Brazillian Amazon Cultures and Environments

fulfills GE requirement for Environmental Awareness (PE-E code)

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Online office hours (via Zoom): Wednesdays 9am to 11am

Course Overview

This course is designed as a general introduction to the astonishing diversity of cultures and environments contained within the Brazilian Amazon. Comprising an area roughly 60% of the size of the United States, this region has returned to the spotlight with media images of burning of the tropical rainforest and violence upon indigenous communities, inspiring indignation and calls for justice. While large scale deforestation is driven by the actions of a powerful and often non-resident minority – the Brazilian Amazon has historically seethed with social uprisings in defense of the forest and of local livelihoods. It has a diverse and complex population of 25 million people and has been shaped by everyday forms of popular resistance and the history of indigenous and other popular environmental practices. The population includes hundreds of indigenous tribes, caboclos or de-tribalized natives; quilombola communities descended from escaped slaves; seringueiro or rubber tapping communities left in place after the rubber boom and subsequent abandonment; recent migrant colonists from the massive settlement and agrarian reform programs, like the TransAmazon highway; ethnic settlement and range of other migrants.

This course is thus designed to develop students’ conceptual and comparative awareness of the social as well as environmental diversity and complexity of the region. We will come face to face with what underlies perverse (non)development and forest destruction, but also social defense of the forest and sustainable life within it. The course is relevant for majors across a variety of disciplines and with career interests in either environmental conservation, indigenous advocacy/heritage, land use policy, social policy and sustainable development. We will collaboratively develop responses to broad questions: Who are the various residents of the Brazilian Amazon and how do they live in relation to their environment? What underlies the eruption of large-scale burning of the forest (in forests that are not ecologically adapted to fire), deforestation and conflict, and how might these be prevented? What does the deeper history of the region and contemporary experience reveal about cultural understandings of nature, territorial conflicts, and capitalism’s political economic relationship with global environmental change in the Anthropocene?

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will have honed their analytical and writing abilities, and will have developed knowledge of cultural variation and the diversity of cultures, ecologies and livelihood practices pertinent to social and environmental change in this region.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation 10%
Active participation is expected. We only meet for ten sessions, so don’t miss class sessions on Zoom.
**Reading Responses 30%**
See guideline under canvas. They will be graded out of 20 points. You may miss one without penalty.

**Quizzes 15%**
Quizzes will be given during class time during most class sessions on Zoom. They will be graded out of 10 points. You may miss two without penalty.

**Two Papers (25% each) 45%**
There will be two 4-5 page papers, one due on July 18 (Saturday) and the second due on July 27 (Monday) – both to be electronically submitted through Canvas. No late papers will be accepted. You have the option to extend your first paper into a more extensive research paper of 10-12 pages, instead of writing a second 4-5 page paper. I expect these papers to be properly formatted and to use Chicago style citations – see guidelines posted on canvas.

**Workload** – The expectation within the University of California system is that for each credit hour of a course, students spend 3 hours in preparation during the week (e.g. 15 hours for a 5-credit course). This includes completing the readings and writing assignments. Summer session operates on an intense timeline, with a substantial amount of material condensed into just five weeks. Plan accordingly and set aside adequate time to complete all assignments. Familiarize yourself with the Canvas interface. Your success in this course will require good time management—especially for the second class meeting in each week, for which preparation time is limited.

**Important Summer Session Remote 2020 Deadlines:**

**Session 1:**
Drop: Monday, June 29
Request for “W”: Friday, July 10

**Session 2:**
Drop: Monday, August 3
Request for “W”: Friday, August 14

8-Week:
Drop: Monday, July 6
Request for “W”: Friday, July 24

10-Week:
Drop: Monday, July 6
Request for “W”: Friday, July 24

Summer is unique. **You will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment.** You must drop yourself. Dropping before the deadline results in a full-tuition reversal/refund. Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund).

For all dates and deadlines, including ‘change of grade option’ (P/NP) and grades due, here is the summer academic calendar: [https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html](https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html)
For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email summer@ucsc.edu.

**DRC Remote Accommodations**

The Disability Resources Center reduces barriers to inclusion and full participation for students with disabilities by providing support to individually determine reasonable academic accommodations. Operations continue via remote appointments. If you have questions or concerns about exam accommodations or any other disability-related matter, email the DRC Schedulers at drc@ucsc.edu for an appointment.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. Academic dishonesty diminishes the university as an institution and all members of the university community. It tarnishes the value of a UCSC degree. All members of the UCSC community have an explicit responsibility to foster an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. All members of the university community are expected to present as their original work only that which is truly their own. All members of the community are expected to report observed instances of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty in order to ensure that the integrity of scholarship is valued and preserved at UCSC.

In the event a student is found in violation of the UCSC Academic Integrity policy, he or she may face both academic sanctions imposed by the instructor of record and disciplinary sanctions imposed either by the provost of his or her college or the Academic Tribunal convened to hear the case. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student’s transcript.

For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the Academic Integrity page at the Division of Undergraduate Education.

**Title IX**

The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors.

The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct. Information about the Title IX Office, the online reporting link, applicable campus resources, reporting responsibilities, the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at titleix.ucsc.edu.

The Title IX Office is actively responding to reports and requests for consultation. If you are not currently working with someone in the office and want to make a report/request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using our online reporting link.
For more information please visit the Title IX Operations under Covid-19 page.

Immigration Status – I am committed to supporting all students, regardless of immigration status. Additionally, Undocumented Students Services offers free and confidential support. Visit their website for more information:
http://eop.ucsc.edu/undocumented_student_services/index.html

Instructor office hours – I encourage students to meet with me during my scheduled online office hours to address questions about the class or to discuss their work in more detail.

Email communication with Instructor – E-mail is the best way to reach me. Please put “Anthro 110H” in the subject line of your message. If you are using a non-UCSC e-mail account, please write out your name. E-mails that do not clearly identify you or the question you are asking will not be answered. E-mails that seek information that is already in the syllabus (e.g., when are the papers due) will not be answered. I respond to emails within 24 hours, except for emails received on Fridays (to which I may respond by the following Monday).

List of session topics by week with assigned readings and films/videos

NOTE: All readings including book chapters will be available to download on Canvas (go to “Files” and select by week), or through attached links via the appropriate Canvas module.

**Additional readings for the two short research papers are marked with ** — these readings are not critical for quizzes or for response papers but should be used in the development of the two short research papers.

Required Books (3)


Optional / Recommended Books:


Week 1

**Class 1 An Introduction: Developers, Destroyers and Defenders**

FILM: *AMAZÔNIA DESCONHECIDA* (UNKNOWN AMAZON)


**Class 2 Extractive Reserves and Caboclo river culture**


FILM – IN THE MOUTH OF THE AMAZON

Week 2

**Class 3 Caboclos continued: human ecologies and historical ecological continuity**


VIDEOS: SLASH AND BURN

FILM DOC: THE SECRET OF EL DORADO – TERRA PRETA

**Class 4 Recent migrant colonists: alliance movements, smallholding and agro-extractivism**


VIDEO: MIGRANT COLONISTS’ CACAO AGROFORESTRY, AND BRAZIL NUT COOPERATIVES IN NORTHWEST MATO GROSSO

**Week 3**

**Class 5 Recent migrant colonists: frontier land speculation and the role of cattle**


Hoelle, Jeffrey. 2014. “Cattle Culture in the Brazilian Amazon.” *Human Organization* 73 (December): 363–74. [https://doi.org/10.17730/humo.73.4.u61u675428341165](https://doi.org/10.17730/humo.73.4.u61u675428341165).

**GROUP EXERCISE**

**Class 6 Indigenous (Munduruku and Kayapô) cultures and forests**


**FILMS – OUR PAINTING (AND OTHERS)**

**Week 4**

**Class 7 Indigenous (Munduruku and Kayapó) cultures and resistance**


**FILM – AMAZON JOURNAL**

**Class 8 Quilombos**


Torre, Oscar de la. 2012. “‘The Land Is Ours and We Are Free to Do All That We Want’: Quilombos and Black Rural Protest in Amazonia, Brazil, 1917-1929.” *The Latin Americanist* 56 (4): 33–56.


**FILM – QUILOMBOLAS OF THE AMAZON, QUILOMBOLA JAUARY**

~~~~~~FIRST PAPER DUE BY MIDNIGHT SATURDAY JULY 18~~~~~~

**Week 5**

**Class 9 Quilombos**


Class 10 Transitions


FILM – EMBRACE OF THE SERPENT

>>SECOND PAPER DUE ON MONDAY JULY 27th, MIDNIGHT<<