

Sample Syllabus: AFRO-BRAZILIAN REALITY IN THE BAHIAN CONTEXT

Course Description

Salvador, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and capital of Bahia State in North East Brazil, is the first colonial capital of Brazil, and the center of Afro-Brazilian culture. The Summer Program in Brazil provides students an unparalleled opportunity to engage with a city and region that have retained and celebrated their African roots. This cultural uniqueness has a tragic underbelly. The Bahia region was the center of the Brazilian slave trade economy, and racism and the legacies of colonialism are ever apparent. In Bahia, 70% of the population is of African descent, but more than 80% of those who graduate from university are white Brazilians.

Led by the Instituto Cultural Steve Biko, this core course provides an overview of history, culture and society in Brazil with a particular focus on the racial relations. The course includes lectures by local faculty, community members, specialists from non-governmental organizations, and site visits and trips, readings and writing assignments that allow students to explore a variety of topics in Salvador, including but not limited to the legacy of colonialism and slavery in its diverse impacts on education, living conditions, work opportunities, culture and family living. In order to gain hands on experience with issues covered in the Core Course, all students participate in an internship at a local institution with a total of 24 hours distributed along the six weeks.

Student Learning Outcomes

Holistic Intercultural Learning Outcomes

- Participate fully in the Afro-Brazilian culture and community while engaged in an ongoing process of culture learning.
- Develop the capacity to explore and learn about a new community and acquire local knowledge employing such methods as participant observation, active listening, field note writing, and structured reflection.
- Integrate your personal experience and acquisition of local knowledge and perspectives with readings and lectures to more deeply understand core course topics and ideas.
- Demonstrate the ability to observe a host culture behavior without interpreting or judging based on one's own culture and ultimately, the capacity to recognize and understand the relationship between host culture values and behavior.
- Demonstrate an ability to analyze issues from multiple perspectives within the host culture (check the tendency to make over generalizations about the culture based on one person's or one group's perspective.)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the privileges and prerogatives that one has because of one's skin color, gender, nationality, education, job position, social class, language, etc.

Outcomes associated with the location and program theme

- Demonstrate an awareness of the historical, social, and economic conditions that have led to inequalities among the Afro-Brazilian population of Bahia, and the ability to reflect on the character and identity of individuals as emerging out of their group history, life experiences and present day circumstances.
- Through intersectional lenses (race, gender, class, religion, etc.) articulate the situation of the black population in Brazil generally and Bahia specifically.
- Identify and reflect upon global and national processes, institutions, ideologies that affect and shape the quality of life in your host community.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the Instituto Cultural Steve Biko, its history, mission, impact on the local community, and challenges it faces.

Grading Criteria

36% Field book/field essays assignments

There will be six assignments based on your experiences and reflections on the development of the Exchange Program. Each one corresponds 6% of the final grade. The essays should be written focusing a specific set of days which were divided according to the scheduled activities of the program. Each essay refers to a specific set of days and has a specific due date.

15% Learning partners active participation and development of contributions that will be given to your host Institution.

It requires a final product (the design of the final product will be decided together with the Exchange Program, students and Internship host Institution) and could possible include a final presentation.

15% Participation within your homestays

This includes, but is not limited to, your efforts to integrate into the life of your host family and play your part as a significant member of the family, respect for host family rules and cultural norms, and integration of learning from your host family experience into discussion sessions and writing assignments.

10% Punctual attendance at and full participation in all classes, meetings and Program activities leading to a contribution to the learning of others (in the group) in the spirit of cooperative learning.

An on-going commitment to culture learning that informs you interactions with staff, faculty, host families, community members and fellow students (i.e., culturally appropriate interactions that respect local values and beliefs, including local and national laws and program guidelines for health and safety.

24% Final essay

Based on the reflections, theoretical and experiences, during the entire Program.

The final grade for the course will be based on the following scale:

92 + = A

90 to 91 = A-

88 to 89 = B+

82 to 87 = B

80 to 81 = B-

78 to 79 = C+

72 to 77 = C

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Guest Speakers

Guest speakers are scheduled throughout the six weeks, both at the Biko Institute and at Field/Study Trip locations. Speakers expose students to a range of topics and perspectives regarding some of the main historical, social, cultural, and political issues fundamental to Salvador's history and modern identity. Speakers may include community members, university professors, government officials, and guests from the private sector and non-governmental organizations. When is the case, students are expected to do the assigned reading for a given topic, take good notes that can serve as references for writing assignments, and engage the speaker and one another with questions and insights.

Learning Partners

Group of Biko students that will be introduced to the Pitzer students having the focus to develop friendship and exchange reflections on life and share experiences. The Learning Partners are engaged to present their reality as Afro-Brazilian youth, sharing leisure activities but also discussing aspects of live, dreams and future perspectives, challenges, family live and political views with the Pitzer students. On the same hand, is expected the Pitzer students engage with the Biko students sharing and introducing the Biko students to the same aspects of their lives in United States. The main focus of the Learning Partners proposal is to promote a rich and real exchange of ideas and experiences for everyone evolved, despite the fact both groups are facing the challenges of finding ways to communicate to each other overcoming the barriers of the languages. At the end is desired they all transform the challenge of communication in an amazing way to learn/develop other languages.

Study Trips

These study trips (tours, day trips and one longer extended trip) allow students to complement classroom learning with direct observation and experience in the field. Students will visit important cultural, historic and religious sites in and around Salvador, as well as different NGOs working to address many of the issued covered in the core course curriculum.

Readings

In conjunction with lectures and field trips, a selection of required readings will focus and expand upon issues raised in the classroom. Readings include articles and essays by both foreign and Brazilian scholars and expose students to contemporary scholarship and debate on a diverse set of issues. A list of required readings is included below.

Discussion Sections

As part of the core course, there will be a series of discussion sessions (usually once a week) during which students, staff and faculty explore issues raised in lectures and readings and their own experience. As a part of each session, students will have an opportunity to share how their overall program experience is going (highlights and

concerns/issues), especially in reference to their internship and homestay experience. One goal of the discussion session will be to find connections between personal experience and the readings and lectures, and more fully explore local perspectives on issues that are important to the student.

Fieldbook

In the course of the program, students are assigned a series of papers which together comprise the fieldbook. The fieldbook asks students to integrate the theoretical and experiential components of the program through a series of structured writing assignments that are designed to facilitate cultural immersion and integration of personal experience with more traditional forms of learning. The assignments, in general, ask students to make non-judgmental observations of the host culture, cautiously interpret events, topics and issues from both personal (US) and host culture perspectives, and integrate observations, conversations and interviews (especially with host family members and internship colleagues) with readings and lectures to arrive at an integrated understanding of important local and national issues.

Family Stays

Living with host families in Salvador helps provide important context for issues raised in lectures and readings and is one of the foundations of students' educational experience. Accordingly, student participation in the life and culture of their host family, and their ability to integrate this into writing assignments and discussion sessions, is a factor in the grade for the core course.

Readings

Adichie, Chimamanda N. (2009). The danger of a single story. TEDx Lecture (transcription and video)

Biko, Steve. (1978). Black consciousness and the quest for a true humanity. *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*, 8(3).

Tata-Dhan Academy (2008) Fieldwork Diary Writing, Process Documentation, and Journal. Writing Guidelines for making the most of your field experiences. User Guide for Tata-Dhan Academy.

Ickes, Scott. (2013). African-Brazilian culture and regional identity in Bahia, Brazil. University Press of Florida.

Hordge-Freeman, Elizabeth (2015). *The Color of Love: Racial Features, Stigma, and Socialization in Black Brazilian Families*. Austin, Tx: The University of Texas Press.

Afolabi, Niyi. (2018). The Quilombo newspaper, Abdias Nascimento, and human rights activism in Brazil. *Intellèctus*, 17(1), 95-116.

OBS: These are basic readings given to the students in their core course module. In case students interests and guest speakers' suggestion, other additional readings can be included.