Course Description
This course provides an in-depth look at the process of political and social transformation at the grass-roots level in Northeastern Brazil, as well as the persistent and often conflictive interaction of new political actors in the country that has become a living "social laboratory". The course provides the broad and contextualized historical, political and social background necessary to understand the emancipation struggles of indigenous, African, and Afro-descendants. It addresses long-standing issues of social exclusion and marginalization, focusing in particular on indigenous populations, women, children, and the landless and these groups’ struggle for social justice. It also provides the opportunity to study civil society initiatives in Fortaleza, such as the Brazilian landless movement and the black women’s movement in Salvador. The course also seeks to understand the influence and impact of social emancipation struggles and civil society organizations in the postcolonial process of transition from authoritarianism to present-day democracy. Students will experience and explore how Brazil’s landless and marginalized groups pursue their own path toward social justice and development as Latin America’s weak political institutionalization is increasingly channeling citizens’ demands through non-party organizations. Low political institutionalization and conflicting interests often go along with ad hoc forms of conflict resolution and the redress of social justice issues. The course will offer students the opportunity to engage in observation, discussion and critical reflection, examining at the local level critical global issues affecting the economy, social conditions and health of Brazil’s landless and marginalized peoples. The course considers how religious communities of the African Matrix, indigenous communities, quilombo communities, NGOs and other groups
historically and actually offer ways to rethink human relations, within a social justice framework, emphasizing solidarity, fraternity, re-centering knowledge and generating new ideas. These themes are explored from a post-colonial, decolonization and critical grounding.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze country-specific knowledge regarding local efforts to achieve social justice and development;
- Engage in culturally appropriate discussions on social justice and development issues;
- Identify, describe, analyze and assess the ways in which scholars address and frame questions of social justice and development;
- Identify, describe and analyze social, political and cultural forces shaping contemporary Brazilian democracy;
- Identify and use scholarly approaches to social justice and inequality;
- Examine and explain the pressures exerted by organizations of civil society for greater inclusion, recognition and protection under the law;
- Articulate how the transition from dictatorship to democratic institutions has forged widespread demands for social justice, human rights and social equity;
- Cite the main theoretical contributions of postcolonial theorists and apply some of their concepts to current research;

Course Objectives
The objectives for this course are to:

- Provide students with historical background and knowledge about social, economic, political and cultural issues which have forged the present day reality of Brazil in general, and Northeast Brazil in particular.
- Develop a basic conceptual and practical understanding of contemporary social justice and development issues in Brazil.
- Gain an understanding of the construction of global citizenship and democracy.
- Explore the role and contribution of all major ethnic groups to the creation of contemporary Brazilian culture and democratic institutions.
- Consider the issue of social justice in-depth, using the Brazilian situation as a case study.
- Provide scholarly tools to process and critically analyze historical information, different schools of thought, and varied interpretations about social justice and governance in Brazil.

Language of Instruction
English and Portuguese
Course Schedule

Module 1: The Historical Foundations of Social Injustice and Underdevelopment in Northeastern Brazil

Taught at sites in the state of Ceará, this introductory module works to develop a common scholarly frame of reference for students to more fully explore issues of race and class divisions, unequal development, social exclusions, gender inequality, and unequal resource distribution in Northeast Brazil.

Integrating readings, lectures and experiential participation in local organizations and communities, this module focuses on causes and effects of key aspects of social exclusion and social injustice. The module addresses the issues of who is excluded, what are the forms of the exclusion, and the links between exclusion and other development issues such as poverty and inequality.

Required Readings


Other Readings


Module 2: The Colonial Legacy: Individual & Structural Violence in Northeastern Brazil

Building on considerations related to the experience of slavery and the colonial history of Brazil, this module highlights the enduring structures of individual and structural violence that continue to characterize social, political economic and cultural relations. Students will explore how these structures of violence mold and shape the life experience of marginalized groups in Brazil with a focus on Afro-descendant and Indigenous populations and women. The module is also designed to engage students in a reflective analysis of how these structures of violence are globalized, normalized and integrated into our daily life becoming determinant factors in the nature and character of our personal relations. Finally, the modules seeks to reveal through discussion, debate and analysis how these violent structures and relations power of gender, race, and homophobia and other forms of domination are at the center of global social injustice today.

Required Readings


De AlmeidaL, Agamenon T. “Understanding World Capitalism Today.”

Other Readings


Santos, Martha “On the importance of being honorable: Masculinity, Survival, and Conflict in the backlands of Northeast Brazil, Ceará, 1840s -1890”, The Americas, Berkeley, July 2007, Volume 64, Iss.1, pg35.


Levine, Robert M.; The History of Brazil; Palgrave MacMillan; New York; 2003

Luna, Francisco Vidal; Klein, Herbert S.; Brazil since 1980; Cambridge University Press; New York; 2006.

Meade, Teresa A.; A Brief History of Brazil; 2nd edition; Checkmark Books; New York 2010.

Menke Renner, Esther Susana, “Who we were, who we are, who we will be”, [ICJ 7.1 (2007) 109-115] ISSN 1472-2089.


Ribeiro, Darcy; The Brazilian People; University Press of Florida; Gainesville; 2000

Module 3: Post-Colonialism and Social Innovation in Northeast Brazil

This module focuses on theories of Post-Colonialism and citizen action in Northeast Brazil. Much of the module is concerned with the identification of political spaces, social technologies and mobilization means so that citizens can exercise democratic decision making both through representation at the state level and participation in civil society.

Students will be exposed to debates with state government representatives, and gain experience through interaction with local community organizations mobilized to improve resident’s lives in impoverish neighborhoods. Experiences of solidarity economics will receive special attention.

Required Readings


Lissovoy, Noah De (2008).Dialectic of Emergency/Emergency of the Dialectic* Capitalism, Nature, Socialism; 19, 1; ProQuest Central pg. 27


Carter, Miguel, “The landless rural workers’ movement (MST) and democracy in Brazil”, *Centre for Brazilian Studies, University of Oxford, Working Paper CBS-60-05*.


Selwyn, Ben, “Trade unions and women’s empowerment in north-east Brazil”, *Gender & Development* Vol. 17, No. 2, July 2009.

Thayer, Millie, “Translations and Refusals: Resignifying Meanings as feminist Political Practice”, *Feminist Studies* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2010).


Miller, Ethan, “Other Economies are Possible”. *Dollars & Sense*, Jul/Aug2006, Issue 266, p11-15, 5p


**Other Readings**


Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments

Pre-departure Assignments: This will include the analysis of certain pre-departure readings and movies. It will take into account the capacity to analyze and reflect upon the reading.

First Quiz: The evaluation of the first module will be a quiz or short written exam. The objective of the quiz is to evaluate knowledge of some basic social movement theories and also the situation of social movements in Brazil.

Synthesis and Presentation: The evaluation of the second module will be a synthesis and presentation of one of the key concepts of social movements in Brazil. The students will choose one of the topics in which they are most interested, either popular education, social economy, territory, militancy, or gender. They will have to complete a synthesis of the text to be distributed to the group before the class. During the class they will have to give a brief presentation of the text and generate discussion about the topic.

Final Group Presentation: In the evaluation of the third module the students will apply the concepts presented in the first module to the visits completed by the group. They will have to debate the possibility of change that comes from these strategies and social movements.

Participation: Participation refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active participation in all classes, discussions, excursions, and other activities. It also means appropriate and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of students’ participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Assessment

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<td>First Quiz</td>
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<td>Synthesis and Presentation</td>
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<td>Final Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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Grading Scale

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<td>90-93%</td>
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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

Expectations and Policies

- **Show up prepared.** Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- **Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements.** This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- **Ask questions in class, Engage the lecturer.** These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.…
- **Comply with academic integrity policies** (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- **Respect differences of opinion** (classmates’, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

**Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process.