

**ANTH 5620.200 and ANTH 4601.100, ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION
Fall 2025**

MWF 1:00pm-1:50pm, Language 204

Instructor: Dr. Mariela Nuñez-Janes (profe)

E-mail: Mariela.Nunez-Janes@unt.edu

Phone: 940-369-7663

Office hours: Mondays 2-4pm CST and by appointment. Sycamore 131. To sign up for office hours or to request appointments outside of office hours please go to the "Introduction" module in Canvas and find the page "meeting with Profe."

DESCRIPTION This class will introduce issues and approaches relevant to the study of education within the field of anthropology. The course is divided into two analytical sections. The first section provides an introduction to anthropological concepts and anthropological methods used in the study of education and schooling. This section examines the relation between anthropology and education by emphasizing the significance of cultural transmission. The second section is devoted to an examination of cultural transmission and appropriate approaches. In this section, you will be exposed to works in the field of anthropology of education that examine cultural difference, minority status, learning and policy. The third and last section of the course will emphasize application. This section will highlight interventions related to current and relevant educational "problems."

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the relation between anthropology and education.
- Recognize the major approaches used by educational anthropologists
- Use the theoretical insights and methodological tools of educational anthropology to create a research project

You will be able to achieve these objectives through various course assignments. Class activities, discussions, and reading journals will prepare you to recognize, explain, and use the content of lessons and class readings. The Research project assignments will allow you to use your critical thinking and apply the theoretical insights and tools of educational anthropology to a particular topic of your choosing.

REQUIRED READINGS (UNT Bookstore)

- Levinson, Bradley and Mica Pollock. 2011. *A Companion to the Anthropology of Education*. Malden: Wiley Blackwell.
- Additional readings in Canvas

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Class attendance and participation (5 points each day)
- Leading class discussion (50 points)
 - Undergraduates will lead discussion with a graduate student at least once during the semester.
 - Graduate students will lead discussion at least twice during the semester with an undergraduate student.
- Reading journal (50 points each entry)
 - Graduate students: In addition to the assigned reading your reading journal will also include weekly annotations of a book chapter or journal article of your choosing.
- Community project journal (20 points each entry)
- Community project infographic and power point (100 points each entry)

ASSIGNMENTS

1) Class attendance and participation (5 points each day) This is seminar style class and participation is essential. Read each article/chapter for the day's lesson and be ready to participate in the class discussion.

2) Leading class discussion (50) You will use the assigned readings to lead discussion in class on a that of your choosing. You will prepare questions/activities to raise during the class discussion. Your discussion questions/activities should help the class think about both the content and the application the class reading for your selected discussion day. Graduate students will lead the class discussion at least twice during the semester with an undergraduate student as a discussion partner. Undergraduates will lead discussion at least once during the semester.

2) Reading Journal (50 points) The reading journal will consist of your answers to questions about the weekly readings. The questions will be posted in Canvas. You must submit your answers to the assignment drop box. You should use Word Document or Google Doc to answer the reading journal questions.

3) Community Project Journal (10 points each) Submit a short reflection of your community project volunteer activities in the form of a video journal entry on Canvas (no longer than 2.30 minutes). You are asked to commit to volunteering at least 2 hours per week. Please use the following listening guide and include your responses in your recorded reflection: 1) what you did/what types of questions you were asked 2) preferred language 3) how long you volunteered, when, how many calls you answered 3) note anything that was puzzling or surprising 4) note any takeaways, lessons learned or solutions provided.

4) Community Project Infographic and Power Point (100 points): As a final semester project you will create an Infographic and a power point with recorded audio. The infographic is intended to summarize in a compelling and easy to digest format the information you gathered from your involvement with the homework hotline combined with what you learned from the class readings and discussions. You can use Canva to help you find free design templates. The power point is intended to describe, explain, and discuss in more detail, using slides and a recorded explanation, the information you included in the infographic. Your infographic must include the following: 1) the types of questions you answered as a volunteer for the homework hotline, 2) your hours of involvement and number of calls you answered 3) lessons learned that can serve as suggestions for the future 4) ideas from the class that related to what you did, the lessons learned, and/or the questions you answered as a volunteer. Use our class readings (make sure you cite your references using the Chicago Manual of Style Author-Date citation format).

FALL 2025 COMMUNITY PROJECT

The pandemic has impacted our local communities in myriad ways and has dramatically altered the landscape of the education of language minority youth and other historically marginalized populations. Studies revealed that 1 out of 10 students did not turn in assignments and/or did not respond to teacher outreach when teaching went remote in the Spring of 2020.

While crises create challenges, they also provide the opportunity to think and act in creative ways. We view this as a generative opportunity for schools and teachers to tap into these same students' (and their families') rich funds of linguistic and cultural knowledge that are oftentimes disregarded in our curriculums. We are hopeful that culturally relevant teaching processes can foment high engagement and curricular openings for those students who were already being left behind in face-to-face learning formats.

At Texas Woman's University (TWU) and the University of North Texas (UNT) we are committed to social justice and equity pedagogies and have partnered with the Bilingual/ESL Department in Denton ISD (DISD) on a project to address these inequities through a culturally relevant service learning and community engagement opportunity: the Homework/Mentoring Hotline. The purpose of this Homework/Mentoring Hotline is to partner pre-service teachers (PSTs) and other students from TWU and UNT with K-12 students and their families in DISD and provide support with homework and other school-related questions over the phone and/or in a virtual setting. The goals of the Homework Hotline are the following:

- critically listen to families and students and offer academic and social support in and around remote learning
- develop a trusting and consistent relationship with families and students
- offer mentoring about the path to college while also positioning themselves as co-learners with families and students

- document their experiences with families and students in online journals; experiences are shared with DISD Bilingual/ESL Department and integrated into PSTs and other students' coursework/evaluation. The journals will be developed based on a listening guide. Students will document the time: date and time spent, family/DISD student preferred language, types of questions asked, answers/solutions provided, ideas for further thought/reflections.
- make connections to key theoretical perspectives in the course
- gain experience in working/learning with families and students through virtual learning spaces
- offer valuable community service to a university school district collaboration in response to a global pandemic.

GRADING AND EXPECTATIONS

I believe that teaching and learning are forms of emancipation and empowerment that require mutual support and collective participation. Attendance is required as your class participation. Late work will not be accepted unless you have a documented excuse (for example, a doctor's note). Please email me if you are unable to turn in an assignment by the deadline so that we can discuss your individual circumstances.

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

100-89% = A; 88-79% = B; 78-69% = C;
68 -59% = D; 58% or below = F

I will return your graded assignments to you within about a week of their due date. You should expect responses to emails, phone calls, or other inquiries directed to me within 48 hours.

Use of GenAI

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the [Student Academic Integrity policy](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>).

Canvas Announcements and Other Class Materials

I will periodically share announcements on Canvas about reminders and updates relevant to the class. Supplementary class materials will be posted on Canvas. These are indicated in the course outline.

A NOTE ABOUT LEARNING DURING UNPRECEDENTED TIMES (adapted from Dr. Jason Tham)

The COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges and suffering of people in our own country and around the world continue. As we try to navigate, manage, and survive during these times of injustice, persecution, joblessness, homelessness, sickness, and death we have the opportunity to come together in this class. We are a learning community and as part of this community our engagement as individuals in this collective space should be guided by the following principles:

People are the priority. Educational institutions claim that students and teachers are their top priority, yet the holistic wellbeing of students and educators is ultimately demonstrated by actions and practices that clearly and uncompromisingly prioritize the people most impacted by them. As participants in the process of teaching and learning we should remember to put people first by practicing the ideas we will learn about in this class with empathy and compassion. We must remember to engage each other with our minds as well as our hearts as *sentipensantes*, human beings whose humanity is deeply connected to our ability to think and feel.

Stay informed. We will seek reliable sources of information to stay informed about developments related to the pandemic and to local and global social injustices. We will use this to make informed personal and professional decisions.

Celebrate accomplishments. We will celebrate and mark our collective class accomplishments and the individual accomplishments significant to you. Any kind of achievement during an uncertain time is a testament to your ability to persevere and our collective ability to do it together.

Take time to thrive. It is important that individually and collectively we take time to take care of our minds, bodies, and spirits. If you are not feeling well and struggling to do the work for this class, tell me so we can come up with alternatives. Do not push yourself beyond your limits; invest in self-care and self-preservation. Take time to do things that nurture your body, mind, and soul.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Withdrawal: Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure which YOU must initiate (for a “W” or “WF,” as determined by the instructor, with instructor approval). If you simply stop attending and do not withdraw, you will receive a performance grade, usually an “F.”

Department Policy on Student Academic Integrity: The Department of Anthropology expects its students 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/>).

Students are encouraged to use the [UNT Writing Center](#). 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](#). For information on the University's policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT [Student Academic Integrity policy](#).

Course Policy and Procedures on Student Academic Integrity: Any work not meeting the standards included in the Department of Anthropology's Policy on Student Academic Integrity will be evaluated and subject to either a re-write for partial credit, if the instructor concludes that the assignment was unintentionally plagiarized, or a zero for the assignment will be given. Egregious forms of academic conduct are subject to formal review.

Academic Resources: UNT strives to offer a high-quality education in a supportive environment where you can learn, grow, and thrive. As a faculty member, I am committed to supporting you, and I want to remind you that UNT offers a range of mental health and wellness services to help maintain balance and well-being. Utilizing these resources is a proactive way to support your academic and personal success. To explore campus resources designed to support you, check out [mental health services](#) (<https://clear.unt.edu/student-support-services-policies>), visit unt.edu/success, and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

ADA Policy: The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To request accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course. You can request accommodations at any time, but it's important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodations can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](#) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>).

Texas Senate Bill 17, the recent law that prohibits certain programs at public colleges and universities in Texas, does not in any way affect content, instruction or discussion in a course at public colleges and universities in Texas. Expectations and academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered post-SB 17. See the [UNT System Senate Bill 17 Guidance](#) for additional information.

Other Help: The anthropology department's undergraduate adviser is Melissa Nelson. If you have any problems or questions related to academic advising, please email her at: Melissa.Nelson@unt.edu The anthropology department's Graduate Programs Coordinator is Teresa Muro. Graduate students can reach out to her with administrative and technical questions, Teresa.muro@unt.edu

Note: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of this course or syllabus.

COURSE OUTLINE

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
Week 1, Lesson 1 8/18, 8/20, 8/22	Welcome and Introduction	• Review syllabus • Review “Homework Hotline” Canvas module • Complete DISD background check and volunteer availability • Sign up to lead discussion • Read Introduction in Levinson and Pollock • Reading journal due 8/22
Week 2, Lesson 2 8/25, 8/27, 8/29	Anthropology and Culture	• Read Ch 1 in Levinson and Pollock • Read Ch 2 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 8/25 and 8/27 • Reading journal due 8/29
Week 3, Lesson 3 9/1, 9/3, 9/5	Culture and Education	• LABOR DAY on 9/1, NO CLASS • Read Ch 3 in Levinson and Pollock • Read Ch 6 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 9/3 and 9/5 • Reading journal due 9/5
Week 4, Lesson 4 9/8, 9/10, 9/12	Culture and Education Continued	• Read Ch 7 in Levinson and Pollock

		• Reach Ch 8 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 9/8 and 9/10 • Reading journal due 9/12 • Community project journal due 9/12
Week 5, Lesson 5 9/15, 9/17, 9/19	Studying Educational Settings	• Read Spindler and Spindler in Canvas • Read Anderson, Herr, and Nihlen in Canvas • Students lead discussion 9/15 and 9/17 • Reading journal due 9/19 • Community project journal due 9/19
Week 6, Lesson 6 9/22, 9/24, 9/26	Cultural Differences	• Read Ch 9 in Levinson and Pollock • Read Ch 12 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 9/22 and 9/24 • Reading journal due 9/26 • Community project journal due 9/26
Week 7, Lesson 7 9/29, 10/1, 10/3	Cultural Differences Continued	• Read Ch 13 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 9/29 and 10/1 • Reading journal due 10/3 • Community project journal due 10/3
Week 8, Lesson 8 10/6, 10/8, 10/10	The Nation-State and Education	• Read Ch 18 in Levinson and Pollock

		• Read Ch 21 in Levinson and Pollock • Look at the module “the nation-state and education” read about the nation-state and reflect on “what I learned about my nation-state” • Students lead discussion 10/6 and 10/8 • Reading journal due 10/10 • Community project journal due 10/10
Week 9, Lesson 9 10/13, 10/15, 10/17	Roles, Experiences, and Institutions	• Read Ch 23 in Levinson and Pollock • Read Ch 25 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 10/13 and 10/15 • Reading journal due 10/17 • Community project journal due 10/17
Week 10, Lesson 10 10/20, 10/22, 10/24	Roles, Experiences and Institutions Continued	• Read Ch 26 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 10/20 and 10/22 • Reading journal due 10/24 • Community project journal due 10/24
Week 11, Lesson 11 10/27, 10/29, 10/31	Policy	• Read Ch 22 in Levinson and Pollock • Read Ch 27 in Levinson and Pollock • Students lead discussion 10/27 and 10/29

		• Reading journal due 10/31 • Community project journal due 10/31
Week 12 11/3, 11/5, 11/7	Lessons from our Community Project	• We will work on coding and analyzing community project journals • Community project journal due 11/7
Week 13 11/10, 11/12, 11/14	Lessons from our Community Project	• We will continue working on coding and analyzing community project journals • Community project journal due 11/14
Week 14 11/17, 11/19/11/20	Final project drafting	• We will begin drafting the final project • No class 11/19 and 11/20. Profe will be at AAA
Week 15 11/24, 11/26, 11/28	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Week 16 12/1, 12/3	Present final project	• Present final projects on 12/1 and 12/3 • Last day of class is 12/3 • Final project due 12/8