

MARTIN & MALCOM
AFA 33930 – Section 05F5
REL 3938 – Section 2445
Fall 2016

Mondays 8th-9th periods (3:00-4:55PM)
Wednesdays 9th period (4:00 -4:55PM)
Anderson Hall 13 (Both Days)

Course Outline

Malcom X /el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz

Malcolm X was born on May 19, 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska and was assassinated on February 21, 1965 at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, New York. He was named **Malcolm Little** by his parents and later became known as Malcolm X after becoming a member of the Nation of Islam (NOI) as was the custom for everyone who became a member of the NOI.¹ He later was known by the honorific **el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz** after completing the Hajj to Mecca in Saudi Arabia in April of 1964. Malcolm was the fourth of seven children born to Mrs. Louise Helen (Norton) Little and Earl Little. His father was a Baptist lay preacher and an activist in the **UNIA** (*Universal Negro Improvement Association*).² His mother who was born in Grenada was also active in the Garvey Movement and in racial uplift work. It was reported that Earl Little was a harsh disciplinarian of his children and was said to have hit his wife when angry. The family left Omaha in 1926 due to *Ku Klux Klan* threats, moving to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. From Milwaukee, they moved to Lansing, Michigan again because of white racist attacks. Due to Earl Little's outspokenness and continued UNIA activities the harassment by a white racist group known as the *Black Legion* continued. It was this group that Earl Little accused of burning the family's home in Lansing in 1929. Malcolm's father was killed in what was officially ruled an accident when he was six years old. His mother Louise and other members of the black community accused the *Black Legion* of the killing. Needless to say, Malcolm was deeply

¹ All members of the NOI had the surnames dropped (within the Community) and replaced with the letter X, which signified "**surname unknown**" as the white Americans who enslaved African Americans' foreparents forced them to change their names upon their arrival to these shores and gave them names of their choosing. If they were given a surname, it was the name of the slave "owner." Therefore no African American who is a descendant of enslaved foreparents knows their real name.

² The **Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL)** is a black nationalist organization founded by Marcus Mosiah Garvey. The organization enjoyed its greatest strength in the 1920s, prior to Garvey's deportation from the United States of America, after which its prestige and influence declined

troubled by his father's murder and the fear that must have gripped his mother, him and his siblings. Their breadwinner and staunch defender was gone with no one to take his place.

After his father's death, things became extremely difficult for Mrs. Little. She tried to make ends meet financially but was always in dire straits. She met a man who showed interest and promised to marry her. But when she became pregnant, he disappeared, never to be heard from again. This was more than she could withstand; she suffered a nervous breakdown in 1938 and was placed in a mental institution. This caused the breakup of the family and the children were dispersed and placed in foster care. Malcolm encountered racism in school yet he was smart, did well in his classes and was elected president of his class. When he told a white teacher who asked him what he wanted to be, "a lawyer," the teacher told him that being a lawyer was no career for a "Nigger." This greatly discouraged him about going to school; he dropped out and was later sent to live with his half-sister, Mrs. Ella Little-Collins in the Roxbury neighborhood in Boston. There he became a hustler, a drug addict and a petty criminal for which he was arrested, convicted and sentenced to an eight-to-ten-year sentence to be served at the *Charleston State Prison* for larceny and breaking and entering.

It was in Prison that Malcolm Little began the miraculous transformation that would lead him from a life of crime, drugs and desperation to that of an internationally revered religious and human rights leader. He was introduced to the teaching of Mr. Elijah Muhammad through his brothers and a sister who had joined the *Nation of Islam* and embraced Muhammad's teachings. Malcolm began to read everything he could get his hands on, even reading and memorizing much of the dictionary. He became a great debater and consumer of history – ancient and modern. With some difficulty, he embraced Islam as taught by Elijah Muhammad and joined the organization while still incarcerated. Upon his release, he went to meet Mr. Muhammad to whom he pledged his allegiance. Mr. Muhammad made Malcolm a NOI minister and set him to work. Malcolm X became the pre-eminent Muslim Minister in the NOI and beyond, increasing almost single handedly membership by the thousands. His fame went far beyond the NOI and he was asked to speak at prestigious institutions such as Harvard University in the U.S. and Oxford University in England. He debated some of the foremost public figures – black and white – in the U.S., Europe, Africa and Asia. Not only did he become the most famous Muslim in America, he also became an internationally known human rights activist.

To his admirers Malcom X was a courageous advocate for the rights of African Americans, a man who **indicted** white America in the harshest terms for its crimes against black Americans. The main stream media, elected officials and many black leaders accused Malcolm X of preaching racism and violence. In more recent times, Malcolm X has been recognized as one of the greatest and most influential African Americans in history. Amazingly, the country whose intelligence services hunted and harassed him mercilessly, issued a commemorative stamp in his honor.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Michael (later Martin) Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta Georgia in his family's home at 501 Auburn Avenue on January 15, 1929 to Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. and Mrs. Alberta Williams King. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel supposedly by a lone gunman, James Earl Ray. Martin King was born in very different circumstances from Malcolm X. His father was a college educated minister; his grandfather was a minister, as was his great-grandfather. Their church, the *Ebenezer Baptist Church* was an influential and respected black church in Atlanta. His family were members of the black middle class. In his autobiography, Martin says that his home situation was very congenial and describes his parents as "marvelous." He says that he grew up in a family where "love was central and lovely relationships were ever present." Dr. King saw the universe as basically friendly because of his uplifting hereditary and environmental circumstances. He leaned more toward optimism than pessimism about human nature because of his childhood experiences. He said that his strong determination for justice came from the very strong dynamic personality of his father and that his gentle aspect came from his mother who was very gentle and sweet.

King attended the *Booker T. Washington High School* in Atlanta. He became known for his public speaking ability and was part of the school's debate team. King became the youngest assistant manager of a newspaper delivery station for the *Atlanta Journal* in 1942 at age 13. During his junior year, he won first prize in an oratorical contest sponsored by the Negro Elks Club in Dublin, Georgia. Returning home to Atlanta by bus, he and his teacher were ordered by the driver to stand so white passengers could sit down. King refused initially, but complied after his teacher informed him that he would be breaking the law if he did not go along with the order. He later characterized this incident as "*the angriest I have ever been in my life*". A precocious student, he skipped both the ninth and the twelfth grades of high school. It was during King's junior year that *Morehouse College* announced it would accept any high school juniors who could pass its entrance exam. At that time, most of the students had abandoned their studies to participate in World War II. Due to this, the school became desperate to fill its classrooms. At age 15, King passed the exam and entered Morehouse. The summer before his last year at Morehouse, in 1947, an eighteen-year-old King made the choice to enter the ministry after he concluded the church offered the most assuring way to answer "*an inner urge to serve humanity*". King wrote that his "inner urge" had begun developing and he made peace with the Baptist Church, (with which he had some issues) as he believed he would be a "rational" minister with sermons that were "a respectful force for ideas, even social protest." [This was something he often felt was lacking in the Baptist Church.]

In 1948, he graduated from Morehouse with a B.A. degree in sociology, and enrolled in *Crozier Theological Seminary* in Chester, Pennsylvania from which he graduated with a B. Div. degree in 1951. King's father fully supported his decision to continue his education. At Crozier, King was elected president of the student body. King once called out another black student for keeping beer in his room because of their shared responsibility as African-Americans to bear "the burdens of the Negro race." King then began doctoral studies at Boston University and received his Ph.D. degree on June 5, 1955, with a dissertation on *A Comparison of the Conceptions of God in the Thinking of Paul Tillich and Henry Nelson Wieman*.

King went on to become the official leader of the African American Civil Rights Movement from the time of the Montgomery, Alabama Bus Boycott in 1954 through numerous campaigns that we will review and view films of during this term. Among the many accolades and honors bestowed upon Dr. King include the *National Holiday* observed annually in his honor on January 15th and the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument and Park* located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Of course the world recognized his leadership as a great force for Peace in the world by bestowing the Noble Peace Prize to him in 1964.

But in his lifetime, King was pilloried, castigated, spied upon, threatened by racists vigilantes and his own government and finally assassinated.

In this Course we will compare and contrast the lives, thought and strategies of these two great African American Freedom Fighters. As Dr. James Cone has written in his important work: *Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare*, which we will read this semester:

In memory as in life, Martin King and Malcolm X are still highly controversial African American leaders. [Long] ...after their assassinations, their names arouse passionate acceptance or rejection and few people, black or white, have unbiased opinions about them. Thus it is important for any interpreter to beware of misleading notions about them that are promoted by their promoters and their detractors. The best way to gain reliable knowledge about Martin and Malcolm is through a careful examination of the life and thought of each figure in relation to the other and in the light of the two main resistance traditions in African American history and culture – integrationism and nationalism.

COURSE GOALS:

- Learn both Malcolm X's and Martin Luther King's histories through reading their autobiographies, what others have written about them and looking at films and documentaries about them.
- Learn how their personal histories shaped their views of America: A *Nightmare* for Malcolm X and a "possible" *Dream* for Martin.
- Learn about the two main resistance traditions in African American history – **integration** and **black nationalism** that these two men symbolize.
- Learn about these men's religious traditions: Christianity and Islam and the role it played in their lives and their missions.
- Learn about the Movements these two men began or expanded and those Movement's goals and aspirations for black people, for the United States of America and people of African descent around the world.
- Learn about role of the CIA, FBI and other intelligence agencies in the harassment and possible death of these two leaders.
- Learn about the national and international impact these two men have had on the US and world-wide movements against oppression.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND PERCENTAGES OF YOUR GRADE:

1). Attendance and **active** participation in class discussion. We are going to cover a lot of ground in a concentrated amount of time. Therefore each class meeting is very important. Therefore roll will be taken at each class. You are allowed **three unexcused absences without penalty**. Each unexcused absence after three will take 2 points off of your final grade for the semester. Please keep track of your absences in your calendars on your phones or elsewhere. Excused absences include: 1). illness with a note from the infirmary or your private doctor on stationary saying that you were too ill to attend class on the day you were absent. 2). Death or serious illness of a close relative with documentation. 3). Member of a UF Sports Team, Band, Choir, Dance, Drama, Debating Team or other activity that required your attendance (please let me know at the beginning of the class that you are a member and will need to be absent on certain dates), Job Interviews, etc.

2). **Reading and Writing Assignments**

2-A). **REQUIRED: Content Queries** - Each person is expected to read each assignment and be able to actively participate in our discussions of these readings. To motivate your reading of each assignment, each student is to **prepare two in depth written questions, quotes with your opinions on why these quotes were significant to you or your Reactions to the**

readings assigned for that class. You will e-mail these to the instructor on the day before the class meets by 5:00PM. [We meet on Mondays and Wednesdays this semester, therefore, on Sunday by 5:00 PM and on Tuesday by 5:00PM, you are to e-mail your **in depth questions, quotes** saying why these quotes are important and/or **your reactions to some significant part of the reading.**] I will compile these and send them to the entire class - without your names - by 9:00 AM on Monday & Wednesday. Each student is to bring the compiled list to the class either on paper or in an electronic format that you can refer to during our class discussion. These Content Queries will not be graded but read for content. These Content Queries represent **30% of your grade.**

2- B). **REQUIRED: Reaction Papers** - Each student will write **4 Reaction Papers** to 4 of the assigned readings during the course of the term.

Additionally each student will do one oral presentation of the assigned readings that they have written a reaction paper on. You will basically lead the class discussion with the instructor for that class period. An outline or synopsis of your oral presentation is to be distributed to the class when you make your oral presentation of the assigned reading for that day. It can be done as a Power-Point presentation, or as a lecture with either a printed or an on-line hand-out. In other classes students have used YouTube clips or other video or audio materials during their presentations. Please make your oral presentations as interesting and thought provoking as possible. Each student will select the **four** readings from the Course Assignment List that you want to write your **four reaction papers** on and select **one** of those four dates for your **oral presentation/class facilitation date** also. I will ask you to give me in writing your four dates on the 3rd class of the semester. I will compile and circulate the master list of dates when each of you will write your Reaction Papers and the date on which you will facilitate our class discussion. The **four papers** and **your oral presentation** with handout will account for **40% of your grade.**

2-C). **REQUIRED: Research Paper** - Each student is to write an end of the term Research Paper on some aspect of the life, thought and activities of

Malcolm X or Martin Luther King, Jr or Both. You can select one or the other or you can contrast and compare their lives or their movements to one another. We will discuss your papers and appropriate titles as we get further into the semester. Each of you will write a **10 page (minimum) Research Paper**. This paper & an oral presentation of your paper topic with handouts) will count for **30% of your grade**

Summary of Requirements:

- 1) **Content Queries**: Two in depth questions, quotes with explanations, reactions to the readings that are to be e-mailed to me on the day before our class meets by 5:00 PM. These will be compiled and sent to the class by 9:00 AM on the day our class meets. Each student is to bring the compiled list to class or have access via a digital source: phone, tablet, computer, etc. **30% of your grade**

- 2) Each student will write **four** reaction papers during the term, which will be graded and returned with written comments during the term. **One of these four papers will be presented in an Oral Presentation/Class Facilitation. On the day of your oral presentation please present a synopsis of your reading in either hard-copy to be distributed in class or to be pulled up on video screen. 40% of your grade.**

- 3) Each student will **write a 10 page (minimum) research paper**. Each student will make an oral presentation in class with a 2 page synopsis of your research to be handed out at the time of your oral presentation **in either hard-copy to be distributed in class or to be pulled up on video screen. 30% of your grade.**

Summary of requirements and percentages of your final grade:

Content Queries	30%
Four Reaction Papers	40%
Research Project and Paper	30%
Total	100%

Students with disabilities:

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to me with your requests for specific accommodations.

Policy on Absences

Because of the importance of class attendance, **Roll will be taken at each class. Only three unexcused absences are permitted before it impacts negatively upon your grade. All unexcused absences above three will decrease your grade by 2 points. Being late repeatedly can cause you to be recorded as absent for that day unless you have alerted me in advance that you will be late for a valid reason.** Roll will be taken soon after class begins. Students who leave class without prior permission and a valid excuse to be determined before class by the instructor as valid will be marked absent even if your name appears on the role taken that day. I will note on the role sheet that you left class before we dismissed officially.

Excused absences include:

- a). **Serious illness.** You must have a note from your doctor **written on her or his stationary or from the University's Infirmary** saying that you were too ill to attend class on the **specific date (s)** that you missed. Also serious illness of a close family member (mother, father, child, sibling, grandparents) that requires your assistance verified on a doctor's stationary will be considered as an excused absence.

- b). **Death of a close family member** whose funeral or other service you attend that is certified by a letter from the funeral director or religious official who handled your family member's service. **This must be on official stationary from the funeral home or the religious official.**

- c). **Attendance and participation in university activities,** i.e. choirs, debating teams, sports teams, etc. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the term of your membership in these activities and your expected days of absence. I need official documentation of your membership and confirmation from the university official advising the group of your scheduled absence on official stationary with a phone number. Also graduating seniors who have interviews for jobs, internships and the like will be excused with official papers confirming such meetings.

Please be responsible and let me know about other problems not on this list that might have caused you to be absent. Let's discuss any problems with your assignments early in term before they become big problems. I am here

for you and want to be helpful in any way that I can. TALK TO ME AND LET ME KNOW IF THERE IS A PROBLEM! I WANT TO HELP!!!!

Required texts (three are available at the University of Florida Bookstore)

Title: MARTIN & MALCOLM & AMERICA Author: JAMES CONE
ISBN: 0883448246 Publisher: ORBIS Copyright: 2000
Cover: paperback book Edition: FIRST This text is **required**

Text No. 2 Title: MALCOLM X: A LIFE OF REINVENTION Author: MANNING MARABLE
ISBN: 9780143120322 Publisher: PENGUIN BOOKS Copyright: 2011
Cover: paperback book Edition: FIRST This text is **required**

Text No. 3 Title: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. Author: CLAYBORNE CARSON
ISBN: 0446676500 Publisher: TIME WARNER BOOKS Copyright: 2001
Cover: paperback book Edition: FIRST This text is **required**

Text No. 4 Title: The Autobiography of Malcolm X Author Malcolm X
ISBN 9780345350688 Publisher Random House Copyright 1987
Cover: paperback Edition: First/Reissued This text is **required This**

was not ordered and is not in the UF Bookstore. It is very inexpensive. You can order via Amazon and as a student can get 2 day shipping. I will send the first readings as a pdf to give you a chance to get a copy.

There will be additional readings sent as pdfs via our Class List.
We will also view numerous videos of Malcom X & Martin Luther King, Jr. during the term.

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