

Politics, Economy, and Society of Contemporary Brazil

Spring 2024

GOV 337F, Unique 37350

LAS 337Q, Unique 38634

Mezes 1.120, Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:00-12:15

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:00-10:30; Thursdays 12:30-2:00, and by appointment

This course will examine the major political, economic, and sociological developments of Brazil in the 20th and 21st centuries. Noting significant changes as well as marked continuities that the country has undergone, it will emphasize the broad themes of state-led industrialization and economic growth; the alternation of authoritarian and democratic governments; and the multiple problems generated by high levels of socio-economic inequality. In addition to examining the many challenges that Brazil faces, the course will also explore the opportunities it enjoys.

The political topics to be investigated include the concentration of power at pivotal moments in Brazil's political history, and the institutions that allow the country's elites to retain such striking power and privilege even in periods of democratic government. Economic topics include the centrality of state-led development, recent moves toward enhanced globalization, and the destructive extraction of Amazonian resources. Sociological subjects include the many problems that stem from a development model that has created extreme concentrations of wealth and record levels of income inequality. Chief among those problems are high crime and chronic corruption. The complex issues of slavery and race will also be treated. Additionally, we will examine some of the social policy innovations developed and implemented in the last twenty years.

The course revolves around several core questions.

*Have the major initiatives that have advanced Brazil's modernization come primarily from the state or society?

*How have important institutions of the past weighed on the present, despite outward signs of change?

*What are some of the most harmful outcomes of such striking levels of socioeconomic inequality in the country?

*What nation-building and nation-integrating strategies have Brazilian governments pursued over time to create social cohesion and stability?

*What have been the legacies of slavery in the country, and what are contemporary governments doing to mitigate the most harmful aspects of those legacies?

*What place has the Amazon held in the economic and geostrategic strategies of civilian and military elites? What considerations will determine the fate of the rainforest?

*What has Brazil done well and what accounts for these accomplishments? In which aspects could it do better and what are the prospects for improvement?

Expected learning outcomes include an understanding of the basic historical facts necessary to contemplate these questions intelligently, and a strong grasp of the conceptual and theoretical issues that these questions entail. It is expected that students come to understand the impact of the past on present-day political, economic, and social challenges, and to recognize the interests and resources of the various actors that compete for power and privilege in the country.

The course assumes no prior knowledge or prerequisites.

Three core books are required and are available for purchase at the University Co-op bookstore. I strongly encourage you to buy all three books in order to read them as carefully as possible. Everything else is posted on CANVAS or is available through links in this syllabus.

Required Items for Purchase

- James N. Green and Thomas E. Skidmore. 2022. *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*. Third Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Marshall C. Eakin. 2017. *Becoming Brazilians: Race and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bailey, Stanley. 2009. *Legacies of Race: Identities, Attitudes, and Politics in Brazil*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Requirements and Grading

<i>Assignment:</i>	<i>Grade Distribution</i>	<i>Date/Deadline</i>
Class participation	10 percent	Throughout
Quizzes (3)	30 percent	Various
Film Reflection	10 percent	February 22
Essay	25 percent	April 11
Final in-class exam	25 percent	April 25

Class participation: To facilitate participation, at the end of lectures I will institutionalize the following 3-2-1 format and spend the last few minutes of class drawing on students' responses: "3 things you learned, 2 things you considered interesting, and one question the lecture raised in your mind." Attendance is a precondition for talking and will be accounted for under class participation. Yet merely attending but not entering into the discussion will not count as full participation. Interventions need not be earth shattering to be considered participation! Coming prepared with reactions to or questions about the readings and lectures can be useful points of departure for a productive discussion. Commenting in the time given to the 3-2-1 format is another way to lift your participation grade. Skipping class *four or more sessions* without a cleared excuse beforehand will mean that your participation grade can rise no higher than a 75. Missing even more sessions will diminish your participation grade proportionately. Beginning in week two there will be a sign-in sheet upon entering the class.

Quizzes: I will administer four quizzes and keep the highest three grades. Given that you can miss or bungle one, there will be no make ups on the quizzes. These will be administered right at the beginning of the course period, with no exceptions for stragglers. Each quiz will last 20 minutes. Dates for the quizzes will be February 1, March 5, March 21, and April 4. Material for the quizzes will include the reading for that week (and all material covered after the previous quiz).

Film Reflection: I have selected three films that cover the period of military rule: *Four Days in September* (O que é isso companheiro); *The Year My Parents Went on Vacation* (O ano em que meus pais saíram de férias), and *They Don't Wear Black Tie* (Eles não usam black-tie). You can gain access to all three through the UT library (and by other means). Students will chose one to

view and (in two pages, double-spaced) reflect on it as a statement on the military regime. I will pass out more detailed instructions closer to the due date. Please submit a hard copy at the beginning of class on February 20 and also attach the assignment in an email to me. In class I will ask people to speak about the film they chose and their reflections on it. There will be a penalty of 1/3 of a grade per day for film reflections that are handed in late.

Essay: I will pass out questions for this essay assignment well in advance of the due date of April 11. In 5-6 double-spaced pages, students should write an integrative essay (not a research paper) based on lectures, discussions, and course readings. Essays need to be written without resort to AI (see AI policy below) and submitted via a hard copy at the start of class and additionally in an email to me. There will be a penalty of 1/3 of a grade per day (e.g. A to A-, etc.) for essays that are handed in late.

Final In-Class Exam: The final assignment will be an in-class essay exam (on paper) that focuses on major themes concerning the period of military rule and beyond. Students will be offered a choice of essay questions and will need to respond to two. None of these questions should come as a surprise. Make up exams will be granted only under the most exceptional and extreme of circumstances, such as a serious medical emergency or death of a close family member.

Grading: This course will use plus/minus grades. Your final grade will be calculated as follows. I will sum all the points you received in the class and convert them into letter grades based on the following scale:

93-100 = A
90-92 = A-
87-89 = B+
83-86 = B
80-82 = B-
77-79 = C+
73-76 = C
70-72 = C-
67-69 = D+
63-66 = D
60-62 = D-
Below 60 = F

Without exception, I will round up scores of 0.5 and higher and round down scores of less than 0.5. (In other words, a 92.4 is a 92, and a 92.5 is a 93).

Grade Appeals

Students who wish to contest a grade must do within one week of the day on which the assignment was handed back in class. The appeal must be made in writing and must focus on the content of the work.

Office Hours: Please feel free to come to office hours and discuss anything on your mind. I have deliberately set them at two different times to accommodate people with different schedules.

Pronouns and Related Matters: I will gladly refer to you however you would like. Please just write to inform me or talk to me.

Use of electronic devices: All phones must be turned off and put out of use during class. Laptops are prohibited as well. This policy is designed to encourage the formation of a community and to get students to process the information better. Research shows that multitasking results in suboptimal learning outcomes. It also demonstrates the benefits of taking notes by hand. During lectures, feel free to ask me to repeat something if you didn't quite get it. See these articles on the merits of taking notes by hand.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>
<https://www.vox.com/2014/6/4/5776804/note-taking-by-hand-versus-laptop>

Religious holidays: Students who need to miss a class due to a religious holiday should notify me at least fourteen days prior to the holiday. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Disability accommodations: If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me early in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on academic misconduct are subject to the student conduct process and potential disciplinary action. A student found responsible for academic misconduct may be assigned both a status sanction and a grade impact for the course. The grade impact could range from a zero on the assignment in question up to a failing grade in the course. A status sanction can range from probation, deferred suspension and/or dismissal from the University. To learn more about academic integrity standards, tips for avoiding a potential academic misconduct violation, and the overall conduct process, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited: No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions.

Use of Artificial Intelligence: The use of artificial intelligence in this course is strictly prohibited. This includes AI to generate ideas, outline an approach, answer questions, solve problems, or create original language. All work in this course must be your own.

Miscellaneous websites of possible relevance:

Sanger Learning Center: <https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc>

The University Writing Center: <https://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Student Emergency Services:
<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Counseling and Mental Health Center: <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

*Posted in Canvas

I – INTRODUCTION

Week 1: January 16 and 18 — Overview of Themes

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Introduction (pages 1-8)
- <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brazil/The-economy> (Read all the way down through the end of <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brazil/Sports-and-recreation>) Stop before "History of Brazil."

Week 2: January 23 and 25 — Brazilian History to 1930

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapters 4 and 5
- Eakin's *Becoming Brazilians: Race and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, Introduction and Chapter 1

II – POL & ECON MODERNIZATION UNDER GETÚLIO VARGAS: 1930-1945

Week 3: January 30 and February 1

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapter 6
- Eakin's *Becoming Brazilians: Race and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, Chapter 2

[QUIZ 1: Thursday, February 1](#)

III – DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENTALISM: 1945-1964

Week 4: February 6 and 8

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapter 7
- *Scott's "Brasília: The High-Modernist City Built—Almost," in *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (NOTE: Read only pages 117-146 of the posted chapter)

IV – MILITARY RULE: 1964 – 1985

Week 5: February 13 and 15

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapter 8
- *Hecht and Cockburn's *The Fate of the Forest: Developers, Destroyers, and Defenders of the Amazon*, Chapter 6
- Eakin's *Becoming Brazilians: Race and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, Chapter 4

V. BRAZIL'S CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRACY: 1985-PRESENT

Week 6: February 20 and 22 —Democracy Within Constraints

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapter 9
- *Hagopian's "The Political Economy of Inequality" in the Ames' *Routledge Handbook of Brazilian Politics* (Entire book is posted. See chapter 21.)
- *Hunter and Sugiyama's "Democracy and Social Policy in Brazil: Advancing Basic Needs, Preserving Privileged Interests"

FILM REFLECTION: Due on Thursday, February 22

Week 7: February 27 and 29 – The Center-Right Cardoso Presidency (1995-2002) and Move to the Center-Left under President Lula (2003-2010)

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapter 10
- *Wadge et al.'s "Brazil's Family Health Strategy." Also available through this link. <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/case-study/2016/dec/brazils-family-health-strategy-using-community-health-care-workers>
- *Goldfrank and Wampler's "Good Government and Politics as Usual?" in Kingstone and Power, *Democratic Brazil Divided* (Chapter 2)
-

Week 8: March 5 and 7—Efforts at Greater Social and Racial Inclusion

- *Sugiyama's "Transformation in Social Policy: Progress Toward Social Inclusion and Human Development" in Ames' *Routledge Handbook of Brazilian Politics* (Entire book is posted. See Chapter 27.)

- Bailey's *Legacies of Race: Identities, Attitudes, and Politics in Brazil*, Chapters 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10

QUIZ 2: Tuesday, March 5

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS

Week 9: March 19 and 21— Corruption, Crime, and the Turn to the Political Right

- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapter 11 (until page 311)
- *Kingstone and Power's, "Introduction" in Kingstone and Power, *Democratic Brazil Divided* (pages 3-23)
- *Mello and Spektors', "Brazil: The Costs of Multiparty Presidentialism."
- Short articles on crime and public insecurity through these links:

<https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/brazil-spends-billions-on-public-security-why-is-violence-getting-worse/>

<https://www.americasquarterly.org/fulltextarticle/can-anyone-stop-brazils-pcc/>

<https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/behind-a-rise-in-latin-americas-violent-crime-a-deadly-flow-of-illegal-guns/>

<https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/qa-why-is-prison-violence-so-bad-in-brazil/>

Quiz 3, Thursday, March 21

Week 10: March 26 and 28—The Election and Government of Jair Bolsonaro

- *Hunter and Power's "Bolsonaro and Brazil's Illiberal Backlash"
- Green and Skidmore's *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, Chapter 11 (pages 312-322)
- * Boas' "The Electoral Representation of Evangelicals in Latin America"

Week 11: April 2 and 4—Amazonian Issues Continued

- *Lapper's, *Beef, Bible and Bullets*, Chapters 10 and 11
- Deforestation in the Amazon: A CFR InfoGuide Presentation:

<https://www.cfr.org/interactives/amazon-deforestation/#/en>

- *Boucher, Roquemore, and Fitzhugh's, "Brazil's Success in Reducing Deforestation"
- *Fearnside's "Challenges for Sustainable Development in Brazilian Amazonia"
- *Rajão et al.'s "The Rotten Apples of Brazil's Agribusiness"
- *"Cartographies of Violence in the Amazon" Executive Summary November 2023.

QUIZ 4: Thursday, April 4

Week 12: April 9 and 11—The Return of Lula

- *Hunter and Power's "Lula's Second Act"
- * Jones, Hart, and García's "Autonomy or Alignment? The US-Brazil Relationship in a Changing World Order"
- <https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/lulas-security-policy-is-rehashing-old-ideas/>

PAPER DUE: Thursday, April 11

Week 13: April 16 and 18—Final notes on National Integration

- Eakin's *Becoming Brazilians: Race and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, Chapters 5, 6, and Epilogue

Week 14: April 23 and 25— Review and Final Reflections

FINAL EXAM: April 25 in class