

# ANTH 4701 | 5700 | URBAN BEINGS

MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS, 3:30-4:50 | GATEWAY CENTER, ROOM 142

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Jamie K Johnson (*she/hers*)

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OFFICE: 124 Sycamore Hall | PHONE: 940-369-5403

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, Thursday 1:00 - 2:30 via Zoom

[SCHEDULE A 15MIN VISIT](#) [SCHEDULE A 30MIN VISIT](#) [SCHEDULE A 1HR VISIT](#)

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cities are enduring markers of human expansion across time and space, evidencing innovation, adaptation and contestation within distinctive urban ecologies. Students in this course will examine the human experience in cross-cultural urban contexts from an anthropological perspective. Centering the built environment, ethnographic case studies impart materialist and ideological explanations of sociocultural arrangements, allowing students to compare dramatic diversity and surprising similarity in city structures and city life. Students will apply conceptual frameworks and ethnographic field-methods suited for studying human behavior in urban environments, and will conduct an independent anthropological research project analyzing urban beings in the DFW Metroplex.

## COURSE GOAL

To provide students a comprehensive understanding of human behavior in distinct urban environments and teach them how to study that behavior anthropologically. This course is designed for a multidisciplinary student body and satisfies a core requirement for the UNT Certificate in Urban Studies.

## COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Examine urban life cross-culturally, using a comparative, anthropological approach
- Relate theory and concepts to sociocultural and material characteristics of the DFW area
- Develop qualitative research skills for studying, analyzing & explaining human behavior in cities
- Appraise intentions and impacts of development vis-a-vis the built environment and infrastructure

## REQUIRED READINGS

Students are not required to purchase any materials for this course. Selected readings will be made available, 1) through the UNT Library, 2) via our [Urban Beings Library Course Guide](#), or 3) in Canvas. If you require accessible PDF formats, please let me know as soon as possible so I can make necessary accommodations.

Abridged references for print/pdf materials (electronic references are available in the Course Guide):

Bridge, Gary and Watson, Sophie, eds. 2010 *The Blackwell City Reader*. West Sussex: Blackwell.

Gmelch, G. and Zenner, Walter P., eds. 2018 *Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of the City*. 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc. **(on reserve in Willis Library)**

Haenn, Nora, Richard R. Wilk, and Allison Harnish, eds. 2016. *The Environment in Anthropology: A Reader in Ecology, Culture, and Sustainable Living*, 2nd ed.. New York, New York University Press. **(on reserve in Willis Library)**

Low, Setha M, ed. 2005. *Theorizing the City: The New Urban Anthropology Reader*. New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press. **(on reserve in Willis Library)**

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSES WITH DIGITAL MATERIALS

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas learning management system and through the UNT Library. Students will also need MS word and Adobe Acrobat. These are available to you for free as a UNT Student. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content.

Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [LEARN ANYWHERE](https://online.unt.edu/learn) (<https://online.unt.edu/learn>).

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

*Research has shown that students who attend class are more likely to be successful. You should attend every class unless you have a university excused absence such as active military service, a religious holy day, or an official university function as stated in the [Student Attendance and Authorized Absences Policy \(PDF\)](#). If you cannot attend a class due to an emergency, please let me know ASAP. Your safety and well-being are important to me. I have great respect for students who are balancing the demands of their coursework with the responsibilities of caring for family members. If you run into challenges that require you to miss a class, please contact me. There may be some flexibility we can offer to support your academic success.*

Please see course policies at the end of this document.

## ACTIVITIES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADES

### RESEARCH COMPONENT:

Students will design and execute a mini-ethnographic research project where they observe human behavior in urban contexts and analyze them using conceptual frameworks from this class. The research component of this project requires students to independently study the history of the urban issue of their choice. The ethnographic component of this assignment requires students to perform at least two 1-hour site visits to a location of their choice in the DFW area, where they will conduct mapping assignments, observations, and open ended interviews.

### REPORT:

The report requirements are two fold: 1) written and 2) presented

- 1) **Undergraduate students** shall provide a 5-page written analysis of their fieldwork based upon one (or more) of the weekly course themes and lectures.  
**Graduate students** shall provide a 7 – 10 page written analysis of their fieldwork based upon two (or more) of the weekly course themes and lectures.
- 2) All students shall present the findings of their research in a 7 - 10 minute presentation at the end of the semester, with 3 – 5 minutes of Q & A. Students will be encouraged to incorporate both text and visual aids (photographs, maps and drawings) into their reports and presentations.

Students will choose an interest and plan a long term field project to study this hypothesis. They will only execute a small part of the study.

Graduate students are welcome to investigate an existing interest pertaining to their Thesis or Dissertation.

### FORMAT

Both the proposal and the final report will be organized according to the following guidelines. It must include each of the 6 sections below.

1. **State the thesis.** Who/what do you plan to study? How do you plan to study them/it? What do you expect to learn?

Explain the unit of analysis: neighborhood? population? racial or ethnic group? economic class? gender? public space? contested space? development? gentrification? traffic jams? situation or event? other? Make sure to clearly and holistically document information about the unit of analysis.

2. **Conceptual/theoretical framework.**

Identify which of the course themes best fits your approach. This will be used to analyze the data you collect.

3. **Methods.**

State which techniques you plan to use to gather your data and why they are appropriate.

Participant Observation?

Standardized questionnaires? (surveys)

Interviews- informational, open-ended, semi-structured or directed?

Life histories?

Use of archives, records or other written documents (newspapers, censuses, etc). Will these documents be historical or contemporary or both?

Event Analysis?

Network Analysis?

Componential Analysis?

Maps?

Statistics?

Explain the process needed to carry out the actual field study.

How long will your study last and why?

Are special arrangements needed to meet the community/enter the site?

What special equipment do you need?

What groups or individuals can you single out as important contacts? How will you locate them?

Where will you live? If not with folks, then how will you get where you're going?

How shall you explain (to the community) what you are doing there? Is there any benefit for them to share their lives and experiences with you?

How will you organize your raw data?

4. **Conduct actual field work.**

You are not expected to do all the fieldwork necessary for your project. You are expected to do a minimum of three total hours. In your paper, present the data you gathered in field work.

5. **Based on your field research, what would your next step be in this study?**

Does your fieldwork suggest that your original hypothesis and approach are still viable?

6. **Bibliography**

Annotated bibliography listing a *minimum* of 5 references for undergraduates and 8 references for grads (list the reference and one or two sentences explaining what the reference is about and why it is important for your project).

7. **Notes**

Raw field notes of 1) maps, 2) observations, 2) interviews must be submitted along with the final report.

## **ARTICLE OVERVIEW AND INSIGHTS (AOI)**

Each student will be responsible for presenting **1** assigned article of their choice to the class.

**Undergrads** will offer a 10 – 15 minute presentation, and should prepare a basic overview of their article along with any insights they took away from the reading. They should also raise 2-3 critical thinking questions that will guide classroom discussion.

**Graduate students** will offer a 20 – 30 minute presentation, and should prepare a thorough overview of their article along with any insights they took away from the reading. The overview should include an investigation of at least one additional reference the author cites in their work. Grads should likewise raise 2-3 critical thinking questions that will guide classroom discussion.

Students presenting different articles on the same week are encouraged to collaborate and discuss issues pertinent to that week's theme, and should also be prepared to refer to other related articles in terms of relevance and critical issues. Students will be required to submit a 1-page (500 word max) report of their article analysis in either written or bulleted format. In their presentations, students should be able to address the following questions:

### **Overview**

State the title and the author's name.

What is the author's thesis?

What is the author's theoretical perspective?

Summarize the data gathered. What methods does the author use to gather data? When was the data gathered?

What are the author's conclusions?

### **Insights**

Did the author convincingly prove his/her point?

Were the methods used sufficient to prove the author's point?

Was the data sufficient to prove the author's point?

Did the author's reasoning and theoretical perspective make sense to you?

How does this article relate to the weekly theme? To other assigned readings?

What did you personally/intellectually gain from the article?

What questions do you have for the class?

### **WEEKLY TALKING POINTS:**

Students will create a set of "talking points" for each assigned reading. These should be uploaded on Canvas before class every Wednesday throughout the course of the semester.

**Objective:** Talking points do double duty. They ensure the student is keeping up with weekly readings as well as comprehending the overall course themes. They also prepare students to engage in rich conversations with one another.

### **Requirements:**

150 – 350 words, including but not limited to

Main idea?

Theoretical perspective?

Methods used?

Data gathered?

Conclusion or discussion?

Critiques or confusion you had with the reading?

### **Format:**

**Paragraph format** is fine, **bulleted format** is also fine...

Direct quotations may comprise no more than 25% of the talking points, but are encouraged to direct conversation....

**OR**

**Creative interpretations** (poems, renderings, drawings, paintings, sculpture, collage or other artwork, music, or dance) are encouraged as long as they are accompanied by an outline summarizing the interpretation's relationship to the reading ...

## **GRADING:**

Research Project: 40%

Research Proposal: 5%

Fieldnotes: Social Map, Observation, Interview: 15%

Presentation: 10%

Report: 10%

Article Overview and Insight: 20%

Written component: 10%

Presentation and classroom discussion: 10%

Talking Points: 40%

Total: 100%

Final letter grading will be based on the point total after weighting using the standard distribution:

A+	97-100	A	94-96	A-	90-93	(Excellent)
B+	87-89	B	84-86	B-	80-83	(Good)
C+	77-79	C	74-76	C-	70-73	(Average)
D	65-69	D-	60-64	F	59 and below.	(Poor)

Assessments will be conducted in *Canvas*. Grades will be posted on *Canvas* for you to view. If you would like to discuss my evaluation of your work, please contact me by email to make an appointment. **I will not discuss or report any student's scores and grades, or any other evaluation-related matters, by e-mail or telephone.**

## **RETURNING GRADES**

I will do my best to quickly return on all of your quizzes, assignments, and texts. However, in order to give thorough attention to each evaluation, I reserve the right to return graded work within two weeks of the completed assignment.

## **How To Be Successful In This Course**

- READ the required (and recommended) assignments and do your best to learn from them;
- Participate fully in the course, ie: get plenty of rest the night before and stay engaged by participating in the Collaboration documents;
- Ask questions in class *in addition* to those you receive credit for;
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes or go out on a limb. Learning is a process – there are no “stupid” questions – everyone (including your instructor) is here to learn!
- Log into Canvas and check your email frequently during the week to check announcements;
- Do not wait until the night before (or morning of) to read or work on assignments and submit them;
- Check the schedule if you are unsure of a due date. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT A UNIVERSITY-APPROVED ABSENCE.**

- ❑ Seek assistance immediately if you are experiencing *any* problems. If your problem is technical, start with the Student Help Desk (see below).
- ❑ Share what you have learned with others! The ideas you and your classmates express in your assignments are important and valuable. Talking about what you are learning in class is a great way to retain what you have learned and to think critically about others' perspectives!

*I support student success by creating an inclusive learning environment and by helping you overcome challenges inside and outside the classroom. This is true for all students, and especially for first-generation students, BIPOC students, LBGTQ+ students, international students, neurodiverse students, veteran students, and so-called "non-traditional" students. Please look at the section below on "Helpful Resources" and let me know how I can help.*

## **EMAIL RESPONSES and CANVAS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Connect with me through email and/or by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. *A gentle nudge is always appreciated.*

If you have an emergency, you may contact the Anthropology Department at 940-565-2200 in order to contact me.

I frequently use Canvas Announcements to communicate important course information to students. It is your responsibility to check your Canvas dashboard on a regular basis.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Technical Difficulties:**

If you have ANY technical difficulties, follow these steps:

1. Capture an image of the issue using "print screen" or other capture features
2. Contact the Canvas Help Desk <https://unt.instructure.com/> using the link at the bottom of the global navigation menu.
3. Give the nice folks at the Helpdesk the following info: your Student EUID; Name & Section of the Course: Anth 4701 / 5700 Urban Beings
4. Once you have a ticket number from the Help Desk, email me (see contact info above)

If you contact me without first completing this process, you will be kindly redirected to this section of the syllabus and the matter will remain unresolved.

### **Server Unavailability:**

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time window and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the UNT Student Help Desk: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu) or 940.565.2324.

### **Late work and Make-up assignments:**

Please see #6 Attendance Policy below. Late work and Make-up work will not be accepted unless you or your representative emails me with a University-Approved excuse 24 hours before work is due. Exceptions will be granted to those who provide legitimate documentation within 24 hours of the due date. Unexcused late work will be subject to ½ letter grade deductions per day. Late work will not be accepted more than one week after the due date.

### **Grade Appeals:**

Questions about grades – including grade appeals – must be presented to the Instructor within 3 days following receiving the grade. I am happy to go over what you missed in office hours. My goal is for you to succeed!

### **Extra Credit:**

Complete the SPOT Course Evaluation at the end of the semester for 10 extra credit points. Complete the Earn Some Points! Assignments throughout the semester. Watch for announcements about upcoming opportunities. I may be able offer additional extra credit.

### **Attendance Policy**

There are some absences (egregious transportation issue, death of a pet, minor non-COVID-19-related illness) that do not fall under the University guidelines. We are all human and life happens. Please communicate with me so I do not mark your absence as unexcused. Imagine not showing up to work and not calling your employer - it's pretty much that serious.

### **Attendance and Participation**

This course meets in on campus two days a week. Students who, **because of the COVID-19 pandemic**, are unable to meet on-campus may join any class meeting live (synchronously) on Zoom.

Participation is essential to your learning. If I don't know your name by the middle of the semester, chances are your participation is suffering. Talk to me about overcoming any public speaking anxiety.

### **COVID-19-related Excused Absences**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty realize that a higher rate of absenteeism is likely. Students may become ill or asked to self-isolate because they have come in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. While class attendance is expected, I am mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (Links to an external site.) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.

Please contact me if you are unable to attend class because you are ill, or unable to attend class either due to COVID-19 including symptoms, potential exposure, pending or positive test results, or if you have been given specific instructions to isolate or quarantine from a health care provider or a local authority.

### **Other Excused Absences**

- a non-COVID-19 related illness, including concerns about mental health
- a personal or family emergency

It is important that you communicate with me prior to being absent so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class. An excused absence will be documented in Canvas. Students may monitor their attendance (on a 100% basis) at any time by visiting the Grades page.

### **Making-up excused classes or work**

Because all student work is submitted through Canvas, only students with University-excused absences are able to make-up missed work.

### **Unexcused Absences**

- Missing class without emailing the professor in advance of the missed class period
- Confusion about assignment due dates
- Oversleeping
- Work-related absences
- Travel-related absences

### **Making-up Unexcused Absences**

No unexcused late or make-up work will be accepted. With advance notice, students may "make-up" up to three (3) unexcused absences by 1) watching the class meeting via Zoom, and 2) submitting a Class Meeting Overview through the Class Meeting Overview assignment tab.

### **Classroom Citizenship:**

Please exercise professionalism, common courtesy, IQ and EQ when interacting with class members and the professor. I expect you to debate with poise and grace. I absolutely will not tolerate distractions and disruptions, especially those which might be deemed bigotry, sexism, racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, militant nativism (anti-immigrant), ableism, ageism, bullying or any other forms of harassment in my classroom. Students who have witnessed or experienced *any* forms of discrimination or hatred at UNT are encouraged to contact me and we will determine an appropriate response.

In-classroom use of mobile phones and tablets for texting or other interpersonal communication during class is unacceptable. The use of laptops for any person other than taking notes for *this class* is unacceptable.

I reserve the right to ask students to refrain from any disruptive activity, or to leave the class at any time.

### **Copyright Notice:**

Some or all of the materials in use may be protected by copyright. Federal copyright law prohibits the reproduction, distribution, public performance, or public display of copyrighted materials without the express and written permission of the copyright owner, unless fair use or another exemption under copyright law applies. You **MUST** use proper citation styles (provided in the Navigation tab) when citing course material and any external sources. Egregious and/or intentional failure to cite sources is grounds for failure on assignments with no makeup opportunity.

### **Important Registrar Dates, Drops, and Withdraws:**

You are responsible for your timely admission, registration, payment, and withdraws/drops. Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure that the student must initiate. I cannot do it for you. If you simply stop attending and do not withdraw, you will receive a performance grade, usually an "F."

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

### **1) Academic Integrity:**

Students found plagiarizing their own or others' materials (incl. Canvas, the textbook, articles, online resources, etc.), will first be given an opportunity to explain themselves. If it is determined that the student unknowingly copied work without giving proper credit, that student will be given the opportunity to re-write their assignment. All make-up work deadlines apply – one week from due date is standard. If it is determined that the student knowingly copied work without giving proper credit, that student will be given a '0' ('F') for that assignment and their work may be subject to additional scrutiny.

You will be part of an academic community in which honesty and integrity of character are central. The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat (collusion). Students suspected of academic dishonesty will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; a guilty finding will merit an automatic "F" in the course. For information on the University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, and especially the Student Code of Conduct <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.



## **ODA Policy:**

The University of North Texas and the Department of Anthropology makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. It is your responsibility to initiate a private discussion with faculty regarding your specific needs in any course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://disability.unt.edu/>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

## **Sexual Discrimination, Harassment and Assault:**

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of ALL forms of discrimination, harassment and assault, *particularly* those of a sexual nature, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) is a victim of any acts of aggression, WE ARE HERE FOR YOU. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: [http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources\\_0](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0). Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT's Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](mailto:SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

## **HELPFUL RESOURCES**

### **Veteran Students:**

For students who are active or retired military, thank you for serving our country! If you are a new or returning student, UNT has a lively Student Veteran organization, and a number of other campus resources available here: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-veteran-services>

**UNT Writing Lab:** Another AWESOME resource available to students is the UNT Writing Lab. Need a refresher course in academic writing or some quick links for your next paper: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/resources>. On-campus and want to attend a workshop to improve your writing skills? <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/workshops>. Off-campus and struggling with academic paper writing? Check out their online tutoring link here: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/online-tutoring>

### **Life happens!**

If you are experiencing a personal or family crisis which is affecting your success as a student here at UNT, please check out the resources here at UNT. <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources> **If you have fallen behind in course work and need help, please do not wait until it is too late!! The sooner you email me: [jamie.johnson@unt.edu](mailto:jamie.johnson@unt.edu) the sooner I can put you in touch with the appropriate contacts and get you back on track for the remainder of the course.**