

SYLLABUS
ANTH 4300.400
MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
MAYTERM 2026

Instructor: Dr. Jara Carrington

Email: jara.carrington@unt.edu

Office Hours: Zoom or phone by appointment

Instructional Assistant (IA): Itzel Verdin

Email: itzelverdin@my.unt.edu

Office Hours: Zoom or phone by appointment

* Credit: Some of the content within this course was created and designed by Dr. Alicia Re Cruz (Department of Anthropology) *

To contact the Instructor or the Instructional Assistant, please email us at our email addresses. **Please do not send email through Canvas!** In the subject line of your email, please include the course name or number. We will do our best to respond to your emails in a timely manner. Please allow up to 48 hours for response to your email inquiries.

The Instructor and the Instructional Assistants (IAs) are available by appointment via voice or videoconference. Please email at least 48 hours in advance to schedule an appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Migrants and Refugees! I hope that you will find this course both challenging and rewarding. International migration is a powerful global phenomenon that affects millions of people around the world. The term **displacement**, which refers to the forced movement of individuals or groups, is an important concept in the discussion of international migration. In this course, we will learn about and critically evaluate the multiple, intersecting institutions and processes that shape forms of displacement across the globe. We will consider how international and national law defines and differently treats migrants. In addition, we will examine how political, legal, and social processes influence the lived experience of migrants across the globe.

In this course we will learn an anthropological approach to migration, one that takes into consideration both global processes and the everyday, lived experience on the ground in both sending and receiving countries. To begin, we will learn about international and national structures, policies, and practices of migration; we will consider the construction and maintenance of national borders; and we will survey a variety of theoretical approaches to understanding migration. In the second part of the course, we will turn our focus to the U.S. migration system specifically, and analyze how immigration law and

policy shapes the experience of migrants and citizens alike. In the final section, we will move outside the U.S. to examine specific regional and thematic topics that are relevant to displacement. Throughout, we will also engage with various online and news media sources to learn about contemporary issues related to displacement in the United States and around the world.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Assess and evaluate key concepts about migration, such as displacement, migrant, refugee, and borders
- Apply a cultural anthropological approach to understand migration processes
- Develop and exercise critical thinking skills in the analysis of displacement
- Develop an awareness of the complexity and diversity of cultures and societies within the United States and around the world

REQUIRED READINGS/READING ASSIGNMENTS

All required article and chapter readings for the course will be accessible electronically through Canvas and/or the UNT Libraries for your reading and downloading pleasure.

If you are trying to access a reading that is in an academic journal and the link does not work, all citation information is provided so that you can go through the library search and find it yourself. If that doesn't work, please contact me or your IA for help.

Important Information

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 may suggest opportunities in our course announcements, but also, I am open to creative ideas from you. That is, you can suggest relevant extra credit options you would like to do! Options to earn extra credit include things like: critical analysis of relevant film, television show, book, or song; writing a summary and response to a related talk, lecture, or demonstration that you attend during the semester; or developing a creative piece such as poetry or artwork. For all of these options, you will be asked to make use of at least one concept or theme from the course to earn credit. You must get approval from me ahead of time for your choice, so check with me before you do the work.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND 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](#): "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, plagiarism, or unauthorized use of generative AI 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, I 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.

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 HELP/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>

NEED ACADEMIC HELP/ASSISTANCE? UNT IS HERE FOR YOU!

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 PRIVACY POLICY: <https://www.instructure.com/policies/privacy>

CANVAS ACCESSIBILITY POLICY: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2061-accessibility-within-canvas>

NAVIGATING THE COURSE

Some students find online courses daunting or confusing, but this course is designed to be straightforward and user-friendly. Everything that you turn in is through Canvas.

EVERY DAY:

1. Look for any new announcements
2. Open the Lesson that corresponds with the day of class
3. Read through the Lesson as well as work through any links to online content, including websites, videos, or other files
4. Complete the Reading Assignment
5. Complete the Assignments due for that Lesson

EVALUATION AND EXPECTATIONS

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course requires significant 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 (I don't agree with everything our authors might say!) but I do expect you to a) approach these topics in an open, anthropological, and intellectual fashion and b) use course content and the provided class resources to complete assignments, exams, and your final paper. Comments that are disrespectful to your classmates and/or myself will not be tolerated.

GRADES

There are no exams in this course. However, this course does help you to develop and practice skills important to anthropologists, including written and oral communication, research, and critical thinking.

CALCULATING YOUR GRADE

A total of 660 points are available in this class. To calculate your grade at any given moment, you divide the number of points you have received by the number of points possible to that moment.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Daily Discussions	(12 discussions x 30 points)	= 360 points
Film Analysis		= 100 points
Final Project: Analytic Memo		= 200 points
Total points		660 points

I. DAILY DISCUSSIONS - 30 POINTS EACH

Many of the points that you are able to earn this semester will come from daily Discussion forums. I believe that education is a collaborative endeavor, and one of the best ways to really *learn* and internalize something is by working out ideas with others. At the end of

each lesson, you will have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the readings, lesson content, and other supplemental sources with your classmates.

For each Discussion, you will create one original post *that includes a discussion question*, and respond to one of your classmates' posts/discussion questions with a response discussion post.

The original discussion post should be 450-600 words, and must include a discussion question for your classmates about the readings or course content for that day. Keep in mind the best discussion questions will be:

1. Open-ended- Questions cannot be answered with yes/no or either/or
2. Answerable- Questions do not require extensive knowledge from outside the course, and can be answered using knowledge/experience versus speculation
3. Substantive and relevant- Questions should be related to a significant point/argument in the course lesson or readings assigned for the day, and should ask us to consider the point/argument in the context of the themes of this course.

In addition, you will craft a response post that replies in a substantive manner to a discussion question posed by one of your classmates. The response post should be at least 150 words.

The two discussion posts will be due by **11:59 pm each day**. Discussion posts will be graded for originality, thoughtfulness, and grammar/organization. Out of the 30 points possible for each Discussion, the original post with a discussion question is worth a total of 20 points, and the response is worth a total of 10 points. **Your lowest discussion score will be dropped.**

Please note that like all other assignments, all discussion posts are checked for the use of generative AI. If a discussion post is determined to be AI generated, it will receive a 0. If you believe that there is an error in a grade you receive, you are welcome to contact me to set a meeting to discuss. Ultimately, it is up to you to demonstrate to me that you created the discussion post on your own/without use of AI assistance.

II. FILM ANALYSIS – 100 POINTS

For this assignment, you will watch and respond to the documentary film “Well Founded Fear” about processes of asylum in the United States. Your summary and analysis of the film must **use at least two relevant anthropological concepts or theories** from the lesson content and/or readings. In order to do this well, you should define/describe the concept and then apply it to the film content.

In your assignment, you will a) summarize the film and its premise or major argument and b) analyze the subject matter of the film using one concept from class. As you watch the film and complete this assignment, please address the following questions:

- What aspects of the U.S. asylum system were highlighted in the film?
- How does the film portray the experiences of asylum seekers?
- How does the film portray the experiences of asylum officers?
- What are major challenges faced by asylum seekers in navigating the U.S. asylum process?
- How does the film explore the political and social factors influencing asylum policy in the U.S.?
- How does the film contribute to our understanding of immigration and asylum issues globally?
- What actions, if any, do you think should be taken based on the issues raised in the film?

You can complete this assignment in either essay or video format. **Essays must be 700-800 words, and videos should be at least 6 minutes.** For both formats, you must cite your sources within the essay/video, and include a reference page. All assignments must be turned in on Canvas. For essay format, papers should be double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all sides.

III. ANALYTIC MEMO ON CURRENT ISSUE OF DISPLACEMENT

This assignment will give you the opportunity to learn more about a specific example of displacement/migration that is interesting to you, and to apply some of the knowledge you have learned in this class to think about that situation.

Imagine that you work for the International Organization for Migration, and your supervisor has asked you to select a specific issue in a specific place that you think is important in relation to displacement. Your task is to conduct research on this topic and to craft a report for your supervisor that 1) explains the issue in understandable terms, 2) argues for why this issue needs attention, and 3) provides resources for more factual information. Note that this should be more than a descriptive effort— it is up to you to collect and synthesize information to be able to describe what is going on and to argue for its relevance.

The analytic memo should be between 1500-1750 words. In it you should provide the following:

- Brief description of the topic/situation
- Historical and cultural context of the topic situation, including root causes. Cite your sources of information in the memo!
- **Define and apply at least two relevant anthropological concepts from lesson content or course readings to describe and analyze the situation**
- Suggestions for potential courses of action, if appropriate
- Provide at least five research-based resources for the decision-maker to learn more about the issue. These can include “country condition” reports, reports published by international refugee or human rights organizations, news updates by watchdog organizations or think tanks, scholarly reports/articles, etc. News articles can be used but do not count towards your five research-based resources.

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

*** Paper Formatting:** All papers 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 and a reference page provided. 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 or do not know how to do this, please, please, please ask the Instructor, your Instructional Assistant, or the UNT writing lab for help.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<i>UNIT 1: Contextualizing Global Migration Processes</i>		
5/11/26 Lesson 1: Introduction to the Course/ Danger of a Single Story	To Read: Syllabus and schedule, familiarize yourself with our Canvas course features	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 1 Discussion and Response Posts
5/12/26 Lesson 2: Introduction to Anthropology of Migration	To Read: 1. AAA Statement on Human Rights 2. Migration Policy Institute "Top 10 Migration Issues of 2025" 3. International Organization for Migration: Key Migration Terms	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 2 Discussion and Response Posts

5/13/26 Lesson 3: Structures of Migration	To Read: 1. UN 1951 Refugee Convention 2. Yarris and Castañeda, "Discourses of Displacement and Deservingness"	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 3 Discussion and Response Posts
5/14/26 Lesson 4: Rethinking Borders in a Globalizing World	To Read: 1. Castañeda "Estamos Encerrados: Im/mobilities in the Borderlands"	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 4 Discussion and Response Posts
5/15/26 Lesson 5: Theorizing Migration: Theoretical Approaches to Migration	To Read: 1. Massey, "Why Does Immigration Occur?"	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 5 Discussion and Response Posts
5/18/26 Lesson 6: Root Causes: The Interplay Between Politics, Economics, and Social Belonging	To Read: 1. Castles, "Why Migration Policies Fail" To Watch: Well-Founded Fear (Film through UNT Libraries, see link in lesson)	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 6 Discussion and Response Posts 2. Film Analysis: Well-Founded Fear
<i>Unit 2: Regulating Immigration/Constructing the U.S. Nation</i>		

5/19/26 Lesson 7: US Immigration Law and the Construction of the Undocumented Immigrant	To Read: 1. Ngai, "Illegal Aliens: A Problem of Law and History"	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 7 Discussion and Response Posts
5/20/26 Lesson 8: Regulating Immigration/Constructing the Nation	To Read: 1. Chavez, "The Latino Threat Narrative" 2. Luibhéid "Entry Denied: A History of U.S. Immigration Control"	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 8 Discussion and Response Posts
5/21/26 Lesson 9: Immigration and the Nation: Race, Gender, and Sexuality	To Read: 1. Donato et al, "A Glass Half Full? Gender in Migration Studies"	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 9 Discussion and Response Posts
<i>Unit 3: Displacement Around the Globe</i>		
5/22/26 Lesson 10: Displacement in Europe	To Read: 1. UNHCR "Ukraine Emergency" 2. Wanner "The War Comes to Us All: Snapshots"	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 10 Discussion Posts and Response Posts

5/25/26	MEMORIAL DAY! NO CLASS!	
5/26/26 Lesson 11: Displacement in Africa	To Read: 1. Human Rights Watch “Questions and Answers on Sudan and the Laws of War” 2. UNHCR “Five Things to Know about the Crisis in Sudan”	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 11 Discussion Posts and Response Posts
5/27/26 Lesson 12: Displacement in Asia	To Read: 1. UNHCR “Rohingya Refugee Crisis Explained” 2. Al Jazeera “Rohingya Campaigners Condemn Myanmar’s ‘Opaque’ Repatriation Plan”	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 12 Discussion and Response Posts
5/28/26 Lesson 13: Displacement in Latin America	To Read: 1. UNCHR “Venezuela Crisis Explained” 2. IOM “Venezuelan Migrants and Refugees Defy Deadly Desert Conditions on their Journey to Chile”	To Turn In: 1. Lesson 13 Discussion and Response Posts

FRIDAY, MAY 29: ANALYTIC MEMO DUE BY 11:59PM!