

AFRO-BRAZILIAN FILM

SPRING 2021

DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES

Course Number: PORT 700-WRTG

CRN: 14340

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Using film, this course introduces students to the political issues, history and cultural traditions of Afro-Brazilians. During this writing intensive course, students will develop a stronger sense of an academic voice through our classroom discourse community focused on Afro-Brazilian films. By exploring the ways in which these films frame ethnic identities and question social inequalities based on race in Brazil, students will have the opportunity to reflect on their personal experiences with race. Some topics of discussion will include subalternity, social justice, the legacy of slavery in Brazil, racial and class discrimination, the myth of Racial Democracy and questions surrounding citizenship in the modern city.

This course focuses on marginal voices, counter-narratives and urban spaces. Each week we will devote time to examining films accompanied by academic articles. The first unit of the course, *The Foundation of Black Film in Brazil*, will provide an overview on the origins of Black cinema in Brazil. The second unit of the course, *Subalternity and Representation*, looks at documentaries on race and social class. The next section of the course, *Race and Gender*, examines films by Afro-Brazilian women directors to consider the intersectional experience of Black women in contemporary Brazilian society. The final section, *Citizenship and Urban Space*, focuses on the question of citizenship in contemporary, urban society.

PREREQUISITE

“C” or better in Freshman English 003 for COAS students and a passing grade in 003 for students in other colleges. This course is not open to any students who taken the non-writing intensive version of this course.

CREDIT

This course fulfills the third writing requirement in COAS and satisfies the same requirements as other sections of the course. Students will receive three hours of course credit for the successful completion of this course.

COURSE GOALS

The goals of the course are 1) to introduce students to films on Afro-Brazilian culture, history and political issues; 2) to examine racial dynamics in Brazil in relation to the U.S.; 3) to promote

the development of critical thinking skills, paying attention to the style, structure and ideas that can be found in the film's narrative; 4) to develop skills in academic writing and to improve students' learning through writing.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- 1) Describe and analyze the social, political and historical contexts of films on Afro-Brazilians
- 2) Demonstrate a general understanding of Brazil's racial dynamics
- 3) Produce writing that provides critical analysis of selected films
- 4) Develop a film review project
- 5) Strengthen writing and oratory skills

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

- 1) Check the syllabus and course calendar on a regular basis
- 2) Take notes on the films and academic texts
- 3) Regularly engage in the weekly Blackboard discussions
- 4) Ask questions and provide comments on your classmates' posts
- 5) Complete assigned films and readings prior to the deadlines posted
- 6) Turn in all assignments on time

COURSE TEXTS

Since we will be looking at different films for this course, you need to have access to online movie services (e.g., Netflix, Amazon, iTunes, Hulu, etc.).

Additional texts and course materials will be available via Blackboard.

WRITING RESOURCES SECTION

This is a list of online resources you can consult as you develop your writing skills in this class:

Purdue's OWL: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Darling's Grammar: <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

Howard University also has excellent resources available for students to assist with their writing. Students can go to the English Department's Writing Center, Locke Hall 100 to receive assistance with their writing. Online resources are also available at the following websites: Writing Center website (see <http://www.coas.howard.edu/writingcenter>) and WAC website (see <http://www.cetla.howard.edu/wac>)

To make an appointment in the Writing Center, click on the following link:

<http://www.coas.howard.edu/writingcenter/>

COURSE GRADES

Weekly Discussions	
Blog Entries (15 points each for 11 week)	165 points
Blog Comments (10 points each for 11 week)	110 points
Essays	
Week 1 Reflection Essay	25 points
Week 14 Reflection Essay	25 points
Library Research Activities	
Orientation Quiz	15 points
Annotated Bibliography	30 points
Film Review Project	
Project Abstract	20 points
Final Draft of Film Review	100 points
Discussion of classmates' projects	10 points
Total Points Possible	500 points

Grading Scale:

A 450-500 points

B 400-449 points

C 350-399 points

D 300-349 points

F Below 300 points

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Blog Entries

Since this is an online course, the blog tool in Blackboard will serve an important role in creating class discussion. The course will provide you opportunities to share your analysis of course readings during discussions. You will be submitting weekly blog entries through the link to the Blog tool found in the weekly content folders. Blog entries should be concise (250-300 words), well thought out and on topic.

All students will be expected to make a blog entry each week in response to the questions I post. Each blog entry must incorporate the academic readings and analysis of the cultural texts (film, videos, images, etc.).

Weekly blog entries need to be posted by Thursday of each week. I will give a two-hour grace period for submitting entries after the assigned time. After that time period, you will not be able to receive credit for any missing discussion board posts.

In addition to the weekly blog entries, students will post comments on classmates' blogs by the end of each week. Students will be assigned to groups for each course unit and will post comments to the classmates in their group. This is an opportunity for students to engage in discussion with each other regarding the course content to develop critical analysis skills.

Reflection Essays

During weeks 1 and 14 of the semester, students will write a reflection essay based on a prompt provided by the instructor. For the Week 1 essay, students will reflect on what they hope to learn and what their perceptions are about Black culture and film in Brazil. For the Week 14 essay, students will be able to reflect on what they have learned throughout the semester and how their perceptions have changed. Students are strongly encouraged to reference films, academic texts and other sources in their reflection essays. The essay should be concise (250-300 words) and well thought out. I will give a two-hour grace period for submitting the essay after the assigned time. After that time period, you will not be able to receive credit for your essay.

Library Research Activity

Howard library services has created an online research guide specifically for our course. The guide will serve as a resource where you can find additional information on topics and issues related to the content covered in the course. Additionally, the guide will serve as a key resource in assisting you in finding material and sources that you can use in your final project.

To get the most of this online guide, you will complete two activities that will help you learn how to use the guide in preparation for your film review project. The first activity is an orientation quiz to familiarize yourself with the library guide website. The second activity is an annotated bibliography that will serve as a foundation for your film review project. You will use the library resources to find sources for your project.

Film Review Project

For the final course project, you will have the option to examine in more depth one of the films we watched during the semester or to examine other Afro-Brazilian focused films we did not watch in the course. This is your opportunity to share your insights about social, cultural and racial issues that was a focus in one of the films. In preparation, you will submit an abstract that contains a tentative title and description of your project during the semester to receive feedback. At the conclusion of the semester, you will create a draft of the film review (1,500 words) using the online software Adobe Spark. You will then revise the draft and develop a discussion question about your web story. During the final week of the semester, you will upload the link to your film review to Blackboard and post comments on your classmates' project.

For an example of how to structure your project using Adobe Spark, reference the following project: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/83gvhRFCtJrnh/>

Here is an example of an actual film review on an Afro-Brazilian film on the blog site <https://blackbraziltoday.com/> to you an idea what your project should look like:

<https://blackbraziltoday.com/cafe-com-canela-is-directed-by-a-black-woman/>

You will notice that the writer not only provided a review of the film, but examined the social and racial issues found in the film. Additionally, you will include at least five sources in your film review to give your analysis more depth. Since it is a blog format film review, your sources need to be hyperlinked, which is the format used in blogs and other online publications.

The film review project is worth 100 points. Your participation in the discussion of your classmate's presentations is worth 10 points. The links to your project must be uploaded to Blackboard in order to receive credit. You will then post comments to your classmates' projects in your assigned group as part of your project grade.

COURSE POLICIES

Incomplete Grades and Withdraws

A grade of Incomplete (I) is given only if an emergency prevents you from taking the final exam. Such an emergency must be documented by your dean or advisor. However, if you wish to withdraw from the course, please see me before the Registrar's deadline.

Lateness

Assignments have built in grace periods. After that time period, you will not receive credit if it has not been submitted. If you cannot submit the work on time because of an emergency, you must *submit appropriate documentation* in order to receive an accommodation.

Technology Problems

It is highly recommended that you submit assignments well before the deadline. If you encounter a technical problem with submitting your assignments to Blackboard, you need to send me an email right away with a screen shot of the problem and a brief explanation of your situation. If you send me a message after the assignment is due, I not will provide any form of accommodation and you will receive a zero.

Academic Integrity

Please read the "Academic Code of Conduct," which is published in the *H-Book* or *Directory of Classes*. If you are caught cheating, you will receive a "0" for the assignment.

OTHER COURSE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Blackboard and Email

This course extensively uses Blackboard (<https://blackboard.howard.edu>). You will be responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements. If there is an unscheduled downtime for a significant period of time, your instructor will make an adjustment. It is recommended that students check e-mail on a daily basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical.

Hands-on Blackboard Orientation for Students:

CETLA has designed a hands-on Blackboard Orientation for Students:

http://www.cetla.howard.edu/teaching_resources/blackboard/BBStudentsFAQ.html.

Designed as a scavenger hunt, the orientation engages students in six basic tasks: 1) updating their email address, 2) opening a document, 3) posting on the discussion board, 4) submitting a

paper, 5) taking a test, and 6) checking their grades. The students can follow the directions for enrolling in the Blackboard site, complete the tutorial, and print out a confirmation page (with a unique identifier) so that you can give credit if you wish. Note: For technical support, please contact ETS's Blackboard Help Desk (helpdesk@howard.edu) not CETLA.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Howard University is committed to providing an educational environment that is accessible to all students. In accordance with this policy, students who need accommodations because of a disability should contact Disability Services at oss.disabilityservices@howard.edu or call (202) 238-2420.

LGBTQ+

Howard University is committed to providing an educational, living, and working environment that is welcoming, respectful, and inclusive of all members of the University community, including all sexes, sexual orientations, gender expressions, and gender identities. For more information, please contact the Division of Student Affairs.

Title IX Statement

Howard University is committed to creating a learning and working environment free from discrimination and harassment based on sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation or marital status. The following forms of conduct are prohibited by the University's Title IX Policy: Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Gender-Based Discrimination or Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, Dating and Domestic Violence, Stalking, Retaliation, and Complicity (any act that knowingly aids, facilitates, or encourages prohibited conduct by another person). It is important that you know the various campus resources and reporting options available to you if you have experienced or have any concerns related to sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment or violence. For more information access the [Title IX PDF](#) or contact the Title IX administration at TitleIX@howard.edu or call 202-806-2550.