Martin Luther King, Jr. was not only an important and courageous leader of the civil rights struggle of the 1950s and 60s, but he was also an insightful interpreter of human nature and social life. He has left us a rich legacy in his published books, essays, sermons, speeches, and interviews which articulates not just a vision or dream of a better world but a realistic appraisal of what it might take to achieve such a world. In the tradition of many social thinkers, not the least of whom I would include Plato, Martin Luther King, Jr. sought to uncover and espouse principles of human social life of universal import, principles which define to a large degree what would constitute a peaceful and prosperous society, or what King liked to call "the beloved community."

I. Class Schedule

Feb. 3rd: Introduction

Thurs. Feb. 5th: Discuss nature of "sociological wisdom"
King's childhood and schooling
Reading: Garrow, pp. 1-125.

Feb. 10th: Video program: "King! From Montgomery to Memphis"

Thurs. Feb. 12th: Wrap up King's childhood & schooling
Discuss Garrow, pp. 1-125
Presentation of selected assignment
Writing assignment #1 due
Reading: Garrow, pp. 127-230.

Feb. 17th: Discuss Garrow, through p. 230
Reading: Garrow, pp. 231-430.

Thurs. Feb. 19th: Continue to discuss Garrow reading.

Tues. Feb. 24th: Continue to discuss Garrow reading, through p. 430
Reading: Garrow, pp. 431-625 (conclusion).

Thurs. Feb. 26th: Video program: "Eyes on the Prize: The Promised Land"
(Part X)
Presentation of selected assignment
Writing assignment #2 due.

Tues. Mar. 2nd: Begin wrap-up on King's life (everyone should have completed Garrow)
Reading: selection from The Last Crusade by Gerald McKnight.

Thurs. Mar. 4th: Video program: "The Assassination of MLK"
Discuss The Last Crusade
Reading: (optional: Brief for James Earl Ray filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals, 6th Circuit).

Mar. 9th: Discuss The Last Crusade and the Ray case
Thurs. Mar. 11th: Presentation of selected assignment  
Writing assignment #3 due  
Reading: Intro. to Testament of Hope, edited by Washington

Tues. Mar. 16th: Loose ends/ Overview of King's writings  
Reading: Washington selections # 53, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Thurs. Mar. 18th: Discussion on the philosophy of non-violence  
Reading: Washington selections # 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 33.

Tues. Mar. 23rd: Discuss previous readings  
Reading: Washington selections # 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27

Thurs. Mar. 25th: Presentation of selected assignment  
Writing assignment #4 due  
Discussion: focus on integration.

Tues. Mar. 30th: Discuss previous reading/loose ends  
Reading: Washington selections # 55, 54, 21, 22, 28, 29, 36, 37, 46, 49.

Thurs. Apr. 1st: SELECTION OF PAPER TOPIC DEADLINE  
Discuss previous reading  
Reading: Washington selections # 23, 30, 31, 32, 38, 39, 50

Tues. Apr. 13th: Presentation of selected assignment  
Writing assignment #5 due  
Discuss reading: focus on the movement of the civil rights struggle to the North; increasing radicalism of King.

Thurs. Apr. 15th: Continue discussion of above reading/issues  
Reading: Washington selections # 40, 42, 43, 51, 52, 11, 12, 13.

Tues. Apr. 20th: Presentation of selected assignment  
Writing assignment #6 due  
Discuss issues of economic justice, peace, etc.  
Reading: Washington selections # 56, 57, 47.

Thurs. Apr. 22nd: Discuss above reading  
Reading: Washington selections # 44, 45, 48, 58

Tues. Apr. 27th: Discuss last phase of King’s career

Thurs. Apr. 29th: PAPER DUE  
Overview and discussion: defining the "sociological wisdom of MLK, Jr.".

Tues. May 4th: The legacy of Dr. King/ Concluding remarks.

Thurs. May 6th: Final class meeting. Open. Review for final exam  
(hand back papers)

Final Exam
II. Course Requirements

A. Books:
   (1) Bearing the Cross by David Garrow
   (2) Testament of Hope edited by James Washington
   (3) selection from The Last Crusade by Gerald McKnight (on reserve in the library)

B. Writing assignments: every two weeks you will be required to do a 2-3 page essay which will address either a topic I will give you in class or in some cases a topic or issue of your own choosing. These essays will also be a vehicle for your personal comments or reflections on various aspects of Dr. King's life and thought.

   When these assignments are due, as indicated in the class schedule, one person will be called upon to present their essay to the rest of the class.

   Each writing assignment is worth 20 points (for a total of 120). A one point penalty will be assessed for each day (including weekends) that an assignment is late. Your class presentation will not be graded as such, but failure to give your presentation when scheduled will result in the loss of 3 points each time this occurs.

C. Paper: everyone will do a 6-8 page paper on a topic of your choice to be due near the end of the term. This paper will involve some outside research. More details about this paper will be given in class some time during the first couple weeks. This paper will be worth 50 points.

D. Final Exam: there will be just one exam, a comprehensive final exam which will consist mainly of short-answer questions and a few short essays. This exam will be worth 100 points.

Grades: your grade for this course will be determined according to the scale below based on a maximum point total of 270:

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<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>270 - 247</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>246 - 241</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>240 - 235</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>234 - 219</td>
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<td>218 - 214</td>
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<td>186 - 159</td>
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<td>158 - 0</td>
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You may earn up to an additional 10 points for class participation (which goes beyond your assignment presentation). This will be determined at my discretion at the end of the term and then added to your total score.

F. Attendance: regular attendance is expected. You, of course, are responsible for fulfilling the requirements outlined above.

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