

## Course Descriptions:

**INST 335.01** (Prof. Kimberly C. Borchard):



Amazon women killing male intruders.  
(1565 engraved illustration by Theodor de Bry)

"I find that there is nothing barbarous and savage in this nation, by anything that I can gather, excepting, that every one gives the title of barbarism to everything that is not in use in his own country."  
-- Michel de Montaigne, "Of Cannibals" (1580) --

Taking a critical approach to the original European accounts upon which subsequent historical works have been based, this course will demonstrate how early European explorers laid the textual groundwork for the colonial domination of the people and environment of the Amazon. Specifically, it will address how the ostensibly empirical (or "scientific") reports on local geography, culture, and agriculture produced by early explorers in fact served as tools of imperial expansion, colonization, and economic exploitation of indigenous and African peoples, as well as the natural resources of Brazil. Special attention will be given to the diametrically opposed images of coastal Brazil and the Amazon that coexist in these early accounts. Do these regions represent earthly paradise, or hell on earth? Are they populated by docile natives eager to embrace the doctrine of the Catholic Church, or cannibals and warrior women so fiercely independent that they not only reject marriage, but banish men from their society? Finally, this course will provide students with the conceptual framework and historical context necessary to understand the key role that the Amazon has played in the imagination and ideology of Western development from the time of the first Portuguese exploration of the region (by Pedro Cabral, in 1500) until the emergence of Brazil as a superpower today (Counts as Experiential/Travel CAR and for the International Studies Major and Minor, especially for the Concentration in Culture and Society in Latin America and the Caribbean and EVST Major Category 2 discipline "width" requirement)



Amazon River source of 1/5 of Planet Earth's freshwater

"At first I thought I was fighting to save rubber trees. Then, I thought I was fighting to save the Amazon rainforest. Now I realize I am fighting for humanity."

Chico Mendes (1945-1988) rubber tapper and environmentalist assassinated by a cattle baron's hired guns



**SOCI 273.01** (Professor D. Reber Dunkel): This sociology course uses a comparative political economy approach to inform us about Brazilian society, with its fascinatingly diverse population and vibrant culture—a blend of indigenous, African and European influences. On campus the two fold focus will be on (1) understanding Brazil's contemporary culture as well as its historical antecedents and (2) learning about the ways in which Brazil has become a world leader in areas such as renewable energy as well as social and environmental challenges posed by immense problems such as urban poverty in the *favelas* (urban slums) and the deforestation of the Amazon.

We will do this by analyzing how Brazil has been articulated into the global capitalist economy over time and how Brazilians have uniquely shaped their national identity. In the text for the course, *Brazil on the Rise: The Story of a Country Transformed* (2010), author Larry Rohter uses the term "cultural cannibalism" to explain this phenomena. You will learn how stereotypical images of soccer champions, carnival/samba schools, supermodels and winning racecar drivers belie Brazil's emergence as a world power. Symbolically, winning the 2016 Olympic games showed that Brazil has indeed entered the world arena.

Another endeavor of our preparation to travel is learning ethnographic methods and the "art" of taking fieldnotes (as part of a joint journal assignment with Prof. Borchard) with the goal of trying to understand Brazilian society from an "insider's perspective." i.e., by trying to understand how Brazilians see themselves. Finally, students will see firsthand the magnificent biological diversity of the Amazon as well as the problems caused by rapid deforestation and climate change. (Counts as AOK Social Science and Sociology and Sociology Major/Minor Group 3; EVST Major Area of Expertise: **Sociology**; CAR Non-Western and CAR Experiential/Travel)

### Course Selection:

INST 335 and SOCI 273 are co-requisites.

### Pre-requisites:

No language or course prerequisites; students do need instructors' permission.

### Estimated Cost:

**\$4,423**

(The entire fee must be paid in full by Oct. 3rd, 2011)

Includes airfare, lodging, all breakfasts and some dinners, excursions and entrance fees, hotel room tips, and guided tours.

## Faculty:



**Dr. Kim Borchard**, Assistant Professor of Spanish, completed her doctoral degree at the University of Chicago. A specialist in the literature of the Latin American colonial period, her research includes the first-person accounts of early European explorers of the Amazon River and its tributaries. She has studied Portuguese language and literature at the graduate level, and has both studied and taught in Spain (where she co-directed an intensive, one-month study abroad course). Additionally, Borchard has studied Nahuatl in Mexico, done research on Nahuatl primary texts and traveled to Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Mexico. [Office: Haley 17 - (804) 752-7284 - [KimberlyBorchard@rmc.edu](mailto:KimberlyBorchard@rmc.edu)]



**Dr. Reber Dunkel**, an environmental sociologist, taught rural sociology for two years at the Universidade Federal de Viçosa, Minas Gerais, Brazil and established and taught the Michigan State University summer school program at the Cave Hill, Barbados campus of the University of the West Indies. He is completing a manuscript on the African diaspora in the Bahamas. Dunkel, a former Peace Corps volunteer hydrologist in India, has previously co-lead R-MC J-term travel courses to New Orleans (Hurricane Katrina recovery/service learning), Ghana (twice) and Brazil. [Office: Mabry House 200-(804) 752-3105- [rdunkel@rmc.edu](mailto:rdunkel@rmc.edu)]

## Tentative Activities:

Our Brazilian adventure includes an exploration of Rio de Janeiro, a five-day adventure down the Amazon River, and three days in the colonial seaside city of Paraty. Our first stop is Rio, known as the "marvelous city" and host of the 2016 Olympics. Our hotel in the Copacabana district is less than two blocks from the ocean. Destinations include the iconic *Pão de Açúcar* (Sugar Loaf) mountain and the Christ the Redeemer statue on Corcovado, both with breathtaking panoramic views of Guanabara Bay. During a community service trip to the Tangua Project we will interact with low-income youth by teaching English, helping with art projects, singing songs, and playing games. We may even challenge them to a *futebol* (soccer) scrimmage. The Royal Botanical Garden, created in 1808 and now a UNESCO bioserve, is a showcase of native and exotic tropical plants. Students will also have the chance to test their rhythm skills during a percussion workshop presented by the Grupo Rio Maractu, dedicated to preserving traditional songs, dances and rhythms. And finally, we will spend an evening at the Salgueiro samba school, where a pulsating *carnaval* rehearsal is the place to try out your samba dance moves.

## Tentative Activities

(Cont'd)



The Toco Toucan (Ramphastos toco)

Next, we fly deep into the rainforest to Manaus where we will experience the fun of sleeping in hammocks on a riverboat journey down the Amazon. On the way, we will stop to observe the "meeting of the waters," where the muddy Rio

*Solimões* joins the Rio Negro, and the bicolor waters flow side by side for several kilometers. A sample of the range of activities on the Amazon includes canoeing, fishing for piranhas, and *jacaré* (alligator) spotting at night. A local woodsman will lead us on a walk through the Amazon Rainforest to show us traditional medicinal uses of plants and jungle-survival techniques such as collecting edible fruits and using a compass and the sun for guidance. Then it's time to fly back to Rio and transfer by bus to Paraty, a picturesque town that flourished after gold was discovered in the 1690s. Paraty's port at the end of the *Caminho do Ouro* (Gold Trail) received gold from the mines in Minas Gerais, which was then shipped to Rio de Janeiro. Due to pirate attacks, a shorter overland route to Rio, and the demise of gold mining in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Paraty declined. Ecotourism now drives the local economy. Activities include a schooner cruise around the islands and a jeep tour to a *cascada* (waterfall) and the *Caminho do Ouro*. There will also be some leisure time to shop and relax before our flight back to the States.

We will hold periodic evening classes to share our experiences and work on our Web page projects. Our itinerary was planned to provide a wide scope of cultural, historical and ecological activities.

Our lodgings will be the Golden Tulip Hotel in Rio de Janeiro, a riverboat in the Amazon, a hotel in Manaus, and the Pousado Corsario in Paraty.



**Important Note:**  
Students must make the deadlines for deposits and full payment as instructed below. **October 3rd** is the last day to **ADD or DROP J-term study/travel courses**. For the College's cancellation and refund policy for study/travel courses, visit the J-term section on the OIE's website ([www.rmc.edu/studyabroad](http://www.rmc.edu/studyabroad)).

Date	Amount Due
<b>At time of registration</b>	<b>\$100 deposit</b> (students must take check and signed add-form to Registrar's Office to be added to the course. \$100 is applied to 50% deposit (see below); refundable if student drops the course before Oct. 3rd*.)
<b>Prior to Aug. 3</b>	<b>50% deposit</b> (payable by check, due to Business Office. Non-refundable after October 3rd*.)
<b>Aug. 3 - Sept. 1</b>	<b>50% deposit at time of registration</b> (if being added to a J-term study/travel course during this period, this amount will become due immediately.)
<b>By Oct. 3</b>	<b>100%</b> (students' J-term study /travel program fee due in full. Students who have not paid in full by October 3rd will be automatically withdrawn from the J-term study/travel course. Travel Course Instructor will determine amount of refund available to withdrawn students*.)

*\* unless an earlier deadline was established by the instructor.*

### J-term Need-based Travel Scholarship: Deadline - May 13th, 2011

To be considered, you must be pre-registered for a J-term 2012 travel course and have completed a 2011-2012 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Award notifications will be sent out mid June with your financial aid award letter. Complete details are listed on the application available at [www.rmc.edu/FAForms](http://www.rmc.edu/FAForms).

### Office of International Education

1st floor of Thomas Branch  
studyabroad@rmc.edu • 804-752-7383 or 3607

For more information, corrections, and updates, visit [www.rmc.edu/studyabroad](http://www.rmc.edu/studyabroad) then click "J-term 2012 Study/Travel Courses"

## J-TERM STUDY / TRAVEL COURSE 2012



### INST 335.01

*Science, the Environment and Conflict in the Conquest of the Amazon*

### SOCI 273.01

*Globalization, the Environment and Social Dynamics in Brazil*

### Travel Dates:

January 8 - January 24, 2012

(Total days in Brazil 14 + two travel days)



17th Century colonial city of Paraty at end of Caminho do Ouro

Classes will meet on campus from January 3 through January 6 and January 25 through January 27.