



University of North Texas  
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences  
Anthropology  
ANTH 3700  
Peoples and Cultures of South Asia

## **Instructor Contact**

Dr. Andrew Nelson  
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Office hours: Tuesdays noon-2pm, or by appointment

## **Course Description:**

This course covers the cultural region of South Asia, which includes the countries of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and occasionally Afghanistan, Tibet, and Burma, as well as the large South Asian diaspora around the world. Through a study of the region's geography and history, we will start by un-thinking how South Asia is imagined in western discourses as a timeless, spiritual, poor and conflict-ridden. Then we will shift to thinking about South Asia less as a place and more as a symbol of particular cultural responses to questions that all of humanity asks, such as: what does it mean to be a person? How should society be organized? Why causes violent conflict? Finally, we will end the class by asking what might a South Asian perspective teach us about life in the United States. In addition to reading academic texts, students will gain an appreciation for the region through films, literary fiction, and blogs.

**Pre-requisites:** There are no pre-requisites for the course

**Course Objectives: By the end of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Critique how the West imagines South Asia
2. Identify the role of history and geography in producing South Asia
3. Apply cultural concepts and theories inspired by South Asian societies
4. Challenge the many myths about South Asian societies and conflicts
5. Articulate a critique of the United States inspired by South Asian migrants
6. Locate South Asia in the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex

## **Required Materials**

Mines, D. & S. Lamb, eds. 2010. *Everyday Life in South Asia: 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*.  
Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Singh, Deepak. 2017. *How May I Help You? An Immigrant's Journey from MBA to Minimum Wage*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

### Technical Support

Student Helpdesk:

UIT Helpdesk  
Sage Hall 130  
940-565-2324  
[helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)

### Technical Skill Requirements

To be successful in this class, students will need to be able to: download and upload files, send and receive emails and navigate Canvas.

### Netiquette

Virtual Classroom Citizenship

The same guidelines that apply to traditional classes should be observed in the virtual classroom environment. Please use proper *netiquette* when interacting with class members and the professor.

### Course Requirements

Graded Work	Percent of Final Grade:	What each submission contributes to final grade:
Syllabus Quiz & Self-Introduction	4	2
8 Discussions	24	3
4 Assignments	36	9
4 Quizzes	36	9

### Graded Work Specifics

1. Discussions: Each discussion is worth five points and consists of two submissions: the original post (3 points) and the two responses (1 point each). In order to grant students time to read each other's posts and respond, the first post is due on Thursday evenings (before midnight), while the replies are due before midnight on Sunday evening.

2. Assignments: Each assignment will be graded out of 20 points. They will be submitted using the Canvas link to turnitin. Keep in mind that you must not only “upload” your document, but also “submit” it, requiring two clicks. When submitted, turnitin will send an email to your unt email. If you did not receive a confirmation email, you DID NOT TURN IT IN!
  
3. Tests: Each test will consist of multiple choice, T/F, and matching questions. They will tend to have 20 questions for which you will have 30 minutes to answer. You will be allowed to take Tests twice and your final score will be the average of your two attempts.

### Final Grades

All grades will be assigned based on the following grading scale:

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
59-under	F

### Policies

#### COURSE POLICIES

**1. Withdrawal:** If you are unable to complete this course you must officially withdraw by the University-designated date (for a “W” with instructor approval). Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure that YOU 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.”

**2. Submitting Course Work:** No coursework will be accepted via email. Late work will be accepted only if accompanied by a note from a medical professional. No other exceptions will be considered. If you are occupied on the due date, you can submit the work early.

**3. Course Communication:** I expect you to check your UNT email on a regular basis as this will be the only format for all course communication outside of the classroom. I require 24 hours to respond to any emails sent between Monday and Friday. Over the weekends and on holidays I require 48 hours to respond. Please include the name of the course you are taking with me in the body of your email. If you email me with a question that the syllabus answers, I will not reply to you. If you are writing an email from a

mobile device, please remember to use a formal tone (salutations, full sentences, correct spelling and punctuation, signature).

**4. Extra Credit:** Students will have the following opportunities to gain extra credit:

1. EC Films: There will be seven different films that students can watch for extra credit. If students watch the film, answer and submit a short (100 words) response to a question that relates the film to course lessons, they will receive 1% extra credit added to their final grade. Students will be responsible for locating and screening each film on their own time.
2. If more than 67% of the class completes the end-of-the-year SPOT evaluation, each student will receive 1% extra credit point added to their final grade.

#### **5. Academic Honesty Policy**

The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Students suspected of any of these 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, <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/academic-integrity>

#### **6. ADA Policy**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable 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 a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable 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 reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. 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](tel:940.565.4323).

#### **7. Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses**

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

### **University of North Texas Compliance**

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

- (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email [internationaladvising@unt.edu](mailto:internationaladvising@unt.edu)) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

### **Calendar**

<b>Lesson/Goals</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Due Work</b>
<p>1: What is South Asia?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify one example of cultural appropriation (D1)</li> <li>- Discuss how ethnocentrism misrepresents South Asia (D1)</li> </ul>	Jan 16-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- View introduction film</li> <li>- Read Sen: Indian Tradition and the Western Imagination</li> <li>- Mannur &amp; Sahni: Indo Chic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Syllabus Quiz (due 1-18)</li> <li>- Introduce Self (due 1-18)</li> <li>- Discussion #1: South Asia in the American Imagination (due 1-18/21)</li> <li>- EC Film: <i>Slumdog Millionaire</i> (due 1/21)</li> </ul>
<p>2: Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Locate major geographic features of South Asia (E1/Q1)</li> <li>- Recognize the geographic &amp; social diversity of South Asia (E1/Q1)</li> </ul>	Jan 22-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 2 Lecture</li> <li>- Read Schmidt: chs. 1-3</li> <li>- Read Bose &amp; Jalal: Pp. 1-7</li> <li>- Read Visweswaran: Pp. 1-10</li> <li>- Do Map Exercise 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quiz #1: Geography (due 1-28)</li> </ul>
<p>3: Pre-colonial History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recall cultural contribution of South Asia's civilizations and empires (Q2)</li> <li>- Compare the major religions of South Asia (E2/Q2)</li> <li>- Articulate the historical context of one South Asian religion (D2)</li> </ul>	Jan 29 – Feb 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 3 Lecture</li> <li>- Listen to Dr. George James Lecture</li> <li>- Read 1 of 2 following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Bose &amp; Jalal, chs. 2-5</li> <li>b) Schmidt, chs. 4-5, 8-10, 16-17, 21-22, 54</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Do religion comparison Exercise 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion #2: Historicizing Religion (due 2-1/4)</li> </ul>
<p>4: Colonial History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify major causes and consequences of</li> </ul>	Feb 5 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 4 Lecture</li> <li>- Listen to Dr. Kate Imy Lecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion #3: Becoming Indian (due 2-8/11)</li> </ul>

<p>British colonialism (Q2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Role-play political life in colonial India (RP 1)</li> <li>- Discuss how colonial rule produced a national identity (D3)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read 1 of 2 following texts:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Bose &amp; Jalal, chs. 6-15</li> <li>b) Schmidt, chs. 25-26, 32, 35-37</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Do Nationalism Role Play 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EC film: <i>Lagaan</i> (due 2-11)</li> </ul>
<p>5: Post-Colonial History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connect colonial history to post-colonial era (Q2)</li> <li>- Recall key players, events and politics of post-colonial era (Q2)</li> <li>- Recognize the influence of US foreign policy in contemporary South Asia (Q2)</li> </ul>	<p>Feb 12 - 18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 5 Lecture</li> <li>- Read 1 of 2 following texts:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Bose &amp; Jalal, chs. 16-20</li> <li>b) Schmidt, chs. 38-43, 63-69</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quiz #2: History (due 2-18)</li> <li>- EC film: <i>Midnight's Children</i> (due 2-18)</li> </ul>
<p>6: Personhood &amp; Kinship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recall theories and concepts of personhood (Q3)</li> <li>- Compare/contrast personhood in South Asia with your own cultural context (D4/A1)</li> </ul>	<p>Feb 19 - 25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 6 Lecture</li> <li>- Read ELSA:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Part 1 Introduction</li> <li>* Wadley: ch. 1</li> <li>* Lamb: ch. 5</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Read Mines: Conceptualizing the Person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion #4: Comparing Life Stages (due 2-22/25)</li> <li>- EC film: <i>Akhon Dekhi</i> (due 2-25)</li> </ul>
<p>7: Gender &amp; Marriage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recall theories and concepts of gender/marriage (Q3)</li> <li>- Compare/contrast gender/marriage in South Asia with your</li> </ul>	<p>Feb 26 - Mar 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 7 Lecture</li> <li>- Read ELSA:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Part 2 Introduction</li> <li>* Jeffery &amp; Jeffery: ch. 2</li> <li>* Nanda: ch. 9</li> <li>* Reddy: ch. 10</li> <li>* Kapur: ch. 4</li> <li>* Gamburd: ch. 8</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion #5: Comparing Patriarchies (due 3-1/4)</li> <li>- EC film: <i>Monsoon Wedding</i> (due 3-4)</li> </ul>

own cultural context (D5/A1)			
<p>8: Religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recall theories and concepts of religion (Q3)</li> <li>- Discuss how religion is used to discriminate (D6)</li> </ul>	Mar 5 - 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 8 Lecture</li> <li>- Listen to Dr. Waquar Ahmed Lecture</li> <li>- Read ELSA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Part 4 Introduction</li> <li>* Mines: ch. 17</li> <li>* Marriott: ch. 18</li> <li>* Marsden: ch. 20</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Read Khan: Islam and Pious Sociality</li> <li>- Read Ghassem-Farchandi: Religious Synthesis</li> <li>- Read Schmalz: Christianity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assignment #1: Reflexivity Paper (due 3-11)</li> <li>- Discussion #6: Islamophobia &amp; Politicization of Religion (due 3-22/25)</li> <li>- EC film: <i>Bajrangi Bhaijaan</i> (due 3-25)</li> </ul>
<p>9: Caste &amp; Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recall theories and concepts of caste/class (Q3)</li> <li>- Use theories of caste/class in role play (RP 2)</li> <li>- Discuss how caste and class overlap in practice (D7)</li> </ul>	Mar 26 - Apr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 9 Lecture</li> <li>- Read ELSA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Part 3 Introduction</li> <li>* ch. 11</li> <li>* Dickey: ch. 15</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Read Liechty: Carnal Economies</li> <li>- Do caste/class Role Play 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion #7: Caste/Class (due 3-29/4-1)</li> </ul>
<p>10: Communalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recall causes and conditions of South Asian conflicts (Q3)</li> <li>- Challenge how conflicts are portrayed in western media (A2)</li> <li>- Articulate how ethnicity, religion and nationalism are</li> </ul>	Apr 2 - 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 10 Lecture</li> <li>- Read ELSA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Part 5 Introduction</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(India) Shani: Politics of Communalism and Caste</li> <li>(Nepal) Sijapati 2013</li> <li>(Bangladesh) Chakma 2010</li> <li>(Sri Lanka) Thiranagama ch.</li> <li>(Pakistan) Ring: ch. 24 of ELSA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quiz #3: Society (due 4-8)</li> <li>- Assignment #2: Challenging Myths of Conflicts (due 4-15)</li> </ul>



manipulated by politics (A2)		(Bhutan) Evans 2013	
<p>11: Global South Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recall history and concepts of South Asian migration (Q4)</li> <li>- Articulate critique of US inspired by South Asian migrant (D8/A3)</li> <li>- Locate South Asia in DFW (A4)</li> </ul>	Apr 16 – May 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to Lesson 11 Lecture</li> <li>- Read Schmidt: ch. 59</li> <li>- Read Tanaki: The Tide of Turbans</li> <li>- Read ELSA                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Part 6 Introduction</li> <li>* Radhakrishnan: ch. 33</li> <li>* Narayan: ch. 34</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Read Singh: <i>How May I Help You?</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion #8 (due 4-19/22)</li> <li>- Assignment #3: Migrant Labor paper (due 4-29)</li> <li>- Assignment #4: South Asia in DFW blog (due 5-6)</li> <li>- EC film: <i>The Namesake</i> (due 5-6)</li> </ul>
Finals	May 7 – 11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quiz #4: Global South Asia (due 5-11)</li> </ul>