

PORT 3340 - Cultures of Brazil



Term: Fall 2024

Instructor: Erika Stephens

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Days/times: TR 1:30 - 2:50 pm (online)

Office Hours: by appointment only

About the Course:

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.

Credit Hours: 3 Credit Hours

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course 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 scholarship.
- 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 Technology and Materials:

- A functioning computer or tablet, with Microsoft Word or Apple Pages installed. (All readings will be provided in PDF format on Blackboard.)
- Internet access capable of supporting live streaming of video and audio. (Videos, songs and other multimedia materials will be posted on Blackboard or provided as links.)
- A functioning camera and microphone for participating in live Zoom class sessions.

General Course Structure:

Weekly Activities:

1. Weekly course material and comprehension questions—to be completed at home before class; each student will answer 4-5 questions with a 2-3 sentence response for each
2. Lecture and class discussion—Tuesday and Thursday (attendance mandatory)

Other activities:

1. Discussions and debates in groups in preparation for presentations
2. Journal presentations—total of **two** throughout the semester

Course Material:

On our Blackboard page, you will find folders containing each week's course materials. These may include short readings, films, online videos, or music. When necessary, videos will be subtitled and music will include written lyrics. Comprehension question sheet: For each week of class, you will find on Blackboard a Word document with comprehension questions that we will go over in the following week's class. These questions are meant to help guide you as you read/watch/listen to that week's material. Each student will typically be responsible for 4-5 questions and write a 2-3 sentence response for each, demonstrating their comprehension and consideration of the question.

You will submit the answers to your questions on Blackboard; they will be graded as simply complete/incomplete. You may also be called on to give one of your answers in class. 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. 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.

Class Attendance:

Attendance is a course **requirement**. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed—contact a classmate and/or your professor. If you must miss class due to a serious emergency or illness, you should communicate as soon as possible with the professor so that you can make arrangements in order to not fall behind in the class.

If you are absent an excessive number of times during the drop period—from the first day after the end of late registration through the last day for faculty to drop students—your instructor will drop you from the course. Once the last day for faculty to drop students has passed, your instructor cannot drop you, but can and will lower your grade in the course.

1. Late arrivals and early departures also carry penalties. Two late arrivals equal one absence, two early departures equal one absence, and one late arrival plus one early departure equal one absence. If you arrive late to class, it is your responsibility to tell your instructor at the end of the class period that you arrived late but that you were indeed present, for if you do not, it is possible that he or she will mark you absent.
2. Exceptions to the above-stated policies are only made under these circumstances: (1) a medical emergency requiring hospitalization, (2) jury duty or (3) official UTEP business such as athletics, for example. Documentary proof of official UTEP business or jury duty

must be provided ten calendar days before the fact; documentary proof of hospitalization must be provided on the day you return to class. Babysitting, work schedule changes, personal problems, unexpected events, or workload are not exceptions for this attendance policy. Students who miss more than 5 class sessions risk being dropped from the course. Talk to your professor about any attendance problems.

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 on Zoom and actively participate in all discussions, activities, and assignments. In order to encourage your active participation in class, the professor will assign you a participation grade out of **10 possible points**. Full participation means:

- 1) logging in on time;
- 2) having your camera and microphone turned on for the entire Zoom session;
- 3) having your comprehension questions open;
- 4) doing your best to ask and answer questions from the professor and your classmates.

Journal Presentations:

Students will keep a journal on PPT slides. They will record **one** thing each week they found interesting or learned. There will be **two** journal presentations in groups of 2-3 students—one in the middle of the semester, and another one at the end of the semester. During those presentations, students are expected to briefly explain those concepts and ideas that they recorded and explain why they stood out to them or why they think they are important, interesting, or curious.

Grading Scale and Distribution:

The following scale will be used to calculate your final grade:

A 90.0 – 100%	
B 80.0 - 89.9%	Attendance 20%
C 70.0 - 79.9%	Participation 20%
D 65.0 - 69.9%	Comprehension Questions 30%
F 64.9% or less	Journal Presentations 30%

About Academic Honesty:

Engaging in any behavior that involves taking credit for work that is not your own will be penalized. There is zero tolerance for cheating and/or allowing others to copy your work on assessments and/or homework. Penalties for academic dishonesty range from an “F” on an assignment to dismissal from the course and/or the college.

Course Policies: Cheating, Plagiarism, Scholastic Dishonesty, and Student Discipline:

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

a. Cheating:

"Copying from the test paper of another student, engaging in written, oral, or any other means of communication with another student during a test, or giving aid to or seeking aid from another student during a test; possession and/or use during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes, books, or specifically designed "crib notes"; using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program; using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters but which will be used again either in whole or in part without permission of the instructor; or accessing a test bank without instructor permission; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student for an assignment without authority; substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one's self to take a test; and falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit."

b. Plagiarism:

"Means the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors."

a. Collusion:

"Means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on scholastic dishonesty."

Students with Disabilities:

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is committed to providing for the needs of enrolled or admitted students who have disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Therefore, it is the policy of UTEP that the campus makes services available for any student who, through a recent assessment, can document a disability. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at (915)747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit the office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass.

Course Calendar:

*Please note that the professor may make changes to the calendar below.

DATE	TOPIC	MATERIALS
Week 1 27 de agosto	"For the English to see": Myths and Realities-Part 1	- Syllabus and course introduction - Song: "Aquarela do Brasil" (Ary Barroso) - Song: "País Tropical" (Jorge Ben)
29 de agosto		- Book chapter: " <i>Jeito as Worldview</i> " (Tracy Novinger)
Week 2 3 de setembro	"For the English to see": Myths and Realities-Part 2	- Book chapter: "The Brazilian Way of Life" (Michael Reid)
5 de setembro		- Book chapter: "A Capsule of History" (Tracy Novinger)
Week 3 10 de setembro	Colonization and Slavery	- Video: "Brazil - An Inconvenient History" - Song: "Zumbi" (Jorge Ben)
12 de setembro		- Short story: "Father versus Mother" (Machado de Assis)
Week 4 17 de setembro	Deconstructing and Debunking Brazil's "Racial Democracy"	- Book chapter: "Race and Ethnicity in Brazil" (Jeff Garmany & Anthony Pereira) - Song: "Lundu Chorado" (Ney Lopes)
19 de setembro		- Articles: <i>Brazil Reader</i> - various essays on race - Short video: "Why race in Brazil is a confusing, loaded topic"
Week 5 24 de setembro	Brazilian Religions: Mixture and Tension	- Videos: YouTube videos on Candomblé - Film: <i>Keeper of Promises</i>
26 de setembro		- Book chapter: "The Pentecostal Boom" (Bryan McCann)

Week 6 1 de outubro	Dictatorship and Resistance	- Book chapters: "Introduction" and "Fidelismo and the Brazilian Crisis" (Thomas C. Wright) - Book chapter: "The Long Dictatorship" (Michael Reid)
3 de outubro		- Songs: " Cálice" and "Apesar de você" (Chico Buarque)
Week 7 8 de outubro	Disorder and Progress? : Politics in Present Day Brazil	- Podcast: "Who exactly is Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva?" - Podcast: "Who exactly is Jair Bolsonaro?"
10 de outubro		- Short story: "Premeditated Coincidence" (Adalgisa Nery)
Week 8 15 de outubro		Journal Presentations
17 de outubro		Journal Presentations
Week 9 22 de outubro	The Invention of Brasília	- Selections from book: <i>The Modernist City</i> (James Holston)
24 de outubro		- Vídeos: YouTube shorts on Brasília
Week 10 29 de outubro	The Role of Culture and Race in Modernization Projects	- Book chapter: "Race, Ethnicity, and Urbanization" (Lorraine Leu)
31 de outubro		- Short story: "The File Cabinet" (Victor Guidice)
Week 11 5 de novembro	Hills vs. Asphalt: Favelas, Periphery, and Insurgent Communities	- Podcast: Brazil Unfiltered, "A Look Inside Rio's Favelas" - Book chapter: "New Foundations of Rights" (James Holston)

7 de novembro		- Film: <i>Bus 174</i>
Week 12 12 de novembro	Futebol & Carnaval	- Book chapter: "Soccer in Brazil" (Jeff Garmany & Anthony Pereira) - Article: "Socrates, Corinthians, and Democracy" (Matthew Shirts)
14 de novembro		- Short story: "Remnants of Carnaval" (Clarice Lispector) - Song: "Turma do Funil" (Tom Jobim & Miúcha)
Week 13 19 de novembro	Preservation and Peril: Indigenous Communities and the Environment	- Film: Rubber Jungle (documentary) - Podcast: Brazil Unfiltered, "The Economics, Ecology, and Politics of Brazil's Rainforest"
21 de novembro		- Book chapters: "Introduction" and Posttraditional Indians" (Jonathan Warren)
Week 14 26 de novembro		One-on-one Conferences *Conferences with the professor must be scheduled in advance
28 de novembro	*Thanksgiving Holiday	(no class)
Week 15 3 de dezembro		Journal Presentations
5 de dezembro	*Last day of classes	Journal Presentations

Course Bibliography:

Novinger, Tracy. *Communicating with Brazilians: when "yes" means "no"*. 1st ed. University of Texas Press. 2003.

Reid, Michael. *Brazil: The Troubled Rise of a Global Power*. Yale University Press, 2014.

Garmany, Jeff & Anthony Pereira. *Understanding Contemporary Brazil*. 1st ed. Routledge, 2018.

McCann, Bryan. *The Throes of Democracy: Brazil since 1989*. Zed Books, 2008.

Holston, James. *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia*. The University of Chicago Press, 1989.

Wright, Thomas C. *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution and Beyond*. 3rd ed. ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2018.

Warren, Jonathan W. *Racial Revolutions: Antiracism and Indian Resurgence in Brazil*. Duke University Press, 2001.