



# Portuguese 3340: Cultures of Brazil



**Term:** Fall 2017 (CRN: 18323)

**Professor:** Dr. Adam Demaray

**Days/times:** MW / 12:00-1:20 p.m.

**Location:** Classroom Bldg. C301

**e-mail:** [andemaray@utep.edu](mailto:andemaray@utep.edu)

(expect a response within 24 hours max.)

**Office:** Liberal Arts Bldg. 215

**Office Phone:** (915) 747-7025

**Office Hours:** MW 10:30 - 11:50 a.m., or by appointment

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

*Cultures of Brazil* (PORT 3340) provides an interdisciplinary, critical introduction to Brazilian culture, history and society. The course is structured primarily around themes rather than chronology so that each week provides the opportunity to consider key distinctions or developments within the broader history of Brazil. In this course, we will use short texts, films, music, short stories, and more to explore and examine how Brazil came to be the diverse, dynamic, and troubled place that it is today.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of *Cultures of Brazil*, students should be:

- familiar with the most important historical and cultural aspects of Brazilian society.
- familiar with various canonical works of Brazilian literature, film, music and criticism.
- capable of contextualizing key events and ideas related to Brazil within broader trends and debates in the country.
- capable of analyzing examples of written fiction and non-fiction, film, and music in order to identify important themes and concepts as they relate to Brazilian history and culture.
- capable of explaining their knowledge and/or analyses of Brazilian history and culture to others in a clear, well-reasoned manner.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- A three-ring binder, at least 1.5” thick, with 15 dividers for weekly readings and notes.
- All readings will be provided in PDF format on Blackboard. Students are responsible for printing readings prior to the day we discuss them (unless otherwise instructed).
- Short videos, songs and other multimedia materials will be posted on Blackboard or provided as hyperlinks (to YouTube, etc.).
- There will be 5 full-length film screenings over the course of the semester (4 mandatory, 1 optional). Students should plan ahead to make sure they can attend.

## GENERAL COURSE STRUCTURE:

### Weekly activities:

1. Weekly course material and discussion questions—to be completed at home before class
2. In-class discussions and activities—Monday and Wednesday (attendance mandatory)

3. Discussion board postings—1 original post per week, 1 response post per week (minimum)
4. Comprehension quizzes—1 per week (most Mondays)

**Other activities:**

1. Mini-essays—3 total; one to be turned in during Weeks 1-4, one during Weeks 5-8, one during Weeks 9-12
2. Short presentation—students sign up at the beginning of the semester for the week of their choice
3. Final project—students choose topic in consultation with professor in Week 13

It is important to pay attention to the type of material we will study each week since a film, for example, cannot be consumed the same way as a short story. Students should plan to spend a total of 2-3 hours on weekly activities. On weeks when a student has chosen to complete a short essay or presentation as well, s/he should budget additional time accordingly. During Weeks 13-15, students should plan to spend additional time researching and preparing their final project.

Please note: all assignments listed above (and described in detail below) are mandatory. Failure to complete any activity fully and on time will significantly affect your final grade. Failure to complete three or more weeks of discussion board postings may result in removal from the course.

**COURSE CONTENT AND REQUIREMENTS:**

**Course material and discussion questions:**

On our Blackboard page, you will find folders containing each week's course materials. Course material may include short readings, films, online videos, or music. When necessary, videos will be subtitled and music will include written lyrics.

In each weekly folder you will also find a set of questions related to that week's materials. These questions are intended to help guide your reading, listening and/or viewing. They will also serve as the basis for online and in-class discussions. Question sheets will generally not be collected, but students are expected to come to each class with answers, notes and/or ideas written down to show that they have considered the questions and are prepared to discuss them. Students should also come to class with their own thoughtful questions and comments for us to consider.

**Attendance and participation:**

*Cultures of Brazil* is primarily a seminar course, which means most classes will center around group discussion and exploration of that week's topic. Students are required to attend all classes and actively participate in all discussions, exercises, and assignments. You should come to class with all the homework for that day completed, and be prepared to answer questions on the assigned materials.

Attendance is essential. More than two unexcused absences will result in the loss of 10 points on the final participation grade for each day missed. Official university business and certifiable illness are the only types of excusable absences. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed—contact a classmate and/or your professor.

Please keep in mind that arriving more than five minutes late to class two times equals one unexcused

absence. There is no make-up of missed class work, quizzes, or presentations. Students who miss more than 5 class periods risk being dropped from the course. Talk to your instructor about any attendance problems.

### **Discussion board:**

The discussion board primarily serves as a way for students to begin exploring and sharing ideas about the course material. Each week, you will write at least 2 posts.

By Friday night (12:00am MST) each week, unless otherwise noted, you should have:

- read/watched/listened to at least one piece of material for the following Monday's class.
- written a 1 paragraph response (5-8 sentences) engaging with one of that week's discussion questions.

By Sunday (12:00am MST) each week, unless otherwise noted, you should have:

- written a 1 paragraph response (5-8 sentences) to at least one classmate, thoughtfully engaging with their ideas or questions.

As the main goal of the discussion board is the open exchange of ideas and first impressions, your posts will be graded simply as "Complete/Incomplete." Posts that receive a grade of "Incomplete" will only be those that are missing, late, off-topic, or of insufficient length.

### **Comprehension quizzes:**

Most weeks you will be required to complete a short quiz or activity to test your comprehension of the material. While we will use class time and the Blackboard discussion board to explore different ideas, ask questions, and introduce new topics, comprehension quizzes will be used to confirm that you have identified and absorbed the most important information from that week's material. Quizzes will usually take place at the beginning of class on Monday. If you are absent or arrive late and miss a quiz, you will not have the opportunity to make it up. Exceptions will only be made for absences for serious, legitimate reasons (see above) or for absences discussed ahead of time with the professor.

### **Mini-essays:**

Three times over the course of the semester each student will choose a topic that is of greater interest to them in order to write a 2-3 page, double-spaced essay in which they develop and defend an argument related to their chosen topic. Students should find and utilize 2-4 legitimate outside, academic sources to help explain their argument. Mini-essays can be a way to explore more in depth a topic that is new to you or one that is already of personal and/or academic interest to you. The professor will give more detailed instructions and examples during the first week of class.

### **Short presentations:**

During weeks 4-11, Wednesday classes will feature short presentations or activities from 1-2 students on an additional piece of cultural material related to that week's topic. Material can include an image, a song, a short video, or a short text. The second week of class, students will sign-up for topics. Student presentations will not require significant outside research, but will require some preparation to make them structured and dynamic. The form of the presentation is flexible, but should generally last 5-10 minutes, involve interaction with / between classmates, and highlight key aspects and questions to consider.

**Final project:**

The final project will consist of a 20-minute lesson about a topic of your choice, based on one or two pieces of cultural or material from Brazil. After researching your materials, you will teach the rest of the class about them (their significance, uniqueness, etc.). Depending on the size of the class, students may be asked to work individually or in small groups. Your lesson should incorporate a written and/or video outline as well as at least one interactive activity to help your audience engage with the material. Later in the semester, you will be provided with more detailed directions, including how to choose your topic and materials.

**GRADING CRITERIA:**

Attendance and participation	20%	Mini-essays (3)	30%
Discussion board	12%	Short presentation (1)	8%
Quizzes	8%	Final project (1)	22%

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:****Classroom and online behavior:**

In class and in discussion board postings, students are expected to demonstrate respect and consideration for each other, the professor, and the course material. Each student will undoubtedly bring their own unique viewpoints, analyses, and ways of explaining their ideas. In this type of course, we are less concerned with finding the “right” or “best” interpretation of a given topic, and more concerned with exploring the topic from different angles and understanding its nuance.

Disagreements and heated discussions can be valuable part of the learning process, provided that they are respectful and based on thoughtful analysis of the material. Inappropriate comments, personal criticisms and the like will negatively impact your participation grade and may result in referral for disciplinary action from the university.

**Academic integrity:**

All work for this course must be your own. For the short essays, presentations, and the final project you will be using course materials as well as outside sources. Any outside source that you use must be fully and correctly cited according to MLA style. Using language or ideas from another person or source without citing them is considered plagiarism and is a serious violation of academic honesty.

In discussion board posts, you are encouraged to include direct quotes (and page numbers if relevant) when you make reference to a particular part of a text, song, etc. However, because discussion board posts are informal reflections on a piece of material provided by the professor, you do not need to use a formal citation style when writing them.

For more information, please consult official UTEP policies on “Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty” found here: <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/>

**Accommodations:**

This course has been structured to allow students to engage with material in a variety of ways, with the hope of accommodating a range of learning styles. Any student who may require additional accommodations should communicate immediately with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). The professor, student, and staff at CASS can then work together to determine the most appropriate and effective accommodations. Should any further needs or issues arise, students should communicate with the professor as soon as possible in order to address them.

**\*Attention:** The assignments, policies and schedule outlined in this syllabus are subject to change. Students are responsible for acquainting themselves with any modifications instituted by the professor. Not being familiar with changes to the syllabus or course requirements does not constitute an excuse for late or missed assignments.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

WEEK	TOPIC	KEY DATES
1	<b>Introduction</b>  <b>“For the English to See” : Myths and Realities</b>	<b>Aug. 30 (Wed):</b> Film screening— <i>Black Orpheus</i> ; EDUC 203 (1:30 p.m.)  <b>Aug 31 (Thurs):</b> Film screening— <i>Black Orpheus</i> ; EDUC 305 (1:30 p.m.)
2	<b>“For the English to See” : Myths and Realities</b>	
3	<b>Colonization, Empire and Democratization</b>	
4	<b>Deconstructing and Debunking Brazil’s “Racial Democracy”</b>	<b>Sept. 20 (Wed):</b> Final day to turn in Mini-essay #1
5	<b>The Northeast and Rural Society</b>	<b>Sept. 27 (Wed):</b> Film screening— <i>The Keeper of Promises</i> ; EDUC 203 (1:30 p.m.)  <b>Sept. 28 (Thurs):</b> Film screening— <i>The Keeper of Promises</i> ; EDUC 305 (1:30 p.m.)
6	<b>Brazilian Religions: Mixture and Tension</b>	

7	<b>The New State and the Invention of Brasilia</b>	
8	<b>Hill vs. Asphalt: Favelas, Periphery, and Insurgent Communities</b>	<p><b>Oct. 18 (Wed):</b> Final day to turn in Mini-essay #2</p> <p><b>Oct. 18 (Wed):</b> Film screening—<i>Bus 174</i> ; EDUC 203 (1:30 p.m.)</p> <p><b>Oct. 19 (Thurs):</b> Film screening—<i>Bus 174</i> ; EDUC 305 (1:30 p.m.)</p>
9	<b>Scenes of Modern, Brazilian Life</b>	
10	<b>Dictatorship and Resistance</b>	<p><b>Nov. 1 (Wed):</b> Film screening—<i>The Year My Parents Went on Vacation</i> ; EDUC 203 (1:30 p.m.)</p> <p><b>Nov. 2 (Thurs):</b> Film screening—<i>The Year My Parents Went on Vacation</i> ; EDUC 305 (1:30 p.m.)</p>
11	<b>Soccer, Samba, and More?: What Sports and Music Can and Can't Do</b>	
12	<b>Preservation and Peril: Indigenous Communities and the Environment</b>	<p><b>Nov. 15 (Wed):</b> Final day to turn in Mini-essay #3</p> <p><b>Nov. 15 (Wed):</b> Optional film screening—<i>The Sound Around</i> ; EDUC 203 (1:30 p.m.)</p> <p><b>Nov. 16 (Thurs):</b> Optional film screening—<i>The Sound Around</i> ; EDUC 305 (1:30 p.m.)</p>
13	<b>Disorder and Progress? : Politics and Protest in the Present Day</b>	<b>Nov. 22 (Wed):</b> <i>No class</i> ; email professor with 1-2 paragraph proposal describing topic for final project
14	<b>Brazil : The Country of What Future?</b>	
15	<b>Brazil Through Your Eyes</b>	<b>Dec. 4 &amp; 6 (Mon &amp; Wed):</b> Final Project presentations in class

