

# CAT 125A: The Story of the Body

Summer Session I 2021

Online: <https://canvas.ucsd.edu/courses/27957>

**Last update:** 6/29/21

Instructor: Siloh Radovsky

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Office hours: Wednesdays 5-6pm PST & Fridays 10-11am PST or by appointment (OH info in Zoom LTI Pro)

Lecture MW 2-3:50pm PST

[Zoom Link](#) /

Meeting ID: 932 0512 7165 — Password: cat125

*We will only have live lectures on Wednesday. Other lecture content will be pre-recorded and released to Canvas on Sundays.*



“Antifascist Medicine Machine” by Elektra KB

## Course description

In this public rhetoric and practical communication course, we will explore intersections of medicine, language, care, and culture. Exchanges between practitioner and patient, research about structural impacts on wellbeing, and the narration of personal encounters with illness are examples of sites where medicine, art, and/or the humanities converge. Even the ways we conceive of the body and medicine are shaped by culture, and thus by language. We’ll approach these relationships critically while cultivating our own writing and communication skills.

We’ll also explore our own relationships to care. What kinds of caretaking do we engage in or rely upon? How do caretaking and communication converge in medical practice, and in our own lives? How does our wellbeing figure into our aspirations and imagined futures, and how might we bring genuine care for what’s beyond ourselves (such as our communities and our planet) into that work?

Using these questions as a guide, we’ll work together to develop holistic and authentic self-narratives about our identities, capabilities, and goals suitable for our chosen professional, academic, and creative/community audiences. Through coursework, writing practice, and encounters with critical and literary texts, we’ll expand our understanding of what we can do with words—and what words and

culture have to do with medicine—while identifying tools we might use to maintain a healthy work/life balance. Exercises and assignments are structured loosely so that you might adapt them to your particular area of interest.

### **CAT 125 Objectives**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Develop proficiency in public presentation, documentation, and curation.
2. Understand and employ various rhetorical strategies
3. Direct written, spoken, and digital compositions to multiple audiences.
4. Examine your authority as a writer (and how authority in authorship works in terms of race, gender, and sexuality)
5. Identify how different genres and citation conventions are appropriate for establishing credibility in different contexts.

### **Course sections & TAs:**

SECTION	DAYS	TIME	TA	EMAIL
A01	MW	9-9:50am	Klara Feenstra	kfeenstr@ucsd.edu
A02	MW	10-10:50am	Klara Feenstra	kfeenstr@ucsd.edu
A03	MW	11-11:50am	Allison Evans	aoevans@ucsd.edu
A04	MW	12-12:50pm	Allison Evans	aoevans@ucsd.edu
A05	MW	1-1:50pm	Lauryn Smith	lasmith@ucsd.edu
A06	MW	4-4:50pm	Lauryn Smith	lasmith@ucsd.edu

### **Required texts & technologies:**

- Access to reliable internet connection
- Access to computer video and audio
- Notebook and writing utensil
- Recommended: *They Say/I Say* CAT edition 4E

### **Course policies / Important things to keep in mind:**

**Syllabus:** This syllabus may be adjusted during the term to best facilitate our collective learning. I will never add additional assignments or readings, but may revise or substitute what's here. If that happens, I will send you notice and reminders via Canvas announcements. Please turn on Canvas announcement notifications so they forward to an email address you check. I also encourage you to check your email regularly throughout the quarter so you can catch any announcements/emails from me (and your TA).

**Lecture attendance:** With the exception of week 1, Monday lecture content will be pre-recorded & asynchronous. Wednesday lectures will be held on Zoom at their scheduled time (2-3:50pm PST); if you are unable to attend live, you are expected to watch the recording. Your participation in Wednesday lecture via the chat and/or contributing your thoughts vocally is welcomed and encouraged! Please be aware that all Zoom lectures will be recorded.

**Section attendance & participation:** On-time attendance of your discussion sections is a requirement of this course. Missing more than two sections is grounds for failing the course. Consistently being late may also impact your course grade. Please let me or your TA know if you have any concerns about your attendance of this course.

**In order to facilitate engagement with each other, you are expected to have your camera on during section; please communicate with your TA if you are unable to do so for technical reasons, your living situation, etc.** Your attendance and participation grade is holistic; simply being at section is not enough, as productive contributions to class discussions and active participation in small group work are essential to both the momentum of the class and the development of your ideas. This requires that you come to class prepared (having completed assigned reading and writing) and ready to participate in class activities. Please see the [participation](#) rubric for more info.

**Late work:** With the exception of the Public Presentation and Reflection #3, all assignments (including reflections and discussion board posts) are due on Fridays by 11:59pm PST. If a job or other life circumstance prevents you from turning in your final work on Friday, you may always request an extension (**with >24 hour notice**) from your TA. Extensions cannot exceed more than three days after the original deadline. Submitting work after the deadline without previously requesting an

extension will result in a ½ letter grade deduction for each day the assignment is late; submitting an assignment more than three days after the original deadline will result in an F for that particular assignment. Because of the compressed nature of a summer session course it's important you don't fall behind with the assignment cycle; please reach out to me or your TA if you're struggling with the workload so we can help you stay on track.

**Email policy & contacting me:** I respond to emails M-F; you can expect a reply no later than 48 hours during the week, usually sooner. If you haven't heard from me within that time frame, please send me a gentle reminder email. I do not reply to emails in the evenings, or from Friday evenings-Sunday morning.

Office hours are the very best way for us to discuss your writing, your ideas and plans for the future, and anything else related to our coursework. You are very welcome to attend them! Please let me know (with advance notice) if you'd like to meet at an alternate time.

**Peer review, self-evaluation, & reflection:** Self-assessment, reflection, and collaboration are core components of the first year writing program at UCSD. In this class (and CAT broadly), you will do a fair amount of peer review, revision, working in groups, and reflection on your work. Be prepared both to receive and offer constructive criticism and re-work your writing, presentation, etc.

- Peer Review will happen regularly, so be prepared to work with your peers and offer constructive critique and receive feedback.
- Revision will be a crucial component of each major assignment. Failure to revise an assignment or participate in peer review will lower your final assignment grade by ½ a letter grade.
- Self-Evaluations and Reflections are also a crucial part of this course. I will ask you to do reflections on your work throughout the term and a final reflective portfolio. If you fail to do a reflection, it will lower your final assignment grade by ½ a letter grade

**Grade contesting:** See grade contesting policy [here](#). Must be completed by Monday of week 5.

**Academic integrity:** UCSD has a university-wide Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, published annually in the General Catalog, and online at <http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html>

All students must read and be familiar with this Policy. All suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to UCSD's Academic Integrity Coordinator. Students found to have violated UCSD's standards for academic integrity may receive both administrative and academic sanctions.

Administrative sanctions may extend up to and include suspension or dismissal, and academic sanctions may include failure of the assignment or failure of the course.

**If, in this course, you are revising materials which you've previously drafted, please communicate with your TA about that to avoid concerns about self-plagiarism.**

Accessibility & accommodations: Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability should (if needed) present a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities. The OSD Liason in the department can help facilitate the arrangement of accommodations. Please contact Nik Bulajic at [nibulajic@ucsd.edu](mailto:nibulajic@ucsd.edu). Students without an AFA letter may also request accommodations; I will do my best to facilitate a learning environment and materials which are accessible to you. The UCSD [Disabilities Resources](#) page has more information about accommodations and resources available to students with disabilities on campus.

**Communication & learning environment:** We will be writing about and sharing personal experiences. In assignments, discussion sections, forum posts, and lecture, we will be exploring topics related to our life experiences and identities. I recognize that we do not all share the same experiences and identities, but I hope each member of this course feels comfortable speaking to their perspective and ideas. Honesty, listening for understanding, a willingness to share your ideas, and respect for self and others are at the core of this class. Your participation and feedback are important to the success of the course and I welcome your thoughts throughout the term on how we might improve class processes that will encourage effective communication and dialogue.

**UCSD Principles of Community:** The UCSD Principles of Community are a rigorous outline of the values which the university strives to uphold. This course operates within this set of values in order to facilitate a learning environment which is fair, cooperative, and professional. They are below; you can find more about these principles [here](#).

- We value each member of the UC San Diego community for his or her individual and unique talents, and applaud all efforts to enhance the quality of campus life. We recognize that each individual's effort is vital to achieving the goals of the University.
- We affirm each individual's right to dignity and strive to maintain a climate of justice marked by mutual respect for each other.
- We value the cultural diversity of UC San Diego because it enriches our lives and the University. We celebrate this diversity and support respect for all cultures, by both individuals and the University as a whole.

- We are a university that adapts responsibly to cultural differences among the faculty, staff, students, and community.
- We acknowledge that our society carries historical and divisive biases based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs. Therefore, we seek to foster understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups, and we promote awareness through education and constructive strategies for resolving conflict.
- We reject acts of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs, and, we will confront and appropriately respond to such acts.
- We affirm the right to freedom of expression at UC San Diego. We promote open expression of our individuality and our diversity within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect.
- We are committed to the highest standards of civility and decency toward all. We are committed to promoting and supporting a community where all people can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of abusive or demeaning treatment.
- We are committed to the enforcement of policies that promote the fulfillment of these principles.

**Major assignment grading schema:**

<b>A+</b>	97	<b>C+</b>	77
<b>A</b>	95	<b>C</b>	75
<b>A-</b>	92	<b>C-</b>	72
<b>B+</b>	87	<b>D</b>	65
<b>B</b>	85	<b>F</b>	50
<b>B-</b>	82		

**Assignments:**

*Note: there will be **no** synchronous final for this course*

Personal Narrative -- 20%

Public Performance -- 25%

Final Reflection & Portfolio -- 15%

Reflective Journals (3) -- 15%

Discussion boards -- 10%

Participation -- 10%

Reading Quizzes — 5%

Assignment descriptions and deadlines are available on Canvas; see [here](#) for a Google doc with all course deadlines

## Weekly pattern

All elements of the course will be remote; our weekly format will include a combination of synchronous and asynchronous activities. Our class activities as well as (most) course assignments will follow a weekly cycle. Section attendance is mandatory.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Watch lecture videos</li> <li>- Complete rough draft of major assignment before section (when applicable)</li> <li>- Discussion sections meet (writing workshop)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete weekly reading quiz by Tuesday @ 11:59pm PST</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Synchronous lecture 2-3:50pm PST (or watch recording)</li> <li>- Discussion sections meet (rooted in course readings and weekly theme)</li> <li>- First discussion board response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit final draft of any major writing assignment, or assigned reflection</li> <li>- Complete your discussion board replies to section-mates</li> <li>- <b><i>Assignment pattern in weeks 4 &amp; 5 will differ slightly; see course calendar</i></b></li> </ul>

## Synopsis of course calendar

**In the first half of this course** we will be exploring techniques and modes of public communication, using case studies related to medicine and care. We will particularly be thinking about expertise and different modes of understanding the body, and how those modes highlight or hide structural factors which influence health and well-being. You'll be asked to engage critically with texts and media in a variety of genres, while also considering your own experiences, assumptions, and values.

You will put these techniques and self-knowledge into practice with the personal narrative/statement assignment.

**In the second half of the course,** we'll dig deeper into public storytelling practices in a wider landscape of mediums and genres. You'll be asked to do research about a topic you care a whole lot about, and to create a performance designed to persuade or inform your audience about it. In doing so, you will be encouraged to use rhetorical devices introduced earlier in the quarter, and to consider aesthetics and formatting as a part of public communication.

We'll close out the course by considering public discourses around productivity, care, and work, and doing reflective work around our own relationships to work, care, and medical discourse.

## Course Calendar

### **Week 1 — Intro to CAT 125 & Exploring our assumptions**

Topics: Course overview; intersections between storytelling and medicine; defining rhetoric

**READ:** “Attention, Representation, Affiliation” by Rita Charon (9 pages); EmmaLee Pallai and Kim Tran, “Narrative Health: Using Story to Explore Definitions of Health and Address Bias in Health Care” (7 pages); Donald Barr, intro to *Questioning the Premedical Paradigm* (10 pages)

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Week 1 discussion board posts & reflection #1 due on Friday 7/2

**Reflection #1: On Influences** What conversations, individuals, experiences, publications, and/or media have shaped your understanding of healthcare/medicine? What kinds of experiences have you had with medicine or care? Do you have any impactful memories related to your body, or of illness (yours or another's)? What do you know about your own body, and how does that knowledge/experience influence how you imagine your future?

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:** Peter Elbow, *Writing With Power* (pages 3-19); “The Degradation of Medical Labor and the Meaning of Quality Care,” by Gordon D. Schiff and Sarah Winch (15 pages)

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## **Week 2 — Communication as Relation**

Topics: Ethos (incl. race, class, gender, and expertise); distrust of science/medicine

**Note:** *No discussion sections/class meetings on Monday, 7/5*

**READ:** “[Black America Has Reasons to Question Authorities](#)” by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor; Melanie Tervalon and Jann Murray-García, “Cultural Humility Versus Cultural Competence: A Critical Distinction in Defining Physician Training Outcomes in Multicultural Education” (7 pages)

**WATCH/LISTEN:** “[Narrative Humility](#)” (TEDx Talk) by Sayantani DasGupta (17 minutes), and [trailer for \*United In Anger: A History of ACT UP\*](#) (<3 min; full video available on [Kanopy](#))

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Week 2 discussion board posts; reflection #2; *optional* submission of C.V. due on Friday 7/9. (Note: submission of C.V. has no bearing on your grade; if you would like feedback on it you must attend my and/or your TA’s office hours). **Reminder that a rough draft of your personal statement is due on Monday of week 3.**

**Reflection #2: On Expertise** What would being an expert look like in your field or area of interest? What skills, qualities, and practices contribute to your sense of trusting others who do work or hold positions you’re interested in? Is there a difference between what you’ve been told is trustworthy, and what you personally feel contributes to that? What experiences have led you to feel more confident, trustworthy, and knowledgeable with your own work (professional or otherwise)?

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:** Excerpt from *Understanding Rhetoric* by Elizabeth Losh et. al. (comic); Intro to *You Are Your Best Thing* by Tarana Burke and Brene Brown; “[Why is the Pandemic Killing so Many Black Americans?](#)” episode of the Daily

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## **Week 3 — Thinking & Feeling**

Topics: Pathos & logos; data & care; the limits of science

***\*Bring a rough draft of your personal narrative/statement to your Monday section for workshop\****

**READ:** Anne Boyer, [“Data’s Work is Never Done”](#); Audre Lorde, Introduction and “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action,” from *The Cancer Journals* (pages 1-16); Arianne Zwartjes, “Anatomy of Trust or Breaking,” from *Detailing Trauma* (pages 3-9)

**RECOMMENDED:** Atul Gawande, [“Why Doctors Hate Their Computers”](#)

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Reading quiz; & week 3 discussion board. Personal narrative rough draft due on Monday for workshop in section; final draft due by Friday 7/16 @ 11:59pm.

**Personal Narrative final draft due Friday 7/16 — See Canvas for assignment description**

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#### **Week 4 — Public Selves & Collective Knowledge**

Topics: Research as an act of care; public storytelling/performance

**READ:** “Prefigurative Politics and Radically Accessible Performance Spaces” by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (7 pages)

**WATCH/LISTEN:** One [“Decolonizing Substance Use & Addiction”](#) by Len Pierre (TED Talk) — (17 minutes) and first 30 minutes of [“Tricia Hersey on Rest as Resistance”](#) (Podcast — episode #185 of For The Wild)

**RECOMMENDED:** Engage with examples of public storytelling about medicine (Canvas page in this week’s module) and/or Ignite speeches

- Ignite: <http://www.ignitetalks.io/>
- This I Believe: <https://thisibelieve.org/>

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Reading quiz & week 4 discussion board. Public performance rough draft due for workshop in section on Wednesday 7/21; Public performance final video posted to your section discussion board and script to Canvas assignment by Sunday 7/25 @ 11:59pm

**Public presentation due on Sunday 7/25 — See Canvas for assignment description**

## **Week 5 — Making Livable Lives**

Topics: Self and community care as labor; final reflection & wrap-up

**READ:** Kate Litterer, "[Five Productivity Practices that helped me finish my dissertation](#)"; adrienne maree brown, "[If you're good, say you're good](#)" (blog post)

**WATCH/LISTEN:** Khan Academy, "[How to Write a SMART Goal](#)"

**RECOMMENDED:** Mindtools [article about SMART goals](#); Tim Kreider, "[The 'Busy' Trap](#)"

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Week 5 discussion board posts-- feedback on two presentations due by **Wednesday** @ 11:59pm; reflection #3 due on **Wednesday**; final reflection and portfolio due **Friday** 7/30 @ 11:59pm. **Note adjusted deadline schedule this week; also, no reading quiz this week.**

**Reflection #3: On Sustainable Habits** What skills, habits, and/or practices do you hope to incorporate into your professional, creative, or personal life? These might be habits that currently sustain you, or they might be something new. What is your current relationship with your productivity, and is there anything you'd like to change about it? What relationship to work would feel sustainable for you?

**Final reflection and portfolio (due Friday 7/30; see Canvas for assignment description)**