Delve into northeastern Brazil’s history—as impacted by the African diaspora—and contemporary culture to understand how racial, religious, and artistic differences have both shaped and benefited this city. Examine firsthand how these differences have intermingled to create the distinctive Afro-Brazilian culture.

Salvador da Bahia was the first capital of Brazil and is currently the third largest Brazilian city. It is the city in Brazil where the African influence is most transparent, due to the large diaspora it experienced from different African regions during the colonial period, and to the constant expression— and celebration— of the African heritage in its culture. In this course, we will study Brazil’s, and particularly Bahia’s, African roots and legacy, from the slavery period to the postmodern racial issues. Students will read texts from fields such as history, anthropology, sociology, music, religion, and cultural studies, while exploring the city’s numerous historical sites, museums, and cultural and artistic manifestations. They will also watch movies, and read novels that are relevant to the topics discussed. They will visit temples of Afro-Brazilian religions such as Candomblé and Umbanda, the Church of Our Lady of the Black Rosary (Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Pretos), and the Good Death Sisterhood (Irmandade da Boa Morte) in the city of Cachoeira, Bahia. Students will also go to the Afro-Brazilian Museum and the Projeto Axé, attend talks at the CEAO (Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais/ Afro-Oriental Center) at the Federal University of Bahia, interact with community leaders at Afro-musical/educational/activist groups such as Olodum, Timbalada, Iê Ayê, and Muzenza (and understand their participation in the so-called “World Music” movement), have Capoeira lessons (the world-renowned Afro-Brazilian martial art/dance), as well as classes of other Afro-Brazilian dances, and try Afro-Brazilian food.

There will also be a series of lectures by local scholars about Salvador’s (and Brazil's) Afro-Brazilian heritage, and on how the city has both been shaped and benefited from globalization. Salvador is, after all, one of Brazil’s major touristic destinations due to its wonderful beaches, famous Carnival, and friendly people. Moreover, its Afro-Brazilian art has for long been a symbol of Brazilian identity internationally.

Pre-departure

Before departure, the faculty director and students will meet for a couple of presentations and discussions on Brazil, Salvador, and Brazilian culture. We will discuss students’ perceptions of Brazilian culture and compare several Brazilian and American values and behaviors. Cultural similarities and differences will be discussed, as well as important nonverbal language, and notions of what is accepted or unaccepted cultural behavior in Brazil. There will be specific focus on students’ relationships with their host families and the host institution. We will also distribute a short handout with some survival expressions and Portuguese and give students the opportunity to learn some useful basic
Portuguese terms. Besides the activities that are an integral part of the program, students will be given the opportunity to interact with community organizations and NGO’s that deal with issues of their personal or professional interests while in Brazil. Upon return there will be an opportunity for those who went in the program to share their experiences with fellow students at UIUC.

Topics to be discussed in class and during site visits may include:

Slavery
The Whitening Ideal
The Racial Democracy Myth
Candomblé and Religious Syncretism
Race and class connections
Samba, Carnival, and Brazilian National Stereotypes
Axé Music and the World Music Movement
Immigration to Brazil
Foreigners and Sexual Tourism
Etc.

Possible readings include (sometimes as excerpts from):


Possible movies include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Distributor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quilombo</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Carlos Diegues</td>
<td>New Yorker Video (1991)</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of God</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Fernando Meireles &amp; Katia Lund</td>
<td>Miramax Films</td>
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<tr>
<td>O Pagador de Promessas</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Anselmo Duarte</td>
<td>Lionex Films Inc. / Embrafilme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Favela Rising</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Zeff Zimbalist</td>
<td>HBO Documentaries</td>
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