

Draft Syllabus: Not Final

Honors Seminar in the Social Sciences
Inequality, Race, and Politics in Brazil: Ethnographic Studies and Comparisons with the US

Honors 21:525:254
Rutgers University, Newark
Fall Semester, 2022
Mondays, 2:30-3:50pm and Wednesdays, 1:00-2:20
Conklin Hall 302

Instructor: Sean T. Mitchell

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Zoom Office Hours: schedule appointment here: <https://calendly.com/seantm>

Course Canvas Page: <https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/198569>

Course Description

The Americas have not one, but two, continent-sized countries of hundreds of millions of people. Both of those countries were shaped by centuries of enslavement of people from Africa; colonization of Native American lands by people from Europe; large-scale immigration from all over the world; and, at present, deeply fractious politics. This course focuses on one of those two countries: Brazil. We will also work on developing scholarly comparisons that might help us to better understand the other of those two countries: the United States. Most of the course reading will be recent ethnographic and historical studies focused on issues of inequality, race, and politics in different parts of Brazil.

Required Books

Graham, Jessica Lynn. 2019. *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy: Race, Politics, and Culture in the United States and Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pereira, Anthony W. 2020. *Modern Brazil: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Pinho, Patricia de Santana. 2018. *Mapping Diaspora: African American Roots Tourism in Brazil*. Illustrated edition. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y. 2020. *Parenting Empires: Class, Whiteness, and the Moral Economy of Privilege in Latin America*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.

Additional readings will be available on Canvas

Additional Class Material

In addition to the reading assigned on this syllabus, I will sometimes assign additional films, videos, and articles when I think they are relevant to class discussion. **We will watch several films in this class, and I will assign some films to watch at home as well, although I have not selected those films yet. ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT ON THE SYLLABUS, THESE FILMS AND READINGS ARE ALSO REQUIRED.**

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the term, students should:

- 1) Have a basic knowledge of Brazilian history
- 2) Have a basic knowledge of the working of class, race, and politics in Brazil
- 3) Have the ability to make informed and critical social comparisons among Brazil the United States (and other contexts)
- 4) Be able to carefully read and understand historical and ethnographic texts
- 5) Be able to present your ideas clearly in spoken and written form

Course Requirements and Grading

Course grades

10 Discussion Board entries: **2%** each: Total **20%**

2 Take Home Exams: **30%** each: Total: **60%**

Participation and Attendance: **20%**

Discussion Board

You must contribute to the Canvas Discussion board discussion for at least 10 of the semester's weeks. For your discussion board entries to count towards your grade, they must be submitted by Sunday night, so that I can consult them as I prepare the weeks' discussions. Discussion board entries should be at least 300 words. Their content is up to you. You can ask questions, engage with the ideas of other students, with me, or with the authors. You do not have to agree with the author's perspectives (or with my own perspectives, for that matter). Ideally, this will be a lively space where we work out some of our thoughts in relation the texts and in dialogue with our colleagues.

Take-Home Exams

There will be a take-home midterm and final for this class. Each exam will allow you to chose among a series of questions and will require you to critically engage the readings. We will discuss this more in class.

Participation and Attendance

This is an honors seminar class. That means that it is focused on discussion. You must attend class having done the assigned reading and you must be ready to discuss it. We also must respect each other and our differences in this class. We will be discussing difficult and often contentious material in this class. It is okay for us to disagree with each other (this includes disagreeing with the professor). We should respect each other and consider each other's perspectives, and we should attempt to ground our own perspectives in scholarly evidence and logical argument. Your participation in discussion is an important part of your grade. Additionally, after two unexcused absences, each absence will negatively affect your grade.

Note: there is no possibility of extra credit work to bring up a course grade at the end, except that which is already mentioned on this syllabus. You must keep up with course reading and work all the way through.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Our purpose in the classroom is to seek the truth; this work requires trust and honesty between teacher and student. If we are not honest about what we know and do not know, our learning will always be impaired. Because our teaching and learning depends on this honest communication, we expect all students to understand what plagiarism is and why it is unacceptable.

Any student considering plagiarism should recognize the consequences and consider alternatives. Students uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism may request help from faculty or from appropriate University services. For information on using sources in writing, see the Identifying and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty section of the Rutgers Academic Integrity web site:
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources-for-students/>

Student Code of Conduct

Students are required to adhere to the University Student Code of Conduct delineated in the Rutgers Student Affairs website Student Conduct page:
<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/student-conduct-processes/university-code-of-student-conduct/#1495568095620-2f5ce77d-17dd>

Accommodations

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:
<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form (<https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>).

Student Support Services

Academic Services:

- For academic support visit Rutgers Academics Student Support at <https://www.rutgers.edu/academics/student-support>

• Any student can obtain tutoring and other help at the Learning Centers on each campus. Check the website at <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>

- For coaching help with writing skills and assignments visit the Writing Coaching webpage at <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/student-services/writing-coaching>

• Many library resources are available online. Assistance is available through phone, email, and chat. For information, check the Rutgers Libraries website at <https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/>
Rutgers Student Health Services:

Rutgers Student Health Services is dedicated to health for the whole student body, mind and spirit. It accomplishes this through a staff of qualified clinicians and support staff. Services are available at several locations throughout the New Brunswick-Piscataway area. For more information visit:
<http://health.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University Health Requirements

In order to protect the health and well-being of all members of the University community, masks must be worn by all persons on campus when in the presence of others (within six feet) and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks must be worn during class meetings; any student not wearing a mask will be asked to leave.

Masks should conform to CDC guidelines and should completely cover the nose and mouth:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app.

Electronic Device Policy

Electronic devices may be used only for course purposes, and phones must be put away for the duration of the class. Students are permitted to use laptops and tablets for taking notes, consulting readings, etc. However, such devices are highly distracting, even under the best of circumstances, and with the best intentions. If I find that students are distracted by their devices I reserve the right to prohibit their use in the classroom.

Course Schedule

Week 1: An Introduction to the Course

September 7

Week 2: An Introduction to Modern Brazil

September 12

Pereira, *Modern Brazil*, Ch. 1-2

September 14

Pereira, *Modern Brazil*, Ch. 3-4

Week 3: Modern Brazil

September 19

Pereira, *Modern Brazil*, Ch. 5-6

September 21

Pereira, *Modern Brazil*, Ch. 7-8

Week 4: Brazil's 2022 Presidential Election

September 26

Reading on the 2022 Presidential Election TBD

September 28

Reading on the 2022 Presidential Election TBD

Week 5: Shifting the Meaning of Democracy

October 3

Graham, *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy*, Introduction

October 5

Graham, *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy*, Ch. 1

Week 6: Shifting the Meaning of Democracy

October 10

Graham, *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy*, Ch. 2-3

October 12

Graham, *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy*, Ch. 4

Week 7: Shifting the Meaning of Democracy

October 17

Graham, *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy*, Ch. 5-6

October 19

Graham, *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy*, Ch.7-Conclusion

Week 8: Readings linked to Sawyer Seminar: Immigration, Nativism, Activism and Trans-Border Political Sentiment

October 24

Reading TBD

October 26

Reading TBD

Extra Credit for Participation on Thursday, October 27, in Sawyer Seminar event:

Politics Across Borders: Immigration, Nativism, Activism and Trans-Border Political Sentiment

Week 9: Comparative Racisms and Political Consciousness: A Classic Debate

October 31

Hanchard, Michael George. 1994. *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, 1945-1988* (Selections)

November 2

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Loïc Wacquant. 1999. "On the Cunning of Imperialist Reason."

Week 10: Mapping Diaspora

November 7

Pinho, *Mapping Diaspora*, Intro-Ch.1

November 9

Pinho, *Mapping Diaspora*, Ch. 2

Week 11: Mapping Diaspora

November 14

Pinho, *Mapping Diaspora*, Ch. 3

November 16

Pinho, *Mapping Diaspora*, Ch. 4

Week 12: Mapping Diaspora

November 21

Pinho, *Mapping Diaspora*, Ch. 5-Epilogue

November 23: NO CLASS, FRIDAY SCHEDULE FOR THANKSGIVING

Week 13: Parenting Empires

November 29

Ramos-Zayas, *Parenting Empires*, Ch. 1-2

November 30

Ramos-Zayas, *Parenting Empires*, Ch. 3

Week 14: Parenting Empires

December 5

Ramos-Zayas, *Parenting Empires*, Ch. 4

December 7

Ramos-Zayas, *Parenting Empires*, Ch. 5

Week 15: Parenting Empires

December 12

Ramos-Zayas, *Parenting Empires*, Ch. 6

December 14

Ramos-Zayas, *Parenting Empires*, Ch. 7-Epilogue