Course Description:
This course explores violence, trauma, and the politics of memory from an anthropological perspective. Through reading ethnography and philosophical texts on violence, the course queries the ethics of writing about and researching violence and trauma. Throughout the class we think through the question "what is violence?" as we discuss the concept's physical, structural and symbolic forms. Specific topics include war, the police state, colonialism, terror(ism), witnessing, representation, surveillance, power and discourse, with special attention to the dynamics of gender, race, class and sexuality that complicate these themes. We particularly focus on the politics of writing and theorizing violence when doing social analysis, the precarious balance between addressing violence and glorifying it, and the coping mechanisms that we often require to do this work.

Objectives: 1) To think critically about violence not only as a physical encounter, but a multilayered phenomenon that manifests itself in dynamic ways; 2) To consider the role anthropology plays in witnessing violence; 3) To better understand the ethics of discussing and writing about violence ethnographically.

Assignments
Class Participation: Participants in this course are expected to 1) actively and respectfully participate in weekly discussions; 2) arrive in class promptly and adequately prepared; and 3) complete all class assignments on time. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues. In line with this, the success of this course hinges on the active participation of everyone. Class participation is of the utmost importance.

Discussion Leading: Each student will be required to prepare a presentation that summarizes, synthesizes and analyzes the weekly readings at least twice during the semester. These presentations will be done in groups of 2 or more. As part of this assignment, groups will submit a 1-3 page critical reflection on the texts for that week that includes a brief biographical synopsis of each author. In addition, each group will prepare a short blog entry for that week's discussions designed to guide your fellow students' reading of the week's texts and provoke discussion. These texts will be posted on the class website (link available via Canvas).

Final Research Project: The final assessment for this course will be a substantive research project. Students may elect to write a traditional 12-20 pp. research paper or develop a substantive and new creative piece (blog, oral history project, artistic piece etc.) on a topic of the student’s choosing related to the themes of the class. All projects must be approved by the instructor by October 1. Further details for this assignment will be discussed in class. Due date: December 7.

Grading: Class Participation 30%; Discussion Leading 30%; Final Research Project 40%

* Syllabus subject to modifications by instructor. Any changes will be properly communicated.
Course Schedule

**Introduction: What is violence?**

August 27:
- “Violence in Identity” (Bowman 2001)
- Film: “The Battle of Algiers” (1966)

**The State**

September 3: “On Violence” (Fanon 1963)
   - Film: “Concerning Violence” (2014)

September 10: *Homo Sacer* (Agamben 1995); “Necropolitics” (Mbembe 2003)

September 17: *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Das 2007)

September 24: *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Smith 2015)
- “Gender and Symbolic Violence” (Bourdieu)
- “Symbolic Violence” (Bourdieu and Wacquant);

**The Body, Trauma, Pain**

October 1: *Pathologies of Power* [Part I] (Farmer 2003)
- “Violence, Peace and Peace Research” (Galtung 1969)
   - Recommended: “An Anthropology of Structural Violence” (Farmer 2004)

October 8: *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977)

October 15: *The Body in Pain* (Scarry 1984)

October 22: *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment* (Biehl 2005)

October 29: *The Violence of Care: Rape Victims, Forensic Nurses and Sexual Assault Intervention* (Mulla 2014)

**Archive, Memory, War**

*November 5: Exceptional Violence: Embodied Citizenship in Transnational Jamaica* (Thomas 2011)

*November 12: Reckoning* (Nelson 2009)

November 19: *Archives of the Insensible: Of War, Photopolitics, and Dead Memory* (Feldman 2015)

November 26: NO CLASS MEETING – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

December 3: *The Farming of Bones* (Danticat 1998)
Grading Scale

GUIDELINES

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN HARD COPY AND ELECTRONICALLY VIA CANVAS BY THE DUE DATE

*LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE PENALIZED*

Due Dates/Late Policy: As a general policy late assignments will not be accepted without the instructor’s prior approval. Any late assignments accepted will carry a penalty of 10% of the assignment grade per day late. — six days late or more will automatically receive a grade of 0.

I will make exceptions to this penalty policy only in the event of a documented medical or family emergency, if you have official, documented University of Texas business off-campus, or if you have prior special permission from me. In case of medical or family emergency, or official UT business, please notify me as soon as possible.

Format Guidelines for Writing Assignments:

All coursework must be double-spaced and typed in 12pt Times New Roman font. All papers must have 1-inch margins on all sides. Please use the AAA Style Guide: http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.pdf as a guideline for bibliographies and citations.
Class Policies

1. Again, please come to class on time and prepared to participate actively in class discussions each day.

2. Hot and cold beverages are okay to bring to class, but please NO FOOD ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM (unless you have brought a goodie for everyone and you have cleared it with me first).

4. Please be attentive and polite to one another during class. If you wish to read the Texan, surf the web, talk with your neighbor during class time, sleep, or do anything else disruptive, then please go elsewhere.

5. Please respect your classmates and your instructor. In this course, there will be a lot of lively discussion and debate. Even if you don’t agree with someone, you should still treat that person with respect and be kind. We are all here to learn!

5. Due dates for all assignments are listed on the syllabus and/or will be announced in class and/or will be announced on Canvas. Late assignments carry stiff penalties. Please see note on “due dates” above.

6. ACADEMIC HONESTY IS IMPERATIVE. I will refer all cases of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating and plagiarism) to the Dean of Student’s Office. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, visit the University’s official statement: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Documented Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD. (Note to Faculty: Details of a student’s disability are confidential. Faculty should not ask questions related to a student’s condition or diagnosis when receiving an official accommodation letter.)

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

- Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD’s website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Q drop Policy
The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Process for grade appeals (Liberal Arts): Students must first contact course instructor, then if dispute not resolved, they must contact Associate Chair. If Associate Chair declines appeal, the student can appeal to the Dean. See below for details. (I have attached the linked pdf to this email as well)