

Inequality, Social Justice & the City
Anthropology 4760
Spring 2023

Time: Monday/Wednesday 3:30-4:50

Place: Art 219

Instructor: Dr. Andrew Nelson

Office: 110C GAB

Office Hours: Fridays 10-12 in office or Zoom, or by appointment, [book an appointment](#)

E-Mail: andrew.nelson@unt.edu

Instructor Communication: Students can expect to hear back from the instructor within 24 hours of the initial email (48 hours on the weekend).

Course Description:

With the goal of asking how we might make fairer cities, this class seeks to understand historically and ethnographically how political, social, and economic structures have shaped urban society and how people-centered movements might regain “rights to the city”. We will focus on local examples of urban social justice causes in Denton and Dallas.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will apply urban concepts to their everyday life through creative assignments.
2. Students will analyze structures of inequality throughout the history of cities by engaging in debates, planning exercises, role-plays, and media applications.
3. Students will identify urban theories in contemporary examples.
4. Students will draw from local examples to see and experience processes of urban change.
5. Students will conduct research on UNT student housing issues, and envision how we might re-imagine student housing.

Required Texts: None

All other materials can be found on Canvas under Readings. Articles will be identified by the author’s name and year of publication.

Undergraduate Course Requirements:

I. Readings & Lectures

Students are expected to complete all readings before class.

II. Attendance & Participation

Students are expected to attend and participate in class. Attendance and participation will contribute to 20% of your final grade.

III. Taking it to the streets (and courtroom)

Students are expected to attend four external-to-class experiences:

- February 6: Denton Quakertown/Southeast Trip (during class hours, 3:30-5)
- January 30-March 1: one required visit to eviction court (Tuesdays 9am) or the Denton Planning and Zoning Commission meeting (Wednesdays 6:30pm)
- April 8: Dallas trip
- April 17-26: apartment or resident interviews

In exchange for time, class will be cancelled on February 27, March 20 and 29.

IV. Assignments

There will be four mini-assignments in the first half of the semester. Based on course material, students will be asked to apply lessons to some “urban” phenomena they observe in their world. Assignments will consist of short essay and/or creative exploration of their observation. Each assignment will be scored out of 10 points. Altogether the four assignments will contribute to 20% of your final grade.

V. Midterm Paper

There will one midterm paper that asks you to apply Right to the City (RTTC) to one historical urban case covered in the class. The paper will be 1000-1500 words and graded out of 100 points. The paper will account for 30% of your final grade.

VI. Final Project

Based on archival and fieldwork research on UNT student housing, students will contribute to a final report and presentation. All of the work for this project will contribute to 30% of their final grade.

Grade

Type of Work	Percentage of Final Grade
Attendance & Participation	20%
4 Assignments	20%
Midterm Paper	30%
Final Project	30%

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

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Course Introduction

January 18

Key terms: City, in/equality, social justice

Activity: name that city game, key terms, syllabus, assignment #1

Assignment #1: My favorite urban landscape, **due Sunday, January 22nd**

Week 2: Rethinking Urban Origins

January 23: Unlearning the myth of urban inequality

Reading, *for the scholar in you*

- Graeber, David and David Wengrow (2021) Ch. 1 from *The Dawn of Everything*

Reading, *to get to the point*

- Deresiewicz, William (2021) “[Human History Gets a Rewrite.](#)” *The Atlantic*, November.

Key terms: Enlightenment bias, agricultural revolution, surplus, centralization, civilization, origins of inequality, the state

Activity: Panel drawing the “natural” evolution of urban history

January 25: Rewriting the first cities narrative

Reading, *for the scholar in you*

- Graeber, David and David Wengrow (2021) Ch. 8 from *The Dawn of Everything*

Reading, *for the time crunched*

- Wengrow, David (2019) “[Rethinking cities, from the ground up.](#)” *Medium*, September 4.

Key terms: collective governance, experiments in social organization, urban freedoms

Activity: Gallery walking through first cities

Assignment #2: Tourist brochures of first cities, **due Sunday, January 29th**

UNIT 1: HOW DID WE GET STUCK?

Week 3-4: Critique of Planning

Jan 30: History of Urban Planning

Reading, *for the scholar in you*

- De Certeau, Michel (1984) “Walking in the City” from *The Practice of Everyday Life*
- Jacobs, Jane (1961) Excerpts from *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*

Reading, *for the get-to-the-point learner in you*

- Erickson, Amanda (2012) “[A Brief History of the Birth of Urban Planning.](#)” *Bloomberg, City Lab*, August 24.
- Jagannath, Thejas (2016) “The Benefits of ‘[Eyes on the Street](#)’.” *Medium*, June 24.

Key Terms: Industrial revolution, planning theory, imperialism, Paris, zoning/segregation, urban renewal, street planning

February 1: Brasilia, Brazil

Reading

- Holston, James (1989) Excerpts from *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia*

Reading, *for time crunched*

- Banerji, Robin (2012) “[Niemeyer’s Brasilia: Does it work as a city?](#)” *BBC*, December 7.

Key Terms: modernism, built environment engineering, blueprint utopia

Activity: Q&A with Dr. Karine Narahara

February 6: Quakertown/SED field trip

Reading

- Glaze, Michelle P. (1991) “[The Quakertown Story](#)” *The Denton Review*
- Re Cruz, Alicia (2009) “When Immigrants root and transnational communities grow.” *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 38(2-4): 121-148.
- Bell, K.D. (2022) Introduction (pages 1-10) to *Southeast Denton Neighborhood Needs Assessment for Program Evaluation and Development*, Master’s Thesis, UNT.

- Agyeman, Julian (2020) “[Urban planning as a tool of white supremacy-the other lesson from Minneapolis](#)” The Conversation, July 27.

Key terms: city beautiful, displacement, structural racism

Activity: Tour of Quaker Park, Southeast Denton. Meet at Emily Fowler Library parking lot, 3:30pm

February 8: Structural Violence, Citizenship & Expertise

Viewing

- Kadir, Khalid (2014) “[Can Experts Solve Poverty?](#)” #GlobalPOV Project on youtube.

Reading, *for the scholar with time*

- Miraftab, Faranak (2009) “Insurgent planning: Situating radical planning in the global south.” *Planning Theory* 8(1): 32-50.

Reading, *for the runners to class*

- Dhingra, Apoorva (2021) “Radically rethinking urban planning in (and from) the Global South” [Uneven Earth](#).
- Schroedel, Jenna (2019) “[The development of participatory budgeting in South America](#)” Citizenlab, November 13.
- Johari, Smruti Jukur (2021) “[What if the poor were part of city planning?](#)” Ted Talks on youtube.

Key Terms: structural violence, citizenship (formal vs. substantive), participatory/insurgent planning, Medellin, Colombia

Field trips: Eviction Court (Tuesday, 9am), Planning and Zoning (Wednesdays, 6:30pm Feb 9th maybe)

Assignment #3: Insurgent Planner, **due February 12th**

Weeks 5-7: Critique of Capitalism

February 13: What Marx got right

Reading:

- Engels, Friedrich (1845) Excerpts from *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*.

Viewing:

- Roy, Ananya (2014) “[\(Un\)knowing Poverty](#)” Ted Talk.

Key Terms: Capitalism, industrial City, alienation, class, use/exchange value, Manchester, England

Activity: Drawing 1844 Manchester, 2023 DFW

Feb 16: Racial Capitalism, what Marx missed

Reading

- Coates, Ta-Nehisi (2014) “[The Case for Reparations](#),” The Atlantic, June.
- Graeber, David (2015) “[Ferguson and the Criminalization of American Life](#)” Gawker, March 19.

Videos

- Demby, Gene (2018) “[Housing Segregation in Everything](#)” NPR, April 11.
- Vox (2020) “[American segregation, mapped at day and night.](#)”

Key Concepts: racial capitalism, redlining, urban renewal, gentrification

Feb 20: You sure you want to be “liberal”?

Reading, *for the scholar in you*

- Graeber, David (2010) “Neoliberalism, or the Bureaucratization of the World” in *The Insecure American*, edited by Besteman, C. and H. Gusterson, pp. 79-98.

Reading, *for the time crunched*

- Short, John (2015) “[There are more Baltimores: America’s legacy of hollowed-out cities](#)” *The Conversation*, May 15.

Key concepts: neoliberalism, postindustrial city, deindustrialization, flexible labor, entrepreneurial city, the “Rustbelt”

Feb 22: global south urbanism

Reading

- Bayat, Asef (2012) [Politics in the City-Inside-Out](#). *City & Society* 24(2): 110-128.
- Caldeira, Theresa (2017) [Peripheral urbanization: Autoconstruction, transversal logics, and politics in the cities of the global south](#). *Environment and Planning D* 35(1): 3-20.

Video, *for late to classers*

- Pieterse, Edgar “[How Urban Studies Envision the New Era of the Metropolis](#)” Falling Walls. (not very anthropological, but it gives you the large-scale view of what’s possible thinking from southern cities)

Key terms: autoconstruction, peripheral urbanization, consumer citizenship, informal economies

Feb 27: Class Cancelled

March 1: The Commons

Reading

- Susser, Ida and Stéphane Tonnelat (2013) “Transformative cities: The three urban commons” *Focaal-Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* 66: 105-132.
- Katrini, Eleni (2020) “[Spatial manifestations of collective refugee housing: The case of City Plaza.](#)” *Radical Housing Journal*, 2.1.

Video

- “[How to design the commons \(or, Elinor Ostrom explained\)](#)” Shareable, August 23, 2022.

Key terms: the commons, solidarity markets, mutual assistance, community land trusts, public art, Athens, Greece

Activity: #commons

Assignment #4: Identifying the already-existing commons, **due Sunday, March 6th**

UNIT 2: RECLAIMING OUR RIGHT TO THE CITY

Week 8-10: Right to the City

March 6: Lefebvre

Reading

- Purcell, Mark (2002) [Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant.](#) *Geojournal* 58: 99-108.
- Purcell, Mark (2014) [Possible Worlds: Henri Lefebvre and the Right to the City.](#) *Journal of Urban Affairs* 36(1): 141-154.

Key terms: right to the city, right to participation/appropriation, self-organization (autogestion)

March 8: RTTC to the university

Activity: re-imagining UNT through right to the city

SPRING BREAK

March 20: class cancelled

March 22: walking the right to the city

Activity: walking UNT campus/midterm chats

March 27: Imagining the democratic city in cinema

Activity: view excerpts from *Neptune Frost* (2022), *Bacurau* (2019) (in class)

March 29: class cancelled/midterm chats

Midterm Paper: Applying RTTC to urban history, **due Sunday, April 2nd**

Week 11: Dallas

April 3: History of Dallas planning

Reading

- Prior, M. & R. V. Kemper (2005) "[From Freedman's Town to Uptown: Community Transformation and Gentrification in Dallas, Texas.](#)" *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 34(2/3): 177-216.
- Phillips, Michael (2006) Excerpts from *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841-2001*.

April 5: Dallas Neighborhoods

Reading

- Holt, Brianna (2021) "[‘We don’t fit the demographic’: a community in Dallas grapples with gentrification.](#)" *Guardian*, September 11.

Viewing

- Weflen, Craig (2015) [Bonton + Ideal](#). BC Workshop, Dallas Neighborhood Stories Film.

Activity: plan Dallas trip

UNIT 3: UNT STUDENT HOUSING

Week 12: Housing Intro

April 10: Housing politics in US

Viewing

- Angelini, Giorgio (2022) [Owned: A Tale of Two Americas](#). PBS.

Key Terms: supply/demand-side housing, public housing, public-private partnerships, Section 8, affordable housing, rent control, mortgages

April 12: UNT student housing

Reading

- Nelson, Andrew et al. (2021) “Doubling-Up in College as an Adaptation to Student Housing Insecurity.” Client report for Colorado Housing and Finance Authority.
- Nelson, Andrew et al. (2020) “House of Cards: College Student Housing Insecurity during the SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic.” Client report for UNT Dean of Students.

Activity: Plan research project

April 15: Dallas Trip

Leave Denton around 10am, return around 6pm.

Week 13: The Rent Industry

April 17: Financialization of rent

Reading, *for the political economist in us*

- Fields, Desiree and Sabina Uffer (2014) “[The financialization of rental housing: A comparative analysis of New York City and Berlin](#).” Urban Studies 53(7).

Reading, *for the rushed*

- Desmond, Matthew (2016) “[The Eviction Economy](#)” New York Times, March 5.
- United Nations Human Rights “[Financialization of Housing](#)”.

Activity: research housing companies, start interviews with managers

April 19: researching companies

Week 14: Renter Strategies

April 24: Getting by as a renter, and occasionally fighting back

Dougherty, Conor (2022) “[The Rent Revolution is Coming](#)” New York Times, October 15.

Smart, Allan (2020) “[Squatter Housing](#).” Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Anthropology.

Autonomous Tenants Union Network (2021) “[On the Autonomous Tenants Union Network](#).” *Radical Housing Journal* 3(1): 99-104.

Kallin, Hamish and Mike Shaw (2019) "[Escaping the Parasite of the Student Flat: Reflections on an experiment in co-operative housing.](#)" *Radical Housing Journal* 1.1

Key terms: occupations, squatters, doubling-up, tenants unions, ADUs, housing cooperatives

Activity: interview students about housing

April 26: student responses

Activity: discuss interview progress

Week 15: Analysis and Writing

May 1: Project Analysis

May 3: Writing workshop

Finals Week: Presentation

Final project due: May 10th

University Policies

Technology Support

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a [Student Help Desk \(Links to an external site.\)](#) that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues:

Phone: 940-565-2324

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Current list of [Student Help Desk hours \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

For additional support, visit this [Canvas Technical Help \(Links to an external site.\)](#) web page.

Academic Support Services

- The [UNT Academic Resource Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#), which provides links to the bookstore, registration and advising information, tuition information, financial aid, and more.
- The [UNT Academic Success Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#), which offers academic support services and free individual tutoring.
- [UNT Writing Lab \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Community Support

Eagle Dreamers

<https://www.unt.edu/daca>

Questions: dacainfo@northtexasdreamteam.org

Workshops: immi.gr/dacaupdates

Opening Doors International Services: <https://www.odisinc.org/>

United We Dream: <https://unitedwedream.org/actions/upcoming-first-time-daca-renewal-preparation-sessions/?source=adsgoogle>

First Generation Success Center

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/first-generation-success-center>

UNT Student Legal Services

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>

Black Lives Matter

<https://ied.unt.edu/UNTBLM>

Pride Alliance

<https://ied.unt.edu/pridealliance>

Food Pantry presented by Kroger

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/food-pantry>

Supply Pantry

<https://learningcenter.unt.edu/school-supply-pantry>

Voting

votedenton.com

COVID

Vaccination Information

[Student Health and Wellness Center Walk-In Vaccination Information](#)

Vaccine Incentive Program (until Sept. 10th): <https://healthalerts.unt.edu/vaccine>

COVID Reporting & Alerts

To report a positive test/exposure or if you have questions: COVID@unt.edu

Updates: <https://healthalerts.unt.edu/>

COVID Dashboard: <https://healthalerts.unt.edu/return/cases>

Testing Information

UNT Mandatory Testing Facts: <https://healthalerts.unt.edu/mandatory-testing>

Testing Information for Students: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/laboratory/covid-testing>

Free COVID Testing by Curative in the Union: <https://curative.com/sites/24128>

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences

According to UNT Policy 06.003, [Student Academic Integrity \(Links to an external site.\)](#), academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the [Code of Student Conduct \(Links to an external site.\)](#). The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

The [Dean of Students Office \(Links to an external site.\)](#) enforces the [Code of Student Conduct \(Links to an external site.\)](#). The Code explains what conduct is prohibited, the process the DOS uses to review reports of alleged misconduct by students, and the sanctions that can be assigned. When students may have violated the Code they meet with a representative from the Dean of Students Office to discuss the alleged misconduct in an educational process.

ADA Accommodation

UNT 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 a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students 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 [ODA website \(Links to an external site.\)](#). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Visit [Title IX Student Information \(Links to an external site.\)](#) for more resources.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called [Eagle Alert \(Links to an external site.\)](#) to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

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.”

Late Coursework

Late coursework will not be accepted over email. I will NOT accept work via email, so please do not send it. Late work will only be accepted for credit if accompanied by a note from a medical professional attesting to your inability to complete it. No other exceptions will be considered.