

**Bowie State University**  
School of Arts and Sciences  
**Department of History & Government**

**Fall 2011 Course Syllabus and Schedule of Learning Activities**

**Course: Independent Study** (3 Credits)

**Course # & Section:** Govt 483-001

**Schedule:** F 2:00-4:30 p.m.

**Class Location:** MLK 250

**Off. Hrs:** MWF 9:00-10:00 a.m., 12:00-1:00 p.m., or by Appointment

**Instructor:** Benjamin O. Arah

**Office Bldg.:** MLK Bldg., Rm 0207

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**Course Description:** This course is an advanced research project, guided readings, and/or paper undertaken with the approval of the department.

This course is a rigorous closed textual study and interpretive analysis of the life, social teachings and works by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. focusing on his civil rights leadership and legacy.

**Course Prerequisites:** The prerequisite is junior or senior standing.

**The Required Texts:**

Ansboro, John J. (2000). *Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change*. New York: Madison Books.

Branch, Taylor. (2006). *Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years (1965-68)*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

King, Martin Luther. (1958). *Strides Toward Freedom*

King, Martin Luther. (1964). *Why We Can't Wait*.

Meier, August et al. (1977). *Black Protest Thought in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Daily readings of national newspapers: *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Additional reading assignments will be placed in the Reserve Collection of the Thurgood Marshall Library at Bowie State University.

**Disability Policy Statement for Accommodations:** Students with any form of disability and would like to be considered for accommodations should immediately communicate their interests to Dr. Michael S. Hughes [Coordinator of Disability Support Services (DSS) & Academic Advisement Specialist]. His office in the new Business/Graduate Studies Building (Room 1328), and he can be reached (301) 860-4067. It is also important to share such an interest or desire for ADA assistance with the instructor of the course.

**Instructional Modes:** The methods would include these graded learning activities:

- traditional lectures with assigned readings and handouts to illuminate/challenge students
- in-class/online participation/discussions and study group/collaborative presentations
- viewing and interpretive analysis of the relevant/appropriate CD/Video-tapes
- written assignments (an essay, two quizzes, two examinations, extra-credit projects), and
- (possibly) inviting outside professionals and experts as guest lecturers or speakers.

**Learning Objectives:** The course objectives are as follows:

1. To introduce the students to the history and experiences of Blacks in the United States
2. To describe the civil rights struggles and evolution of certain events
3. To understand and appreciate the sacrifices and risks inherent in racism
4. To identify the unique roles played by certain individuals, particularly Dr. King; and
5. To examine Dr. King's speeches, writings and nonviolent strategy for social change

**Students Requirements:**

A) Attendance

1. Students are required to attend class sessions regularly and punctually
2. Students are required to sign the role at each class session, and a record of attendance will be maintained; and
3. It is the responsibility of the students to make up all work missed during any period of absence.

B) Written Assignments

1. For each reading assignment, students are to write a 5-page synopsis and submit (as at when due) through the designated Dropboxes.

C) Class Participation

1. Students will be required to participate in class discussions.
2. Class participation should reflect a good grasp of the arguments in the text.

**Evaluation**

A) Methods

There will be a total of 5 oral presentations and 5 short summaries of the assigned readings. There will also be a Term Paper with Oral Presentation for 20% and

- a) Each student will be required to submit a term paper of no more than 12 pages long; typed with double-spacing
- b) Students will be required to select topics from a list provided by the instructor
- c) An outlined of each paper is required; and
- d) Students will be required to give oral presentations of their papers in-class.

1. Term Paper Procedures and Deadlines: Students are required to follow these procedures and deadlines in completing their term papers:

Procedures

Deadlines

Selection of Topic	September 29, 2011
Submission of Outline	October 15, 2011
Submission of Draft	November 8, 2011
Submission of Final Copy	December 7, 2011

**Note:** Deadlines will be strictly enforced

2. The Oral Presentations of the term papers will be evaluated as follows:

a) Clarity of thesis statement	5%
b) Organization and coherence of presentation	15%
c) Conclusion & Evaluation	5
<u>Total:</u>	<u>20%</u>

3. Term Papers will be graded as follows:

a) Clarity of thesis statement	5%
b) Organization & coherence	15%
c) Depth of research demonstrated by citations & analysis	40%
d) Footnotes & Endnotes format	10%
e) Bibliography format	10%
f) Oral presentation	20%
<u>Total:</u>	<u>100%</u>

#### B) Grading Scale and Distribution of Percentages

1. 5 Oral Presentations	30%
2. 5 Written Assignments	50%
3. Final Paper/Project	20%

The numerical equivalents of the letter grades are as follows:

90+ = A
80+ = B
70+ = C
60+ = D
50+/- = F.

#### **Some Important Announcements: Information & Dates:**

**English Proficiency Examination:** After completing ENGL 101 and 102, Composition and Literature I and II, students must take and successfully pass the Bowie State University English Proficiency Examination. Transfer students who completed their English composition requirements at another university should take the English Proficiency Examination during their first semester of enrollment at the University.

**Technical Assistance:** For technical questions or instructions, please call (301) 860-4357 or (301) 860-HELP and someone, possibly Mrs. Mariann Hawken (the Blackboard Administrator), will help you. For additional information, check and click on the Tech/OIT Support via the Course Menu.

**Course Modifications:** The instructor reserves the right to make some necessary adjustments and appropriate changes or modifications) to course with your consent and due communication.

**Inclement Weather:** In cases of inclement weather, please tune in to a local radio or television station and also monitor for BSU announcements. The area media may announce whether BSU will be opened or closed, but such an announcement depends on the severity and degree of weather inclemency. Many of these sources will begin announcing late openings and closings by 6:00 a.m. Consult university publications for the information or call (301) 860-4000.

**Units of Instruction & Schedule of Learning Activities with Reading Assignments**

<b>Weeks/Dates</b>	<b>Learning Modules &amp; Objectives</b>	<b>Required Reading Assignments</b>
<b>Weeks 1-4</b>	Introduction and Course Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. King’s Biography</li> <li>• From Accommodation to Protest</li> <li>• Philosophies of Black Protest</li> <li>• The Era of Legalism</li> <li>• The Era of Nonviolent Action</li> <li>• The Era of Black Power</li> </ul>	<b>Read Meier’s book: <i>Black Protest Thought</i></b>
<b>Weeks 5-10</b>	Dr. King’s Philosophy of Nonviolence and Politics of Civil Disobedience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Redemptive Power of Agape</li> <li>• The Dimensions of Divine Providence</li> <li>• The Sacredness of Human Personality</li> <li>• The Moral Obligation to Resist Collective Evil</li> <li>• The Social Mission of the Christian Church</li> <li>• King’s Critiques of Other Responses to Collective Evil</li> </ul>	<b>Read Ansbro’s book: <i>Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change</i></b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• King's rejection of Violent Resistance</li> </ul>	
<b>Weeks 11-15</b>	<p>America in the King Years: 1965-1968 and a Reflection on his Legacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selma: The Last Revolution</li> <li>• High Tide</li> <li>• Crossroads in Freedom and War</li> <li>• Passion</li> </ul>	Read Branch's Book: <i>Canaan's Edge</i>