Course Syllabus

Race, Gender, and Sustainable Development in Brazil

LACB 3005 (3 credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Brazil: Social Justice and Sustainable Development

Course Description
Brazil is home to the largest number of African descendants outside the continent of Africa, and they constitute the majority of the population. The Race, Gender, and Sustainable Development course (RGS) explores the historical and present struggles of Afro-descendants to dismantle a complex and violent system of discriminatory and exclusionary practices. It studies Afro-descendant social participation and development efforts. Particular attention is dedicated to the historical construction of Afro-descendant identity, the influence of Afro-descendant social and political movements, and recent governmental affirmative action to address racial discrimination and exclusion. The seminar also explores how human degradation is linked to environmental degradation. Within the thematic modules, emphasis is placed on efforts to achieve sustainable human and ecological relationships. Students will consider the influence of Afro-descendant and indigenous systems of knowledge, the building and strengthening of solidarity-based economies, and citizen participation. They will look at the formulation and implementation of ecological public policies and community-generated articulations of new, creative visions of relations with the natural universe.

Course Objectives
The objectives for this course are to:

- promote an understanding of the way Brazilian scholars analyze how ideologies of race and gender have informed the historical and actual construction of Brazilian society;
- grasp the particular manner in which race and gender based ideologies are expressed in cultural constructions, social and economic institutions and practices;
- consider the issues of race and gender in historical context and how these concepts and their applications have been a major force in limiting human development, using the Brazilian situation as a case study;
- identify the most important social movements, civil and political rights organizations and strategies employed in the Brazilian context to defeat the oppressive outcomes generated by racial and gender based discrimination;
- promote an understanding of the relationship between human degradation and

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environmental degradation;
- identify the major problems of environmental sustainability prevalent in the NE of Brazil;
- consider the important governmental public policy initiatives designed to address the major problems of human and environmental sustainability in the NE;
- study and understand community based initiatives to preserve local environments.

**Expected Outcomes**
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
- Describe and explain how issues of race and gender have historically and presently shaped the social, political and cultural forces influential in the development of a modern society;
- Identify, describe and analyze issues of sustainability, race, gender and ethnicity;
- Identify, describe and articulate major issues related to Brazilian race models and how these models are being questioned, challenged and dismantled in the context of Northeast Brazil;
- Examine country-specific issues regarding local efforts to achieve sustainable development;
- Articulate, analyze and discuss major issues related to Brazilian sustainability models and how these models are addressing environmental challenges in the Northeast region.

**Course Modules**
RGS material will be delivered through a series of modules, as found below. The approach will be integrative and experiential, and will aim to develop a multi-sided and historical understanding of issues of race, gender and sustainable development with particular reference to Northeast Brazil.

**Module 1: The Challenges of Race, Gender and Class Inequalities in NE Brazil**
This module focuses on issues surrounding African-Brazilian populations and their struggle for social inclusion, equality and full participation in Brazilian society. A special focus is placed on the role of Black women in this struggle. Additionally, issues related to the oppression and exclusion of indigenous peoples, gender oppression, class divisions and identity construction are considered in this module.

**Instructors**
Prof. Itanacy Ramos de Oliveira: Social Worker: Federal University of Pernambuco: “The Role of Women in Northeastern Brazil.”

Prof. Lindinalva Barbosa: Federal University of Bahia: “Afro Descendent Women Intersectionality, Resistance and Freedom.”


Prof. Samuel Vida Ph.D Federal University of Bahia: “Human Rights and the Structure of Inequality.”

**Required Readings**

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Other Readings

Module 2: Sustainability and Social Transformation
By addressing conceptual dimensions of sustainable development for Ceará and Bahia states, students will be able to discuss the current challenges faced locally and relevant alternatives for long-term well-being in rural and urban environments. The module focuses on sustainable tourism and family based agriculture.

Drawing upon inter-disciplinary insights and bringing together information from scholars, local wisdom and other sources, this module offers an in-depth exploration of innovative approaches to work on practical ways to bring about common dreams of social justice and sustainability. Students will be asked to think and act upon creative alternatives and solutions to the myriad problems that hinder social justice around the world.

Instructors
Prof. Adriano Sarquis, PhD., Economist, Representative of Brazilian Northeast Bank – BNB.

Representative of Terramar, local NGO

Movimento dos Sem Terra – MST/Landless rural workers´ movement Representative

Required Readings


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Other Readings


WALSH, Catherine, “Development as Buen Viver: Institutional Arrangements and (de)colonial entanglements” Development ( 2010), 53(1), 15-21 ( www.sidint.org/deve;lopment)


General Reading
In addition to readings, which will be assigned for each module, it is also the student’s responsibility to keep up to date with current events. At a minimum, students are required to read one Portuguese language weekly or one English Language weekly focused on Brazil; it is also recommended that you read a daily newspaper (perhaps alternating papers to get various perspectives) as well as a Sunday paper. It is advised that you watch a session of the news at least once a week, though this is in no way a substitute for keeping up with the print media. Familiarity with current events and a working knowledge of today’s political and economic issues will be assumed in the RGS seminar.

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Student Assessment and Evaluation
Students will be expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in the lectures, discussions, and field visits. They will be expected to complete all assignments in a professional, timely manner. The following breakdown of grades will be used to arrive at the final letter grade, which is determined by the Academic Director (AD).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Project Journal 2- Chapada</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Group Presentation</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Analysis of Articles</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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Grading Scales and Criteria
Grades are given both fairly and rigorously and in accordance with the system below. They will reflect a combination of absolute quality of performance, progress made, the ability to take into account and assimilate the Academic Director's and the teachers' advice in assessing the work done. An “A” letter grade reflects exceptional work, perfect combination of academic competences and personal research and analysis. It shows great ability to integrate field-based investigation and personal reflection into a structured and well argued paper. A “B” letter grade reflects serious and methodical work as well as a substantial effort at analyzing and understanding cross-cultural issues. A “C” letter grade shows the work meets the requirements but needs more in-depth reflection and personal involvement. A “D” letter grade is insufficient and clearly reflects lack of work or serious deficiencies.

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:
- 94-100%  A
- 90-93%  A-
- 87-89%  B+
- 84-86%  B
- 80-83%  B-
- 77-79%  C+
- 74-76%  C
- 70-73%  C-
- 67-69%  D+
- 64-66%  D
- below 64  F

Please see the SIT Study Abroad student handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Please note, the syllabus, course content, lecturers, and readings may modified by the Academic Director in order to better suit the needs of the course and its participants. Should any change of class topics or lecturers may be necessary, student will be promptly notified.

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