

**Dr. Montague R. Williams**

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**Office:** Smee 202

**Meeting Hours:** Mondays 8:45a-9:45a; Tuesdays 2:30p-4:30p

**Phone:** 619-849-3282

**Semester:** Spring 2020

**Time:** Thurs - 4:45p-7:15p\*

**Location:** FSB 101

**Final Exam:** Thursday, May 7  
7:30p-10p

### **PLNU MISSION – To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send**

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Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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This course introduces students to the field of Kingian studies with a particular focus on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s theological and ethical commitments.

### **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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1. You will gain an understanding of the complexity of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s theological and ethical commitments.
2. You will engage in meaningful dialogue regarding matters in theology and ethics.
3. You will reflect on and engage in practices that connect with Kingian theological ethics.

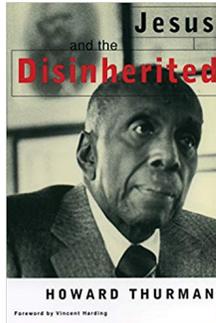
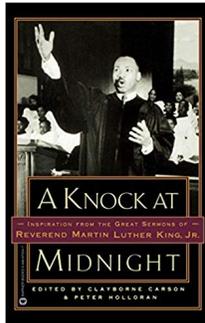
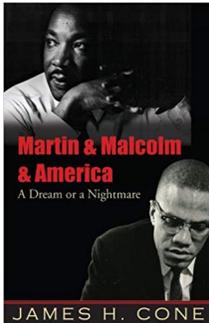
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\* This course is a 3-unit course that meets once each week. The time designated for this course is 4:45p – 7:15p. However, classes will let out at 6:30pm. Students will be guided toward a particular Canvas activity and discussion to complete the “seat time.” The Canvas activity and discussion will need to be completed before the next class meeting.

## REQUIRED READINGS

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- *Martin and Malcolm and America: A Dream or Nightmare* by James Cone
- *A Knock at Midnight: Inspiration from the Great Sermons of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.* edited by Clayborne Carson and Peter Holloran
- *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman
- Articles and Essays Provided by the Professor



## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

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Assignments (see descriptions in the next section)	Point Value (% of total grade)
Classmate Interview Paper	5%
Collective Participation	5%
Individual Participation	15%
Reading Reports	15%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Group Meeting with the Professor	5%
Leading a Reading Discussion	15%
Re-Membering MLK Project	20%
Total	100%

### Grading Scale:

A = 93-100%	B+ = 87%-89%	C+ = 77%-79%	D+ = 67%-69%	F = 0 – 59%
A- = 90-92%	B = 83%-86%	C = 73%-76%	D = 63%-66%	
	B- = 80%-82%	C- = 70%-72%	D- = 60% – 62%	

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

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**Classmate Interview Paper** – The Classmate Interview Paper is worth 5% of the student’s course grade. Students will submit a 500 to 700-word paper about another person in the class. More specifically, you will interview an assigned partner from the class and write your paper with the following components and flow.

1. Brief Introduction that shares who you interviewed, their year in school, and major. (25-50 words)
2. What is your partner’s familiarity with MLK and MLK’s theological ethics? What has s/he read, listened to, watched, engaged, or practiced that connects directly or indirectly with MLK and MLK’s theological ethics? Explain. (75-100 words)
3. Who are your partner’s favorite theologians, philosophers, or thinkers? Why? (75-100 words)
4. What matters to your partner? Before the interview, your partner should journal on the following questions: *What are two or three life questions that take up your sense of wonder these days? It may be helpful to identify at least one broader theological or philosophical question you have and at least one question that is more about daily life matters. Of course, such separation is not necessary. If all two or three questions intertwine the academic and the daily life, that is perfectly fine. What really matters to you in this season of life? What are you hoping to understand better or figure out one day (soon or later)? Do any of your “two or three questions” involve curiosity about what it means to live a meaningful life? How so?* When discussing this with your partner, simply frame the question as “What matters to you?” then allow your partner to share whatever they feel comfortable sharing from their journaling. Please note that your partner does not have to share about anything s/he does not want to share about, and the same goes for you. You won’t be able fit everything in when you write this section of the paper. However, your goal is to listen well and discern how to write about it in a meaningful and substantive manner. (175-250 words)
5. What does your partner need from other students in the class in order to facilitate learning and engagement during class meetings and gatherings? How does your partner plan to help the classroom be a place of mutual engagement, learning, and respect? (75-100 words.)
6. Looking at the syllabus and considering the course introduction, what aspect of this course is your partner looking forward to the most? Why? Is there anything on the syllabus for which your partner needs clarification? Explain. (75-100 words)

*If you feel uncomfortable about being partnered with a particular individual in class, please let the professor know no later than the third class session. You do not need to explain why you feel uncomfortable about being partnered with that person.*

**Collective Participation** – The collective participation makes up 5% of the student’s course grade. This assignment focuses on the way the *entire class* engages discussion throughout the semester, and the purpose is to help students become aware of mutual responsibility for fostering a constructive classroom environment. You can think of it as one large semester-long group project. Your commitment to stay current with readings and contribute to meaningful course dialogue affects your grade and everyone else’s in the class.

**Individual Participation** – Participation makes up 15% of the student’s course grade. This includes participation in course dialogue, online dialogue, classroom activities, and any planned course pilgrimages. The professor may call upon any student to answer a question or expound upon a particular topic or reading. Students who are regularly punctual and present without unexcused absences or tardies have met the bare minimum requirement for participation, namely being present. These students can expect to earn at least a D for their participation score at the end of the semester. Students who do this but also *regularly participate* in classroom dialogue in a substantive manner can expect to earn at least a B for their participation grade. Students who exemplify regular participation can expect to earn an A for their participation grade at the end of the semester.

Regularly participating in class means you are consistently offering thoughtful comments and questions as well as respectfully supporting the regular participation and perspectives of fellow students. You do not have to agree with your fellow students. Come to the (literal and metaphorical) table with the humility and readiness to learn from your peers, share with your peers, and challenge your peers when appropriate. *Last note: Rather than simply finding a way to talk a lot, focus your concern on doing your part to promote meaningful course dialogue regarding the reading and classroom activities.*

\*This course will include practices of Christian spirituality. While the professor does hope you find these meaningful for your own reflection and meaning-making, the professor does not assume that everyone at PLNU is a Christian. If you do not feel comfortable engaging in Christian practices, please know that the professor is happy to discern alternative options for you. Simply inform the professor during the first week of class and set up a meeting to discuss alternatives.

**Reading Reports** – Reading Reports make up 15% of the student’s course grade, and the purpose is to help students begin the kind of reflection needed for discussing the material in class. The reading reports are due by the beginning of each class period for which the respective reading assignments are due. This means you need to complete the reading report before coming to class.

The reading quizzes are divided into two sections of equal value. The first portion includes self-reporting regarding the student’s completion of the reading assignment as well as her/his quality of reading. To be more specific, students will score their own reading based on the following scale:

10 = I read every word of the assignment and took excellent notes.

8 = I read the vast majority of the assignment and took notes.

6 = I read more than half of the reading assignment.

4 = I read very close to half of the reading assignment.

0 = I read very little to none of the reading assignment.

The second portion of the reading report requires you to list three well-formed questions or question sets that emerge from reading of the assignment that you think would be important for classroom discussion. Your goal is to offer questions or question sets that display a close and thoughtful reading of the given assignment. Here is an example of *one question set*.

In Chapter 1 of Van Opstal's *The Next Worship*, the author emphasizes a "vision of the end" to make the case regarding the necessity of intercultural worship in Christian communities. While this is helpful, inspiring, and a compelling exegesis of biblical imagery, how does such a vision actually motivate changed action and commitments in the present? If there is no actual "end" date or deadline for this vision, then is this just an imaginary moving target that ultimately functions to maintain control over Christians (and other humans) rather than freeing them to live a life worth living? What other theological, philosophical, and ethical commitments are needed for this "vision of the end" to have a meaningful, just, and life-giving impact on the present?

**Mid-Term Exam** – The Mid-Term Exam is worth 20% of the student's course grade. The exam will cover content from the first half of the course (January and February) and include no more than fifty questions. The exam will cover figures and concepts from the course readings, lectures, and discussions. While the vast majority of questions will be multiple choice and short answer, the exam may include essay questions as well.

**Group Meeting with the Professor** – This Group Meeting with the Professor makes up 5% of the course grade. Students will be divided into small groups for various course activities. Each group will need to schedule a meeting with the professor to discuss course-related matters. The primary purpose of this is for the professor to gain a sense of how you are doing in the class. This meeting is particularly important in light of the large number of students in the course.

**Leading a Reading Discussion** – The Leading a Reading Discussion assignment makes up 15% of the student's course grade. Each group will lead the entire class in a 25 to 30-minute discussion on the reading assignment for a given day in the second half of the course (March and April). The group will need to identify pertinent theological, philosophical, and ethical themes in the reading and facilitate a meaningful conversation based on those themes. The purpose here is not for the group to do a lot of talking. While some aspects of the discussion will need some prefacing and introduction from group members, the goal is to provide space for your classmates to engage the reading and each other. The discussion should be framed around at least three well-formed questions or question sets that emerge from a deep reading of the assignment. See the description of Reading Reports to see an example of a well-written question set.

Students must submit their discussion guide on Canvas by the beginning of class time on the day they are leading discussion. The submitted discussion guide needs to have the following:

- Names of the group members
- At least three well-formed theological, philosophical, or ethical questions (or question sets) based on the reading.
- An explanation of why each question is pertinent for the class discussion.

**Re-Membering MLK Project** – The Re-Membering MLK Project is worth 20% of the student’s course grade. You will create an artistic expression that points to and conjures reflection on an understanding of King’s theological ethics that you did not have before this course. There are four components to this project: (1) your original creation, (2) your artist’s memo, (3) your presentation, and 4) your reflection on two of your classmates’ projects. Please see the course schedule for the due date. For a description of the four components, see the explanations below:

- 1) Your original creation. You will submit *your own original creation* that creatively and substantively builds upon content from this course to point to and conjure reflection on an understanding of King’s theological ethics that you did not have before this course. This project can be done in a variety of ways (i.e., painting, poetry, story, short film, song, music video, podcast, game, app, built structure, machine, organizational chart, business plan, spreadsheet, concept illustration, food, clothing, etc.).

While it is true that many do not feel as if they are creative people, the theological reality is that every human being is created in the image of God—the Creator of all things. We are created as creative beings by a creative God. As you prepare for this assignment, feel free to try your hand at something new. However, don’t assume creativity is limited to a stereotypical box. Take a moment to reflect on the ways you are a creative being before jumping into a project.

- 2) Your artist’s memo. Along with your original creation, you must submit an “artist’s memo” that explains your intentions undergirding the composition of your original creation. Your explanation in the “artist’s memo” needs to make it very clear that you understand the course content and that your original creation has been created in a thoughtful and careful manner. The length of the “artist’s memo” is 150 – 250 words. The “artist’s memo” needs to answer the following questions:

1. What is the significance of this piece?
2. How does it creatively and substantively build upon content from this course to express an understanding of King’s theological ethics that you did not have before this course?

- 3) Your presentation. During the final exam time slot, each student will give a 3-minute presentation to the class on her/his project and field questions. Projects that require a particular time (i.e., a song or a short film) may be allotted more presentation time.
- 4) Your reflection on two other projects. After presenting, students will arrange their projects in a gallery style. You will need to spend some time viewing (or listening to, observing, etc.) several projects and then reflect meaningfully on two of your classmates’ projects using a reflection guide provided by the professor. All of this will happen during the final exam time slot.

## EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

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**\*\*You can pick one of the first four options. However, everyone can participate in the fifth extra credit opportunity, even if you have done one of the first four.**

EC Opportunity #1: Interview with Pastor Miles McPherson. Students can earn 2 percentage points of extra credit by :

- 1) Reading the book, *The Third Option* by Miles McPherson
- 2) Completing the respective reading review quiz on Canvas by 2:30pm on January 30
- 2) Meeting with Dr. Williams for 30 minutes between 2:30 and 4:30p to discuss the book
- 3) Attend the interview with the author, which will take place on campus at 11am on January 31

EC Opportunity # 2: San Diego Black Film Festival. Attend the San Diego Black Film Festival on Feb 1 to watch the 3:30pm screening of *The Evers*, the new documentary about Civil Rights leader, Medgar Evers and his family. After the screening, there will be a Q and A with Medgar Evers' daughter, Reena Evers. Tickets are currently \$10.

EC Opportunity #3: Book Review of *White Awake*. Students can earn 2 percentage points of extra credit by reading and completing a critical reflection quiz on the book, *White Awake* by Daniel Hill. Daniel Hill was a featured chapel speaker in the Fall 2018 semester. The chapel talk offered a tiny snippet of what is in the book, so feel free to view the chapel via the PLNU chapel website as a way of helping get a basic idea of the book's focus. But please note that the book is far more in-depth than the chapel talk. Simply viewing the chapel talk will not be sufficient for this extra credit opportunity. To receive the extra credit points, you must read the entire book and complete the critical reflection quiz no later than March 11, 2019. To be clear, you can complete this extra credit assignment much earlier in the semester. Please let the professor know if you've already read this book for a previous class or will read this book for a different class this semester, so you can be assigned an alternative book for the extra credit opportunity.

EC Opportunity #4: Interview with Alice Walker. Students can earn 2 percentage points of extra credit by:

- 1) Reading a portion of a work by Alice Walker.
- 2) Meeting with Dr. Williams for 60 minutes to help plan the interview with Alice Walker.
- 3) Attend and participate in the interview with Alice Walker, which will take place Thursday, Feb 20 @ 3pm.

\*\*EC Opportunity #5: Trip to the MLK Institute at Stanford. Students can earn 4 percentage points of extra credit by participating in the March 20 trip to Stanford University for an exclusive meeting with

renowned King historian, Dr. Clayborne Carson. Dr. Carson was selected by Coretta Scott King in 1985 to edit and publish the papers of her late husband, Martin Luther King, Jr. He has spent the last 35 years dedicated to furthering and shaping King studies. This is his last year before retirement, and we will have a unique opportunity to discuss the future with King Studies. This course does not have a course fee, so you will need to purchase your own plane ticket and food throughout the day. However, the professor can help with the process. And this conversation will be worth the money!

## **CLASSROOM BEYOND THE WALLS (CBW)**

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You will notice “CBW” marked on particular days in the course schedule. These are required class sessions or activities that will take place outside of the typical classroom space. The professor will provide needed details for this class sessions or activities.

## **INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

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Unless otherwise stated by the professor assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

## **FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY**

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Successful completion of this class requires a final project and presentation **on its scheduled final exam day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. The final project for this course is the Re-Membering MLK Project. See details for this assignment in the syllabus.

## **PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY**

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Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

## **PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

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Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one’s own when in reality they are the results of another person’s creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

## **PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

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If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU’s Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at [DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu). See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

## **PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY**

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Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

## **INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE**

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The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. Thus, terms like “man” or “mankind” or the pronoun “he,” should not be used to refer to all humans. Instead “people,” “humanity,” “humans,” and “he or she” better acknowledge women as full persons.

**THE4090 / PHL4090 MLK and Theological Ethics - Course Schedule**

This course is a 3-unit course that meets once each week. The time designated for this course is 4:45p – 7:15p. However, classes will let out at 6:30pm. Students will be guided toward a particular Canvas activity and discussion to complete the “seat time.” The Canvas activity and discussion will need to be completed before the next class meeting.

Date	Topic	Readings DUE	Other Items DUE
Thurs 1/16	Syllabus		
Thurs 1/23	King’s Incarcerated Christ		
Thurs 1/30	King’s Early Theological Influences: Family and the Black Church Prophetic Tradition	-Cone, Introduction -King, “Rediscovering Lost Values” -Thurman, Ch. 1-2	Reading Report 1 <b>Classmate Interview Paper Due</b>
<p>----<b>Extra Credit Opportunity</b>----</p> <p><i>Rethinking Reconciliation</i></p> <p>Meet with Dr. Williams on Thursday Jan 30 to discuss upcoming interview with Pastor Miles McPherson then attend the interview on Friday Jan 31 @ Noon See Syllabus and Canvas for more important details.</p>			
<p>----<b>Extra Credit Opportunity</b>----</p> <p><i>San Diego Black Film Festival</i></p> <p>Attend the screening of <i>The Evers</i> on Feb 1 at 3:30pm. See Syllabus and Canvas for more important details.</p>			
Thurs 2/6	King’s Academic Theological Influences: Practical Theology and Christian Ethics	-Cone, Ch. 1 – 2 -King, “Paul’s Letter to American Christians” -Thurman, Ch. 3	Reading Report 2
Thurs 2/13	King and Twentieth Century Theological Ethics	-Cone, Ch. 3 – 4 -King, “Loving Your Enemies” -Thurman, Ch. 4-5	Reading Report 3
<p>----<b>CBW: Required Wiley Lecture and Reflection</b>----</p> <p><i>Rethinking the Bible as the Poetry of God</i></p> <p>Attend one of the Wiley Lectures happening on campus Feb 12-14 and Participate in the respective Canvas Discussion</p>			
Thurs 2/20	King’s Appeal to Virtue Ethics: Beloved Community and Christian Imagination	-Cone, Ch. 5 - 6 -King, “A Knock at Midnight” -Williams (Holiness and Racial Harmony)	Reading Report 4 CBW Post

<p>----<b>Extra Credit Opportunity</b>----</p> <p><i>Nonviolent Resistance and Creativity as a Way of Life</i></p> <p>Meet with Dr. Williams on Thursday Feb 20 to discuss upcoming dialogue with Alice Walker  Then attend and participate in the dialogue with Alice Walker on Thursday, Feb 20 @ 3pm  See Syllabus and Canvas for more important details.</p>			
Thurs 2/27	King's Theological Anthropology	-Cone, Ch. 7 – 8 -King, "The American Dream" -King, "Guidelines for a Constructive Church"	Reading Report 5
Thurs 3/5	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>		
Thurs 3/12	<b>No Class - Spring Break</b>		
Thurs 3/19	The Destructive Nature of 'Good': Rereading Luke 10:25-37 in Light of MLK and the Rejection of Respectability Politics	-King, "The Three Dimensions of a Complete Life."	Reading Report 6
<p>----<b>Extra Credit Opportunity</b>----</p> <p><i>The Future of MLK Studies</i></p> <p>Friday, March 20. Trip to Stanford University</p>			
Thurs 3/26	King's Pneumatology	-Cone, Ch. 9 – 10 -King, "Why Jesus Called a Man a Fool"	Reading Report 7
Thurs 4/2	King's Cruciform Aesthetics	-Cone, Ch. 11 -King, "The Drum Major Instinct"	Reading Report 8
Thurs 4/9	MLK and Black Lives Matter	-King, "Unfulfilled Dreams" -King, "Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution" --Williams, "Holy Communion on Canfield Drive"	Reading Report 9
Thurs 4/16	Struggling, Striding, and Searching Toward Beloved Community: A Kingian Paradigm for Christian Vocation and Discernment		
Thurs 4/23	Practices for Embracing Beloved Community as an Alternative Habitus		
Thurs 4/30	Course Review		
Finals May 7 7:30p – 10p	<b>Re-Membering MLK Projects</b>		