

## **CAT 125**

Winter 2023 // SSB 106 // 4 Units

Maya VanderSchuit, mavander@ucsd.edu, Office Hours: Monday 10-12am, Tuesday 4:10-5:10pm on Zoom, or by appointment.

Section Number:	Day :	Time:
097042 SE 011	TuTh	8:00am- 9:20am
097043 SE 012	TuTh	9:30am - 10:50am
097044 SE 013	TuTh	11:00am- 12:20pm

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

[CAT 125](#) and [CAT 125R](#) courses (four units, every quarter) are upper-division writing and communication classes in which students focus on translating skills developed in lower-division writing courses into writing after college and public rhetoric. CAT 125R is the online version of CAT 125; only one of these two courses must be taken to fulfill the upper-division writing requirement. Students must have completed the lower-division writing sequence—CAT 1, CAT 2, and CAT 3—in order to enroll in CAT 125 or CAT 125R.

*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.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

CAT 125 students work towards these goals:

- Practice reflective strategies for reading, watching, listening, and writing.
- Develop proficiency in public presentation, documentation, and curation.

- Examine 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.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS AND 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*
- *NOTE: You may be asked to bring your laptop to certain sessions*

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **STATEMENT OF INCLUSION:**

I believe very strongly that the classroom is a place to expand our knowledge and experiences safely, while being respected and valued. I support the values of UC San Diego to “create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus in which students, faculty, and staff can thrive”. I strive to uphold the values articulated by the Office of the [Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#): “We believe that true excellence is achieved through productive relationships among people of diverse perspectives. When the collective talents of our students, faculty, and staff at UC San Diego are united in an environment that is open and inclusive, creativity and innovation prosper.” I hope you will join me in creating a class that upholds these values to further enhance our learning as a community. (Sample from Biological Sciences)

For more information,

[https://commons.ucsd.edu/\\_files/Inclusion-Statements-Handout-4.pdf](https://commons.ucsd.edu/_files/Inclusion-Statements-Handout-4.pdf). And

<http://diversity.ucsd.edu>.

### **DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

Our classroom will be inclusive and compassionate. Please see UCSD’S policies [here](#).

### **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the [Office of Disabilities](#). Students authorized by OSD to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with me during my office hours in order to ensure confidentiality. *We can*

*discuss your specific accommodations and brainstorm ideas of how I can best help you succeed in this course.*

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

UCSD has a university-wide Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, published annually in the General Catalog, and online <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/>. 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 include suspension or dismissal, and academic sanctions may include failure of the assignment or failure of the course.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance and class participation is *essential* and *mandatory* to your success in this course. Please arrive on time and ready to participate in the classroom community. If you must miss class, please come and talk to me during office hours or email me to discuss the circumstances. It is your responsibility to check in with your fellow students to see what you may have missed.

*You are allowed 1 week (2 for T/Th and 3 for MWF) unexcused absences. For every absence after 3, you will lose 1/3 a letter grade of your overall grade. After 8 absences, you may fail the course.*

NOTE: Per University guidance, attendance to synchronously held lectures or discussions cannot be used in calculating your grade in the event a course moves remote.

## **TARDINESS**

Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment and will adversely affect your grade. Three tardies are equivalent to one absence.

## **PARTICIPATION**

In CAT, it is our hope that in this course we will develop a supportive learning community that fosters discussion, engagement, and excitement. Often, we will engage in the course material through the sharing of ideas, questions, and personal experiences. "Honesty, listening for understanding, a willingness to share your ideas, and respect for self and others" are basic guidelines that can help create a positive learning environment. 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.

Showing up to section is a small portion of what counts as participation. You must earn your participation grade through various forms of engagement with the course. Such forms include, but are not limited to:

- Actively engaging in section discussion and online communication
- Completing readings
- Working respectfully with others
- Coming to section ON TIME
- Taking notes
- Putting away distractions (no cell phones!)
- Attending office hours

A – You are well prepared for lecture and section, demonstrated by: having all your materials; consistently contributing to discussion; asking productive questions; listening actively and taking notes; engaging in group work; supporting and respecting other students; respecting TAs, the instructor and course material; attending office hours; coming to lecture and section on time and staying for the entire class time; taking responsibility for any work or material missed if absent; overall proactive and attentive.

B – You are somewhat prepared for lecture and section, demonstrated by: occasionally contributing to discussion; listening actively; engaging in group work; respecting other students; respecting TAs, the instructor, and course material; mostly coming to lecture and section on time and staying for the entire class time; overall responsible.

C – You are inconsistently prepared for lecture and section, demonstrated by: rarely contributing to discussion; missing materials; managing time poorly; working well with others, but unable to contribute fairly; respecting TAs, instructor, and course materials; mostly coming to lecture and section on time and staying for the entire class time; overall, inconsistent.

D – You are physically present but mentally disengaged from the course, demonstrated by: never contributing to discussion in lecture or section; consistently coming to class late or leaving early; working well with others, but unable to contribute fairly; failing to develop any relationships with TAs and/or instructor; overall, disengaged.

0 – You demonstrate through behavior and/or language that you are uninterested in learning; or, alternatively, you are regularly disrespectful of other students, TAs, the instructor, or course material.

### **LAPTOP AND PHONE POLICY**

Personal electronic devices are not allowed in this class (unless prompted to use them). Screen engagement negatively affects the classroom culture/community and is distracting to both myself and your peers. Your participation grade in this course will be significantly impacted each time you are seen using a screen device in class.

## **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION AND LATE WORK**

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. For each day work is late, your grade goes down by  $\frac{1}{3}$  letter. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive a 0.

## **GRADING CRITERIA**

Your major projects and presentations will be graded on a letter scale. ***Assignments must be turned in on time.*** Please let me know at least a week in advance of the due date if you need an extension for valid reasons. Retroactive extensions WILL NOT be issued. *For each day work is late, your grade goes down by  $\frac{1}{3}$  letter. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive a 0.*

An “A” represents extraordinary work that has been thoroughly developed and considered, a “B” represents great work that fulfills all requirements of the prompt but leaves room for more development and consideration. A “C” is considered to be the “average” and reflects the completion of an assignment that fulfills the prompts requirements, but does not show a great amount of effort to hone your skills from class, it also shows a lack of evolution from initial idea to final project. A “D” represents an insufficient effort in the completion of the assignment, meaning some components are missing or are not turned in on time. An “F” represents disregard for deadlines, assignment instructions, and displays a minimal effort for completing an assignment. In order to receive a grade, all work must be your own.

NOTE: Discussions about grades are more productive in person than over email. If you have a question or concern about your grade, please meet with me during office hours or set up an appointment. I am happy to discuss why you received this grade and how you can improve it in the future.

## **GRADE BREAKDOWN**

Quick note: All assignments must be original work created for this class and should ascribe to UCSD’s policy of academic integrity.

- [Personal Narrative](#) -- 25%
- **Public Performance 101** -- 30%
  - [For CAT 125](#)
- [Final Reflection](#) -- 15% (Complete/Incomplete)

- **Participation** -- 10%
- **Reflective Journals** -- 20%

Reflective Journal assignments will provide space for you to reflect on what you are interested in (in life, in career, etc.); imagine the possibilities attached to those ideas; and to reflect on the discussions we have in class and the media we consume. Entries should be 250-400 words each and prompts are below in the syllabus. These are graded complete/incomplete. One of these includes a [Resume/CV](#) assignment.

**Extra Credit:** if 90% or more of your section fills out the CAPES, then the whole section receives extra credit on 1 assignment (instructors choice)

## COURSE CALENDAR

### WHAT IS DUE & WHEN?

All screenings and readings should be done \*before\* you arrive to section the day. Unless otherwise stated in the course calendar, the listed readings (and other misc content) will be due on *Tuesday* and the written reflections (or prompts in a box) will be due on *Thursday*.

### Week 1: Welcome & Introduction to 125R

Topics: Personal Narrative, Storytelling, Power & Permission

#### **Read:**

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

#### **Watch:**

- "[The Power of Vulnerability](#)" (00:28)

#### **Listen:**

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

**DUE THURSDAY Reflection #1:** How are you—in your personal life, in school? What are you interested in--academic-wise, in your personal life? And, why? How did you develop that interest? (In a perfect world, what would you want to do? And, why?) Which texts from the class did you connect with most this week? And, why?

### Week 2: Stories & Power

#### Read & Listen

- Listen: "[\(EP 18\) PT 9- UNDER THE BLACKLIGHT: NARRATING THE NIGHTMARE &\(RE\)IMAGINING THE POSSIBLE](#)" (1:06)

- 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 THURSDAY Reflection #2:** You are curious or passionate about X--why do you want to work in that field? What are your goals? And/or why do you want to go to graduate school? What do you see as your role? What do you imagine contributing? Have there been challenges to you moving down your desired path? If so, what and how have they affected you? In many ways, this reflection is asking you to develop and expand on Reflection #1 and as fodder for your personal statements/personal essays.

### **Week 3: Laughter, Joy, and Pain**

**Key term:** emotional appeal

**Watch:**

- *Nanette* (Netflix)

**Read:**

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

**DUE THURSDAY : Reflection #3: Resume/CV Due**

### **Week 4: Organizing Silences & Creating Space**

**Read:**

- Gloria Anzaldúa "[Speaking in Tongues](#)"
- [Joseph Azam, "Last, First, Middle"](#)
- Vauhini Vara, *Ghosts* (2021)
- [UC Personal Statements](#) & [Statements of Purpose](#)

**DUE THURSDAY [Personal Essay Draft #1 Due](#) ([Peer Review Directions](#))**

### **Week 5: Telling a Story: Fashion**

*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)

**Personal Essay Final Draft Due by FRIDAY at 11:59pm**

### **Week 6: On Curiosity & Asking Questions**

**Key term:** logical appeals

**Read:**

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

**Watch:**

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

**DUE THURSDAY Reflection #4:** Create a strategic plan. What are your main goals for the next year (or two)? What about this term? What things prevent you from working towards those goals? Map them out as [SMART Goals](#).

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

**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 Video/Speech**

### **Week 8: Talking About Your Stuff**

**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](#)"

Sign up for Performance Date

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

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

### **Week 9: The Internet & Digital Decluttering**

*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”](#)

**You will be performing on your *chosen date*. Please mark your calendar accordingly!**

### **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 (See assignments overview)**

*\*\*\*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\* you arrive at section the day that they are on the calendar (unless stated otherwise).*

## **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"](#)

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!