

History 325
Civil Rights and Black Power

Satisfies: SBS+

Thematic Categories: "Empires, Violence & Global Connections,"
"Law, Politics & Social Justice," "Race, Religion, Gender & Sexuality"

M/W, 5:00 – 6:20 PM

Professor Robert Chase

The course considers how the “long civil rights movement” and century-long struggles for Black Power were intertwined movements contained within the African American freedom struggle, rather than conventional narratives that conceive them as being opposed to one another. The course will therefore span the whole of the twentieth century, beginning with the founding of the United Negro Improvement Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and it will conclude with the turn from civil rights to economic justice, Black political empowerment, and campaigns against mass incarceration and police brutality. While historical figures like Martin Luther King and Malcolm X will receive attention, we will also encounter the less well known organizers on the ground who made a civil rights revolution possible. The course will introduce students to the latest scholarship on the Civil Right Movement and Black Power, particularly recent articles and monographs that move past the traditional celebrative narrative and examine instead how the civil rights revolution remains an ongoing struggle. Readings and discussion topics include: Garveyism; integration and legal campaigns; nonviolent philosophies and communitarian politics; militant civil disobedience and anti-police protest; local and grass-roots campaigns in the South and the North; women, gender, and sexuality; armed self-defense; urban uprisings; state violence and reprisal; police and incarceration; education and cultural identity; and civil rights politics and the presidency.