

**SYLLABUS**  
**ANTH 3101.810/820- AMERICAN CULTURE**  
**SPRING 2017**

Professor Jara Carrington

Email: [jara.carrington@unt.edu](mailto:jara.carrington@unt.edu)

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:00- 2:00 or by appointment.

Office Location: Chilton Hall, 330E (Anthropology Department)

Instructional Assistants:

Ana Belen Conrado [AnaBelen.Conrado@unt.edu](mailto:AnaBelen.Conrado@unt.edu)

Andrea Semlow [andreasemlow@my.unt.edu](mailto:andreasemlow@my.unt.edu)

Joshua Banis [JoshuaBanis@my.unt.edu](mailto:JoshuaBanis@my.unt.edu)

Natalie Morrissey [NatalieMorrissey@my.unt.edu](mailto:NatalieMorrissey@my.unt.edu)

Stephen Gonzalez [StephenGonzalez2@my.unt.edu](mailto:StephenGonzalez2@my.unt.edu)

All IAs are available for office hours by appointment. Please contact your IA at least 48 hours in advance to set up an appointment.

Course Designer: Dr. Alicia Re Cruz

**Overview of the Class:** In this course, we will analyze what people inside the United States, as well as those outside, perceive and encapsulate in the term "American culture." Students are briefly exposed to basic concepts and theoretical models used in the anthropological discipline to approach the understanding of cultural values considered to be at the core of American culture. We will explore the cultural and historical processes from which these cultural values have emerged, as well as how these values have transformed and are expressed in contemporary times through different themes such as: family, ethnic and cultural diversity, consumerism, entertainment and technology, among others. Learners in this course evaluate the complexities embedded in the concept of "culture." Additionally, we will focus on facets of popular culture to gain insight into contemporary values and trends in American culture.

**Course Objectives:**

- Learn basic anthropological concepts and theoretical models
- Be able to apply basic anthropological concepts to the analysis and understanding of cultural processes in the past and present of the United States
- Be able to identify the variety of cultural characteristics and values within the United States
- Be able to use popular culture to analyze U.S. cultural characteristics and values.

**Guiding Anthropological Principles:**

- Culture is not static, it is in constant transformation. The core societal values are continuously negotiated to reflect life styles and social movements within any given population.
- To understand the present, we need to examine the past. The historical context is key to understanding of the origin of core cultural characteristics and values.
- Just as important, the present political and ideological contexts influence our views of the past.
- Popular culture is expressed in objects, activities and communicative media. It offers significant insights for cultural understanding, history and humanity in general.

**Required Texts:**

All readings for this class are embedded in the course material and are available for your downloading pleasure. You are not required to purchase any books-- hip hip hooraaay!! However, you are required to read/view all content provided in each lesson.

PLEASE NOTE: Films, video clips, and additional readings included in the lessons *are* required, and can be accessed through the links provided in each lesson.

**How to Navigate the Course Every Week**

1. Look for any new announcements
2. Open the Lesson that corresponds with the week
3. Read each file within the Lesson.
  - This includes all films and video clips, external links, and assigned readings contained within the lesson.
4. Complete your Journal entry for the week
5. Complete the Quiz for the week

**Contacting Us:** I will check and respond to student emails Monday- Friday from 9-11. Please give me 48 hours to respond to your email. You can also email your Instructional Assistant for most questions. If you have a question about technical issues with Blackboard, please contact the UNT Helpdesk at 940-565-2324.

**Late work:** I do not accept late assignments unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor's note, and/or otherwise received my approval.

**Extra Credit:** Extra credit can be earned at any point during the semester. I will suggest opportunities to the class as they present themselves, and I am relatively open to creative ideas from you. Options to earn extra credit include: relevant movie/documentary analysis, attending a talk/lecture on campus and writing a summary/analysis, or developing a creative piece such as poetry or artwork. You must get approval from me ahead of time for your choice, so check with me before you do the work.

**Academic Honesty:** The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic "F" in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

**Academic Accommodations:** The University of North Texas is committed to providing accommodation for all students with disabilities. If you have or acquire a disability that may affect your participation in class, I will strive to accommodate your needs. To ensure that the necessary accommodations are made, be sure to contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (located in Sage Hall) as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. They will work with

both of us to ensure proper accommodations are made. If you need accommodations, please remember that reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Office of Disability Accommodation. Note that students need to obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

### Evaluation

Weekly Quizzes	22%
Journal Entries	33%
Midterm Exam	18%
Final Exam	18%
Final Project	9%

#### I. Weekly Quizzes (10 points each)

Starting with Lesson 2, each lesson has a quiz associated with the content of that lesson. There will be a total of 11 short quizzes over the semester. Each quiz contains five questions. You will have 30 minutes to take the quiz. Quizzes will be due by 11:59PM every Sunday night.

#### II. Journal Entries (15 points each)

Starting with Lesson 2, you will be asked to complete a short writing assignment as a "Journal entry" in response to a provided writing prompt or discussion question. Journal entries are short essays written on topics specified in each lesson. They should be 200-300 words, and should directly respond to the prompt or discussion question. Journal entries are also due by 11:59PM every Sunday night.

PLEASE NOTE: Journal entries are NOT political platforms. They are to demonstrate that you *understand* the concepts and facts taught in the lesson and that you can effectively *communicate* what you have learned. You can certainly incorporate personal anecdotes provided they are relevant to the Lesson. To earn full credit (15 pts), students will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- Following instructions
- Mechanics
- Content
- Critical thinking

Students may refer to the rubric, below, for clarification in these four areas.

#### III. Exams (90 points each)

- You will take two exams, a midterm and a final. I will post Exam Reviews to Blackboard at least one week before the exam is due. Tests will consist of multiple choice and true false questions which are derived from readings, assignments and information found within the Learning Modules. You will have 90 minutes for each exam. However, if you choose to wait until the last minute, the test will automatically end at 11:59 PM and you will earn the grade you received for the answers you have completed up to that point. While the final exam is

not “cumulative” per se, it will contain questions over basic anthropological principles that you learned throughout the semester.

**FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE EXAMS:**

- Do not begin an exam unless you are certain you can finish it. Make sure you have a reliable Internet connection. Avoid carelessness when selecting your answers. DO NOT wait until the last minute, as Blackboard often undergoes scheduled and unscheduled maintenance. For example: If you wait until Sunday at 10:29pm to take the test, and you experience a computer-related technical difficulty, you will NOT be allowed to retake the test. Blackboard allows us to see what time you logged into the class and what functions you completed while you were logged in. There is no getting around this.
- Reviews will be provided one week in advance of the exam. Aside from the terms presented in the Lessons, a “Glossary” link can also be found within the Blackboard action menu. These are great study tools!
- **Make-up exams will not be given unless the student or their representative emails and/or calls their instructor with a University-Approved excuse by 5:00pm CST BEFORE the scheduled test is due. No exceptions.**

**IV. Final Project: Course Reflection and Discussion (45 points)**

One week before you take your final for the class, you will engage in a final project with your classmates. This assignment will take place within the course Discussion Board, where you will complete a personal reflection on the course and provide a thoughtful response to one of your classmates’ reflections. More detailed instructions will be posted at least one week prior to the assignment due date.

**GRADING RUBRIC**

Criteria	Levels of Achievement			
	MAJOR IMPROVEMENT NEEDED	SOME IMPROVEMENT NEEDED	MEETS PROFICIENCY	EXCEEDS PROFICIENCY
<b>FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS</b>  2pts	Neither prompt addressed.	One prompt not addressed.	Both prompts addressed.	Both prompts addressed fully.
<b>MECHANICS</b>  2pts	More than two grammar, spelling or mechanics errors.	Two grammar, spelling or mechanics errors.	One grammar, spelling or mechanics error.	No grammar, spelling or mechanics errors.

Criteria	Levels of Achievement			
	MAJOR IMPROVEMENT NEEDED	SOME IMPROVEMENT NEEDED	MEETS PROFICIENCY	EXCEEDS PROFICIENCY
<b>CONTENT</b> <b>3pts</b>	Does not demonstrate understanding about Lesson concepts and facts.	Demonstrates some confusion about Lesson concepts and facts.	Demonstrates basic understanding of Lesson concepts and facts.	Demonstrates advanced understanding of Lesson concepts and facts.
<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b> <b>3pts</b>	Summarizes Lesson material only.	Demonstrates one of the following: creative and innovative thinking, inquiry and analysis, and synthesis of information.	Demonstrates two of the following: creative and innovative thinking, inquiry and analysis, and synthesis of information.	Demonstrates all of the following: creative and innovative thinking, inquiry and analysis, and synthesis of information.

You can expect to receive your essay's grade and feedback within two weeks after it is due.

**Grading:** 500 possible points may be earned in this course by completing the assignments and exams. To calculate your grade, you divide the number of points you have earned by the number of points possible at any given point in time.

500-450 = A  
449-400 = B  
399-350 = C  
349-300 = D  
299-250 = F

**Technical Matters:** Because this is an entirely online course, you may experience some difficulties using Blackboard Learn that could impact your grade. As a general rule, do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments or tests. **If you have any technical difficulties during an assignment or exam, follow these procedures:**

1. Take a print screen capture of the issue
2. Contact the Student Blackboard HelpDesk at 940-565-2324 or visit <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/bblearn/>
3. Give them the following info:
  - o Student EUID; Name & Section of the Course: Anth 3101 Culture & Society 810, 820

4. Once you have a ticket number from the HelpDesk, **email your IA** to make them aware of the issue.

Also, please note that The Blackboard Learn website automatically goes down at 11:59 pm CST every Saturday night, and is down for 2 hours.

**NOTE:** The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of the syllabus. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced on the course webpage on Blackboard.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	LESSON	ASSIGNMENT READINGS	JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT AND WEEKLY QUIZ DUE DATE
1/17- 1/22	1	<b>Introduction</b>	No Assignments Due
1/23- 1/29	2	<b>The Anthropological Perspective</b> Reading: Geertz- Introduction, Interpretation of Cultures	1/29 11:59pm
1/30- 2/5	3	<b>American Indians</b> Reading: Glenn- Settler Colonialism as Structure	2/5 11:59pm
2/6- 2/12	4	<b>The Western Frontier and Expansion</b> Reading: Weber- The Spirit of Capitalism	2/12 11:59pm
2/13- 2/19	5	<b>The Civil War and South</b> Reading: Omi and Winant- Racial Formations	2/19 11:59pm
2/20- 2/26	6	<b>The Ideology of "The Melting Pot"</b> Reading: Ong- Cultural Citizenship: Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States	2/26 11:59pm
2/27- 3/5	7	<b>American Social Movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century</b> Readings: The Combahee River Collective Statement; Lorde- Age, Race, Class, and Sex	3/5 by 11:59pm
3/6- 3/12	Midterm Exam	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	DUE SUNDAY 3/12 11:59pm
3/13- 3/19	No Class	<b>SPRING BREAK!</b>	No Assignments Due
3/20- 3/26	8	<b>Race, Ethnicity and Social Class</b> Readings: Hall- What is the Black in Black Popular Culture; Bourdieu- The Making of Social Class	3/26 11:59pm
3/27 - 4/2	9	<b>American Language, Culture and Thought</b> Reading: Lippi-Green- Teaching Children How to Discriminate	4/2 11:59pm
4/3- 4/9	10	<b>Life Cycle, Family, and Gender Dynamics in American Culture</b> Reading: Cott- An Archeology of American Monogamy	4/9 11:59pm
4/10- 4/16	11	<b>Religion in America</b> Reading: Turner- Symbols in Ndembu Ritual	4/16 11:59pm

4/17- 4/23	12	<b>Digital Technology, Mass Media, and Consumerism</b> Reading: Bonilla and Rosa- #Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography	4/23 11:59pm
4/24- 5/1	Final Project	<b>Final Project Due</b>	DUE SUNDAY 5/1 by 11:59pm
5/5 – 5/11	Final Exam	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	DUE THURSDAY 5/11 11:59pm