

**English 4221**  
**The Rhetoric of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X**

Dr. Cedric D. Burrows

Fall 2020

MWF 9:00-9:50

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**Course Description**

This course examines two of the most well-known figures from the African American civil rights movement of the 1960s, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. In contemporary society, most narratives typically frame both figures as polar opposites of each other, which results in King being viewed as the dreamer while Malcolm X is viewed as the nightmare of that dream. This course, then, will study the rhetoric of King and Malcolm X within their historical contexts. To that end, we will read the original texts and speeches of both men along with the historical and cultural worlds that produced their rhetorics.

The class will also focus on how language affects community building and how rhetorical practices shape social movements. Therefore, we will review specific periods of King's and Malcolm X's careers. For King, we will focus on events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Birmingham campaign, and the Poor People's Campaign. For Malcolm X, we will focus on events such as his Nation of Islam years, the development of the Organization of Afro American Unity, and his human rights campaign. Students will then transfer what they have learned in the course to facilitate a reflection session for Marquette's Service Learning Program.

**Required Texts**

- *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*
- *Why We Can't Wait*
- *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?*
- Readings on D2L

**Learning Outcomes**

- 1) Recognize the value of situating language within specific historical and cultural contexts.
- 2) Understanding one's own historical and cultural context when communicating with various cultures.
- 3) Write essays that express clear, cogent arguments that contain a sophisticated analysis.

**Final Grade Calculation**

Seminar Paper	40%
Three Essays	20%
Midterm	20%
Reader Responses	10%
<u>Class Participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

### **Final Course Grade/Points**

A 93-100	A- 90-92.99	B+ 87-89.99	B 83-86.99
B- 80-82.99	C+ 77-79.99	C 73-76.99	C- 70-72.99
D+ 67-69.99	D 63-66.99	F 62.99 and below	

### **Essays**

At the end of each unit, you will compose a paper focused on a particular topic related to the unit. All papers will be 4-6 pages, Times New Roman, 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Rather than a grade, you will receive a  $\sqrt{+}$  (10-8 points);  $\sqrt{\phantom{x}}$  (7-5 points);  $\sqrt{-}$  (4-0 points).

### **Seminar Paper**

At the end of the semester, you will submit a seminar paper related to the rhetoric of both King and Malcolm X. The basis of your paper will be material from your three essays. Your seminar paper will be 10-12 pages, Times New Roman, 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. You will receive a letter grade for your seminar paper.

### **Midterm**

During midterm week, you will participate as a facilitator in the Fall 2020 Reflection Session sponsored by the Service-Learning Program. Below is the title and description of the reflection session:

*Stay In Your Lane: Working With the Community As An Ally*

*This session will discuss how to work in the community as an ally while respecting the standards of the community. Using the works of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X as examples, we will workshop on how people from dominant cultures have historically worked with marginalized communities, and what those historical lessons can teach us as we prepare to work in communities.*

One session will be online on Monday, October 12 at 9:00am-10:30am. Another session will be face to face on Wednesday, October 14 at 6:00pm-7:30pm. You only need to facilitate one session, and you can decide which session you would like to facilitate. I will send more detailed information about the requirements on a separate assignment sheet on D2L.

### **Reader Responses**

I will post on D2L a prompt that you will complete before the next class meeting. Your response will be typed, 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, and approximately 250-300 words (approximately half a page). Your response will have a main idea/argument, supporting evidence, and a conclusion (see sample on D2L). The reading response will be due on the day of class discussion for the assigned selection at 9:00 am. Each response will be submitted to the D2L Dropbox. You are allowed to miss up to two responses throughout the semester. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

### **Class Participation**

At the end of each class, you will earn a participation grade. Below are the criteria for participation points (adapted from the University of Virginia's Center for Teaching Excellence).

Grade	Criteria
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Absent</li> <li>▪ Comes to class substantially late (10 minutes or more) or leaves class before dismissal.</li> <li>▪ Frequently uses cell phone to text during class time.</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present, not disruptive.</li> <li>▪ Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.</li> <li>▪ Uses laptop for other uses instead of uploading the reading assignment.</li> <li>▪ Frequently leaves class while class is in session.</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.</li> <li>▪ Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class).</li> <li>▪ Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates sporadic involvement.</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them.</li> <li>▪ Offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts) to class.</li> <li>▪ Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed case exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.).</li> <li>▪ Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of case material, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.</li> <li>▪ Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.</li> </ul>

### Attendance

In accordance with The College of Arts and Sciences' attendance policy, no distinctions are made between excused and unexcused absences (with exceptions for legal obligations and university-sanctioned activities and travel). If you miss the equivalent of two weeks of class (four absences), then you will be withdrawn and receive a WA on your transcript. Additionally, come to class on time. Three tardies count as one absence. Coming to class after ten minutes will result in an absence. Likewise, leaving class before dismissal will result in an absence.

If you cannot meet in-person due to COVID-19 restrictions, online engagement may be an appropriate alternative. As stated above, you will need to contact the Office of Disability Services if you need to explore the viability of that option. Though I cannot guarantee that every requested adjustment will be possible, due to the challenges we face with the COVID-19 pandemic, I will adapt and adjust to your situation to the greatest extent possible.

## **Health-related Class Absences**

Please regularly evaluate your own health according to current [CDC](#), [State of Wisconsin](#), and [city guidelines](#). Do not attend class or other on-campus events if you are ill.

You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment of illness from [Student Health Services](#). In the event of having a contagious illness such as influenza or COVID-19, please complete the [voluntary form](#) upon diagnosis and do not come to class or to campus to turn in any work. Instead, email me about your absence as soon as you are able so that appropriate accommodations can be explored.

Please note that documentation (a Doctor's note) for medical absences is not required. As part of their commitment to maintain confidentiality, to encourage more appropriate use of healthcare staff resources, and to support meaningful dialogue between instructors and students, Marquette Student Health Services will not provide documentation of illness.

I am committed to working with students with pre-existing medical and mental health needs, as well as new needs that may arise within the semester. I encourage you to reach out to me as early as possible to discuss any adjustments you think may be necessary in this course. Reasonable accommodations may include leveraging the course modules that have been developed in creative ways to maximize your access during times when students need to quarantine due to COVID exposure, or during an absence related to a disability or COVID-19 diagnosis. While I cannot guarantee any specific outcome, I am committed to working with you to explore all the options available in this course.

To begin this process, contact the [Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#).

## **Special Statement on COVID-19**

Marquette University recognizes that this is a difficult time which may be filled with uncertainty as we move forward with the academic year. Your safety, health, and well-being, as well as that of our faculty and staff are our primary concern and we want to be able to support you in any way that we can. To live our *Cura Personalis* or care for the whole person, we ask that you adjust your behavior to best keep yourself and others safe. We have expectations that you act responsibly in order to mitigate risk to others. As your faculty, I too am committing to these behaviors that I will ask you to follow.

The University understands that at this time you may be facing some obstacles that would make it difficult to meet your academic goals. Please use the [Student Resources](#) page on the [Marquette COVID-19 Response webpage](#) for information and resources on basic needs such as housing, food, financial aid, and medical and mental health. The webpage also offers information on official University communications, access to technology, and student services. Your professors and advisors are also here for you. Visit the [Marquette COVID-19 Response Page](#) regularly as information may change as the semester rolls out.

Remember, you are not alone and together we will navigate these extraordinary and challenging times. We are Marquette!

## **Expected Behavior**

### *Wearing Masks in Classrooms is Mandated*

Marquette requires all students, faculty, and staff to wear face masks or cloth face coverings in classrooms, laboratories and other public spaces where in-person instruction occurs. We require the wearing of masks covering the nose and mouth in all physical classrooms to help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. Marquette as a community views the adoption of mask wearing as a sign of our being men and women for others. It is a mark of respect, compassion for your classmates, faculty, staff and for the greater Milwaukee community. Students who cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability, or who are unable to remove a mask without assistance, should seek an accommodation through the [Office of Disability Services](#). If you do not adhere to this practice you will be asked to leave the room.

### *Facemasks are not a Substitute for Social Distancing*

You should maintain appropriate social distancing guidelines where possible while in the classroom, laboratory, or other instructional spaces and in public areas. You should avoid congregating around instructional space entrances before or after class sessions. Expectations for seating arrangements will be communicated at the beginning of the semester. Some instructional spaces may have designated entrance and exit doors for you to use. You should exit the instructional space immediately after the end of instruction to help ensure social distancing and allow for the persons attending the next scheduled class session to enter.

## **Late Papers**

Late Papers or finals may have their grades lowered ½ grade per late day. Please contact me if there is a conflict. All assignments must be submitted to pass the course. Submit all papers to the appropriate D2L Dropbox.

## **Code of Conduct**

You are expected to participate actively, discuss texts, and respond thoughtfully to others. Therefore, when engaging in a discussion with the instructor and/or classmates, make sure that you practice discernment with your comments so that your remarks will enrich—rather than disrupt—the learning environment.

Take care of all personal matters before entering class so as not to disturb the instructor or classmates and turn off any unapproved electronic devices (e.g., cell phones). If you decide to use your laptops during class discussion or lectures, you will be required to email me your notes at the end of class. Your notes should reflect the content discussed in class. Failure to submit the notes within five minutes of class dismissal will result in zero participation points and a class absence. Finally, food and/or drinks is not allowed.

## **Academic Honesty**

Make sure that you are familiar with Marquette's Academic Honesty Policy and the goal of acting with integrity when completing assignments in this and every course. Presenting the work of someone else as your own without acknowledgment/citation can result in you getting zero points for the assignment and a letter documenting plagiarism being sent to the dean's office.

### **Academic Accommodations**

If you have a circumstance that may impact your work in this class, please contact me early in the first weeks of the semester so that we can work together to adapt assignments. I'm happy to work with you and with staff in the Office of Disability Services (<http://www.marquette.edu/disability-services/>) to provide accommodations as appropriate.

### **Technology Requirements**

To be successful in this course, you will need to have foundational experience with D2L, the University's Learning Management System, and the videoconferencing tool Microsoft Teams. If you're not familiar with these technologies, review the [D2L Student Help resources](#) and [Students Use Microsoft Teams for online/live classes webpage](#).

I recommend you also visit the [Technology for Remote Learning webpage](#) for information on the technology you will need to be successful. For general questions about technology, contact the ITS Help Desk at [helpdesk@mu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mu.edu) or 414-288-7799.

### **Inclusive Language**

In pursuit of Marquette's commitment to social justice, it is important to use gender inclusive terms and equally important to avoid exclusionary language. Make sure that your writing honors the diversity of humanity instead of presenting one element of humanity as universal. Also, use *African American* or *black* to describe people of African ancestry. Avoid placing *the* when discussing a group (e.g., *the blacks*). Using the word *the* in front of a group highlights otherness from the speaker and their audiences.

### **Changes to the Syllabus**

The class schedule may need adjustment from time-to-time, depending on class needs, pacing, special events, and your feedback throughout the semester. You are responsible for noting any changes to due dates, meeting locations, or other information.

### **Class Schedule**

*STR = Stride Toward Freedom*

*WWCW = Why We Can't Wait*

*WDWGFH = Where Do We Go From Here*

#### Unit I: 1955-1962

August 26: Course Overview

*Martin Luther King*

August 28: World of Martin Luther King

August 31: *STF*, Chs. 1-3

September 2: **Service-Learning Presentation**

September 4: *STF*, Chs. 4-5

September 7: Labor Day (No Class)

September 9: *STF*, Chs. 6-8  
September 11: *STF*, Chs. 9-11

*Malcolm X*

September 14: World of Malcolm X  
September 16: "Mascot"  
September 18: "The Old Negro and the New Negro"

September 21: "Police Brutality"

Unit II: 1963-Early 1964

*Martin Luther King*

September 23: *WWCW*, Chs. 1-2; **Unit I Paper Due**  
September 25: *WWCW*, Chs. 3-5

September 28: *WWCW*, Chs. 6-8  
September 30: "I Have a Dream"

*Malcolm X*

October 2: "Message to the Grassroots"

October 5: "Ballot or the Bullet"

October 7: Conferences

October 9: Conferences

October 12: Reflection Session

October 14: Reflection Session

October 16: Fall Break (No Class)

Unit III: Mid-1964-1968

*Malcolm X*

October 19: "OAAU Founding Rally"; **Unit II Paper Due**

October 21: "Second OAAU Rally"

October 23: "OAAU Homecoming"

October 26: "Oxford Union Debate"

October 28: "Harvard Law School Forum"

October 30: "Not Just an American Problem but a Worldwide Problem"

*Martin Luther King*

November 2: "Address the Conclusion of Selma to Montgomery March"

November 4: "Beyond Vietnam"

November 6: *WDWGFH*, Chs. 1-2

November 9: *WDWGFH*, Chs. 3-4

November 11: *WDWGFH*, Chs. 5-6

November 13: “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop”

November 16: Review Final; **Unit III Paper Due**

November 18: Conferences

November 20: Conferences

November 23: Course Evaluations

**Seminar paper due Thursday, December 3, 2020, by 3:00.**