

History 4900.001
Special Problems
Fall 2025 | August 18, 2025 – December 12, 2025

Instructor

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 9am-11am; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00am-11:00am & 12:30pm-1:00pm on the Frisco Campus or via Zoom

Course Description

This is a Research Capstone Project for students in Latino & Latin American Studies. Students will engage in an independent research project where they will focus on the research process, communicate their research findings, and plan future directions for their research projects in-process. Students will complete a formal letter that communicates their topic of interest and preliminary research interests and a white paper of 1,500 to 2,000 words, excluding bibliography. They can work directly with the LMAS director, or they can work on this project with a professor that they have already had or that they are currently taking. However, the project must be independent. This means that the project cannot be done as part of another class assignment. It can be an extension of a previous project, but the final product must be different enough to warrant credit.

Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

Students must have consent from the department to enroll in this course.

History 4900 Course Learning Outcomes

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

- Develop a deep understanding of a specific topic related to Latino or Latin American studies.
- Conduct independent research using appropriate methodologies and academic sources.
- Apply critical thinking to analyze topics such as race, migration, politics, culture, or identity within the Latino/Latin American context.
- Develop an understanding of research as a process with several milestones.
- Design future directions for their research and ways they would like to implement or share their research.

Communication Expectations

During office hours, my priority is answering your questions and responding to your emails. If you email me during our office hours, I will respond right away. Outside of office hours, you may still contact me, but I will respond to emails within a 24-hour period. I may not respond to emails over the weekend.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. However, any changes I make will not be substantial, and I will communicate fully with you and give you ample time to prepare.

Course Assignments

Research Topic Introduction Memo (30 Points)

Students will compose a memo addressed to the instructor. In this memo, students will introduce themselves and their research topic. Students should demonstrate what they already know about the topic and specify what research questions they will seek to answer during the semester. The memo should be written in a professional tone yet may make direct reference to the addressee (you) and the researcher (I). In other words, students may write in first person.

White Paper (60 Points)

Students will complete a white paper for this class. A white paper in the humanities is often written and delivered after a researcher has completed a research project that was funded by an organization or agency. For our class, we will use the white paper guidelines established by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The white paper is a report where the researcher describes their research topic and provides a narrative of their findings. The white paper will include the following sections: Project summary, Research Questions and Goals, Research Activities, Research Outcomes, Project Impact, Future Directions and Long-Term Goals. The White Paper will include a bibliography of all the primary and secondary sources students consulted.

Progress Check-ins (5 Points each, 2 meetings, 10 points total)

Students will meet with their instructor twice over the semester to discuss the student's progress. Students may schedule more meetings if necessary.

Grading Breakdown and Scale

Research Topic Memo:	30 points
White Paper:	60 points
Progress Check-ins:	10 points
Total Points Possible:	100 Points

90-100 =	A
80 – 89 =	B
70 –79 =	C
60 – 69 =	D
59 or less =	F

Time Management, Communication, and Late Work

I understand that we may fail to meet a due date, or life may simply happen, and forces outside of our own control will cause us to miss a submission date. In order to practice compassion and understanding and to emphasize learning, not just of the course content but of important life skills necessary to be successful at the university, late work will be accepted. However, students must contact the instructor with a proposed due date. This extension is subject to the approval of the instructor.

Academic Dishonesty and AI Usage

Academic dishonesty, according to UNT's "Student Academic Integrity" policy, includes the intentional and unintentional engagement in cheating, plagiarism, and the facilitation of academic misconduct, to name a few. Students who are suspected to be engaging in such activities may face receiving a failing grade on an assignment, failing the course, or being reported to the dean of students.

Additionally, with the rise of generative AI, I understand that you will use such tools in various writing activities both in and out of the classroom. I will therefore support your understanding of the uses, ethics, and limitations of generative AI tools. This technology has many abilities and also limitations; its use requires research skills, critical thinking, and digital literacy. Therefore, you may use AI tools in this class provided that you acknowledge your use through citation and annotation. The following is a template for citing your use of generative AI:

Chat-GPT-3. (YYYY, Month DD of query). "Text of your query." Generated using OpenAI.
<https://chat.openai.com/>.

Additionally, I will expect you to describe in your own words the strategies and techniques you used to compose with AI tools in a descriptive annotation of 3-5 sentences following your citation. Even if you use Grammarly to proofread your assignment, please provide a citation and brief note as the AI-Detection software cannot distinguish between AI-Generated content and softwares. Be as specific as possible in your annotation. It is your responsibility to be transparent and proactive. Both citation and annotation are required. Failure to acknowledge your use of AI tools through citation and transparency through a descriptive annotation will result in an automatic 0 for academic dishonesty. ***Students in this class may only use generative AI to brainstorm, research, and outline for their assignments as well to proofread and edit their work.***

Example of a citation and annotation:

Chat-GPT-3. (2025, May 1). "What is the historical context for Christopher Columbus's voyage journals?." Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>.

I asked ChatGPT for help understanding the historical context surrounding Columbus's document. I read its answer and checked for accuracy using American Yawp. Then, I used ChatGPT's response to help me write my historical context section.

Course Evaluation

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course. I will alert you to when SPOT evaluations will be opening.

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. If you are found to have plagiarized, cheated on an exam, or assisted someone else in cheating, you will receive a zero on the assignment.

(See: <http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm#Plagiarism>). More information on academic integrity can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog.

ADA Policy

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 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 [ODA website \(https://disability.unt.edu/\)](https://disability.unt.edu/).

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Emergency Notification & 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.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

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://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at

SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oco@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website \(http://www.ecfr.gov/\)](http://www.ecfr.gov/). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

- (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.

- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically-Delivered Courses

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via video conference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.
2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Example: This course employs lecture capture technology to record class sessions. Students may occasionally appear on video. The lecture recordings will be available to you for study purposes and may also be reused in future course offerings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.

Academic Support & Student Services

Student Support Services

Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Chosen Names

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- [UNT Records](#)

- [UNT ID Card](#)
- [UNT Email Address](#)
- [Legal Name](#)

*UNT euIDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.

Pronouns

Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can [add your pronouns to your Canvas account](#) so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

- [What are pronouns and why are they important?](#)
- [How do I use pronouns?](#)
- [How do I share my pronouns?](#)
- [How do I ask for another person's pronouns?](#)
- [How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?](#)

Additional Student Support Services

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)

[Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

Tentative Schedule

Week	Dates	Assignments and Due Dates
1	August 18 – August 23	
2	August 25-August 30	
3	September 1 – September 6	
4	September 8 – September 13	
5	September 15 – September 20	Progress Check-in #1: Meet with the instructor before Friday September 19, 2025.
6	September 22 – September 27	Research Topic Introduction Memo due via email to the instructor by Saturday September 27 before midnight
7	September 29 – October 4	
8	October 6 – October 11	
9	October 13 – October 18	
10	October 20 – October 25	
11	October 27 – November 1	
12	November 3 – November 8	Progress Check-in #2: Meet with the instructor before Friday November 7, 2025
13	November 10 – November 15	
14	November 17 – November 22	

15	December 1 – December 6	
Finals Week	December 8 – December 13	White Paper due via email to the instructor by Thursday December 11 before midnight