

Spring 2024



J-WORLD NEWS



Photo courtesy of UNT Stock Photography

Happy Spring 2024!

Spring has arrived, bringing with it beautiful long days, perfect weather, lush greenery, and the Bluebonnets! The Bluebonnet is a wildflower and the [state flower of Texas](#). I hope everyone is having an enjoyable and productive Spring semester. We encourage you to make the most of this Spring season and semester by participating in various on and off-campus activities so that you have an enriching and fulfilling exchange-visitor experience.

Upcoming Campus Events

University Day- April 5, 2024

We are celebrating [University Day](#) this year on April 5th in the Library Mall. The annual party, which includes a flag parade and free food with your UNT ID, commemorates our change from college to university in 1961. The [sign-up](#) deadline for the Parade of Nations hosted by International Affairs is April 2. We encourage all of you participate in the Parade of Nations and partake in the University Day celebrations!

Total Solar Eclipse Watch Party – April 8, 2024

UNT's Denton campus will be on the solar eclipse path on April 8th and experience 99% totality! This is a rare opportunity to see a total solar eclipse, so do not miss out on all the activities and watch parties that will be taking place on-campus. Check the [UNT Eclipse website](#) for more information.

Programming hosted by International Affairs

Language Exchange

Practice your conversational skills in languages spoken around the world! Language Exchange is a great place to learn a new language or share your own. Open to all students at UNT!

When and where: Every Tuesday at 3:30 PM at Marquis Hall, Room 130

International Social Hour

Make connections and meet students and scholars from around the world. Everyone is welcome!

When and where: Every Friday at 12 PM at Marquis Hall, Room 130

Check out the International Affairs [program calendar](#) for all the fun, cultural events!

Here are some off-campus events to consider:

Denton Community Market – every Saturday from March through December

The Denton Community Market (DCM) is an art and farmer's market in downtown Denton featuring live music, kids' activities, local farms, local artists, food trucks, and a lot more!

The market is open every Saturday until December 21st from 9 AM – 1 PM.

Visit the DCM website for more information: <https://www.dentonmarket.org/>

Ennis Bluebonnet Trails – April 1 - 30

Ennis is the official Bluebonnet City of Texas and has around 40 miles of mapped driving trails to see the spectacular wildflower blooms from April 1-30.

The blooming season peaks around the third week of April which coincides with Ennis Bluebonnet Trails Festival which is being held this year from April 19-21.

The festival held in downtown Ennis has a farmers' market, arts and crafts, food stalls, kids' activities, and local music bands

More information about the Bluebonnet Trails and Festival and be found on their website: <https://www.bluebonnettrail.org/>

Check out more events on the [Discover Denton](#) and [Visit Dallas](#) websites.

Important Fall 2024 Enrollment Updates for J-1 Students

J-1 students must maintain a full-time course load during fall and spring semesters.

This means:

J-1 Undergraduate students must enroll in 12 credit hours or more.

J-1 Graduate students must enroll in 9 credit hours or more.

J-1 students may engage in a maximum of one online course per semester

Please contact our office at jinfo@unt.edu if you have questions or clarifications concerning Fall 2024 enrollment guidelines.

SCAM ALERT

The following is shared on behalf of the UNT Police Department. Please contact 940-565-3000 or visit their webpage at police.unt.edu if you have any questions.

Please know that if you are ever called by someone claiming to be an immigration official, you can politely ask them for a call back number then hang up and call ISSS or UNT PD for guidance. ISSS can be reached at 940-565-2195.

The UNT Police Department has been made aware of several scams circulating through our community. You can learn more about avoiding and reporting scams at consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts.

TRAVELING outside the U.S. this Summer?

J-1 exchange visitors who wish to travel outside the U.S. should request the ISSS office for a travel endorsement on their DS-2019. Travel endorsements are valid for 1 year or until the program-end date on the DS-2019, whichever comes first. Please email the ISSS office at jinfo@unt.edu at least 7-10 days prior to the travel date to request a travel endorsement. In addition to a valid travel endorsement, please be sure to have the following immigration documents prior to re-entering the U.S.:

- Valid J1 visa stamp to re-enter the United States (unless you are a citizen of Canada).
- Valid passport that has more than 6 months remaining of its validity.

Note: The U.S. Department of State allows the international office to apply digital signatures on the DS-2019. The ISSS office may digitally sign and transmit the DS2019 to the J-1 exchange visitor via their UNT email address. Exchange visitors must then print, sign (by hand), and present the paper version of the DS-2019 when re-entering the U.S.

DS-2019 Extensions

DS-2019 extension requests should be submitted to jinfo@unt.edu at least 30 days prior to the current program end date listed on the DS-2019. J-1 students requiring an extension must extend for a minimum of 1 year, unless the expected program completion date is sooner.

Your Rights as a Nonimmigrant Visa Holder

[Nonimmigrant Visa Holder Information](#)

Please visit our website for additional information and resources:

J-1 students - <https://international.unt.edu/content/j-1-students>

J-1 scholars - <https://international.unt.edu/content/j-1-scholars>

EVP EMERGENCY HOTLINE

Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all exchange visitors is the University of North Texas and the Department of State's highest priority. To help safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all exchange visitors, there is an Exchange Visitor Program Emergency Hotline.

This 24/7 toll-free phone number allows exchange visitors to directly contact the Department in emergency and urgent situations. A Department representative is available 24 hours a day.

EVP Emergency Hotline: 1-866-283-9090

Meet Visiting Scholar Dr. Natalia Rikker from Russia

What brought you to the University of North Texas?

I am at the University of North Texas thanks to the Fulbright program and the invitation of Kimberly Hannon Teal, a professor at the UNT College of Music. It has been very honorable and exciting to be at the university, where world jazz education actually began! I came to Dallas in January, right before the start of the semester. Seeing me off from Russia to the USA, some of my friends were surprised: "You're going to the homeland of jazz to teach jazz history! There are enough of their own specialists there." However, my subject has an essential feature - the history of jazz in the Soviet Union. I wouldn't say that my course attracted the attention of many students since the topic is very specific. However, the students who signed up for my lectures have cultivated an interest. I not only give lectures, but we also have colloquiums where exciting discussions often take place.

How have you spent your time outside the classroom in the last few months?

I visited Cleveland and Chicago during Spring break. It was an amazing trip - I managed to visit the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, legendary jazz clubs, feel the breath of big cities and literally fall in love with them. After the holidays, I took part in the Jazz Series Lecture project. As part of one performance, I had to introduce the student and teaching audience to such a voluminous and multi-faceted phenomenon as Soviet jazz. Judging by the reaction of UNT students and professors, the lecture was a success.

I have loved attending master classes and concerts which are a source of real intellectual enrichment for me as well as an opportunity to learn more about my beloved jazz art. In my free time, I walk a lot frequenting the parks, the campus of the Texas Woman's University, the Denton Square and surrounding areas. I have visited the Denton museums and traveled to Dallas several times. In addition to my favorite attractions, I even got my favorite pastry shop there!

What do you like best about your time at UNT and your Fulbright experience?

The atmosphere of openness and friendliness is probably one of the important advantages of the university, the city, and the country. This invaluable experience of working at UNT will not be in vain for me. Cyril Moshkow, the editor-in-chief of the Russian jazz portal, suggested that I write a book about my trip. I also received a similar offer from the famous Chicago jazz journalist Howard Mandel. I value and cherish the UNT library which is a real treasure trove of jazz literature.

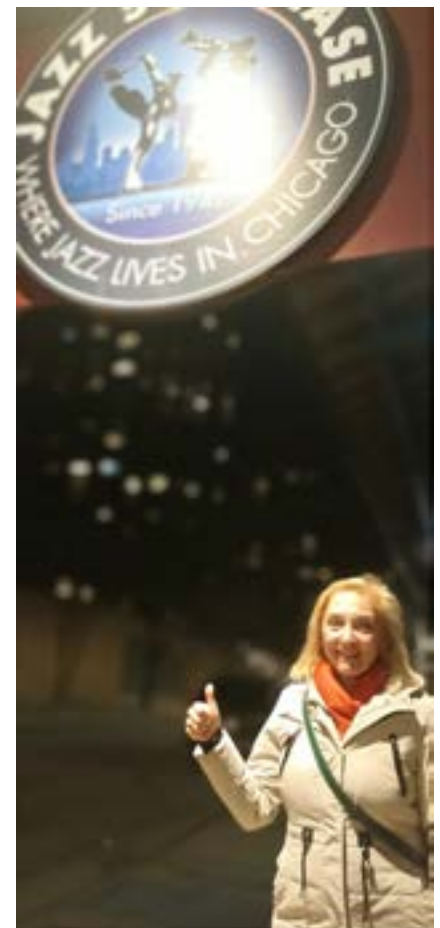
If I try to make up my personal rating of the things I like on campus, it will be like this:

- The teachers have professionalism in their work and the deepest knowledge of the subject
- The talented students who are in love with music
- The beautiful campus
- The benevolence as a rule of life
- The busy schedule and sharp rhythm of university life
- The magnificent concert halls with modern technical equipment
- The wonderful food court of the university with a tasty and varied menu
- The cleanliness and comfort
- The fountains that work in any weather
- And, of course, the smell of fresh coffee that wafts around the campus in the morning!



We are so happy to host Dr. Rikker and Alini at UNT and we wish them all the very best.

Be sure to greet and give them a Mean Green high-five when you see them on campus!



Meet Visiting Graduate Student Alini Parra from Brazil

Tell us a little bit about yourself and what brought you to UNT?

I have been at UNT since January 3, 2024, for almost three months, and I will stay here until the beginning of next year. I am a Ph.D. student in Brazil and have been researching in the area of Freshwater Fish Ecology since my undergraduate studies. In my Ph.D., I am evaluating the influence of the construction of Brazilian hydroelectric plant reservoirs on the taxonomic and functional diversity of fish assemblages. I am also evaluating non-native species' fluctuations before and after the construction of these projects.

My Ph.D. scholarship allows me to stay for a year in another country to conduct part of my research with another professional. Therefore, I contacted Prof. Dr. David Hoeinghaus, who is a great researcher in my field, and he agreed to supervise me and share his knowledge with me, which is what brought me to UNT.

What do you like to do outside of class and work?

When I am not working on my research, I like to go to the gym to work out and play volleyball. I also enjoy spending time with my friends, fishing, camping, hiking, and many other outdoor activities.

What have you liked so far about your experience at UNT?

UNT surprised me with its structure for teaching and research, with its complete research and class laboratories to meet the needs of students and researchers. Also, all of the people I have met at UNT have been very kind, which has helped made my experience here amazing so far!

What are your plans for the future?

After my time at UNT, I will return to Brazil to complete my dissertation and Ph.D. After that, I intend to become a university professor and researcher in the field of Ecology.



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