AAS 343H.01A: African American Studies Since 1865

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African-American History Since 1865

The history of the African-American experience since the Civil War allows students to follow a people in motion. From the literary explorations of Langston Hughes to the organizing drives of Ella Baker and from the trans-Atlantic peregrinations of W. E. B. Dubois to the gender and race crossings of Pauli Murray, this class presents African Americans in late nineteenth and twentieth century United States history as those who moved – by choice and by force – and who moved others. Rather than a tangent to the American story, African-American history is treated as a central strand in the reunification, industrialization, urbanization, and globalization of the United States. Through a lens of motion, students will examine change and continuity in the African-American experience, the fight against Jim Crow, the Great Migrations, the struggle for civil rights, and post-civil rights economic, political, social and cultural developments and challenges.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify the primary physical, cultural, and political movements and periods of the African diaspora in the United States from Reconstruction through the twentieth century;
- assess the strategies employed by African-American women, men, and children in response to traditions of liberalism and white supremacy;
- explain how multiple and varied social forces brought about change within African-American communities and how those communities in turn changed the surrounding society.

Assignments

To realize these objectives, students will take thirteen quizzes, two exams, and complete two projects. Quizzes will have ten short-answer questions each week. The mid-term will combine term identifications and two short essays on central course themes. The final exam will follow a similar format - but with one short and one long essay - covering the entire course and focusing on explanations of how African Americans have influenced central developments in late nineteenth and twentieth century history.

Students will also complete two projects in the course of the semester. Mondays and Fridays of each week’s classes will feature lectures and short discussion of assigned readings. During most Wednesdays’ classes, students will work in small groups to complete and/or present assigned projects and discuss the readings. In the course of the semester, students will complete the following two projects:
A) Group Presentation.

Work in a small group to prepare and present a professional 15-18 minute group presentation (with an annotated bibliography and contextual history paper) on the significance, causes, and key historical African-American actors in one of the following movements:
- African-American Women in the West;
- African Americans in MT;
- Gay Harlem;
- Deacons for Defense;
- Post-1945 Race riots/rebellions;
- Popular Front;
- Double V campaign;
- Korean War;
- Highlander Folk School;
- March on Washington movement;
- Atlanta Washer women’s strike of 1881;
- Motown music in Detroit 1960s;
- Father Divine’s Peace Mission;
- Vincent Harding;
- wildcard (student suggestion approved by instructor).

B) Narrative history or wildcard history (student suggestion approved by instructor).

Write a ten-page narrative history of the group researched for the presentation (students all write own paper, give each other feedback, given individual grade) or tell a narrative history about that group in the form of a play, radio show, documentary or other form suggested by the student. Students may form groups and make proposals on their own initiative. The paper must argue a clearly presented thesis that explains the significance, causes, and key historical African-American actors in the identified movement.

Note on project sessions

Full rubrics for each project are available on the course website and will be distributed as they become due. Class attendance is mandatory and students will sign in at all classes.

Grade changes or drops

Unless in the case of a documented major life emergencies (death of a loved one, extended illness, etc.), this class may not be dropped and grading options may not be changed after the university deadline of 5:00 p.m., February 13, 2015.

Assessment

Participation - 15%
Quizzes – 15%
Project A – Group Presentation – 20%
Project B – Narrative History – 15%
Midterm – 15%
Final – 20%

Grade scale
A+ 98-100  A  93-97  A-  90-92
B+ 87-89  B  83-86  B-  80-82
C+ 77-79  C  73-76  C-  70-72
D+ 67-69  D  63-66  D-  60-62  F ≤59

Classroom etiquette
I expect that all students will join me in creating an effective learning environment by:
- turning off all cell phones (and thus doing no texting, e-mailing or instant messaging);
- using laptops only for note taking;
- not doing crosswords, reading newspapers, or other recreational activities;
- not talking or whispering with fellow classmates unless instructed to do so.

During lectures, I will give you my complete attention. I ask the favor of the same from my students. Should a student’s behavior interrupt our learning environment, he or she will first be given a private verbal warning, then be given a public warning. Should disruptive behaviors continue following two warnings, the student will be issued a warning in writing and docked a letter grade on his or her most recent project. Any subsequent disruptive behaviors will be turned over to the University’s disciplinary committee.

Instructor contact
I will hold office hours every Wednesday from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. or by appointment. My office is located on the second floor of the Liberal Arts Building (facing Mt. Sentinel), Room 262. You are also welcome to contact me by e-mail at tobin.shearer@umontana.edu. My goal is to respond within 24 hours. In case of emergency, you may contact me by phone at 406-243-6225.

Missed deadlines
My goal is always to encourage your best work in the midst of multiple classroom demands and real life emergencies. Limited deadline extensions can be arranged if the student makes advance contact. Late papers or projects will be marked down 2/3 grade/day. Make-up exams and quizzes will be offered when arranged with appropriate documentation from medical, athletic, or administrative officials.
**Academic honesty**

Stealing someone else’s ideas is the same as stealing someone’s property. Cite any reference to others’ ideas in standard footnote or endnote format (in written work and all projects). Paraphrase whenever possible. In general, a paraphrase uses no more than three of the same words in a sentence as the original source. For more information see the University of Montana’s student conduct code (http://ordway.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/name/StudentConductCode).

**Accessibility**

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 406.243.2243. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation.

**Readings**


(Books available in the campus bookstore and on traditional reserve at the Mansfield Library.)

**Course pack (available on the course website)**


**Schedule**

*Marks exceptions to the usual Monday/Friday lecture and Wednesday quiz/group work schedule.
Week 1: Introduction
January 26, Monday – Course review, project description
January 28, Wednesday – Quiz #1 and Project session A1 (Group formation and topic choice)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 1: essays by Woodson, Franklin, Blight, Ruffins
January 30, Friday – Introduction to African-American history

Week 2: Reconstruction (1865-1877)
February 2, Monday – Reconstruction 1 – Building on the bloody shirt
February 4, Reconstruction 2 – Reaction and redemption Wednesday –
*February 6, Friday – Quiz #2 and Project session A2 (meet in Mansfield library, Buckhous Room, level 2 of the library)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 2: essays by Gutman, Saville, Brown; documents – all but elected reps

Week 3: Jim Crow and the New South (1877-1910)
February 9, Monday – Agriculture and labor issues
February 11, Wednesday – Quiz #3 and Project session A3 (sources review)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 3: essays by Brown, Hunter; documents – all
February 13, Friday – Resistance and reunification

Week 4: Lynching and the Mob (1877-1930)
February 16, Monday – No class – president’s day
February 18, Wednesday – Quiz #4 and Lynching and Separation lecture
Coursepack – Brundage, Litwack
February 20, Friday – No scheduled lecture. Group work on your own.

Week 5: W. E. B. DuBois (early 20th century)
February 23, Monday – DuBois and the Niagara Movement
Group Presentation due by Tuesday, February 24, 11:59 p.m. uploaded to class website. One person from each group will need to upload the slideshow (as a .ppt, .pptx, .pdf, or Prezi file), the annotated bibliography (as a .doc or .docx file), and the historical context paper (as a .doc or .docx file).
February 25, Wednesday – Quiz #5 and Project sessions A5 (2 groups present)
DuBois, 1-223 (All the chapters originally written by DuBois).
Chapter 5 – document: Niagara Men Pledge Themselves to Persistent Agitation.
February 27, Friday – DuBois and the Souls of Black Folks

Week 6: WWI (1914-1918)
March 2, Monday – Women and democracy
March 4, Wednesday – Quiz #6 and Project sessions A6 (2 groups present)  
Cashin, 1-126 (Chapters 1-9)

March 6, Friday – Drawing Dissent: African-American Thought In Political Cartoons

Week 7: Great Migration (1916-1945)
March 9, Monday – Pushed, pulled, and politicized
March 11, Wednesday – A Nonviolent movement to the North
Holt and Brown, Chapter 4: essays by Gottlieb and Owens; documents – all
*March 13, Friday – Midterm

Week 8: Organizing a response (circa 1900-1925)
March 16, Monday – Wells and Washington
March 18, Wednesday – Quiz #7 and Project sessions B1 (Narrative History introduction, seven-step thesis handout review)
Cashin, 127-258 (Chapters 10-15)
March 20, Friday – Garvey and Walker

Week 9: Harlem Renaissance (1916-1937)
March 23, Monday – Origins of the renaissance, literature
March 25, Wednesday – Quiz #8 and Project sessions B2 (Narrative History outline due, rubric review)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 6: Essays by Hunter and Higginbotham; documents – all
Narrative history outline due in class
March 27, Friday – The renaissance in music, sculpture, and painting

Spring Break – March 30 – April 3

Week 10: WWII era (1930-1945)
April 6, Monday – The Popular Front
April 8, Wednesday – Quiz #9 and Project sessions A7 (two groups present)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 7: essays by Kelley and Lemke-Santangelo; documents – all
April 10, Friday – Double-V Campaign

Week 11: Civil Rights Roots (1950-1960)
April 13, Monday – A long time traveling
April 15, Wednesday – Quiz #10 and Project sessions A8 (two groups present)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 8: essays by Kelley and by Korstad and Lichtenstein; documents – all
April 16, Thursday – African-American Studies Soup and Pie Night, 6:00-9:00 p.m. – All are welcome to dinner at Dr. Shearer’s house 1020 S. Grant St., Unit B April 17, Friday – Those who came before

Week 12: Civil Rights Realities (1961-1965)
April 20, Monday – Up from the underside
April 22, Wednesday – Quiz #11 and Project sessions B3 (grammar/writing workshop, seven-step footnoting handout review)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 9: essays by Carson and Payne; documents – all
First five pages of narrative history due in class on Wednesday
April 24, Friday – Of Islam and Christianity

April 27, Monday – Dividing generations
April 29, Wednesday – Quiz #12 and Project sessions B4 (proofing methods review)
Holt and Brown, Chapter 10: essays by Lipsitz and Smith; documents – all
Second five pages of narrative history due in class on Wednesday
May 1, Friday – Guns, guys, and gusto

Week 14: Post civil rights labor and cultural movements (1971-1985)
May 4, Monday – Carrying Civil Rights forward.
May 6, Wednesday – Quiz #13 and Project Session B5 (reports on papers and reflection on learnings)
Coursepack: Maclean, West.
Narrative history paper due by Wednesday, May 6, at 11:59 p.m. uploaded to class website.
May 8, Friday – Resistance through culture – rap, hip-hop and performativity.