

SYLLABUS
CITIZENSHIP, BORDERS, AND BELONGING
ANTH 4310.100
FALL 2025

Professor: Dr. Jara Carrington (she/they)

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00- 12:30 and Wednesdays 12:30-2:00; or by appointment

Office: Sycamore Hall 127

Class meetings: Tu/Th 9:30-10:50

Meeting location: GAB 438

Course Description:

This course focuses on the production and negotiation of practices and beliefs around citizenship, borders, and modes of belonging in the United States. Students will critically examine how intersecting cultural hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and more shape the drawing of lines between insider and outsider; marking which bodies can belong to the United States, and those that cannot. Throughout the course, we will move back and forth between analysis of macro-level immigration and citizenship law, policy, and practice; and deepening our understanding of micro-level, lived experiences of communities in the United States. Putting these different levels of analysis together will help to illuminate the intimate connections between the construction of national borders, the policing of immigration, the distribution of the rights and benefits of citizenship, and the possibilities for national and local forms of belonging. This class brings a variety of sources into conversation with each other, including scholarly/academic articles and books, activists' essays and statements, legal documents, and diverse cultural texts (such as news articles, social media, film, and artistic productions). Doing so will help us to make connections between our academic discussions and current events related to immigration and citizenship in the United States today.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Describe and deconstruct foundational concepts in the study of migration and citizenship
- Critically analyze how historical processes and relationships impact the cultural meanings we attribute to various forms of social difference today
- Describe how intersecting hierarchies of race, gender, sexuality, class, and nationality shape the regulation of immigration and citizenship
- Develop and exercise critical thinking skills in the analysis of migration and citizenship processes and politics in the United States
- Develop and exercise oral and written communication skills

REQUIRED TEXT

All required readings for this course will be available for your downloading pleasure in the Modules section of our Canvas course webpage.

In addition to the required readings, there is a suggested supplemental text which is available online at the UNT library or you can purchase it at the UNT Bookstore. It is called “Decolonizing Anthropology: Undocumented Immigrants and New Directions in Social Science” by Carolina Alonso Bejarano, Marian A. Mijangos García, Lucia López Juárez, and Daniel M. Goldstein. Especially for anthropology students, this text will put into practice many of the ideas and concepts we are learning this semester.

COURSE INFORMATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Names and Pronouns: I will gladly honor your request to call you by a name that differs from school records as well as whatever pronouns you use. I also understand that we grow and change in how we understand ourselves, therefore appropriate name and pronouns can change during the semester. So, please advise me of how to address you whenever you feel comfortable, safe, and ready to do so. You can add pronouns to your Canvas account here <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/How-do-I-select-personal-pronouns-in-my-user-account-as-a/ta-p/456>.

General Information: This course requires considerable reading and writing. Although you do not need a background in anthropological theory or citizenship and migration studies 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, given the political and personal nature of some of the course content, it is important that our class participation maintains respect for the many diverse identities, perspectives, and interpretations our classroom holds. As you participate remember that some topics may be sensitive to class members or cause discomfort. Strive for thoughtful and respectful discussion and conversation.

Note that I do not expect you to agree with all of the perspectives or course materials in order to do well in this class, but I do expect you to approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion, and to use the course materials to complete the course assessments. Feel free to attend office hours, or make an appointment with me to share and discuss questions, concerns, or insights about the course or course material.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class meetings. It is important that you communicate with the professor prior to being absent so that you and I can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals.

Class Participation: This class relies on the intellectual commitment and *active* participation of all students. Active participation goes beyond merely showing up for class, and includes but is not limited to: 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. 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. You should bring assigned readings to class each day as we will refer to and utilize them throughout our meetings.

What it Means to Read: In completing the readings, I expect that you read the texts critically. This does not mean trying to find fault with the text, but rather to approach each text with an eye to the assumptions, claims, and conclusions of the authors. In other words, I expect you to derive from your reading not only the basic content of the materials, but also the ways in which these authors understand and work with broader concepts relevant to this course (i.e. "citizen" and "migrant" as well as "borders," "belonging," "rights" etc.) As the semester progresses, you will be encouraged to put different readings in conversation with each other. As such, my strong suggestion is that you take notes on the materials you read to aid you in this task.

Late work: As a general rule, I do not accept late assignments unless you have received my approval. However, if you think you will miss a deadline for a reason other than a documented medical excuse or family emergency, 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, writing about 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 your cell phone ringer/vibration prior to coming to class. Students may use laptop computers to take notes and for class purposes only; students checking email, using social media, 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 expects students in our courses to abide by the high ethical standards of practicing professionals within the field of anthropology. The Department does not tolerate cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, or sabotage. This includes the use of unauthorized professional writing/editing services and generative AI for assignments. Students are expected to follow the [American Anthropological Association's code of ethics](http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/): "In their capacity as researchers, anthropologists are subject to the ethical principles guiding all scientific and scholarly conduct. They must not plagiarize, nor fabricate or falsify evidence, or knowingly misrepresent information or its source" (<http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/>).

- The UNT policy on Academic Misconduct defines Cheating as 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 who are suspected of cheating or plagiarism will receive an automatic zero on the assessment.** I also reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT system. In this instance, students will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic “F” in the course. Multiple violations may result in dismissal from the university.
- For additional resources to help with paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism and how to use citations, see the [Department of Anthropology Writing Guide](#). In addition, students are encouraged to make use of the [UNT Writing Center](#).
- For more information on the University’s policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT [Student Academic Integrity policy](#).

Two more points about this:

A) Just don’t do it. Assignments submitted in this course will be run through Turnitin, a web-based resource that compares the text of student submissions to an extensive electronic database and assesses for use of generative AI. Even without that, we will 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 to ask for help on in-text citations, rather than passing off someone else’s work as your own.

B) Cheating/Plagiarism/use of generative AI are also issues related to the politics of citation and representation. When you represent someone else’s thoughts/writing as your own, you are denying them credit for their intellectual work. Especially when authors are women, persons of color, queer, and/or are born outside the United States and Europe, plagiarism is yet another way in which certain 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 with disabilities. If you have or acquire a disability 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.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Basic Needs: You can't learn if you are hungry! UNT has a Food Pantry on campus. Any current UNT student in need can visit the UNT 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.

UNT Learning Center: This resource provides a variety of tutoring services that are open to students for different topics, including one-on-one and group sessions. Check out their website for more information here: <https://learningcenter.unt.edu/tutoring>

UNT Writing Center: The Writing Center provides assistance with any academic writing needs. If you are having troubles with organizing your thoughts, articulating your argument, or just want assistance with in-text citations, this is the resource for you. Find more about their services here: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu>

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.

COURSE EVALUATION

I.	Participation Grade	50 points
II.	Reading Journals with a Twist	180 points
III.	Current Events Presentation	100 points
IV.	Film Analysis	100 points
V.	Digital Ethnography of Belonging	250 points

I. Participation Grade (50 points)

The depth of knowledge produced and learned in this class is dependent on the intellectual commitment and *active* participation of all students. Active participation goes beyond merely showing up for class, and includes but is not limited to: participating in group work, 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. 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. To encourage participation, there will be two participation grades assessed- 25 points at the mid-term and 25 points at the end of the class.

II. Reading Journal Entries with a Twist (30 points each, 180 points total)

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. In order to encourage you to do so, you will be able to earn points by completing six "Reading Journals with a Twist."

In this assignment, you will pair key passages, themes, concepts, or theories from a scholarly reading with other readings from class, popular media examples, news stories, and/or cultural practices. For each submission, you will also provide an original, relevant discussion question. I will utilize the most pertinent discussion questions in our class to help prompt and guide our conversations.

One Reading Journal will be due every two weeks. You can select which reading you would like to focus on within the two-week period. Reading Journal entries should be submitted by 5PM on the day BEFORE THE READING IS ASSIGNED. So, if a reading is assigned for Thursday 9/11, your journal is due by 5PM on Wednesday 9/10.

Each Reading Journal is worth 30 points. Late submissions will not be accepted without proper documentation and permission from the instructor.

For each entry, you will address the following:

1. **Identify Key Textual Elements (12 points):** Write down **6 significant quotes, concepts, theories, or themes** from the scholarly reading that resonate with you. Be sure to provide definitions for any concepts or theories. Include the page number for each entry.
2. **Critical Analysis/Application (12 points):** For each textual element that you have selected, offer a brief analysis or make connections that the reading raised for you. Consider the following questions as you craft your analysis:
 - How do the selected elements relate to the authors' broader argument?
 - How does this element relate to theories or concepts discussed in other readings or class meetings?
 - What parallels or connections do you see between the ideas in this reading and real-world examples such as current events, popular media (film, television, social media, music, literature, etc), or common cultural practices?
3. **Discussion Question (6 points):** Create a discussion question that focuses on the reading. Keep in mind the best discussion questions will be:
 - Open-ended- Questions cannot be answered with yes/no or either/or
 - Answerable- Questions do not require extensive knowledge from outside

the course, and can be answered using knowledge/experience versus speculation

- 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 (100 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, you will research and present a report about a relevant current event that deals with citizenship, borders, or migration. In your presentation, you will consider the relevance of your topic in relation to themes from the class, and you will explain the event's significance by using at least two concepts/theories from our required readings. Good current event sites include television or film, news media, social media, art, music, domestic or international events, law and policy, or activist organizations/campaigns.

In the second week of class, you will sign up to give a short, **8-10 minute oral presentation** that will take place at the beginning of class on the day you select. In your presentation you will want to:

1. Identify and provide a brief description/summary of your Current Event
2. **Explain this event's cultural significance and relevance to course content using at least two concepts or theories from your required readings. That is, I want to see you make a connection between your selected Current Event and two concepts or theories discussed by one of our authors in the required readings.**
3. Offer your very insightful and critical analysis of the topic/materials
4. Create and use visual aids such as PowerPoint or Google slides to help convey information to the audience
5. Provide in-text citations and a references cited page

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

IV. Film Analysis (100 points)

This assignment explores the concept of citizenship, focusing on how it extends beyond legal status to include cultural, social, and personal dimensions. In your analysis you will take into account how factors such as identity, belonging, rights, and responsibilities shape individuals' experiences as individuals and/or citizens. The analysis should be 500-600 words.

Your analysis should address the following points:

- Brief summary of the film/major themes
- Cultural Context: How does the film reflect the cultural and historical contexts in which they are set?

- Identity and Belonging: How do characters struggle with or embrace their identities as citizens and/or migrants? How does their sense of belonging or alienation shape their actions?
- Citizenship: How does the film challenge or reproduce traditional notions of citizenship? How is the lived experience of citizenship (or lack thereof) shaped by cultural, social, and political forces?
- Anthropological Relevance: How do the themes or experiences in this film relate to course content? Incorporate at least two scholarly sources from our required reading list to support your analysis.

Please include in-text citations and a references page

A list of possible films will be provided, but you are also welcome to suggest ideas to me!

V. Final Project: Digital Ethnography of Belonging

Digital spaces are increasingly central to how people imagine, contest, and experience citizenship and borders. Hashtags, memes, online campaigns, government portals, and activist platforms all shape narratives of belonging and exclusion. In this assignment, you will conduct a mini digital ethnography to analyze how citizenship and borders are represented, negotiated, and reimagined online.

Select one digital space to explore. Examples include (but are not limited to): a hashtag or social media account, a government website or online application portal for citizenship/visas, a migrant or refugee support organization's social media page, online news comment sections about citizenship/migration/borders, or a digital activist campaign or online art project.

You will gather a small set of digital artifacts (6-10 posts, images, memes, tweets, screenshots, short videos, website pages, etc.) to create your own "archive." As you collect items, consider keeping fieldnotes to document: What drew you to this space? How are people interacting with it? What emotions, identities, or political claims are being expressed? What silences or exclusions are present?

For your submission, you will submit (1) your digital "archive" and (2) write an analytical essay that is 1250-1500 words that addresses the following components:

1. Contextualizes your digital archive with anthropological scholarship on citizenship, borders, and belonging by making use of at least **3 scholars or scholarly concepts/theories** from the **required reading list**
2. Analyzes the artifacts you collected and the archive as a whole. To help you with your analysis, consider the following questions:
 - What stories about citizenship, borders, and/or belonging are being told by these artifacts and/or the archive you created?

- How are belonging and exclusion represented in the artifacts and the archive you created?
- Who created the artifacts and what audience are they intended for?
- How do the artifacts circulate? Where are they seen or not seen/hidden?
- What do the artifacts DO socially, politically, emotionally?
- How does the artifact and/or the archive you created reflect, reproduce, and/or challenge systems of power, exclusion, recognition, or mobility?
- What role do digital media play in shaping public imagination and policy discourse?

***A Note on Paper Formatting: All assignment submissions 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. MLA, APA, Chicago), but you must be consistent. If you do not know what I am talking about here, please, please, please ask me or check out the UNT writing lab for help.**

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.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

PART I: INTRODUCTION

- 8/19: Welcome to the class, no required readings
- 8/21: 1. Leo Chavez Op-ed for LA Times "We've Weaponized Immigration Rhetoric, from Chain Migration to Dreamers"
<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-chavez-chain-migration-20180131-story.html>
2. Mae M. Ngai Op-ed for New York Times "Immigration's Border-Enforcement Myth"
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/28/opinion/immigrations-border-enforcement-myth.html>
**no reading journal with a twist due*

PART II: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK: HISTORIES AND THEORIES OF IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES

- 8/26: Eithne Luibhéid. 2002. "Entry Denied: A History of US Immigration Control" Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 8/28: Mae M. Ngai. 2004. "The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 and the Reconstruction of Race in Immigration Law" Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- 9/2: 1. Douglas Massey and Karen Pren. 2012. Unintended Consequences of US Immigration Policy: Explaining the Post-1965 Surge from Latin America. Population and Development Review 38(1): 1-29.
- 9/4: 1. Jason De León. 2015. "Prevention through Deterrence." The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail. Oakland: University of California Press.
2. Leo Chavez. 1992/2012. "Roots of Mexican Migration in the 21st Century" Shadowed Lives: Undocumented Immigrants in American Society" Belmont: Cengage Publishers.
- 9/9: TH Marshall. 1950/1999. "Citizenship and Social Class" in Inequality and Society. Jeff Manza and Michael Sauder (eds). New York: WW Norton and Co. Press.
- 9/11: Linda Bosniak. 2006. "Divided Citizenships." The Citizen and the Alien: Dilemmas of Contemporary Membership. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- 9/16: Renato Rosaldo. 1994. Cultural Citizenship and Education. *Cultural Anthropology* 9(3): 402-411.

PART III: THEORIZING BORDERS, SOVEREIGNTY, AND "THE NATION"

- 9/18: 1. Walter Mignolo. 2005. "The Americas, Christian Expansion, and the Modern/Colonial Foundation of Racism" *The Idea of Latin America*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. **Read pgs. 1-15.**
2. Benedict Anderson. 1983/2002. *Selection from Imagined Communities*. London: Verso Books. Pgs. 67-82
- 9/23: E.J. Hobsbawm. 1992. "Introduction" in *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2nd Ed. Cambridge University Press.
- 9/25: Yarimar Bonilla. 2017. Unsettling Sovereignty. *Cultural Anthropology* 32(3): 330-339
- 9/30: 1. Leo R. Chavez. 2008. "The Latino Threat Narrative" *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
2. Is the Border Crisis an Invasion? Op-ed *The Hill*, 2022
- 10/2: Josiah Heyman. 2004. Ports of Entry as Nodes in the World System. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*. 11(3): 303-327.
- 10/7: Horng-luen Wang. 2004. Regulating Transnational Flows of People: An Institutional Analysis of Passports and Visas as a Regime of Mobility. *Global Studies in Culture and Power* 11: 351-376.
- 10/9: Leo R. Chavez. 2001. "Toward a Framework for Reading Magazine Covers." *Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

PART IV: RETHINKING CITIZENSHIP AND BELONGING

- 10/14: Aihwa Ong. 1996. Cultural Citizenship as Subject Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States. *Current Anthropology* 37(5): 737-751.
- 10/16: Adelaida R. Del Castillo. 2002. Illegal Status and Social Citizenship: Thoughts on Mexican Immigrants in a Postnational World. *Aztlán* 27(2): 11-32.
Mai Ngai. 2021. "Racism has always been a part of the Asian American Experience" *The Atlantic*

- 10/21: Angela Stuesse. 2016. "Southern Fried: Globalization and Immigrant Transformations." In *Scratching Out a Living: Latinos, Race, and Work in the Deep South*. Oakland: University of California Press. Pgs. 1-24
- 10/23: Ruth Gomberg-Munoz. 2016. *The Juarez Wives Club: Gendered Citizenship and US Immigration Law*. *American Ethnologist* 43(2): 339-352
- 10/28: Leti Volpp. 2015. *The Indigenous as Alien*. 5 UC Irvine Law Review 289
- 10/30: Heide Castañeda. 2019. "Estamos Encerrados: Im/mobilities in the Borderlands." *Borders of Belonging: Struggle and Solidarity in Mixed-Status Immigrant Families*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- 11/4: Christina Getrich. 2013. Too Bad I'm Not an Obvious Citizen: The Effects of Racialized US Immigration Enforcement Practices on Second-Generation Mexican Youth. *Latino Studies* 11(4): 462-482.

PART V: ACTIVISMS

- 11/6: Gloria Anzaldúa. 1987. *Selections from Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Aunt Lute Press.
- 11/11: Megan E. Morrissey. 2013. A DREAM Disrupted: Undocumented Migrant Youth Disidentifications with US Citizenship. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication* 6(2): 145-162.
- 11/13: Marco Saavedra. 2020. "The Mis-education of the Migrant." In *Eclipse of Dreams: The Undocumented Led Struggle for Freedom* by Pedro Santiago Martinez, Claudia Muñoz, Mariela Nuñez-Janes, Stephen Pavy, Fidel Castro Rodriguez, and Marco Saavedra (eds.). Oakland: AK Press.
- 11/18: Kristin Elizabeth Yarris. 2021. ICE Offices and Immigration Courts: Accompaniment in Zones of Illegality. *Human Organization* 80(3): 214-223.
- 11/20: Maile Arvin. 2015. Sovereignty will not be Funded: 'Good' Indigenous Citizenship in Hawai'i's Nonprofit Industrial Complex. *S&F Online* 13.2.
- 11/24-30: **NO CLASS, HOLIDAY BREAK**
- 12/2: Class Presentation- Analysis of one artifact for archive, discuss concept for full archive
- 12/9: **Final Projects Due by 11:59PM**