



Course Title: Black Brazil: Afro-Brazilian Music, Literature, and Art

Course Code: CLS 09 W

Instructor Name and Bio: Tom Winterbottom (he/him), Ph.D., teaches Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American cultural studies with a focus on Brazil at Stanford University. His book *A Cultural History of Rio de Janeiro after 1889* came out in 2016 and he has written numerous articles on contemporary Latin American culture in edited volumes, academic journals, and outlets such as *Public Books*.

Class Sessions and Recording

Meeting days and times: Wednesdays 7-8:50pm PST, Jan 25 - March 1

Meeting location: Zoom

The class sessions will be recorded. To get the full benefit of the course, students should attend the live session and participate in discussions and the Q&As. The recordings will be available on Canvas in case you are unable to attend.

Course Features:

- Live session
 - Lecture, discussions, and Q&A
 - Participation recommended through Q&A, discussions, and occasional breakout rooms
- Assignments & Coursework
 - Assignments and course materials posted in Canvas
 - Discussions on Canvas (required for those taking for a grade, otherwise optional)

Course Summary

In this 6-week course, students will gain an in-depth understanding of contemporary Brazil through the lens of Afro-Brazilian history and culture. Each week there will be material posted on Canvas (both required and suggested articles, podcasts, music, etc.) to enhance engagement with the live session on Wednesdays. Required outside engagement is between 1-2 hours per week. The live session will typically comprise of a 50-minute lecture, followed by a short break, followed by a Q&A (15 mins) and discussions (30 minutes). If you are taking the course for a letter grade, you are expected to post a short journal entry on Canvas in the days after class reflecting on the week's material (open as an option to all students). The course will move broadly chronologically from 1500 to the present yet each lecture will relate that history

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directly to Brazil today. There are no prior knowledge or skills required: if you have ever wondered about Brazilian culture and history, this is the course for you!

**Please see course page for full description and additional details.*

Grade Options and Requirements

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
 - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
 - Students must attend and/or watch at least 4 class sessions.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
 - Students must attend and/or watch at least 5 class sessions and complete a short weekly journal entry (approximately 2-3 paragraphs of personal reflections and observations) that draws on a prompt related to the weekly material and that can be collated at the end of the course by way of a final project.

**Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.*

Textbooks/Required Materials

There are no required materials to purchase. All class readings and materials (required and optional) will be provided at no cost through Canvas. A Netflix subscription or free trial is highly recommended but not required for one episode of a show and one documentary in weeks 3-5.

Tentative Weekly Outline

Week 1:

- Lecture: Introduction to Brazil; points of departure; what is “culture” and why Afro-Brazilian Culture; what we know about Brazil; an outline of Brazilian history and culture; Samba and rhythm.
- Discussions: In-class music (Done Ivone Lara, Elza Soares) and poetry (Conceição Evaristo)
- Independent engagement: Readings: “The Sugar Civilization” chapter from *Brazil: A Biography* and selections from *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change* (“The African Slave Trade and Slave Life”)

Week 2:

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- Portuguese colonialism and Afro-Brazilian beginnings (1500-1850); colony and commodity; three races and Brazilian *mestiçagem* (“mixing”); the slave trade; Palmares; establish a comparative analysis with US history.
- In-class analysis of paintings (Frans Post, Albert Eckhout), graphic novels (Marcelo D’Salete), music (Jorge Ben Jor), and poetry (Olavo Bilac)
- Readings: Gilberto Freyre (short selections from book *The Brazil Reader*), “How to Write the History of Brazil” by von Martius, “The Myth of Racial Democracy” by Abdias do Nascimento; short videos on Capoeira and Candomblé

Week 3:

- Independent Brazil (1800-1980s); Capoeira and Candomblé as artistic and religious practice; Self-identification and the census in Brazil; Brazil and the Black Atlantic; Brazil as a (racist) “racial democracy”; poverty / inequality; racial awareness in the 21st century
- In-class analysis of the practice of capoeira and the *orixás* of Candomblé; soccer as a case study (historically and today: Neymar, Vinicius Jr., Richarlison)
- Readings: “Is Neymar Black?” (*New York Times* op-ed), selections from Carolina Maria de Jesus’ *Child of the Dark*. Watch: episode two of *Street Food: Latin America* on Netflix

Week 4:

- An exploration of Brazilian music; Samba; Carnaval and its history; Salvador: Afro-Brazilian capital; Rio de Janeiro; Black expression and resistance (poverty, *quilombos* and activism, 1970s-today)
- In-class music (types of samba and songs by Luedji Luna and Tamara Franklin) and art (performance artist Priscila Rezende)
- Listen to and observe Luna’s album *Bom mesmo é estar debaixo d’água*, read “Aspects of Afro-Brazilian Experience” by Elisa Larkin Nascimento and poetry by Conceição Evaristo, listen to podcast episode on police violence in Brazil

Week 5:

- Contemporary Brazil; Affirmative Action; outcomes for Black Brazilians today; Bolsonaro, Lula and the 2018 and 2022 elections; what is “Brazilianness”?; favela as community; Afro-Brazilian or Black Brazilian?
- In-class analysis contemporary cultural movements (cinema, art, music, and literature, such as *Cadernos negros*). Who gets to make what?
- Watch Emicida’s *AmarElo: It’s All for Yesterday* on Netflix

Week 6:

- Celebrating Afro-Brazilian culture; analysis of Emicida documentary; guest lecture (TBC); Brazil today and into the future
- Final discussions, Q&A, and wrap-up, optional sharing of final projects (collected journal entries) by students.