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AAST 391.01: White Supremacy History and Defeat

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AAST 391 – White Supremacy History-Defeat
Wednesdays, 3-5 pm; weekend of October 25-27 in Bozeman for Montana Racial Equity Project Conference
Location TBA
Tobin Miller Shearer
Fall 2019
CRN: 75365

Instructor contact:
LA 262
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Office hours:
Wednesdays, 1:00 to 3:00 or by appointment

Course Objectives:
Students will be able to –
- articulate and identify the history and development of key white supremacist groups in the U.S.
- discuss the benefits and drawbacks of strategies used by key anti-racism groups in the U.S.
- implement and evaluate a project to dismantle white supremacy in the U.S.

This course is designed as a learning community. Although we will follow the general format outlined below, students will work with their professor to develop course details, rubrics, and project parameters. The class will integrate real-life organizing practice and scholarly literature through group projects that will constitute the major portion of class work.

Grading scale:
Participation and book talk(s) – 25%
White supremacy group presentation – 25%
Anti-racism group presentation – 25%
Organizing project – 25%

Readings:
Determined through class research.

The class is limited to 15 students. Admission by consent of instructor.
Meals:
Students will sign up in pairs and be responsible for providing two meals for the class in the course of the semester. Meal providers are encouraged to prepare simple, low-cost meals. Class members are responsible for bringing their own plate, cup, and utensils each week.

Disability services:
The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154 or visit their website http://www.umt.edu/disability. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation.

Academic honesty:
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

African-American Studies:
This course counts for the Major, Minor, and certificate in African-American Studies. If you enjoy this course and would like to know more about the African-American Studies Program, please contact me, drop by the AAST office, LA 262, or visit the African-American Studies website.

Possible resources to bring into class for Skype or in-person presentations:
- representative from the Montana Human Rights Network
- representative from the Montana chapter of the ACLU
- Professor Ashby Kinch (English) does a presentation on white supremacists’ use of medieval history
- Seattle-based anti-racism organizer Rick Derksen speaks about his anti-racism work
- Professor Robert Balch (Sociology – retired) is an expert on white supremacy groups and may be willing to come and talk with our class
- other representatives of groups

Tentative schedule:

After week 1, each week will also have space for book talks by students

Week 1: August 28 - Course goals and design; develop reading list; set class expectations; develop rubrics for presentations and projects

Week 2: September 4 - History of Racism and White Privilege in the U.S.
Week 3: September 11 - Group 1 – Input and Discussion on white supremacy organization 1 (KKK 1)

Week 4: September 18 - Group 2 – Input and Discussion on white supremacy organization 2 (KKK 2)

Week 5: September 25 - Group 3 – Input and Discussion on white supremacy organization 3 (Aryan Nations)

Week 6: October 2 - Group 4 – Input and discussion on white supremacy organization 4 (Skin Heads)

Week 7: October 9 - Group 1 – Input and Discussion on counter efforts 1 (Black Panthers or other Black Power group)

Week 8: October 16 - Group 2 – Input and Discussion on counter efforts 2 (ACLU)

Week 9: October 23 - Group 3 – Input and Discussion on counter efforts 3 (Southern Poverty Law Center)

October 26-27 – Montana Racial Equity Project Conference (required)

Week 10: October 30 – Debrief Montana Racial Equity Project Conference

Week 11: November 6 - Group 4 – Input and Discussion counter efforts 4 (Anti-racism training groups)

Week 12: November 13 - Group 1 – Project report

Week 13: November 20 - Group 2 – Project report

Week 14: November 27 – No Class – Thanksgiving break

Week 15: December 4 - Group 3 – Project report

Finals week: May 7 - Group 4 – Project report (Class meets from ??)

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Possible resources to bring into class for Skype or in-person presentations:

- representative from the Montana Human Rights Network
- representative from the Montana chapter of the ACLU
- representative from the Montana Racial Equity Project
- Professor Ashby Kinch does a presentation on white supremacists’ use of medieval history
- Seattle-based anti-racism organizer Rick Derksen could speak with the class via Skype about his work
- former School of Journalism dean Peggy Kuhr covered Aryan Nations members and white supremacists during her tenure with The Spokesman-Review in Spokane from the mid 1980s through the early 2000s. She might be willing to speak with us and/or put us in touch with two of the top reporters from those years: Bill Morlin and Jess Walter. You can find out more about these reporters and their work at these links:
  - http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2017/feb/12/journalist-was-eyewitness-to-tragedy-nightmare-of-/#/0
  - http://thebluereview.org/most-say-aryan-nations/