

Course Description: <https://sixth.ucsd.edu/cat/courses/cat-125-and-cat-125r.html>

Required Texts & Technology

- Netflix subscription, weeks 3-6 (you only need one month for this class)
- Access to Canvas & Course Reserves
- Notebook & Writing Utensil
- Recommended: *They Say, I Say* CAT Edition

Course Calendar

Please note readings and screenings are liable to change as the class progresses. I will never add additional readings or assignments, but may revise and substitute what is already here (If I change anything, I will give you lots of notice and reminders!). All screenings and readings should be done before the second section of the week that they are on the calendar (unless stated otherwise). If you have readings that you think would be a great fit, please send them my way!

Weeks 1-5: The first half of this course asks you to turn inward and the authors we read and media we watch will demonstrate ways to do this, particularly incorporating personal experience and memoir into broader political conversations. These narratives are all meant as fodder for thinking about how you narrate your own life, experience, and movement through the world and how those stories are both political and powerful.

Weeks 6-10: The second half of this course turns those same conversations outward, considering how to tell politically impactful stories on topics of your choice. This part of the course asks you to take what you are concerned about, do some research, and then practice how you inform and persuade an audience (i.e. this class) about a topic near and dear to your heart/mind/passion.

Week 1: Welcome & Introduction to 125R

Topics: Personal Narrative, Storytelling, Power & Permission

Read:

- Ocean Vuong, "[Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong](#)" & Gilbert, "[Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness](#)"

Watch:

- "[The Power of Vulnerability](#)"

Listen:

- [Finding Fred, "A Genius of Empathy"](#) (Ep 1)

→ Friday/Thursday class: Resume/CV Workshop

Reflection #1: CV/Resume: After Resume/CV Workshop, upload your revised Resume/CV here. When you do so, write a short (100 word) reflection where you briefly discuss what stands out to you as your most key experience(s) on this document in terms of what you are hoping to do after college.

Week 2: Stories & Power

Reflection #2 due Friday by 11:59pm– Personal Narrative Proposal: Write a quick proposal (200-300 words) for your personal narrative. Your proposal should be ONE paragraph and address 1) your topic 2) your audience 3) the genre of your essay. Be as specific as you can in this as that will help support you in the drafting process. As you begin drafting, this proposal might be revised to become the first paragraph of your essay. (Complete/Incomplete)

Read & Listen

- Emily McCrary-Ruiz-Esparza, [Generation Amazing!!! How We're Draining Language of Its Power](#) (2022)
- Abdellah Taia, ["Oum Zahra Goes to the Movies."](#) *Another Morocco* (2017)

Due Friday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections

Week 3: Laughter, Joy, and Pain

Key term: emotional appeal

Wednesday: Personal Essay Draft #1 Due for Peer Review ([Peer Review Directions](#))

Watch:

- *Nanette* (Netflix)

Read:

- Roxanne Gay, ["Some Jokes are Funnier Than Others"](#)
- Audre Lorde, ["The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action"](#)

Week 4: Organizing Silences & Creating Space

Due Monday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections

Read & Listen:

- [Less is More](#), Hidden Brain
- Vauhini Vara, [Ghosts](#) (2021)
- [UC Personal Statements](#) & [Statements of Purpose](#)

Optional:

- Gloria Anzaldúa ["Speaking in Tongues"](#)
- [Joseph Azam](#), ["Last, First, Middle"](#)

Personal Essay Final Draft Due by Sunday at 11:59pm

Week 5: Telling a Story: Fashion

Due Monday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections

This week you are welcome to choose a few of these texts or teach them all!

- Marita Golden, [My Black Hair: a Tangled Story of Race and Politics in America](#) (2015)
- Oscar-winning short film [Hair Love](#) (2019)
- Tanisha C. Ford, "Dashiki" chapter 1 of [Dressed in Dreams](#)
- Nadra Kareem Nittle, [A Guide to Understanding and Avoiding Cultural Appropriation](#) (2021)
- Minh-Ha T. Pham, [Fashion's Cultural Appropriation Debate: Pointless](#) (2014)

Week 6: On Curiosity & Asking Questions

Key term: logical appeals

Due Monday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections

Write: On Monday/Tuesday: In class reflection on the personal essay

Read:

- ["The Medium is the Message"](#) (Video)
- Review: Gilbert, ["Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness"](#)

Watch:

- ["Examined Life"](#) (2008)

Reflection #3: Public Performance Proposal: Write a quick proposal (150-250 words) for your public performance. Your proposal should include 1) a one-paragraph description of your topic, and 2) a mood board with pictures, colors, and fonts that communicate the general feel of your presentation and showcase how you intend to use your slides to support your thesis or central claim effectively.

Week 7: Turning Out: Questions & Researching Answers (Example about Food))

Due Monday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections

Watch:

- *Chef's Table*, "Mashama Bailey" (Vol 6, Ep 1) & ["Fried Chicken is Common Ground"](#) (Osayi Endolyn)
- If you don't have Netflix access: On topic about food and race this week, an amazing food writer who is in the episode we watched this week, ["When White People say Plantation."](#)

Read:

- Chantha Nguon & Kim Green, ["The Gradual Extinction of Softness"](#) (2021)

[Due by Friday at 11:19pm: Outline for Public Performance](#)

Week 8: Talking About Your Stuff

Due Monday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections

Listen:

- ["1619, "The Birth of American Music," \(Episode 3\)](#)
- ["How to Save a Planet, "Black Lives Matter & the Climate"](#)

Read:

- Tom Chiarella, ["The Invisible Grip"](#) & ["How to Tell a Dragon Slaying Story"](#)

Due in section #1: Public Performance (Rough Draft) ([Peer Review Directions](#))

[For 125R](#) and for [125](#)

Week 9: The Internet & Digital Decluttering

Due Monday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections

Note: In 125 courses, speeches will happen in person and be performed in class during Week 9-10

Read:

- Roxanne Gay, ["When Twitter Does What Journalism Can't"](#)
- Tom Chatfield, ["The Attention Economy"](#)
- Tim Kreider, ["The Busy Trap"](#)
- [The Dolly Parton Challenge](#)
- Frank Pasquale, ["The Algorithmic Self"](#)

[For 125R due by Friday at 11:59pm posted to the discussion board : Video/Speech \(Final Draft\)](#)

[For 125: Sign up to perform in class during Weeks 9-10](#)

Week 10: On Reflection

Recommended: ["The Danger of Fake Positivity & Spiritual Bypassing"](#)

No required reading! Just writing & reflecting & watching each other's videos/performances.

[Final Reflection Due by Friday at 11:59pm](#)

Recommended Readings & Screenings that related to the course topics:

Arielle Bernsetin, "[Mari Kondo and the Privilege of Clutter](#)"

Chef's Table, "Cristina Martinez" (Vol 5, Ep 1) (Netflix)

Phoebe Bronstein, "[Our Modern Attempt to Control Pregnancy is Just another Attempt to Control Women's Bodies](#)" & "[Violently Inclined](#)" & "[Quiet Times](#)"

Kristi Coulter, "[Enjoli](#)"

Frederick Douglass, "[What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?](#)"

Hannah Gadsby, "[Three Ideas. Three Contradictions. Or not.](#)"

Roxane Gay, "A Tale of Three Coming Out Stories" (in *Bad Feminist*)

Roxane Gay, "[What fullness is](#)"

"[This I Believe Speeches](#)"

Myriam Gurba, "[Pendeja, You Ain't My Steinbeck](#)"

"Introduction," [Nonbinary: Memoirs of Gender & Identify](#)

bell hooks, "[Moving Beyond Pain](#)"

Wayne Koestenbaum, "[My 80s](#)"

NPR, "[She's Funny](#)" (NPR Special Column)

[NYT article on COVID & Mental Health](#)

David Sedaris, "[Stepping Out](#)"

Jenny Slate, *Stage Fright* (Netflix)

Sarah Todd, "[What Rescue Dogs Can Teach us about Vulnerability](#)"

Amy Schumer, *Growing* (Netflix)

Alexandra Schwartz, "[Improving Ourselves to Death](#)"

"[The Subaltern](#)"

Ocean Vuong, "[Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong](#)"

Wambui Wainaina, "[Biographical Friction](#)"

Ali Wong, *Baby Cobra* (Netflix)

PS If you have personal essays you think are awesome, please share with me and I'll add them to the list!