DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

“Childhood is historically, culturally and socially variable. Children have regarded--and have regarded themselves--in very different ways in different historical periods, in different cultures and in different social groups” (Buckingham, 2000, p. 6)

This course begins with the assumption that no two childhoods are the same, resulting from individual children’s unique sociocultural situatedness as well as the political positions of children broadly within those spaces, from the micro (e.g. home, classroom) to the macro (e.g. curriculum, policy debates). In this course, we will examine the perspectives of children whose identities are impacted by significant matters such as parental incarceration, chronic or terminal illness, disability status, etc. Arguably, these issues are tied also to larger sociopolitical structures that contribute to notions of the children’s ability and competence.

How does a politics of the child impact children’s psychic and material lives, as well as their sense of themselves as agentic, capable, and competent? What are the sociocultural, historical, spatial, temporal, geographic, sonic, aural, etc. dimensions of these childhoods? How do children “experience, understand, and perhaps resist or reshape the complex, frequently contradictory cultural politics that inform their daily lives” (Stephens, 1995, p. 3)? And how can environments and our roles as adults in children’s lives be re-imagined in light of these understandings?
STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

To respond to these questions and others, we will engage widely with texts that are directly and indirectly related to children, childhoods, and child development. Because *children* and *childhoods* are concepts not reserved strictly for the field of ‘early childhood education’, the readings will draw from sociology, anthropology, childhood and youth studies, disability studies, moral philosophy, feminist studies, cultural studies, etc. Through this interdisciplinary engagement with texts, we will grapple with what it means to be a child, particularly in its forms of neurotypical able-bodiedness that are so often valorized in our private and public lives. Though this is a seminar course in which we will spend time together deconstructing and reconstructing concepts through discussions of the texts, it is also a space for experimentation of ideas, practices, and research methods. My hope is that we will spend some of our time out of the classroom, in other spaces, to consider where/how learning takes place and how knowledge gets deployed.

REQUIRED TEXTS


Aside from these books, other articles and chapters will be uploaded to Canvas. You can access Canvas via your my.unt.edu account or [https://unt.instructure.com/](https://unt.instructure.com/)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, I expect that you will each be able to:

1. Study and engage in critical discussions with colleagues around prevailing and contemporary conceptualizations of children and childhoods
2. Interrogate the language and ideas deployed in the service of the remediation and protection of children and childhoods
3. Create and present a multimodal archive of keyword(s) related to constructions of childhood, competence, and ability
4. Critically analyze different sites of childhood to consider the child they invoke
5. Apply post-developmental and contemporary theories of childhood to your own research and/or practice through dialogue, reflection, and experimentation
6. *Imagine otherwise*
COURSE EVALUATION

This is a doctoral level course, and I assume that you are taking this to further your own intellectual project (research, practice, or both). Therefore, I am not applying points to the assignments. In addition to any meetings we have, I will have two meetings with each of you. One will take place in mid-semester to self-evaluate, check in on how you are making sense of the course, and discuss the final project. The second will take place at the end of the semester to discuss your self-evaluation, as well as to what lies ahead for you in your thinking/work.

Please note that the two things that would prevent you from passing this class are: 1) habitual, uncommunicated absences and 2) failure to turn in (and communicate about) assignments. The following are required components of the course:

Processes
- Thoughtful participation in class discussions and experimentations
- Regular updates in class on your Multimodal Keywords Memo
- Mid-semester self-evaluation (one-on-one meeting)
- End of semester self-evaluation (one-on-one meeting)

Products (Assignments)
- Facilitation of a class discussion: Each of you is to structure a discussion of the week’s reading. This includes a provocation to ignite an engagement with an idea or concept from the texts, as well as the preparation of questions for the group to discuss.
- Multimodal keyword(s) project: Develop an ongoing archive with annotated artifacts related to a keyword(s) of interest. This should conclude with a 2-3 paged single-spaced memo that integrates course material and artifact analyses.
- Critical analysis of a site of childhood: Critically analyze a site of childhood. This could be a text (e.g. children’s books), curriculum (e.g. a socio-emotional curriculum), digital space (e.g. YouTube unboxing videos), physical space (e.g. children’s hospital). The possibilities are unlimited, but the page limit is 3-4 single-spaced pages.
- Final project: Create a final project that can take shape in any format (written, multimodal, performative, etc.) that benefits your current and future practice/research. This can be a piece of research, a conceptual piece, a website, an art show, etc. If your final project is more abstract than a written product, include a written reflection. The build-up to this project will include:
  - Statement of purpose: A brief statement of your topic, its significance, and your goals for it. Who is your intended audience? How will it reflect the ideas presented in the course? What form do you expect it to take (e.g. a website, edited video, curriculum, paper, etc.)?
  - A mutually agreed upon mid-term step
  - Analytic memo: Write a 1-page single-spaced memo on constructions of childhood, ability, and competence that are reflected in your topic of study
COURSE CALENDAR
*The instructor reserves the right to change the course calendar, readings, and assignments to meet the needs of the class.

**Readings are in recommended order.

Week 1: January 14, 2019
Orientation / Childhood Studies


Task (due in class): Collect 2-3 artifacts related to children/childhoods to bring to our first class.

Week 2: January 28, 2019
Topic: What child? What adult?


Due Friday, February 1st at 11:59: Select a keyword and send a paragraph of free writing on it to me. What are your initial thoughts on it? How do you conceptualize it currently?
Week 3: February 4, 2019

Topic: Constructions of childhood and youth


**Task (due in class):** Update group on your keyword project (informal)

Week 4: February 11, 2019

Topic: Dis/ability Studies


Watch clip from *Examined Life* of Sunaura Taylor taking a walk with Judith Butler (link in Canvas)
Week 5: February 18, 2019
Topic: Pedagogies of pathologization


Week 6: February 25, 2019
Topic: What children know and how we know they know it


Week 7: March 4, 2019
Topic: What children know and how we know they know it


Task: Student-led discussion with a provocation to start
Due Friday, March 8 by 11:59 p.m.: Statement of purpose for final project
Note: No office hours this week. I will be out of town.
Week 8: March 18, 2019
Topic: Research with children & youth


Watch Voices of Children documentary (25 minutes)

Task: Schedule a time to meet with Tran for mid-semester self-evaluation
Due Friday, March 22 by 11:59 p.m.: Agreed-upon 2nd part of final project preparation

Week 9: March 25, 2019
Topic: Institutional productions of childhood


Task (in class): Student-led discussion with a provocation to start

Week 10: April 1, 2019
Topic: Adults’ roles in children’s lives


Task (in class): Student-led discussion with a provocation to start
Due Friday, April 5 by 11:59 p.m.: Critical analysis of a site of childhood

Week 11: April 8, 2019
Online class due to AERA conference in Toronto


Dretzin, R., & Ephron, J. (2018). Far from the Tree [Film]. New York, NY: Sundance Selects. [I am trying to get this streaming on Kanopy]

Due Monday, April 8th by 11:59 p.m.: Online discussion board posts

Week 12: April 15, 2019
Topic: Metaphors of childhood and disability


Watch Thasya film on Kanopy (link in Canvas)

Task (in class): Student-led discussion with a provocation to start.
Due Friday, April 19 by 11:59 p.m.: Analytic memo for final project due

Week 13: April 22, 2019
Topic: Other ways of knowing and being


**Task (in class):** Student-led discussion with a provocation to start.

**Week 14: April 29, 2019**  
**Topic: Re-imagining childhood spaces**


Watch clip of Martha Nussbaum in The Examined Life (link in Canvas)


**Task (in class):** Student-led discussion with a provocation to start  
**Task:** Schedule final one-on-one meetings with Tran (email self-evaluation)

**Week 15: May 6, 2019**

No class. Final projects due May 6th by 11:59 p.m. Meet with me in one-on-one meetings to go over self-evaluations and final grades.

**NOTES ON THE COURSE**

**Critical dialogue:** The underlying assumption of this course is that childhoods are directly affected by systemic injustice and inequality. With that in mind, we will engage in conversations about race, class, sexuality, gender, religion, etc. that may be personal, ideological, and political. It is my belief that, if we choose to engage in work with children, we are bringing with that our own ideologies about childhood. Because the issues we discuss may
feel personal and/or political, you may find yourself agitated or uncomfortable with content, topics, and/or ideas presented by any one person on the community. This may also include me. Please contact me to discuss any of your discomfort so that we can develop a plan to move forward and engage in productive dialogue about these issues.

**Sensitive material:** Some sensitive material will be covered in this course, including discussions of the carceral state, illness, and death. Please communicate with me if these may act as triggers for you so that I can see about providing additional supports.

**Language around dis/ability:** There have been shifting discourses around how best to refer to individuals with disabilities. While there has been a “person first” movement in which disabled individuals are to be referred to as “a person with [insert disability label]”. This, as determined by many without disabilities, was to emphasize the person first. The question then becomes, what comprises a person? How does said person come to be? As we discuss this idea in class, you will hear me also use the term “disabled person”, for example. As Simi Linton (1998) writes, “Rather than maintaining disability as a secondary characteristic, disabled has become a marker of the identity that the individual and group wish to highlight and call attention to” (p. 13). That is, the disability, for many folks, is part and parcel of the person. See also Matthew Cortland’s tweet: [https://twitter.com/mattbc/status/1080247039441682432?s=11](https://twitter.com/mattbc/status/1080247039441682432?s=11)

**Student hours:** My hours dedicated to students are Monday and Wednesday 2:30 to 5:30 p.m., and my office is in Matthews Hall 206-R. I am also available by appointment. I encourage students to come to discuss questions, concerns, and connections that you may be making (or on the verge of making!) for your own research, practice, and personhood. This is a time to develop our relationship as colleagues and thought partners, and I find that space together personally and intellectually fulfilling. So, please come, but do use my booking site to ease correspondence about scheduling: [https://trantempleton.youcanbook.me/](https://trantempleton.youcanbook.me/) (or email me for alternative times).

**On the nature of texts:** Some of the texts we encounter may seem ‘unrelated’ to children, childhoods, disability, or any of your expectations around what this course would be. This is in part because I believe that, in order to open ourselves up to more ethical possibilities for children’s lives and well-being, we should read widely, experience deeply, and interpret generously. The other is to meet the various needs of individuals in this particular class (Spring 2019). I would like for us to consider how our disparate fields of interest actually converge around similar concepts and ideas that are taken up in multiple ways.

**Tips for reading:** Some of the readings may be denser than others, and the expectation is not for you to be able to understand all of it (or in some cases, any of it) on your first reading. The purpose of our course is to break down concepts together and to relate them to our own areas of study. In some cases, these are also my first deep readings of the texts so I am right there with you in making sense of the ideas. Here are some suggestions for you as you go about this course:
- **Just keep going.** Don’t get bogged down in what every word or sentence means. Reading deeply is a process of meaning-making; you may find elucidation of concepts if you just keep reading as well as later during discussions with colleagues.
- **Engage with the text.** Take margin notes as though you and the text were in a relationship. Ask it questions, comment on it, express to it your delight and confusion.
- **Talk to someone about it.** Make sense of the reading through telling someone about it. Even if you can’t fully articulate it, even if you stumble over the right words to use, just talk it out.
- **Annotate the reading.** When you finish, write 2-3 sentences about it. I write directly on the text. What did you get from that reading? What questions do you have about it?

**IMPORTANT DATES**

Please refer to the following website for registration, drop, pass/fail, etc. dates for the accelerated online program: https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-8-week-sessions

01/14: First day of class
01/29: Last day to drop without penalty
02/22: Last day to change to pass/fail
03/11 – 03/17: Spring Break
04/01: Last day to drop the course
04/19: Last day to withdraw
04/29: Final day of class (with finals week following until 05/10)

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Canvas:** We will use Canvas as the platform for the course. It is your responsibility to check Canvas for the readings, which will be uploaded there unless it is one of the books you’ve chosen from the list. I frequently make revisions, based on the needs of the class. Those revisions will be announced on Canvas, and the appropriate changes will be made to the module.

**Class Participation:** Because this is a small seminar group, it is expected that you come to class ready to contribute to discussions about the readings, your connections, and any other texts that are assigned. Your contributions are important and valuable as learning is a social (Vygotsky, 1979) and dialogic (Freire, 1970) process.

**Accessibility (adapted statement from Dr. Eliza Chandler):** We all have different physical, mental, sensorial and emotional ways of being, learning, and engaging in a classroom. I encourage you to bring up your accessibility needs up with me and/or with the class in order
to begin a conversation about how we can collectively make the classroom and the course more accessible.

**Attendance and Tardies:** Life happens, and I get that. I was once a student too. The only thing that I ask is that you please communicate with me about tardies and absences. If you know that you may be a few minutes late to class because of your commute, just let me know. If you need to miss class for an important school night, just let me know. I come to know, and care for, each of my students and am genuinely concerned if I don’t see you in class or hear from you. Our relationship really depends on communication about these kinds of details.

**Assignments:** Please see the section on course evaluation. **All written assignments must be completed in APA style** ([http://www.apastyle.org/](http://www.apastyle.org/) or [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)). You must submit assignments via Canvas. Please note that many submissions will go through Turnitin, a plagiarism checker, so make sure that your work is original.

**Incompletes:** All assignments need to have been completed for a grade to be issued. Incompletes will not be granted, with the exception of a documented emergency.

**Integrity:** Students who submit work either not their own or without clear attribution to the original source, fabricate data or other information, engage in cheating, or misrepresentation of academic records will be subject to charges. **Any infraction of this nature, whether it be a phrase or more, will result in a grade of a 0 (zero) for the assignment.** Please also see the department policies in the following section for more on this.

Integrity beyond question is expected of every student. Every source used to inform written work, whether expressed in quotation marks or simply integrated into the substance of the paper, accessed in print or Internet publication, must be appropriately cited. Documented plagiarism will be reported to the appropriate College official. All work submitted in this course must be the student’s own and original, which means that it has not been submitted for any other course or publication.

Plagiarism violates academic integrity (**and it also affects my personal relationship with you**). Any attempt to present someone else’s work as your own, on papers, exams, transcripts, etc. constitutes plagiarism, a form of theft and fraud. There are various forms of plagiarism of which the following are most common. It is your responsibility to ensure that you clearly distinguish between your words and ideas and those of other authors, and to understand proper ways to give credit to other authors and sources.

1. **Word-for-word plagiarism.** This includes (a) the submission of another student’s work as your own; (b) the submission of work from any source whatever (book, magazine, or newspaper article, unpublished paper, or thesis, internet) without proper acknowledgement by footnote or reference within the text of the paper; (c) the
submission of any part of another’s work without proper use of quotation marks and citation.

2. *Patchwork plagiarism.* This consists of piecing together of unacknowledged phrases and sentences quoted verbatim (or nearly verbatim) from a variety of sources. The mere reshuffling of other people’s words does not constitute “original” work.

3. *Unacknowledged paraphrase.* It is perfectly legitimate to set forth another author’s facts or ideas in one’s own words, but if one is genuinely indebted to the other author for these facts or ideas, the debt must be acknowledged by footnote or reference within the text of the paper.

4. *Self-plagiarism.* Work created for a class may be turned in only for credit in that class. Attempting to receive academic credit for work done for another class is a form of academic dishonesty. Please speak with me if you are considering combining your work for this class with work for another class.

**NOTEWORTHY**

**Food/Housing Insecurity:** Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students, Suite 409 at the University Union. The UNT Food Pantry is a useful resource for students who may need it. Please visit the website for more details, or feel free to come see me about this: https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry

**University Mental Health Services:** I recognize that it is not easy to be a student. The demands for economic, intellectual, social, and emotional stability are often in competition, and it can grow weary. School is one aspect of your busy life, and while it’s important to stay the course, it’s also important to acknowledge when you may need more support. UNT’s Counseling Center, as well as the Student Health and Wellness Center, offer support through counseling, care for your well-being and psychiatric health, workshops for socio-emotional challenges, etc. These services are confidential, and most of these services are covered by your tuition. Feel free to see me for more support on this and/or refer to the following website: https://speakout.unt.edu/content/mental-health-resources

**Title IX Services:** Sexual discrimination, harassment, & assault: UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, etc. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are civil rights violations. UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of resources to help support survivors, based on their needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached via email at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648.
**Children in the Classroom:** Many students are also parents, and I want to respect the multiple roles that you might have. Please note that all breastfeeding babies are welcome in the class. If you have older children and babies, you are welcome to bring your child to class if you are having a one-off challenge with childcare. Please communicate this with me in advance.

**Teacher Education & Administration**

**Departmental Policy Statements**

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**
Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**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 classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct](deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct).

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT**
Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your e-mail: [eagleconnect.unt.edu/](eagleconnect.unt.edu/)

**ADA STATEMENT**
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodations 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 you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You 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 Office of Disability Accommodation website at disability.unt.edu, (940) 565-4323.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR AND CODE OF ETHICS
The Teacher Education & Administration Department expects that its students will abide by the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Chapter 247 of the Texas Administrative Code www.sbec.state.tx.us) and as outlined in Domain IV: Fulfilling Professional Roles and Responsibilities of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES); and as also addressed in codes of ethics adopted by professionals in the education field such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you 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). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS
If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify me as soon as possible.

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. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to
review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university’s policy in accordance with those mandates.

SPOT
The Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) is expected for all organized classes at UNT. This brief online survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you an opportunity to provide course feedback.

SUCCEED AT UNT
UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grown. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here’s how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find Support. Get advised. Be prepared. Get involved. Stay focused. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, visit success.unt.edu/.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION POLICY
The Elementary, Secondary, and Curriculum & Instruction program areas support technology integration to assist teacher candidates and practicing teachers to design and implement curricular and instruction activities which infuse technology throughout the K-12 curriculum.

WRITING POLICY
Your written products – including, but not limited to, papers, lesson plans, and emails – should include appropriate and accurate spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, format, and English usage. You should expect that all assignments will be evaluated on these writing skills, in addition to any other expectations of a particular assignment. The UNT Writing Lab (Auditorium Building, 105) offers one-on-one consultation to assist students with their writing assignments. To use this resource, call (940) 565-2563 or visit https://ltc.unt.edu/labs/unt-writing-lab-home.