

**IN 352 Eyes On The Prize: A Television History of the American Civil Rights Movement
Faculty Designed Independent Study (FDIS)**

Faculty: R. Craig Sautter
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Course Description

Students will trace chronological developments of the American civil rights movement from the 1950s through the 1990s by watching the Public Broadcasting Service's (PBS) award-winning series *Eyes On The Prize*, and through independent reading and writing.

Students will follow the fight for civil rights from the 1954 *Brown versus the Topeka, Kansas, Board of Education* decision that outlawed separate but equal public schools in the United States; to the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott that introduced the nation to Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr. to the nation; to the memorable 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington; to the Congressional enactment of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voter Rights Act; to the urban riots that swept through U.S. cities in the mid-1960s and the development of black nationalism as articulated by Malcolm X; to the election of black mayors such as Carl Stokes in Cleveland, Richard Hatcher in Gary, and Harold Washington in Chicago.

Along the way, students will meet remarkable leaders and everyday activists who helped transform American society into a more equitable and just place.

Competences:

H-1-B Can explain how two or more of the factors of race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, age, gender sexual orientation, or religion interact to shape communities.

H-1-F Can describe and explain the roles of individuals, groups, societies or states in history.

Faculty

R. Craig Sautter is a poet, writer, editor, publisher, and political media consultant. During the civil rights movement, he traveled across the nation as a field coordinator for the National Urban League's Voter Registration/Political Education program. He has written and produced TV and radio ads, speeches, and position papers for mayoral, gubernatorial, congressional, and senatorial campaigns. He is the author of several books, including *The Power of the Ballot, A Handbook for Black Political Participation* (1973 NUL staff project) and *Inside the Wigwam, Chicago Presidential Conventions 1860-1996* (with Edward M. Burke), and *Philadelphia Presidential Conventions*. He has taught a variety of courses at SNL for the past two decades.

Learning Experience

The PBS series will be an occasion for learning the chronology and circumstances of key moments in the civil rights movement and to reflect on the significance of those events. Students will take notes and write short reflective pieces on their reaction to the material they encounter in the documentary. Students will also read a biography of or about a key actor in the movement or an important event. Students then will write a final book review on that book, with particular attention to the course competence they seek to demonstrate.

Expected Outcomes

This course will help SNL students:

1. Understand the historical context of today's social and racial interactions;
2. Understand a chronology of major historical events in the civil rights struggle and gain an appreciation of the work of ordinary people and extraordinary leaders in shaping and solving this great racial conflict;
3. Recognize the significant contributions of racial minorities to the U.S. political and legal systems;

4. Develop an appreciation for the power of people united for democracy and justice and the possibilities of social change in their own communities.

Procedure

1. Contact the instructor at 773-262-5806 to discuss course overview and your independent learning plan to fulfill this competence.

2. Obtain the tapes for the PBS series, (1954-1965) and watch them, taking notes in a spiral notebook as though you were in a lecture class. At the end of each note-taking session, at the end of your notes, write a free-hand reflective essay of one page or more on what you just viewed in the tape from your personal perspective.

3. Tapes may be obtained in several ways, usually one at a time, for about a week.

Tapes are on reserve for SNL students at the DePaul University, Lincoln Park, Richardson Library. Or they can be obtained on-line from any DePaul campus from Lincoln Park and delivered to your campus later in the week. (Tapes must be returned on time to allow access to other students. Naturally, you are responsible for loss or damage.)

The tapes can also be obtained from any public library in Illinois. Either they have them or can get them.

The tapes can also be found at many video stores such as Blockbusters.

4. Select and read a book by or about any person who participated in the civil rights movement or a book about the movement itself or any of its critical events or aspects. Possible selections include:

Why We Can't Wait, Martin Luther King, Jr.

Where Do We Go From Here, Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Black Power by Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton

Voices of Freedom, a PBS book edited by Hampton, Fayer, and Flynn

Parting The Waters by Taylor Branch

Or, pick a book of interest to you that is relevant to the subject at hand; check out the library under civil rights or book stores under American history. There are scores of books.

5. Write a five-to-seven page book review of the book you read. Don't tell your reader everything in the book, but give us an overview and then focus on some specific events or people or themes and deliver your insights, observations, or analysis. Read a few newspaper book reviews to see the varieties of literary forms you can use when writing a book review.

Evidence Students Will Submit

1. Submit your notebook and book review for evaluation. Mail it to the address at the top of this syllabus. Enclose a stamped self-addressed envelop big enough for the notebook and paper, and I will send it back to you.

(1. b) Or instead of a book review, you can do an interview with anyone that you know personally who was involved in the civil rights movement, covering what they did and thought back then, and what they think now about the victories of the civil rights movement. Then submit the typed transcript with a final reflection of your own on your learning experience in doing the interview.

2. If you cannot finish your independent study within one quarter, notify the instructor that you want an AIncomplete,≡ before the last class of the regular SNL class schedule. I will issue an AIncomplete,≡ which I will replace with a grade when you turn in a satisfactory notebook and book review.

Criteria for Assessment

Your grade will be based on how well you seemed to grasp the overview of the civil rights movement, as reflected in your notes and final paper; the quality of insights in your reflection of the events in your notebook and final paper; the quality of your book review.

Since I am a professional writer, I also will point out writing flaws and give you some tips to improve your writing. If necessary, I may require a rewrite. We will work until it is in satisfactory form. Then I will apply the above criteria.

Student Consultation

Feel free to contact the instructor to clarify work, discuss problems, or ask for guidance.
Call (before 9 p.m.) or e-mail.