

SYLLABUS WRITTEN BY DR. PHOEBE BRONSTEIN AND ADAPTED BY MS. MORALES FOR FALL2023

**\*Syllabus is subject to change at any point in the quarter**

**To Tell Your Story**



**Public Rhetoric, Media, & Autobiography**

**“Everybody has a story and a history.”**

**-Roxanne Gay, Hunger (3).**

**CAT 125**

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:00 p.m-12:50 p.m, 1:00 p.m.-1:50 p.m, 2-2:50 p.m.**

**Ms. Morales**

**E-mail: [c6morales@ucsd.edu](mailto:c6morales@ucsd.edu)**

**Office Hours: 11 a.m.-11:45 a.m. MWF through zoom**

- **& by appointment in office CT0163 in the Catalyst Administration Building**

- **Zoom Link:**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85979038079?pwd=emhTQmtZUVZ4ZDJrRXZKbWpqbnYzZ09>
- **Meeting ID: 859 7903 8079**
- **Passcode: D5aQ2Y**

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

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

The 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 pre-writing and drafting to peer review and collaborative revision.

### **Course Goals:**

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

- Office Hours: 11:00 a.m. -11:45 a.m. MWF & by appointment
- E-mail: [c6morales@ucsd.edu](mailto:c6morales@ucsd.edu)
- \*The best way to contact me (aside from office hours) is via e-mail. I ask that you expect and allow 48 hours for me to respond. If you do not hear back from me within that window, please email again and politely remind me about your message.

### **Who I am as a Person/Instructor**



I am Ms. Morales. My pronouns are she/her, and I identify as a mixed race Latinx Puerto Rican and Mexican woman. I have an M.F.A in Creative Writing from San Diego State University and a B.A. from California State University, San Marcos where I studied Literature in Writing, with an emphasis in Writing. I started as a community college student and then transferred to California State University, San Marcos. I faced economic hardships in getting through school as an independent learner as well as kept a full-time job. I understand there are various challenges when attending higher education.

As your instructor, I believe it is my job to provide you with a safe, inclusive environment where we will learn and discuss current topics of rhetoric, analyze and evaluate texts, and construct expository and argumentative papers, including an extended argument, which synthesizes, integrates, and acknowledges multiple sources. We will come up with community guidelines for the classroom so that we can all respect each other in our process of writing and understanding arguments. With that being said, microaggressions, racist remarks, actions, and hateful behavior will not be tolerated in this course. I also like to tailor the course to students' needs as much as possible. This means that I allow for room in the syllabus to take more time on each unit if needed.

I will also give you several opportunities through short in-class writings to evaluate how the semester is going for you so that I may make changes as needed. My goal is to create a comfortable, inviting environment for all students so learning can take place. I expect respectful behavior in class. It is essential that we speak respectfully and listen attentively to each other, not just the instructor. Respectful behavior should be extended to everyone and includes respecting

people of different ages, genders, physical abilities, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, religious affiliations, political viewpoints, etc.

We may not all think alike, come from the same places, or like the same things, but we will all be respectful to one another. We should strive to be honest and supportive. While discussion, laughter, and even argument are a part of this course, scoffing and dismissive comments are not. We are not in this class to simply agree with each other or with the instructor. We are here to offer, analyze, and connect a variety of viewpoints so that we can strengthen our own abilities as thinkers and scholars.

### **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*

### **Big things to know & keep in mind (policy-wise) ...**

- *For complete CAT policies on attendance, Turnitin, and more please click here.*
- **Attendance:** Missing more than three class sessions, either lectures or sections, will result in deducting 1/3 of a letter grade off your final course grade (i.e. an A- would become a B+). Missing 8 or more classes (i.e. 2 weeks of class), is grounds for failing the course. Excessive tardiness (meaning coming to class 5 minutes late or more several times, or coming to class later than 10 minutes) will also impact your grade and may be grounds for an absence.
- **Turning in Assignments:** All assignments are due by the day and time marked on the syllabus/canvas. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments will be due and **completed** electronically (via Turnitin). I do not accept work over email. If extensions are needed, please inform me before the due date as I do not give retroactive extensions.
- **Late work:** I will accept late work for three days after it is due. For each day it is late, we will deduct 1/3 a letter grade. The maximum deducted will be 1/3 of a letter grade. After that (i.e. after 3 days) you receive an F/0. Work more than three days late, will result in a failing grade for the assignment. If you are concerned you will miss a deadline, please contact me at least 48 hours before the assignment is due to work out a new deadline. (I will not give extensions retroactively)
- I do not accept assignments over email. Everything must be turned in through canvas on the day that it is due.
- 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 1/3 letter. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive a 0.
- Lectures for this class will not be posted on the course canvas website. However, I will regularly post articles, ideas, and questions related to the course and the week's topics.

### **Peer Review, Self-Evaluation, and 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. That is, be prepared both to receive and offer constructive criticism and re-work your writing, presentations, 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 and/or participate in peer review will lower your final assignment grade by 1/3 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 1/3 a letter grade.
- Grade Contesting Policy (Must be done before Monday of Week 10)

### **Grade Contesting Policy**

- Wait 48 hours between when your work was returned and when you contact your TA/Professor except for the Public Performance grade.
- Make an appointment to speak with your TA/Professor in person (the appointment should be with the person who graded your work).
- Come to the appointment having read your TA/Professor's comments thoroughly and with a written explanation/argument for why your paper should be re-graded. If you chose to meet with me just to "understand" your grade then you can not make arguments for it then, unless you ALSO brought a written explanation. Otherwise, you will need to make a separate appointment. Your explanation should take into account the comments from your TA/Professor and explain why you think your paper deserves another look.
- Keep in mind that asking for and receiving a re-grade, does not necessarily mean your grade will be higher.

### **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.

### A Note on Attendance, Participation, and Class Citizenship

This course functions best only through your consistent attendance and participation in both lecture and discussion section. This means you need to consistently show up to class prepared--having done the week's readings --and ready to engage in open and constructive dialogue.

### A note on class citizenship and community:

Please note that in this class, we will discuss the politics of race and gender, among other intersections of identity, such as class and sexuality. These conversations can be difficult, thus, I expect you to practice respect, listening, patience, and kindness with and towards each other. This includes how you speak to both me (your professor), your TA, and your fellow classmates. In this course, your ideas may be challenged and I ask that you are open to that challenge, meeting it with intellectual curiosity, respect for others' ideas and experiences, and empathy. I believe that ethical argumentation is imperative to a civil and just society and that is a value that I hope we form, instill, and engage with in this course. This is all to say, disagree with each other, with me, with your TA, but do so in a way that respectfully engages the other person's ideas.

If you are anxious about speaking in class, please let your TA know ASAP. Our goal is to get everyone talking and engaged because that is how we will all learn best! My hope in this course is that you learn something cool (about media! And, writing! And, storytelling!), while also

learning key skills from asking good questions to drafting and writing that will help you succeed in college and the workplace more broadly.

### Discrimination and Harassment

UCSD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. This class adheres to those guidelines. Alternative viewpoints are welcome in this classroom. However, statements that are deemed racist, sexist, classist, ableist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory toward others in the class will not be tolerated and students will be asked to leave. Students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and possess a diverse array of values and beliefs and the classroom must be a safe space to discuss opinions and ideas. As such, I will not tolerate harassment of any kind in my classroom.

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability should (if needed) provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are then required to present their AFA letters to the Faculty (please make arrangements to contact your professor privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged. No retroactive accommodations can be provided. The CAT OSD liaison is Lynette Brossard: [lbrossard@ucsd.edu](mailto:lbrossard@ucsd.edu).

### Academic Integrity

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.

### Grading Schema

The Culture, Art, and Technology Program of Sixth College makes use of a set grading schema, which means that certain letter grades correspond to specific numerical grades. This schema prevents grade inflation and point bargaining. All major assignments (those with a draft and final submission) and participation will be assessed according to the grading schema.

### Assignments

Quick note: 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. Quick note #2: 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). **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. (Pass/Fail).

- Personal Narrative -- 25%
- Public Performance 101 -- 30%
- Reflective Journals and Annotations -- 20%
- Final reflection -15%
- Participation -- 10%

## **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 you arrive at the lecture and/or section 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 1-5:** 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 125**

Topics: Personal Narrative, Storytelling, Power & Permission

#### **Read:**

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

#### **Watch:**

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

→ Friday class: Resume/CV Workshop

**Reflection #1 + CV/Resume:** 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?

#### **Weekly Annotations & Reflections**

This reflection is the beginning of the process for your personal statements/personal essays. With this assignment you will also add on your weekly annotations.

Group report 1 and other work due Sunday by 11:59 pm



## Week 2: Stories & Power

### Read & Listen

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

**Reflection #2 due Sunday by 11:59pm–Personal Narrative Proposal:** Using your first reflection as a jumping off point, 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)With this assignment you will also add on your weekly annotations

### [Weekly Annotations & Reflections](#)

Group report 2 due Sunday by 11:59 pm

## Week 3: Laughter, Joy, and Pain

**Key term:** emotional appeal

**Sunday 11:59 pm: [Personal Essay Draft #1 Due for Peer Review](#) ([Peer Review Directions](#))**

\_Group report 3 due Sunday by 11:59 pm

### 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

### Read:

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

DUE: Group report 4 due Sunday by 11:59 pm and [Weekly Annotations & Reflections](#)

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

- 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 Sunday at 11:59pm**

Group report 5 due Sunday by 11:59 pm

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

**Key term:** logical appeals

**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.

Group report 6 due Sunday by 11:59 pm

### **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)

**Listen:**

- An amazing food writer who is in the episode we watched this week, ["When White People say Plantation."](#)

**Read** (optional)

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

**Due by Friday at 11:19pm: Outline for Public Performance**

[Weekly Annotations & Reflections](#)

Group report 7 due Sunday by 11:59 pm up report 3 due

**Week 8: Talking About Your Stuff**

**Listen:**

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

**Watch:**

**Video: Food, Beauty, Mind-Philosophy Tube (on canvas)**

**Read:**

- Tim Kreider, "[The Busy Trap](#)"

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

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

**For 125: Sign up to perform in class during Weeks 9-10**

Group report 8 due Sunday by 11:59 pm

**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](#)"
- [The Dolly Parton Challenge](#)
- Frank Pasquale, "[The Algorithmic Self](#)"
- Tom Chiarella, "[The Invisible Grip](#)" & "[How to Tell a Dragon Slaying Story](#)"

### **Performances this week**

Individual report 9 due Sunday by 11:59 pm

### **Week 10: On Reflection**

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

*No required reading! Just writing & reflecting & watching each other’s performances.*

### **Final Reflection Due by Friday at 11:59pm**

Review your first reflection and starting from there, 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? Write ONE paragraph that narrates your broader goals and then map your individual goals out as [SMART Goals](#).

Individual report 10 due Sunday by 11:59 pm

### **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!