

Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Brazil: Social Justice & Inequality in São Paulo

Course Code / Title: (SP/HIST 360) Public Security and Armed Forces on the Limits of Legality in Brazil

Contact Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: History / Political Science, Sociology, Latin American Studies

Language of Instruction: English.

Prerequisites / Requirements: Prior coursework in social sciences recommended but not required.

Description

In Brazil, key concepts of international penal codes, such as murder, robbery, trafficking, and assault can be underlined by factors such as race, socioeconomic background, gender, religion and political stance. The classification and characterization of what is deemed legal or illegal by public security forces at different points in history offers a valuable lens to clarify a pressing element of the Brazilian cultural experience: violence. The use of violence by the state or extralegal forces throughout Brazilian history, especially since the proclamation of the Republic, provides valuable insights into the power dynamics of various actors and ideological groups. Some political groups have worked to uphold, reproduce and further expand such dynamics, whereas others employed different forms of resistance as tools to pursue social justice and address different forms of inequality.

Drawing on case studies, the course will address how the main legal statutes of the Brazilian republic were established, the concept of public security across different federal entities, the legacy of the slaveholding ethos within armed institutions, the assimilation of ideological discourses by state violence forces, the assignment of genders according to penal codes, and the tension between the imperative of public security and the defense of fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression and the right to life itself.

Content warning:

At times, this course intentionally invites students to engage with readings and content that are controversial. Students might find this disturbing. The intention is not to endorse perspectives, but rigorously engage with them. If certain material is emotionally challenging, students can discuss with the professor before or after class. Students may also leave the classroom without academic penalty, if the discussion becomes too emotionally challenging. Students are, however, responsible for all missed material, and so should arrange to get notes from another student or see the professor individually.

Syllabus of Record

Objectives

In this course, students will:

- Establish a solid framework for conducting comparative analyses of state violence by drawing from the Brazilian historical and political context.
- Deepen their understanding of terms like "public security," "crime," "federalism," "race," and "gender" by exploring their varying meanings and implications across distinct historical periods.
- Explore how the state's control over violence has shaped the formation and consolidation of Brazil's republican institutions.
- Investigate the economic, social, and political factors that have impacted the evolution and practices of public security forces in different Brazilian states.
- Encounter and analyze a wide range of resources, including literature and primary sources, that encourage critical reflection on the topic of state violence in Brazil.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend each class and field-based course component, as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. Course methodology consists of class lectures and group discussions from the content assigned, at the discretion of the instructor. Weekly readings, videos, films or different primary sources can be assigned as pre-class discussion material. It is imperative that each student complete the assigned resource in a timely fashion, as this enables them to actively participate in class. Reading assignments are generally 20-40 pages per class session.

Graded assignments include:

- **Class assignments:** 4 short essays in which students are instructed to analyze and reflect on particular scenarios involving violence in Brazil in light of class discussions and readings.
- **Seminar presentation:** each student delivers a timed presentation on a pre-selected topic followed by time for Q&A.
- **Final essay:** This 7-10-page paper or video essay results from an empirical, in-depth investigation on a topic to be decided in consultation with the instructor. The content should address the relationship between a current development issue in the Brazilian scenario and its relevance to any of the main topics discussed in class.

Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Participation 5%
- Class assignments (4 at 6.25%) 25%
- Seminar presentation 30%
- Final essay 40%

Syllabus of Record

Readings

Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1980.

Arns, D. Evaristo (org.). *Brasil Nunca Mais*. Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 2022.

Barcellos, Caco. *Rota 66 - A história da polícia que mata*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Globo, 1997.

Braga, Júlio. *Na Gamela do Feitiço: repressão e resistência nos candomblés da Bahia*. Salvador: EDUFBA, 1995.

Brandellero, Sara. *Graciliano Ramos and the Making of Modern Brazil: Memory, Politics and Identities (Iberian and Latin American Studies)*. Wales: University of Wales Press, 2017.

Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2010.

Green, James N. *Ditadura e homossexualidades: repressão, resistência e a busca da verdade*. São Carlos: EdUFSCar, 2023.

Green, James N. *Exile within Exiles: Herbert Daniel, Gay Brazilian Revolutionary*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2018.

Hobsbawm, Eric. *Bandits*. New York: New Press, 2000.

Mbembe, Achille. *Necropolitics*. New Jersey: Duke University Press, 2019.

Morel, Edmar. *A Revolta da Chibata*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2016.

Ramos, Graciliano. *Memórias do Cárcere*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2020.

Schwarcz, Lilia Moritz. *Brazilian Authoritarianism: Past and Present*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2022.

Skidmore, Thomas E. *Politics in Brazil 1930-1964: An Experiment in Democracy*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

Skidmore, Thomas E. *Preto no Branco: Raça e Nacionalidade no Pensamento Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Paz e Terra, 1989.

Varella, Drauzio. *Carandiru Lockdown: Inside the World's Most Dangerous Prison*. London: Simon & Schuster UK, 2012.

Additional Resources

Syllabus of Record

Dornelles, Juliano, and Kleber Mendonça Filho, directors. *Bacurau*. 2019.

Padilha, José, director. *Elite Squad*. 2007.

Ramos, Lázaro, and Flávia Lacerda, directors. *Executive Order*. 2020.

Barreto, Bruno, director. *Four Days in September*. 1997.

Rezende, Sérgio, director. *Lamarca*. 1994.

Tavares, Camilo, director. *The Day That Lasted 21 Years*. 2012.

Costa, Petra, director. *The Edge of Democracy*. 2019.

Outline of Course Content

Module 1: Race

- Chibata revolt of 1910
- The Sailors Revolt of 1964
- Statistics on public security from the past decade

Module 2: Religion

- Canudos War of 1897
- Contestado War of 1916
- Crimes linked to Candomblé and Umbanda
- Repression of “Comunidades Eclesiásticas de Base” (religious community efforts) during the military dictatorship

Module 3: Political Stance

- The Lieutenants Revolts of 1922 and 1924
- The Prestes Column
- Urban guerrillas during the dictatorship (VPR, MR-8, VAR-Palmares, COLINA)
- The Araguaia Guerrilla

Module 4: Poverty

- The Cangaceiros of Northeastern states
- The Carandiru Massacre
- The Vaccine Revolt of 1917

Module 5: Gender

- The legal treatment of women in the Brazilian Constitution and the 1940 Penal Code
- The legal treatment of homosexuality during the dictatorship
- Statistics on violence against women in the Annals of Public Security

Syllabus of Record

Module 6: Bringing the Past into the Present

- The history of violence in Brazil and its impact on current public policies
- The face of violence in 21st century Brazil: statistics and pressing challenges
- Focusing São Paulo: Public security as the main perceived dilemma in Paulistano society
- Right to arms as contemporary populist political discourse