

CAT 125: Public Rhetoric & Practical Communication

Tuesday/Thursday 2-4:50 p.m.

Location: CLT B108

Becca Rose: Lecturer, CAT

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Office Hours:

Time & Place—Wednesdays 11-12 on zoom, Thursdays 10-11 in-person at the tables in front of the Catalyst building main entrance (opposite side & upstairs from where our classroom is!), Friday of Week 3 I will hold extra office hours to accommodate Personal Narrative Final Draft questions!

[Office Hours Sign-up sheet here](#)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this public rhetoric and practical communication course, we will use media narratives from stand-up to documentary film and TV episodes to explore how we tell our personal, professional, and political stories. The narratives we'll engage with from *Nanette* to Gloria Anzaldúa's writings and the

1619 Project, will situate personal stories, research, and expertise within broader histories and geopolitics, mobilizing rhetorical devices from humor and emotion to lighting and costuming. The texts we watch will serve as (fun, hopefully) springboards to discuss different topics and rhetorical strategies and how to play with those same strategies in our own self-presentation.

This course will be part discussion and part writing workshop, driving towards helping you think through your future plans from graduation to life after college, from graduate school to getting a job you want/like. Part of this will entail using reflective strategies for reading, watching, and listening rhetorically, i.e. being mindful of contexts, messages, and audiences. You will also practice several modes of rhetorical speaking and writing, making decisions about content and structure to inform, persuade, or tell a story, and ultimately support you as you hone your voice and style. Finally you will develop strategic plans, turn your goals into actions, and discuss and develop a work-life balance. Exercises and assignments are loosely structured so as to allow you to compose texts that will support your present and/or future-life hopes and goals, while highlighting different stages of the writing process, from prewriting and drafting to peer review and collaborative revision.

COURSE GOALS: WRITING, RESEARCH, AND SELF-PRESENTATION

- Practice reflective strategies for reading, watching, listening, and writing
- Develop proficiency in public presentation, documentation, and curation
- Examine your authority as a writer (and how authority in authorship works in terms of race, gender, and sexuality)
- Understand and employ various rhetorical strategies appropriately
- Clearly direct written, spoken, and digital compositions to multiple and diverse audiences.

COURSE MATERIALS

All readings for this course will be free and linked on Canvas and/or our course calendar.

GRADING SCALE:

A = 90-100% **B** = 80-89% **C** = 70-79% **D** = 60-69% **F** = 59%-below

ASSIGNMENTS

- Notes

- All assignments must be original work created for this class and should ascribe to UCSD's policy of academic integrity. All major assignments will be graded using the [CAT 125 Rubric](#).
- Please make sure you refresh the assignment pages before you start working on them. The assignments are live documents and I will revise them as the course goes along (so, until I go over them in lecture, they are somewhat in motion).
- All major assignments require you to submit a rough draft before the final due date. While the draft does not count towards your grade, failure to submit a draft will result in the loss of a letter grade on the final submission.
- In order to receive a letter grade, all assignments must be submitted through Canvas.

Assignment Breakdown:

- **[Personal Narrative](#)** -- 25%
- **[Public Performance](#)**-- 25%
- **[Final Reflection](#)** & Portfolio -- 15%
- **[Participation](#)** -- 10%
 - This includes (but is not limited to) section participation, your participation on discussion boards, attending office hours, participating in peer review.
- **[Discussion Board](#)**--20%
 - Discussion Board posts will do two things: reflect on the weekly readings *and* act as journals where you will reflect on larger personal topics related to the class.
 - You will post TWICE a week. You will offer an original response to a question I ask about the reading *and* respond to one of your peers' posts.
 - Your original response will always be due on Monday night. Your response to your peer will always be due on Wednesday night.
 - These posts will prepare you for conversations in sections. More instructions on Canvas. These are graded complete/incomplete.
 -
- **[Resume/CV](#)**: 5%
 - Complete/incomplete

LATE POLICY

- ❖ I am always understanding about extensions and late submissions if you communicate with me, preferably beforehand—if you need an extension, just reach out, let me know the circumstances, and how much time you need.
- ❖ When an assignment is due at 11:59 pm, as long as you turn it in before the following morning, I will count it on time. No need to email me at 12:05 to explain about internet issues, or worry

if you need that extra hour to revise. As long as I have it by around 8 am the next morning, it won't be marked late.

- ❖ For each day work is late (without communicating with me!) your grade goes down by 1/3 letter. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive a 0.

COVID POLICY

- ❖ If you are exposed to or contract COVID, please follow [CDC](#) and [UCSD guidelines](#) closely. If you have to miss a class for COVID reasons, don't fret—your health and the health of our class community is always the priority. If you are not well enough to get in touch, wait and rest and reach out when you can. If you are well enough to do so, please do the following:
 - Email me to let me know you'll be missing class so we can work out alternative plan to get you caught up on class materials
 - Please only use this option when necessary. It is very important that you attend every class if/when you are healthy and able.
- ❖ Masks are encouraged in class to care for our immunocompromised community members, but by UCSD policy are not required.
- ❖ If I get COVID—we will move our meetings to zoom for the time being until I am able to come back to class based on CDC and UCSD guidelines. Because this is always a possibility and can often be sudden, please try to always check your email the morning of class to double check if there are any updates.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- ❖ I am committed to providing you with any and all accommodations for documented reasons provided through [UCSD's Office for Students with Disabilities](#) and any accommodations for undocumented reasons as I acknowledge that this office and system still fails many students. This includes but is not limited to disabilities, neurodivergence, mental health needs, immunocompromisation, and caretaking for others. You are welcome to but never required to share details of your circumstances with me. I will trust & honor your expertise on your needs and will provide necessary accommodations that you request whether through official or unofficial means.

ATTENDANCE

- ❖ Because of the fast nature of Summer Sessions and the amount of collaboration and group work that will take place during our class meetings, you will be allowed only one unexcused

absence before it will affect your grade. A second unexcused absence will take 5%/half a letter grade off your grade (out of participation), and a third unexcused absence is grounds for failing the course. I know this sounds strict, but it is meant to encourage accountability not to me but. Of course, I will always take into account COVID-related and other extenuating circumstances!

PARTICIPATION

- ❖ This course is an experiential learning course, meaning it requires a lot of participation, collaboration, and self-guidance—there will be no option to coast through this course. Before you continue in this course, please take the time to thoughtfully consider if you are able to give it your all based on both interest and circumstances, in order to respect and honor and build the community of this classroom. For this to work, we need everyone to be committed and willing—and I promise the reward of creating something tangible and important together will be worth it.
- ❖ Participation is more than just attendance! You will be graded on your engagement in class discussions, clear engagement with the assigned readings, your collaboration with your team, and willingness to do the necessary work outside of class.

TECHNOLOGY

- ❖ Out of respect for me and your classmates, please keep phones and other devices away during class unless specified for you to use them for an activity or if needed based on accommodations. I will ask you directly to put your phone away if it is being used at an unspecified time. This is not meant as a disciplinary approach, but as an approach guided by community-mindedness—please give us your presence and attention during the short time we have together each week.

EMAIL POLICY

- ❖ Please feel free to email me with questions anytime (if it can be answered in the syllabus or assignment descriptions, please check there first) but know I am most likely to respond between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm Mon-Fri, and I can often take 24 hours to respond. **If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, feel free to send a follow-up email to give me a little nudge!** Please include a subject line.

OFFICE HOURS

- ❖ [Sign-up sheet and guidelines here](#)

SUBJECT TO CHANGE POLICY

- ❖ *Please note that I may make small changes to the syllabus as I see fit to give us all the chance to be most successful in this course. As a new course, I'll be constantly reassessing as we go, and will always alert you with as much warning as possible if I make changes.*

CAMPUS POLICIES

- ❖ **UC San Diego Principles of Community**
- ❖ **UC San Diego Policy on Integrity of Scholarship**
- ❖ **Religious Accommodation**
- ❖ **Nondiscrimination and Harassment**
- ❖ **UC San Diego Student Conduct Code**

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

- ❖ You are all so much more than students—you are siblings, employees, friends, partners, children, and more. I honor and make space for your life outside the classroom in this course.
- ❖ While so often in academia it feels we are supposed to compartmentalize the classroom from the “outside” world, I will not abide by this “business-as-usual” approach. This means that you are not expected to pretend both personal and collective hardships are not happening in order to function in this class. While this is true of every class I will ever teach no matter the topic, we are uniquely positioned in *this* class to make our fears and our frustrations our subject. This is a course about using your voice in community, about using art and writing as a way to push back against the powers that harm us. Let’s use this as a space to cultivate dissent, to cultivate community, and to cultivate hope.
- ❖ As a white, cis-woman, I do not think it is enough to include a broad or vague diversity and inclusion statement copied and pasted from the university. Rather, I think it is my responsibility to directly acknowledge my positionality and the particular fraught history white women have as teachers, often perpetuating white saviorism and/or lacking an awareness of how our identities as white women privilege us in the world, thus perpetuating the harms of white supremacy and how it has and continues to function within education. I am committed to an anti-racist pedagogy and as your instructor, I promise to always thoughtfully consider my positionality in my interactions with the course content, in discussion, and with each of you, in order to challenge the historical norm of white supremacy within the institution and the world. If you ever feel that I or one of your classmates says something or behaves in a way that does not uphold an inclusive and anti-racist classroom, please know that in this space you are encouraged and safe to challenge

or inform me, whether publicly or privately, and I will always receive that as a generosity that you are extending me, and will make all necessary changes.

- ❖ I ask that you also consider your positionality thoughtfully when engaging with your peers. In this space, we will hold preferred names, name pronunciation, and pronouns with utmost respect. Positionality is also particularly important to consider in our project of creating a publication together—as we will talk about, the publishing industry is fraught with many of the same structural inequities as education and other industries, and it’s going to be imperative that we reflect not only on what identities and experiences we each hold that have lacked representation and that we want to make space for, but also, and perhaps more importantly, that we acknowledge the many identities and experiences held by those in our community and thoughtfully consider which have been given less space and therefore who and what we will prioritize in making space for in our publication. We are all a complex mix of identities that hold different amounts of power, and you will each be asked to reflect on this not only as individuals but as members of this community of people.
- ❖ Links to university statements and resources
 - [Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
 - [COVID-19 and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
 - [Anti-racism resources](#)

TYPICAL WEEK

- MONDAYS: Have all readings done for Tuesday and weekly discussion board post complete
- **TUESDAYS:** class time will focus on discussion of readings
- WEDNESDAYS: drafts of assignments due by the end of the day/by class time on Thursdays
- **THURSDAYS:** class time will focus on workshopping assignment drafts = CV/Resume Workshop, Personal Narrative Workshop
- SATURDAYS: major assignments due = Final CV/Resume, Final Personal Narrative, Final Reflection

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 class the day

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 1-3: The first half of this course asks you to turn inward—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 3-5: 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: Introduction to 125 & Stories and Power	
Tues 7/4:	<p>HOLIDAY: NO CLASS</p> <p>Begin readings for Thursday’s class and complete discussion board by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, July 5th</p>
Thurs 7/6	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ocean Vuong, “Someday I’ll Love Ocean Vuong” ● Gilbert, “Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness” ● Emily McCrary-Ruiz-Esparza, Generation Amazing!!! How We’re Draining Language of Its Power (2022) ● Abdellah Taia, “Oum Zahra Goes to the Movies.” <i>Another Morocco</i> (2017) <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “The Power of Vulnerability” —Brené Brown
Sat 7/8	Nothing due!
WEEK 2: Laughter, Joy, and Pain & Organizing Silences and Creating Space	
Mon 7/10	Due 11:59 pm—Week 2 Discussion Board Post
Tues 7/11:	Read: (~35 pages total)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roxanne Gay, “Some Jokes are Funnier Than Others” (~5 pages) • Audre Lorde, “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action” (4 pages) • Gloria Anzaldúa “Speaking in Tongues” (8 pages) • Joseph Azam, “Last, First, Middle” (7 pages) • Vauhini Vara, Ghosts (2021) (longer piece) <p>Watch (1 hr total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hannah Gadsby: Nanette (Netflix) (1 hr)
Thurs 7/13: Workshop	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UC Personal Statements & Statements of Purpose <p>Due by class time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CV/Resume Draft
Sat 7/15	<p>Due 11:59 pm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CV/Resume Final • Personal Narrative Proposal
WEEK 3: Telling a Story: Fashion & On Curiosity and Asking Questions	
Mon 7/17	<p>Due 11:59 pm—Week 3 Discussion Board Post</p>
Tues 7/18:	<p>Read: (~35 pages total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marita Golden, My Black Hair: a Tangled Story of Race and Politics in America (2015) (~11 pages) • Tanisha C. Ford, "Dashiki" chapter 1 of Dressed in Dreams (13 pages) • Nadra Kareem Nittle, A Guide to Understanding and Avoiding Cultural Appropriation (2021) (short article) • Minh-Ha T. Pham, Fashion’s Cultural Appropriation Debate: Pointless (2014) (PDF version here if you can’t access the link to the Atlantic) (~9 pages)
Thurs 7/20: Workshop	<p>Watch: (1 hr 34 min total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Examined Life” (2008) (1 hr 25 min) • “The Medium is the Message” (Video) (2 min) • Oscar-winning short film Hair Love (2019) (7 min) <p>Due by class time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to peer discussion board post

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Narrative Draft
Sun 7/23	Due 11:59 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Narrative Final
WEEK 4: Questions and Researching Answers & Talking About your Stuff	
Mon 7/24	Due 11:59 pm— Week 4 Discussion Board Post
Tues 7/25:	Read: (~16 pages total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chantha Nguon & Kim Green, "The Gradual Extinction of Softness" (2021) (~10 pages) "Fried Chicken is Common Ground" (Osayi Endolyn) (~6 pages) Watch (50 min total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Netflix: Watch Chef's Table, "Mashama Bailey" (Vol 6, Ep 1) (50 min) Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen: Ngofeen Mputubwele, "When White People say Plantation" (2020) (47 min)
Thurs 7/27:	Listen (choose one of the following): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "1619, "The Birth of American Music," (Episode 3) (35 min) or "How to Save a Planet, "Black Lives Matter & the Climate" (46 min) NOTE: there will be an in-class writing assignment on these podcasts Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional: Liz Ryan, "How to Tell a Dragon Slaying Story" (~4 pages) Due by class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Performance Proposal
Sun 7/30	Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Performance Draft
WEEK 5: The Internet and Digital Decluttering & On Reflection	
Mon 7/31	Due 11:59 pm— Week 5 Discussion Board Post

<p>Tues 8/1</p> <p>Workshop + Discussion</p>	<p>Read: (~12 pages total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roxanne Gay, “When Twitter Does What Journalism Can’t” (~4 pages) • Tom Chatfield, “The Attention Economy” (~7 pages) • The Dolly Parton Challenge (very short, mostly images) <p>Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Performance Finals: 5 presentations
<p>Thurs 8/3</p>	<p>No readings</p> <p>PUBLIC PERFORMANCE FINALS: remaining DUE/PRESENTED IN CLASS</p> <p>Sign-up sheet here</p>
<p>Sat 8/5</p>	<p>Due 11:59 pm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reflection

Additional (optional) Readings & Screenings:

[“The Danger of Fake Positivity & Spiritual Bypassing”](#)

Tim Kreider, [“The Busy Trap”](#) (~4 pages)

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 Koaustenbaum, [“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)

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT AND LEARNING

Learning and Academic Support	
<p><u>Ask a Librarian: Library Support</u> <i>Chat or make an appointment with a librarian to focus on your research needs</i></p>	<p><u>Writing Hub Services in the Teaching + Learning Commons</u> <i>One-on-one online writing tutoring and workshops on key writing topics</i></p>
<p><u>Course Reserves, Connecting from Off-Campus and Research Support</u> <i>Find supplemental course materials</i></p>	<p><u>Supplemental Instruction</u> <i>Peer-assisted study sessions through the Academic Achievement Hub to improve success in historically challenging courses</i></p>
<p><u>First Gen Student Success Coaching Program</u> <i>Peer mentor program that provides students with information, resources, and support in meeting their goals</i></p>	<p><u>Tutoring – Content</u> <i>Drop-in and online tutoring through the Academic Achievement Hub</i></p>
<p><u>Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS)</u> <i>Intellectual and personal development support</i></p>	

	<p><u>Tutoring – Learning Strategies</u></p> <p><i>Address learning challenges with a metacognitive approach</i></p>
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Support for Well-being and Inclusion

<p><u>Basic Needs at UCSD</u></p> <p><i>Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live is encouraged to contact: foodpantry@ucsd.edu basicneeds@ucsd.edu (858) 246-2632</i></p> <p><u>Counseling and Psychological Services</u></p> <p><i>Confidential counseling and consultations for psychiatric service and mental health programming</i></p> <p><u>Triton Concern Line</u></p> <p><i>Report students of concern: (858) 246-1111</i></p> <p><u>Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)</u></p>

<p><u>Community and Resource Centers</u></p> <p><u>Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion</u></p> <p><i>As part of the <u>Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion</u> the campus community centers provide programs and resources for students and contribute toward the evolution of a socially just campus (858).822-.3542 diversity@ucsd.edu</i></p> <p><u>Get Involved</u></p> <p><i>Student organizations, clubs, service opportunities, and many other ways to connect with others on campus</i></p>
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Supports students with disabilities and accessibility across campus

Undocumented Student Services

Programs and services are designed to help students overcome obstacles that arise from their immigration status and support them through personal and academic excellence