

Peoples & Cultures of South Asia
Anthropology 3700
Fall 2025

Time: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00-9:50

Place: Chemistry 352

Instructor: Dr. Andrew Nelson

Office: Sycamore Hall 104C

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-12; 10-11 open “coffee hours”; 11-12, [book an appointment](#)

E-Mail: andrew.nelson@unt.edu

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

Course Description:

This course covers the cultural region of South Asia, which includes the countries of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and occasionally Afghanistan, Tibet, and Burma, as well as the large South Asian diaspora around the world. From an anthropological perspective, we survey the contributions of South Asian societies to our understandings of the world, countries, cities, communities, and notions of self. In addition to reading academic texts, students will gain an appreciation for the region through films, literary fiction, and blogs.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course, the learner will be able to:

- Discuss the ideas for social living that have emerged from South Asia.
- Locate these ideas in their historical and cultural context.
- Consider how these ideas might reframe our assumptions about social life.

Required Texts: None

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

Course Requirements:

I. Readings & Lectures

Students are expected to complete all readings before class.

II. Attendance & Participation

Students are expected to attend and participate in class. Attendance and participation will contribute to 15% of your final grade.

III. Guthi submissions

Each Wednesday, in “guthi groups” students will cooperatively produce and submit small assignments. These assignments account for 18% of final grade.

IV. History and Geography test

After Unit I, students will take a test based on the history and geography of South Asia. It will account for 15% of the final grade.

V. Unit Assignments

There will be three assignments at the end of units II, III, and IV. Assignments will consist of different formats—worksheets, short essays, or creative explorations based on course material. Each assignment will be scored out of 100 points. Altogether, the three assignments will contribute to 30% of the final grade, or 10% for each one.

VI. Final Project

In guthi groups, students will produce final ethnographic portraits of Denton’s South Asian food trucks that applies course material and concepts. Each student will be graded for individual work. It will be worth 20%.

VII. Core Assessment

At the end of the course, students will answer two questions that address the University Core Assessment guidelines.

Grade

Type of Work	Percentage of Final Grade
Attendance & Participation	15%
Guthi submissions	18%
History and Geography Test	15%
3 Unit Assignments	30%
Final Project	20%
Core assessment	2%

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

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D

Course & University Policies

Late Coursework

Late coursework will not be accepted over email. Requests for extensions must be made before the due date. Late work will only be accepted for credit if accompanied by a note from a medical professional attesting to your inability to complete it. No other exceptions will be considered.

Academic Honesty

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](#): "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](#).

ODA

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at anytime, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website](#) (<https://disability.unt.edu/>).

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether

the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students>) to learn more.