

Course Syllabus and Schedule

Syllabus - ANTH 5000 - Seminar in Sociocultural Anthropology

ANTH 5000 University of North Texas

Dr. Jamie Johnson, Course Instructor

July 5, 2021 - August 6, 2021

Course Description

This 5-week seminar is designed to deliver a foundation in sociocultural anthropology. It is intended to prepare students seeking a Master of Arts or Master of Science in Applied Anthropology who have somewhat limited exposure and background in anthropology. It is also helpful for graduate students from any discipline who wish to combine anthropology with their chosen field of study.

Learning Objectives

- Explore discipline-specific theoretical frameworks and perspectives
- Develop your own anthropological lens to analyze cultural phenomenon
- Contemplate (and perhaps contest) the concept of culture with your peers
- Discuss salient topics in ethnographic research and writing
- Identify and deliberate ethics and ethical dilemmas in social science

UNT Anthropology is by-and-large an applied department. To reflect our core values, this course will place emphasis on the application of traditional anthropological theory and methods towards identifying and addressing contemporary social problems. In addition to foundational readings, we will also consider the work of contemporary applied and practicing anthropologists. Through frequent peer discussions, students will develop and expand their understanding of the readings and case studies in conjunction with their own scholarly and professional interests.

About Your Instructor

Dr. Johnson is a Senior Lecturer in the Anthropology Department. She has taught numerous undergraduate and graduate-level courses, and sits on both Anthropology and interdisciplinary MA and PhD committees representing a wide range of research topics and applications. Appointments will be held by phone, Zoom, or MS Teams. Initial communications should be directed to the email function in Canvas, or addressed to jamie.johnson@unt.edu. Dr. Johnson's Zoom PMI is: 588 763 9209.

Required Materials

The syllabus, schedule, and all other course materials will be made available through Canvas. There are no required texts, but I recommend reading Dr. James Peacock's (2001; 2012) *The Anthropological Lens: Harsh Light, Soft Focus*. Find it used on alibris.com or amazon.com for \$5.00 and up. This is a great introductory reader and reference book. It was my first assigned reading as a graduate student, and I have referred to it periodically ever since.

Proficiency using the UNT library services and other necessary digital resources is required in order to identify scholarly literature for your final paper. If you need *any* assistance in this regard, please reach out to me or to our social sciences librarian, Jenn Rowe, at jennifer.rowe@unt.edu. Other technological requirements are noted in the course introduction.

Anthropology Subject Guide

For your final paper literature review, you must access online Anthropology journals through the UNT library. Locate the **Anthropology Subject Guide** in Canvas. The Anthropology Subject Guide will link you to academic resources ranging from books and articles to websites and videos. I have included links to the AAA and Chicago Manual of Style, and have posted examples to help you correctly cite reference materials. <https://guides.library.unt.edu/anthropology> (Links to an external site.)

Activities and Assessments

The Course is organized into three basic parts:

- Assigned Readings
- Lesson Topic Discussions
- Independent Research Paper

Here is a breakdown of activities and their grade points. All grades will be assigned as a letter grade on a 100% scale. Hence, A = 90% - 100%, B = 80% - 89%, C = 70% - 79%, D = 60% - 69%, and F = 0% - 59%. Assignments scored C or below must be reattempted within 78 hours of grading; this includes missed assignments.

Activity 1 - Introductions! 25 points (A = 25pts, B = 20pts, C = 15pts, D=10pts)

- Your first assignment is to post a short autobiographic sketch of yourself, including (but not limited to) 1) intellectual interests 2) a personal fun-fact and 3) three goals you hope to achieve in this class (15pts)
- Then, review your classmates' posts and comment on at least 2 of them. You should have at least a total of 3 posts for this assignment. (10pts)

Try to post your introduction by end-of-day Tuesday, and your peer responses by end-of-day Thursday – Friday at the latest. **Please address your peers by name**, and make a genuine effort to get to know them.

As a general rule-of-thumb, your weekly reading discussion posts should be made by Wednesday, and your peer responses should be posted by Friday. All discussion forum posts and responses are due on Friday at 11:59pm on the week they are assigned; they will remain available in case you would like to reference earlier discussions.

19 Weekly Reading Topic Discussions @ 25 points each 475 points

In weeks 1 – 4 you will submit the following:

- **4 substantive posts, including thought-provoking discussion question @ 15 points each**
 - Each topical discussion post should address the prompt with a substantive analysis and discussion – *not a summary* – over the assigned readings. (10pts)
 - Each discussion post should also include at least one (1) original and thought-provoking question on the weekly focal topic/issue to spurn conversation. (5pts)
 - This component of your post can either focus on one specific reading or a synthesis of the weekly readings – it can even relate to outside readings or to current events. But it must be
 - labeled **Question(s)** so I can find it within your post,
 - presented in question format
 - relative to the discussion topic.

- **4 substantive peer responses @ 10 points each**
 - Within each topic discussion, you must post a thoughtful and conversational response to **at least one** of your peers' posts
 - You may choose to respond to either the reading analysis or thought-provoking question, but please try to respond to different people in each topic discussion to maximize your opportunity to learn from your peers.
 - Label your response “**Response to such-and-such....**” So I can easily find it
 - Once again: *Address the person you are responding to by their name*

If your discussion is missing any of the required components – for example, maybe you forgot to post a question or you ran out of time and couldn't post a peer response, points will be deducted accordingly.

Topic Discussion Grading Rubric:

Reading reflection = 10 points

Discussion question = 5 points

Peer response = 10 points

25 possible points per *each* Topic Discussion

Final Research Endeavor

In addition to Topic Discussions, you will also propose and develop a final research project using anthropological sources (peer-reviewed journals, ethnographies, edited volumes, websites, videos and blogs, etc.). The bulk of your references must represent an anthropological corpus. See instructions for details.

You will submit your research assignment in three parts:

- One 30min meeting with Dr. Johnson @ 50 points during Week 3 (appts will be scheduled during Week 2)
- Paper Topic Proposal and Annotated Bibliography @ 50 points
Week 4: Due no later than Monday at midnight
- Final Research Paper @ 100 points
Week 5: Due no later than Thursday at midnight

Your Final Research Topic should cover one of the options listed below. If you have a specific interest that doesn't quite fit into these categories, we can discuss it. However, this is NOT an ethnographic research project. Please do not plan to conduct research with human subjects.

Research Topic Options:

1. Compare and contrast concepts, theories or perspectives in scholarly OR applied anthropology to other social sciences and discuss how these similarities and differences influence methods;
2. Identify and discuss in depth a current (past 10 - 15 years) topic or controversy in scholarly or applied anthropology;

3. Identify your own scholarly or applied research interests and discuss the theoretical and/or methodological application of anthropology to that topic/project.

You will find detailed instructions concerning the final research paper in Canvas, and I encourage you to email me any time with questions.

The final paper is **due no later than Thursday, August 5th at midnight**. This is a firm deadline as the course ends on Friday, and I need time to grade all of your papers. I will accept – and in fact, *encourage* – advanced rough drafts for review as early as Friday July 30th through Tuesday Aug. 3rd.

Quick Course Guide and Grade Breakdown:

Weeks 1 – 4

Introduction Activity @ 25 points

4 Topic Discussions per week @ 25 points ea. (400 points)

Week 3

30-minute Paper Topic Meeting w/ Dr. J @50 points

Week 4

Research Topic Proposal and Annotated Bibliography @ 50 points

Week 5

3 Discussions @ 25 points = 75 points

Final Research Paper @ 100 points

SPOT course evaluation (no points, many thank yous)

Total points possible = 700

Discussion Guidelines

This is a graduate seminar; participation is essential. Read each article/chapter and the week's lesson and then participate in the online discussion. Lessons 1 – 4 will have four (4) discussion topics; Lesson 5 will have only three (3) Discussion Topics. You will need to post within *each* separate Topic Discussion and respond to at least one peer per Topic Discussion. Each Topic Discussion has a limited word count; specific instructions for each assignment are found within the Lessons and in the Discussion Forums. Do not exceed the allotted word count, or points will be deducted.

Posts: Discussion topics will be posted in advance each week. However, do not proceed with the next Lesson's Discussion forums until after the previous Lesson has closed (after Friday at midnight). The prompts will be contained in each discussion

thread. Your task is to open the message, read the prompt, and then compose your post in a word processing program (this will ensure you do not lose your work, as you cannot “save” in the discussion message boxes. This will also allow you to check your spelling, etc. before posting). Copy and paste your post into the thread (no attachments please – this makes it cumbersome to follow conversation).

Peer Responses

After you have typed up your original thoughts, return to the discussion and read what others have written. Once again, compose in a word doc, save your work, and then copy and paste your message into the thread (no attachments please – this makes it cumbersome to follow conversation).

Your post should indicate in no uncertain terms that you have read others’ messages, even if you choose not to respond to theirs specifically.

For example, if someone has posted thoughts similar to yours, acknowledge that person’s post by saying, “As Sunil wrote earlier,” or “Similar to Nakesha’s observations, I think ..., but my take on this or that is a little different...”

You don’t need to respond in detail to these in your original topic post, but do acknowledge them, as you would in a face-to-face discussion.

Rules of Engagement

Bear in mind that these exercises are not a collection of isolated monologues (or diatribes – or political platforms; opinions must be relevant to the readings and supported by facts). Discussions are the most interactive element of the course and an opportunity for us to create a supportive learning community where every perspective is meaningful and valid. This is not to say that you can’t disagree with or critique the readings or your peers’ posts or to post radically different ideas. Fire away. But remember that **respect, consideration and honesty** are core elements of both civil discourse and scholarly debate. No one should ever feel attacked or cornered in a discussion. Be persuasive when expressing your views, not bullying or hostile. *Persuasive writing, like persuasive speech, makes use of evidence, supports generalizations, and demonstrates a desire to thoughtfully consider others’ points before you decide how to respond.* These elements are part-and-parcel to the score you earn for your posts.

Course Policies

If you have ANY technical difficulties:

1. Take a print screen capture of the issue
2. Click on the “?” icon in Canvas – it will direct you to the Student Help Desk contact information

3. 3. If you must email the HelpDesk to resolve your issue (for example, after hours) make sure to give them the following info: your Student EUID; Name & Section of the Course: Anth 5000; cc me in the email to keep me in the loop.

Notification of Absence: For University-excused absences such as religious observation, illness or extracurricular activity, the student is required to notify me promptly and well in advance, respectively, and must complete missed assignments within 24hrs of the due date. **Only students with legitimate University-excused absences will be allowed to submit late work.**

Missed Assignments: Make-ups will not be allowed unless students approach me with a reasonable excuse **before** the due date. **Late work owing to travel will not be accepted.** I am happy to receive assignments in advance of the due date. Last-minute late work owing to technical difficulty will not be accepted. Mark the dates on your calendar. Communicate problems ASAP.

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. If you simply stop attending and do not withdraw, you will receive a performance grade based on the work you have/have not completed, usually an "F."

Your primary responsibility as a student is to learn the material and succeed in the course. This is a reasonable objective: do the reading, participate in discussion, and submit work on time. At times concepts or issues raised in class might be unclear. Students come from a variety of backgrounds and have various strengths and weaknesses. If you have any questions or feel unsure about any class material, email me soon as you realize a problem. We will work together to find a solution. DON'T wait until the 5th week, or I won't be able to help you. Please realize that my goal as an instructor is not just to grade, evaluate, and test, but to help you gain a valuable life perspective to carry outside the class, into whatever you do.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

PLEASE REVIEW THE COVID-19 STATEMENT IN CANVAS

Academic Integrity: Give credit where credit is due! This cannot be stressed enough. You will be provided with a citation guide and will be expected to uphold graduate-level research standards. Writing resources are provided under the UNT Writing Center link, below. Students found plagiarizing their own or others' materials (incl. Canvas Lessons, your peers discussion posts, assigned 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 (24hrs of receiving the grade). 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. When in doubt, cite!

Virtual Classroom Citizenship: The same guidelines that apply to traditional classes should be observed in the virtual classroom environment. Be professional and respectful when interacting with class members and the professor. I have a zero tolerance policy for sexism, racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, militant nativism (anti-immigrant), bigotry, bullying or other forms of harassment in my classroom. If any of my students or their colleagues have witnessed or experienced any forms of discrimination or hatred on the UNT campus, I urge you to contact me. Together we will determine an appropriate response jamie.johnson@unt.edu .

Accommodations: The University of North Texas and the Department of Anthropology makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. This includes but is not limited to accessibility in all course content and student communications.

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 to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a 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/> ([Links to an external site.](#)) . 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 and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. 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 ([Links to an external site.](#)). Contact me or contact the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

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

2) UNT Learning Center: The UNT Learning Center is an AMAZING department filled with AMAZING people – all here to help you, the student, maximize your potential in college and beyond. They offer *free of charge* a number of services such as tutoring, academic coaching, study and learning workshops, speed reading, campus resources, and a number of other academic success-related topics! Check them out here: <https://learningcenter.unt.edu/> (Links to an external site.)

3) UNT Writing Lab: Another fantastic resource available free-of-charge 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> (Links to an external site.)

On-campus and want to attend a workshop to improve your writing skills? <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/workshops> (Links to an external site.)

Off-campus and struggling with academic paper writing? Check out their online tutoring link here: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/online-tutoring> (Links to an external site.)

4) 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> (Links to an external site.)

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 the sooner I can put you in touch with the appropriate contacts and get you back on track for the remainder of the course.