URBAN LITERATURE IN BRAZIL

DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES

Course Number: PORT 701-WRTG   CRN: 51289

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
Using literature, this online course introduces students to the urban experience in Brazil. During this writing intensive course, students will develop a stronger sense of an academic voice through readings and assignments that examine contemporary society in Brazil's major cities. By exploring the ways in which literary works frame the challenges of living in the big city, students will have the opportunity to learn about new perspectives of Brazilian society typically not covered adequately in the public sphere. Some topics of discussion will include subalternity, social justice, racial and class discrimination and questions surrounding new forms of insurgent citizenship in the modern city.

This course focuses on marginal voices, counter-narratives and urban spaces. Each week we will devote time to examining literary texts accompanied by supplementary materials, such as images, videos and new articles. The first unit of the course will introduce students to the city of Salvador and the social issues of race and poverty. The next section of the course concentrates on Brazil's largest city, São Paulo, and the diversity of experiences found in a cosmopolitan city. The final section focuses on Rio de Janeiro and the development of the favela in the 20th century.

PREREQUISTE
"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 contemporary Brazilian literature, and the cultural, historical and political conditions that produce it; 2) to examine the social issues prevalent in the Brazil's major cities; 3) to promote the development of critical thinking skills, paying attention to the style, structure and ideas that can be found in the narrative of the literary

works; 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 urban literature in Brazil

2) Demonstrate a general understanding of Brazil's racial dynamics

3) Produce writing that provides critical analysis of selected literary works
4) Develop different forms of writing (i.e., blogs, essays, etc.)
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 literary works and supplementary materials

3) Examine your classmates' blog posts to reflect on your own writing

4) Complete assigned readings prior to deadlines posted
5) Turn in all assignments on time

COURSE TEXTS

We will analyze three texts, one for each city we will be examining in this course:

Captains of the Sand (1937) by Jorge Amado
They We're Many Horses (2001) by Luiz Ruffato
City of God (1997) by Paulo Lins

The texts can be purchased as ebooks through Amazon, Google Play, iTunes, etc.

Additional 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 REQUIREMENTS

Travel Blog Posts
Since this is an online course, the Blackboard will serve an important role in creating a sense of a virtual journey to the three Brazilian cities we will be examining. Through the literary texts and supplemental materials, students will be able to experience the cities as a virtual traveler.

Each course unit will begin with a travel blog post where you will provide a brief narrative of your impressions of the city we will be examining through the literature. Video clips, images and news articles will be provided for you to look over to get a sense of Salvador, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. After watching and/or reading over the material, you will compose a travel blog where you will share your thoughts and impressions of the city. You can include images in your blog post to give it more dimension, but it is not required.

Travel blog posts should be concise (200-250 words) and on topic. You will be able to read your classmates' blog posts to compare your interpretations of the three cities. Each travel blog post is worth 50 points.

Textual Analysis Essay
Following the travel blog post, students will read a literary text that is situated in one of the three cities. Students will read the novel *Captains of the Sand* (1937) to learn about Salvador, the short story collection *They were Many Horses* (2001) to learn about São Paulo and the novel *City of God* (1997) to learn about Rio de Janeiro.

I will provide two questions about each literary text. You need to choose one of the questions as the prompt for your textual analysis essay. Your essay should have a clear thesis, several supporting main points and examples from the literary text with analysis that support your argument.

The essay should be concise (500-600 words) and clearly convey your argument to the reader. Because the essay is brief in length, it should be dense in material and analysis. Each textual analysis essay is worth 150 points.

Social Issue Blog Post
For the final assignment of each course unit, you will write a blog post on a social issue addressed in the literary work that is a real-world issue for that city. I will provide you with one or two main social issues addressed in the literary work that can be a focus of analysis.

Supplementary material will be provided, such as news articles, videos, academic texts, that provide more in-depth analysis on the social issues. You will then write a blog post on the social

issue for an audience that has no familiarity with the city or the issue discussed. This is your chance to share your opinion on the issue while providing information from sources I provide as well as sources you find on your own. You can include images or video in your blog post, but it is not required.

The social issue blog post should be concise (250-300 words) and on topic. You will be able to read your classmates' blog posts to compare how you address the social issue that impacts the city. Each social issue blog post is worth 100 points.

Final Reflection Essay
You will write a reflection essay comparing your understanding of Brazil at the conclusion of the course with your assumptions at the beginning of the course. You can also address any questions the readings and course materials raised for you that could possibly be explored in the future.

The reflection essay should be concise (250-300). The essay is your chance to share any insights obtained during the course as well as reflect on how you might pursue a deeper understanding of Brazil beyond the course.

GRADING CRITERIA

Grading Scale:

A 900-1000 points
B 800-899 points
C 700-799 points
D 600-699 points
F Below 600 points

The final grades will be computed using the following formula:

Travel Blog Posts
(50 points per post for 3 course units)……………………………….150 points

Textual Analysis Essay
(150 points per essay for 3 course units)……………...……..………450 points

Social Issue Blog Posts
(100 points per post for 3 course units)…..………......................……..300 points

Final Reflection Essay……………………………………………100 points

Total…………………………………………………......…1,000 points

Incomplete Grades and Withdrawals

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 of 24 hours. 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*.

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.

Plagiarism

In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Plagiarized papers will receive a zero for the assignment. Students should refer to the following website that CETLA has prepared for guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism:
http://www.cetla.howard.edu/teaching_resources/plagiarism.html.

Since we will be using Blackboard for this course, I will use the Safe Assign tool to detect plagiarism in your papers. Within Blackboard, Safe Assign automatically checks students' papers for plagiarism as students upload them to Blackboard. All submitted papers are checked against (a) public webpages, (b) ProQuest's scholarly databases, (c) a database of all papers submitted by students at Howard, and (d) a database of papers volunteered by students at Blackboard, Inc.'s client institutions.

Academic Integrity

Please read the "Academic Code of Conduct," which is published in the *H-Book* or *Directory of Classes* and can also be found at the following link: https://www.howard.edu/policy/academic/student-conduct.htm. If you are caught cheating, you will receive a "0" for the assignment.

Hands-on Blackboard Orientation for Students:

CETLA has designed a hands-on "Blackboard Orientation for Students" to supplement the information on its Frequently Asked Questions page: 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. Students can follow the directions for enrolling in the Blackboard site, complete the tutorial, and print out a confirmation page (with a unique identifier). Students who complete the orientation and submit a confirmation page by the end of the first week of class will receive an extra 10 points on their first discussion board assignment. Note: For technical support, go to https://itsupport.howard.edu.

OTHER COURSE SPECIFC INFORMATION

American 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 Special Student Services (202-238-2420), as soon as possible after admission to the University or at the beginning of each semester. If you need a special accommodation required by the American Disabilities Act, please document and discuss your disability with me during the FIRST TWO WEEKS of classes.

Blackboard and Email
This course uses Blackboard (http://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 if it occurs close to the due date for an assignment. Since Blackboard will be the principal form of communication for this course, it is the student's responsibility to keep the instructor informed about changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily.

Course Schedule

Dates	Unit of Instruction	Assignments
June 24-25	**Unit 1: Salvador**	**Travel Blog Post**
June 26-28	**Unit 1: Salvador**	**Read *Captains of the Sand* Textual Analysis Essay**
July 1-2	**Unit 1: Salvador**	**Social Issue Blog Post**
July 3-5	**Unit 2: São Paulo**	**Travel Blog Post**
July 8-10	**Unit 2: São Paulo**	**Read *They Were Many Horses* Textual Analysis Essay**
July 11-12	**Unit 2: São Paulo**	**Social Issue Blog Post**
July 15-16	**Unit 3: Rio de Janeiro**	**Travel Blog Post**
July 17-19	**Unit 3: Rio de Janeiro**	**Read *City of God* Textual Analysis Essay**
July 22-23	**Unit 3: Rio de Janeiro**	**Social Issue Blog Post**
July 26	**Course Conclusion**	**Final Reflection Essay**