIST 447) course by exploring the African American activism that came after the time period covered therein (and attempted to fulfill the promise of the legislative reforms secured by said civil rights activism).

d) What primary student population will the course serve?

History, Africana Studies, and American Studies.

e) Why is the course offered at the 400 level?

The course requires strong writing and research skills and a willingness to tackle a high volume of reading.

f) Explain the appropriateness of the recommended course preparation(s) and prerequisite(s).

We recommend HIST 201 or a 300 level humanities course because they equip students to 1. conduct historical research and writing which are required in the course, and 2. students who have taken such courses tend to be acclimated to a high volume of reading.

g) Explain the reasoning behind the P/F or regular grading method.

It is customary in our department to offer students the full range of grading methods.

h) Provide a justification for the repeatability of the course.

N/A

ATTACH COURSE OUTLINE (mandatory):

See attached Syllabus

**From Black Power to Black Lives Matter:
The Black Freedom Struggle in the Post-Civil Rights Period**

Course #: HIST 449 / 649

Credits: 3

Course Description and Format:

In 1965, the veteran black political organizer Bayard Rustin published “From Protest to Politics” in which he argued that the civil rights movement had successfully removed the “barriers to full opportunity” for African Americans and now faced the daunting and more difficult task of “achieving the fact of equality.”¹ He suggested that African Americans pursue coalition politics in the electoral arena to carry on the struggle. Fifty years later, African Americans have gained significant political power but have made little progress in achieving the fact of socio-economic equality; indeed by some indicators African Americans have lost ground.

From Black Power to Black Lives Matter explores the myriad and changing ways that African Americans struggled for equality in the fifty years after the civil rights reforms of the mid-1960s. Though the course privileges activists’ agency, it, of necessity, pays particular attention to issues of political economy and structural shifts in U.S. politics in order to situate black activism in context. Using historical manuscripts, long form journalism, and a variety of primary sources, students will seek to answer three broad questions: How did African Americans work to fulfill the promise of the civil rights reforms of the mid-1960s? How did the goals, structure and composition of black protest change in response to subsequent political, economic, and social developments? How have the choices black activists have made shaped contemporary racial politics?

This is an advanced undergraduate/ graduate history course. It will be run as a reading and discussion intensive seminar.

Course Master:

George Derek Musgrove, Associate Professor of History and member of the Graduate Faculty, UMBC

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Other Faculty Involved in the Course:

None

Course Pre-requisites:

None. Recommended course prep for undergraduates: HIST 201 or any 300 level Humanities or SS course.

Course Learning Objectives

¹ Bayard Rustin, “From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement,” *Commentary* n2, v39 (February 1965).

Students will comprehend the general contours of black politics in the post-civil rights period and the major problems and questions in the field. They will also become more confident researchers, analysts and writers by:

1. learning to read more efficiently and think more critically by focusing on identifying the core arguments in their assigned readings
2. learning to analyze primary source documents by testing them against the claims made by historians and journalists
3. conducting historical research in the UMBC library and gaining confidence in the use of major scholarly search engines
4. applying their improved skills in critical thinking and analysis to the production of a historical research paper
5. presenting their ideas orally both in regular class discussion and in a final oral presentation

Assignments:

Your final grade will be based on the following point scale:

Class Participation	10%
Book Reviews	20% (5pts each)
Mid-Term Exam	15%
Final Paper Outline	5%
Final Paper Presentation	5%
Final Paper	25%
Final Exam	20%
TOTAL	100

Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis, to arrive on time, and to remain for the entire class period. But attendance is not enough. Student participation is crucial if class is to be interesting and provocative. Come prepared to talk, argue, change your mind, and defend your position.

Students are expected to engage in productive class discussion at a minimum of once (asking or answering a question in a substantive manner) per week.

Book Reviews

In preparation for class discussions, students will complete a brief (600 word) book review of 4 of the 6 assigned texts. In the case of a book that we read over the course of several classes these reviews are due on the day that we finish the book.

Students will be graded on their ability to **summarize** the text's key arguments, describe the method, and **analyze** of the work: What were the book's strengths and weaknesses? Was the argument convincing? Why? What does it add to our discussions of black politics in the post-civil rights era?

Mid-Term and Final Exams

The **Mid-Term** will consist of one exam question gleaned from those listed in the course study guide. It will cover the materials explored during Weeks I through VI, and will be a take-home exam. The **Final** Exam will consist of one exam question gleaned from

those listed in the course study guide for Weeks VIII through XIII. It will be held in class during the exam period.

For both exams, students will be graded on their ability to craft a well-organized essay with a strongly worded argument, supported by examples from the class readings, lectures, discussions, and films. On the take home exam, students will also be graded on their formatting, grammar and punctuation, and use of footnotes. See the criterion for grading the research papers below for details.

Proposal:

During Week V, students will turn in a **paper proposal** including a preliminary 1. topic, 2. research question, 3. description of the project's significance, 4. outline, and 5. annotated bibliography containing at least five books or scholarly articles.

This is a pass or fail assignment created principally to provide feedback to students as they prepare to embark on their research. Students will be graded on whether or not they make a good faith effort to complete all five sections of the assignment.

Research Paper (15 to 20 pages)

The **research paper** will be an article length primary research or historiographical paper that examines some element of the course topic in depth. Students may, for example, examine a single aspect of post-civil rights era black politics like black mayors or the Nation of Islam; or black activism in a specific city, like Baltimore or Birmingham. Students who choose to do a historiographical paper must analyze at least 5-7 scholarly monographs above and beyond the assigned texts (no textbooks or encyclopedias).

Papers will be graded on the following criterion:

- Demonstrate your ability to use evidence to support your thesis statement. Remember: You are not being graded on your opinion, but rather on the quality of your argument.
- Write clearly with proper grammar and punctuation. Writing well also entails using identifiable introductory and concluding paragraphs and strong topic sentences.
 - You are strongly encouraged to take all written work to the Writing Center before turning it in. The Writing Center is located on the first floor of the Kuhn Library across from the Reference Desk. To make an appointment or for more information go to the Writing Center website at http://umbc.edu/lrc/writing_center.html.
- Accurately footnote and cite relevant source materials.
 - **All sources must be cited using the *Chicago Manual of Style*.** Guidance on how to compose citations and create footnotes in the *Chicago* style can be found in the "How to, Footnotes" file found under the "Syllabus and Course Tools" tab in Blackboard.
 - **NO sources for any paper can be from the Internet.** Students can, of course, use the internet to locate what are otherwise print sources; i.e. a book on Google Books or an article from the *Washington Post* website.²

² There are two exceptions to this rule. Students can reference Internet sites: 1. *if* the site or its content is the subject of a paper, and / or 2. *if* the site lists statistics that cannot be found in printed form – say, for instance, recent census

- Use proper formatting. Papers must be typed, double spaced with one-inch margins, and in twelve-point font. All papers must have a title, centered at the top of the first page, and include the student's name and the due date in the header. All pages must be numbered.

Research Paper Presentation:

During the last two weeks of the course, students will present their work to their peers in the form of a graded **oral presentation**. Each student will have 15 minutes to present their findings, and may do so in whatever format they deem most interesting and effective.

Students will be graded on the richness of their content, the clarity of the presentation, and their creativity.

Class Outline:

Week I: Introduction / Overview: A New Racial Terrain

Week II: Where do we go from here?

Martin Luther King, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (New York Knopf, 1967).

Week III: Black Power!

Donna Murch, *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California* (Chapel Hill, UNC Press, 2010), 1-14, 97-236.

Week IV: Seeking a new synthesis in the “Long 1970s”

Derek White, *The Challenge of Blackness: The Institute of the Black World and Political Activism in the 1970s* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2011), 1-59, 102-165.

Leah Wright Rigueur, *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 1-12, 136-219.

Week V: Research and Writing Workshops

Week VI: Seeking a new synthesis in the “Long 1970s” cont’

Derek White, *The Challenge of Blackness: The Institute of the Black World and Political Activism in the 1970s* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2011), 166-202.

Leah Wright Rigueur, *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 220-302.

Week VII: Mid-Term Exam

Week VIII: Reagan Revolution / Rainbow Rebellion

Leah Wright Rigueur, *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 302-311.

“Harold Washington,” *This American Life*, November 21, 1997.

Frederick Harris, *The Price of the Ticket: Barack Obama and the Rise and Decline of Black Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 35-70.

Week IX: The Black Nationalist Resurgence

Amy Alexander, *The Farrakhan Factor: African-American Writers on Leadership, Nationhood, and Minister Louis Farrakhan* (New York City: Grove Press, 1998), 1-17, 184-93, and 251-69.

George Derek Musgrove, “‘There is no New Black Panther Party’: The Black Nationalist Resurgence and the Changing Nature of Black Protest in the Post-Civil Rights Period,” unpublished article (will likely be delivered as a lecture).

Week XI: The Paradox of Black Politics in the 1990s

Clarence Lusane, *African Americans at the Crossroads: the Restructuring of Black Leadership and the 1992 Elections* (South End Press: Boston, 1994).

Week XII: Wishing for a Post Racial Age

Frederick Harris, *The Price of the Ticket: Barack Obama and the Rise and Decline of Black Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) pp. 1-34, 71-192.

Week XIII: From Barack Obama to Black Lives Matter

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “Fear of a Black President,” *The Atlantic*, (September 2012).

[Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” *The Atlantic*, \(June 2014\).](#)

“The Problem We All Live With,” Parts 1 and 2, *This American Life*, July 31, 2015.

The “Disfranchised” series, *New York Times Magazine*, July and August 2015.

Jay Caspian Kangmay, “Our Demand Is Simple: Stop Killing Us,” *New York Times Magazine*, May 4, 2015.

Week XIV: Student Presentations

Week XV: Student Presentations

Final Exam

Reference List:

Books:

Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: the Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America* (Jacksonville, University Press of Mississippi, 2007).

Steven Lawson, *Running for Freedom: Civil Rights and Black Politics in America since 1941*, Fourth Edition (New York, Wiley Blackwell, 2014).

Greta deJong, *Invisible Enemy: The African American Freedom Struggle After 1965* (New York: Wiley Blackwell, 2010).

Tom Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*

(New York: Random House, 2009).
Rhonda Williams, *Concrete Demands: In Search of Black Power in the 20th Century*
(New York: Routledge, 2014).

Films:

Of Black America, CBS, 1968

Eyes on the Prize: American at the Racial Crossroads, 1965-1985, *Blackside*, 1990.

The Central Park Five, PBS, 2012.

Planet Rock: The Story of Hip Hop and the Crack Generation, VH1, 2011.

Black In America, CNN, 2008.