

SYLLABUS
ANTH 4550.001
RACE, ETHNICITY, AND IDENTITY
FALL 2022

Professor: Dr. Jara Carrington
(she/they)

Email: jara.carrington@unt.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays 11-12, or by
appointment

Office: Sycamore Hall 122

Class meetings: T/Th 2:00-3:20

Meeting location: ENV 115

“The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives.”

- Combahee River Collective Statement (1977)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The concepts of race and ethnicity, and the cultural meanings attributed to perceived racial and ethnic differences, have significantly shaped the development of societies across the globe. In this class, we will learn how to think anthropologically about racial and ethnic categories and identities, and to consider the cultural meanings that are attached to them, with a geographic focus on the United States. We will analyze how demarcations of racial and ethnic boundaries have been culturally constructed over time, especially in and through intersecting norms about gender, sexuality, class, and nationality; and we will focus on the complex ways that hierarchies of race and ethnicity are represented, reproduced, and/or contested in U.S. politics and culture.

The first half of the course will center the writings of anthropologists, sociologists, critical race theorists, black feminist theorists, and cultural studies scholars to help us build an interdisciplinary theoretical foundation for the study of race and ethnicity. The second half of the course we will focus our analyses on various institutions and processes in order to “think like an anthropologist” about race and racialization in the United States. Throughout the course, we will bring scholarly, activist, media, fiction, and other forms of writing together in conversation to understand how cultural meanings about race, ethnicity, and identity are transmitted, reproduced, and contested.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Describe foundational concepts and theories in the study of race, ethnicity, and identity
- Develop and exercise critical thinking skills in the analysis of race, ethnicity, and identity
- Explain and be able to use the concept of intersectionality
- Critically analyze how historical processes and relationships continue to impact the cultural meanings we attribute to various forms of social difference today
- Critically evaluate the politics and sites of representation of racial and ethnic difference

REQUIRED TEXT

There is one required text for this course, which is available at the UNT Bookstore. It is “Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir” by Deborah Miranda (2013). All other required readings will be available for download on our course webpage.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

General Information: This course requires considerable reading and writing. Although you do not need a background in anthropological theory or critical race theory to succeed in the class, you will be expected to grapple with difficult texts that you may need to re-read and sit with to fully understand. In other words, cursory readings will not be sufficient.

In addition, we may cover material in this course that challenges your personal beliefs and opinions. I do not expect you to personally agree with course materials in order to do well in this course, but I do expect you to approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion. Comments that are disrespectful to your classmates and/or myself will not be tolerated.

Each class period, I will expect you to:

- Have completed the readings
- Pose questions for clarification or extension of points
- Participate actively in discussion and debate
- Respectfully challenge your instructor and peers where appropriate
- Contribute positively to the classroom climate

Email Policy: Please allow 48 hours for a response to your email. Emails sent during the weekend will be treated as if sent on Monday morning. When emailing me, be sure to include the course number (ANTH 4550.001) and/or name in the subject line along with the topic of the email. Please use your email account rather than Canvas for communicating with me.

Late work: As a general rule, I do not accept late assignments or exams unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor’s note, and/or otherwise have received my approval. However, if you think you will miss a grade for a reason other than a medical excuse, please get in touch with me prior to the deadline and we may be

able to work something out. Even if it only gets you partial credit, that is better than no credit at all!

Extra Credit: Extra credit can be earned at any point during the semester. I will suggest several opportunities in class, and I am relatively open to creative ideas from you. Options to earn extra credit include: relevant movie/documentary analysis, attending a related talk/lecture on campus, a personal reflection that puts course content in conversation with an experience you have had, 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.

Electronics in the Classroom: Please turn off the sound on your cell phone prior to coming to class. Students may use laptop computers to take notes and for class purposes only; students checking email, using Facebook, etc. will be asked to turn off their computers and will not be allowed to use their computers in subsequent classes.

Academic Honesty: The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. For this class, writing assignments may be submitted through Turnitin, a Web based resource that compares the text of student papers to an extensive electronic database for textual similarity.

- Cheating includes the physical or electronic **distribution or use** of answers for graded components, such as discussion posts, writing assignments, and exams.
- Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own.
- Plagiarism may be inadvertent or intentional. **That is, plagiarism is still plagiarism even if you “didn’t mean to do it.”** 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.
- 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/>.

Two more points about this: A) Just don’t do it. I promise, I will most likely be able to tell if the writing is not yours. It is better to talk with me about why the assignment is not complete, or asking for (even late) help on in-text citations, rather than passing off someone else’s work as your own. B) This is also an issue of a politics of citation and recognition. When you represent someone else’s thoughts/writing as your own, you are denying them credit for their intellectual work. For many of our authors, especially those who are women, persons of color, queer, and/or live outside the United States and Europe, this is yet another way in which their voices are marginalized within the western academy. Actions have meaning. Please cite your sources.

Academic Accommodations: The University of North Texas is committed to providing accommodation for all students that are differently-abled. If you have or acquire a health concern 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.

Class Materials for Remote Instruction: We may from time to time meet together as a class remotely (i.e. via Zoom) for various reasons. Students in this class will need access to: a device that can access the internet, a webcam, and a microphone to participate in fully remote portions of the class. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found at <https://online.unt.edu/learn>.

Emergency Notification and Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert 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 Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Resources

UNT Food Pantry: Any current UNT student in need can visit the Food Pantry 8am-6pm Monday-Thursday and 8pm-5pm on Fridays. Students will check-in at the Dean of Students Office front desk in the Union, Suite 409. Students may go directly to room 366 from 5PM-6PM, Monday-Thursday. Students who visit the food pantry can request to meet with a staff member to discuss any difficulties they may be facing during the hours of 8am-5pm. When appropriate, referral to additional campus and/or community resources will be made. The Dean of Students Office has established protocols that allow for student confidentiality and dignity to be maintained. In addition, there is a pantry located at the Discovery Park Location in the Engineering Library (M130) next to the Career Center, as well as a Food Pantry located at UNT's Frisco campus, which can be accessed by visiting the information desk. **YOU CAN'T LEARN IF YOU ARE HUNGRY!**

Need Technical Assistance? Contact the UNT IT Helpdesk!

Phone: 940-565-2324
E-Mail: helpdesk@unt.edu
Location: Sage Hall, Room 130

Technology Resources

<http://it.unt.edu/helpdesk>

Academic Assistance/Resources

UNT Learning Center

The UNT Learning Center provides a variety of tutoring services that are open to you—including online tutoring for distance students. Check out their website for more information here: <https://learningcenter.unt.edu/tutoring>

UNT Writing Center

Also, the UNT Writing Center provides assistance with any academic writing needs. Find more about their services here: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu>

Canvas

Canvas Privacy Policy: <https://www.instructure.com/policies/privacy>

Canvas Accessibility Policy: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2061-accessibility-within-canvas>

EVALUATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Course Expectations

This course requires your engagement with new and sometimes academically rigorous materials. Further, we may cover content in this course that challenges your personal beliefs and opinions. I do not expect you to agree with course materials in order to do well in this class, but I do expect you to a) approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion and b) use course content and the provided resources to complete assignments. Comments that are disrespectful to your classmates and/or myself will not be tolerated.

Grades

This course is designed to help you develop and use skills important to anthropologists—reading, listening, asking questions, and communicating orally and in writing. While there are no exams in this class, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate these skills through other means.

Class Participation	10%
Weekly Discussion Questions	20%
Current Event Journal Presentation	20%
Media Analysis Paper	20%
Policy Paper	

I. Class Participation (100 points)

This class relies on the intellectual commitment and *active* participation of all students. Active participation goes beyond merely showing up for class, and includes: responding to discussion questions that I pose to the class, asking your own questions for clarification, and respectfully responding to classmates' discussion points if relevant—whether in

person or on Zoom. In order for you to participate, you need to have completed the reading assignment for that day and be ready to talk about it in class.

Especially for this class: The topics we will be discussing can be politically charged, so I expect everyone to *actively* listen to others as well as be respectful of each other's ideas. You should bring assigned readings to class each day as we will refer to and utilize them throughout our meetings. You should take notes regarding lectures and classroom discussions because these notes, alongside your marginalia/notes on the readings, will come in very handy for the writing assignments this semester.

II. Weekly Summary and Discussion Questions (300 points)

Discussion is a crucial component of our meetings. In order to participate in the discussion, you need to come to class having read the assigned readings. As a reward to you for reading, you will be able to earn points by raising one original, substantial, and thought-provoking Discussion Question pertaining to each week's readings and topics. I will utilize the most pertinent discussion questions in our class to help prompt and guide our conversations.

Your original, substantive, and thought-provoking Weekly Summary and Discussion Question should focus on one assigned reading each week. That being said, I encourage you to put the assigned reading in conversation with other assigned readings or current events. The goal of this assignment is to encourage deeper engagement with the text in question and the points the author is making.

You should submit one discussion question **each week** by **9:00AM on the day** of the class that **the related reading is assigned**, for a total of 11 submissions. Each Summary and Discussion Question is worth 30 points, and I will drop the lowest score of one submission. Late discussion questions will not be accepted without proper documentation.

Each submission should be approximately 200-250 words.

In order to earn all of the points, your Summary and Discussion Question should contain:

A. Brief Summary of the Reading (12 points)

1. Include a general discussion of the article/chapter's content
2. Identify significant terms or concepts used by the author
3. Discuss the argument(s) being made by the author

B. Relevant Quote (6 points)

1. Include at least one relevant quote from the reading that you think speaks to the main points the author is making

C. Discussion Question (12 points)

1. Create a discussion question that focuses on the reading. Keep in mind the best discussion questions will be:
 - a. Open-ended- Questions cannot be answered with yes/no or either/or
 - b. Answerable- Questions do not require extensive knowledge from outside the course, and can be answered using knowledge/experience versus

speculation

- c. Substantive and relevant- Questions should be related to a significant point/argument in the reading, and should ask us to consider the point/argument in the context of the themes of this course.

III. Current Event Presentation (150 points)

As a means to kick off our course meetings with student leadership, and to provide an opportunity for you to put the concepts and ideas we are learning in class in conversation with events and issues in our society today, each student will research and present a report about a current event that deals with “race” or “ethnicity.” While current news stories or notable events make especially good “Current Events,” other options include analysis of activist efforts/groups (i.e. analyze organizational brochures, manifestos, protests, or other mobilizations, etc), creative works (poems, prose, music lyrics, artwork, performance art, etc), social media trends, or any other sites that you think are interesting and relevant. Be creative!

In the second week of class, you will sign up to give a short, 7-10 minute presentation that will take place *at the beginning of class* on the day you select. Depending on the number of students in the class, some presentations may need to be done in teams of two. In your presentation you will want to:

- Describe the particular topic
- Situate that topic within a broader cultural and historical context
- **Explain this current event’s significance to course content using at least one concept or theory from class discussion or your required readings. That is, I want to see you make a connection between your current event topic and something you have learned in this class. To do this well, you will need to identify and describe/define the concept you are using.**
- Offer your very insightful and critical analysis of the object (FYI: “I thought it was interesting” is neither insightful nor critical).

Make sure to practice! Your verbal presentation should not go over ten minutes, and be ready to answer any questions we might have for you.

IV. Media Analysis Paper (150 points)

This assignment will give you an opportunity to put the ideas we are learning in class in conversation with media that is important in your world. Your objective will be to select and analyze a particular media site that you believe produces cultural knowledge about race and/or ethnicity. The object of your analysis could be a film, TV show, news or magazine article, social media post, meme/GIF, book, comic, magazine, song, video, or other. In your submission, you will offer a cultural analysis of your selected media. That is, you will provide an interpretation or “reading” of your media example and consider how it creates, reproduces, and/or contests cultural knowledge about race or ethnicity within a specific historical and cultural context. , and situate these meanings within the cultural and historical context in which it was produced and circulated.

The media analysis paper should be 600-750 words. In it you should address the following points:

- Provide a description of the media example
- Offer an informed interpretation of the media example that describes the cultural knowledge that gets produced through the media example
- Situate the media within a specific cultural and historical context in which it was produced and circulated
- **Define and use at least two concepts from lesson content or course readings to describe and analyze the media example**

Note that the media analysis paper should be more than a descriptive effort, rather it should present an argument about the relevance of the interpretation and how the media example reinforces, contests, or produces new cultural knowledge about race and/or ethnicity.

V. Final Project

A) Policy Brief

This assignment will give you the opportunity to learn more about a specific policy topic in to race or ethnicity that is interesting to you, and to apply some of the knowledge that you have learned in this class to that topic.

Imagine that you are working for an elected official who is having to make a policy decision about your topic, however, they don't have time to find and sort through the available information. Your task is to conduct research on the topic and to write a policy brief for your supervisor that 1) explains the issue, 2) argues for the importance of the problem and the need for political action, 3) offers concrete and specific policy recommendations, and 4) provides resources for more information. Note that this should be more than a descriptive effort— it is up to you to collect and synthesize information and to argue both for its importance and to for the viability of your proposed solutions.

The policy brief should be between 800-1000 words. In it you should address the following points:

- Provide a description of the topic/situation
- Demonstrate why this topic/situation is important and why political action is needed
- Discuss the historical and cultural context
- **Define and use at least two concepts from lesson content or course readings to describe and analyze the situation**
- Suggestions for potential courses of action
- Provide at least five suggested resources for the decision-maker to learn more about the issue

Check out the following resources for more information on how to write policy briefs:

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/policy-briefs/>

B) Praxis Project

A praxis-based project requires substantive engagement throughout the majority of the semester with a relevant non-profit or activist organization/group/individual. This could be a group that you already work with, or one that you would like to get involved with. By substantive engagement, I mean that you should be engaging with this group or person regularly (i.e. weekly) for the majority of the semester, for a total of *at least* 25 hours. This could be in a capacity as a member or employee that works with the group, or it could be as an intern, a volunteer, or through some other connection to the group. Note that the project must still meet the requirements of the final assignment, so will require an additional (short) write-up to document the experience and make use of scholarly resources from the class. If you choose the praxis option, this must be approved by me before October 1.

***A Note on Paper Formatting: All papers that you submit in this class are to be double spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all sides, and should contain a works cited/references page. In-text quotes and references should be properly cited. You may use whichever format you are most familiar with (i.e. Chicago, APA, MLA), but you must be consistent. If you do not know what I am talking about here, please, please, please ask me or the UNT writing lab for help.**

Check out this resource by Trent University on doing scholarly research!

<https://www.trentu.ca/academicskills/how-guides/how-use-sources/research-process/research-plan#grey%20lit>

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

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

**Weekly Discussion Questions
Current Event Presentation Date
11/1- Media Analysis Paper Due
12/13- Final Project Due**

COURSE SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

- 8/30: Introduction to the Course - no assigned readings
- 9/1: James Peacock Ch. 1- "It's Real! Culture Beheld" in *The Anthropological Lens: Harsh Light, Soft Focus* (available as an e-book through UNT library)
*** no weekly summary/discussion question due this week!**

THE CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION OF "RACE" AND "ETHNICITY"

- 9/6: Yolanda Moses "Thinking Anthropologically about 'Race': Human Variation, Cultural Construction, and Dispelling Myths"
- 9/8: 1. Joseph Graves, Jr. "How Biology Refutes our Racial Myths"
2. AAA Statement on Race

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION: THE CONSTRUCTION OF RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE UNITED STATES

- 9/13: Johan Galtung "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research"
- 9/15: Karen Brodtkin "How Did Jews Become White Folks?"
- 9/20: Deborah Miranda *Bad Indians* pages xi-xx; 1-35
- 9/22: 1. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic "Critical Race Theory: An Introduction"
2. Derrick Bell "Who's Afraid of Critical Race Theory?" pages 898- 907
- 9/27: Michael Omi and Howard Winant "The Theory of Racial Formation"
- 9/29: 1. Audre Lorde- "Age, Class, Race, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference"
2. Combahee River Collective Statement
- 10/4: Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics"
- 10/6: Leo Chavez "The Latino Threat Narrative"

ANALYZING RACE AND ETHNICITY: REPRESENTATION, COMMUNITY, AND BELONGING

- 10/11: Leo Chavez "Toward a Framework for Reading Magazine Covers" in *Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation*

- 10/13: Lisa Marie Cacho “Racialized Hauntings of the Devalued Dead” pages 25-42 required, entire chapter recommended
- 10/18: Isabel Molina “#OscarsSoWhite: How Stuart Hall Explains why Nothing Changes in Hollywood and Everything is Changing”
- 10/20: Mimi Thi Nguyen “The Hoodie as Sign, Screen, Expectation, and Force”
- 10/25: Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathon Rosa “#Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States”
- 10/27: Deborah Miranda *Bad Indians* pages 38-74
- 11/1: 1. Excerpt from Zora Neale Hurston
2. Alice Walker “In Search of Zora Neale Hurston”
MEDIA ANALYSIS DUE!
*** no weekly summary/discussion question due this week**
- 11/3: 1. Sara Ahmed “Making Strangers”
2. Keesha Beckford “Dear White Mom”
*** no weekly summary/discussion question due this week**
- 11/8: Su’ad Abdul Khabeer “Citizens and Suspects: Race, Gender, and the Making of American Muslim Citizenship”
- 11/10: Deborah Miranda *Bad Indians* pages 76-105

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT SITES OF RACIALIZATION

The Body

- 11/15: Zine Magubane “Which Bodies Matter? Feminism, Poststructuralism, Race, and the Curious Theoretical Odyssey of the ‘Hottentot Venus’”
- 11/17: Deborah Miranda *Bad Indians* pages 108-139
*Content warning: Discussion of sexual violence
- 11/22: J. Kahaulani Kauanui “The Politics of Blood and Sovereignty in Rice v. Cayetano”
*** no weekly summary/discussion question due this week!**
- 11/24: NO CLASS, HOLIDAY BREAK!
BUT READ: DEBORAH MIRANDA *BAD INDIANS* PAGES 140-175

Law and Policy

- 11/29: Angela Davis “Slavery, Civil Rights, and Abolitionist Perspectives Towards Prison” in *Are Prisons Obsolete?*

12/1: Eithne Luibhéid "A Blueprint for Exclusion: The Page Law, Prostitution, and Discrimination Against Chinese Women" in *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border*

Housing and Home

12/6: Setha Low "Maintaining Whiteness: The Fear of Others and Niceness"
*** no weekly summary/discussion question due this week!**

12/8: Recommended: Deborah Miranda *Bad Indians* pages 176-208
*** no weekly summary/discussion question due this week!**

12/13: Final Project Due!