CAT 125: Public Rhetoric & Practical Communication

Tuesdays: zoom 8-10 am

Thursdays: asynchronous activities

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Office Hours:

Thursdays 9-11 am on zoom & 2-3 pm in-person at the tables in front of the Catalyst building main entrance 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 Netflix-comedy special *Nanette* to Gloria Anzaldúa's writings and the 1619 Project podcast, 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 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—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.

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 <u>CAT 125 Rubric</u>.
 - All major assignments require you to submit both a proposal and a rough draft before the final due date. While the proposal and draft do not count towards your grade, failure to submit a proposal and/or draft will result in the loss of a letter grade on the final submission.
 - o In order to receive a letter grade, all assignments must be submitted through Canvas.

Assignment Breakdown:

- Personal Narrative -- 25%
- Public Performance -- 25%
- Final Reflection -- 10%
- **Participation** -- 5%
 - Attend Tuesday sections on zoom. See Attendance policy.
- Weekly Discussion Board & Discussion Synthesis Assignments--30%
 - Discussion Boards
 - Discussion boards posts will ask you question to encourage reflection on the weekly readings and sometimes also act as journals where you will reflect on larger personal topics related to the class. You'll find detailed instructions on each individual discussion board on Canvas.
 - You will post TWICE a week. You will offer an original response to a question I ask about the reading *and* respond to two of your peers' posts: one should reflect on what one of your peers said about the readings, and the second should try to answer a discussion question that another peer posed. Your original responses are due Mondays at 11:59 pm. Your responses to your peers are due Thursdays at 11:59 pm.
 - These are graded complete/incomplete. However, a "complete" must meet <u>all</u> requirements to pass. If you do not meet all the requirements, you will get an incomplete and a note on what is missing. On all incomplete grades, you will have 3 days after it was graded to redo and submit for a re-grade. You must email me to let me know that you have re-submitted an assignment (and which one it is). If it is still incomplete, that is your final grade for the assignment.
 - PLEASE NOTE: using chatGPT to answer discussion questions for you is not allowed and will be treated as plagiarism. If you have questions about ways of using chatGPT to assist you in learning, rather than replacing your learning, please come discuss with me.
 - Discussion Synthesis Assignment

- At the end of the week, after you have completed your initial discussion board posts and your two responses to your peers, read through the discussion thread on your original post. Then, write 150-words minimum in the Discussion Synthesis Assignment for that week, including the following:
 - What is something a peer said that affirmed or challenged your understanding of the week's materials? Did they make you think about anything new?
 - Connect something from this week's theme and readings to one of the previous weeks' themes/materials.
 - Do you have any further questions, concerns, or critiques about this week's material and/or your discussion with your peers? Because this is online, it is more difficult for me to facilitate and monitor discussion in real time, so if anything in discussion has been disrespectful or made you uncomfortable, please use this space to let me know so I can address this (this is optional, only need to answer this question if applicable!)
- **Resume/CV**: 5%
 - Complete/incomplete

GRADING SCALE:

- CAT Writing Rubric
- Discussion boards, minor assignments, and participation will be graded complete/incomplete
- Major assignments will be assessed using a 10-point scale, following the schema below:
 - o 10 Outstanding
 - o 9, 9.5 High Pass
 - o 8, 8.5 Pass
 - o 7, 7.5 Low Pass
 - o 5, 6 Not Passing
 - o 0 Not Completed
- Limitations on possible points enable more effective holistic grading, as well as discourage "point negotiation."
- For purposes of **final course grades** as calculated by Canvas's gradebook, the following ranges will determine letter grades submitted to eGrades:
 - A+ (96.6-100)
 - A (93.6-96.5)

- A- (89.6-93.5)
- B+ (86.6-89.5)
- B (83.6-86.5)
- B- (79.6-83.5)
- C+ (76.6-79.5)
- C (73.6-76.5)
- C-(69.6-73.5)
- D (60-69.5)
- F (0-59.9)

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 (although it's up to you what feels comfortable to share and what is private, I trust you), 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 (let's say by 8 am), 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 8 am the next morning, it won't be marked late.
- ❖ For each full day a major assignment is late (without communicating with me!) your grade goes down by a ½ letter. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive a 0. However, as always, please come to me with any concerns or if you need to make a plan to catch up on late work, etc.

COVID POLICY: Remote class

- ❖ If you are exposed to or contract COVID, please follow <u>CDC</u> and <u>UCSD guidelines</u> closely. If you have to miss our remote class for COVID reasons because you are too ill, don't fret—your health 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 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.
- ❖ If I get COVID—I will continue to hold class on zoom if possible, or will cancel class and create an asynchronous option to count for attendance until I recover. 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 this is only a 5-week course and we will only meet synchronously once a week on Tuesdays, you are allowed only 1 absence. There is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences—you can use this 1 absence for any reason: illness, doctor appointment, rest, mental health day, traveling, to study for another class, beach day, Taylor Swift concert, play video games, etc! For this absence, you do not need to email me to let me know when and why you are missing class, or to provide any documentation. I recommend checking the slides (which will always be posted on Canvas in that week's module) to see what you missed, but that is your prerogative.
- Your participation grade is 5% of your overall grade and is complete/incomplete. If you miss 2 classes, you will get an incomplete in your participation grade, meaning you will lose 5% from your final grade. Missing 3 classes or more is grounds for failing the course entirely.
- ❖ If you miss a second class more and would like to do makeup work so as not to lose participation points, please make an office hours appointment with me and **come prepared** with a plan of your own making that you think will be sufficient to make up for that absence. We will discuss and I will decide if I approve or have additional requests for your plan. Your plan should account for:
 - > the particular course content of the class you missed
 - And, because missing class means missing valuable discussion and community building with your classmates, should also include some kind of community engagement plan (i.e. organizing a watch party and discussion of course content with friends; planning a poetry reading related to the course; facilitating a free-write group; etc!)

❖ If you email me asking how you can make up participation points, I will respond by directing you to the syllabus to follow the above instructions.

PARTICIPATION

- ❖ In an in-person class, participation would be graded not just on attendance but also on in-class engagement and discussion, but because our class and discussion boards are online/remote and worth 30% of your final grade, participation for this class is only 5% of your final grade and will be based entirely on attendance to our Tuesday sections on zoom.
- Graded complete/incomplete
- See Attendance policy above for more information

TECHNOLOGY

❖ Out of respect for me and your classmates, please keep phones, headphones, 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 at least 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 ETHOS & POSITIONALITY STATEMENT

- ❖ You are all so much more than students—you are siblings, employees, friends, partners, 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 the power of storytelling, and you are always welcome & encouraged to blend the personal and political in your assignments.
- 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 lacking an awareness of how our identities as white women privilege us in the world and within the education system. 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 and many other systemic inequalities based on identity that persist within this 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, you are encouraged and safe to challenge or inform me, whether publicly or privately, and I will always receive that as a generosity 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. This course content asks us to engage with and discuss power as related to many forms of identity; 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. This can be uncomfortable and vulnerable and might require you to challenge some implicit bias or beliefs you hold. I ask that you show up to this space open, engaged, and ready to be held accountable, and I will do the same.

- ❖ Our course content includes writings from and about identities across race, gender, sexuality, nationality, language, religion, ability, and more. There will be material that you share direct experience with, and there will be material that you have no experience with. There will be material that I share direct experience with, and much that I do not. My familiarity with the course material and my position as instructor for this course do not make me an expert on the experience of identities I do not hold, and I will never assume that it does. Yours and your classmates' lived experience is a form of knowledge that will be honored and welcomed in this course.
- Links to university-wide statements and resources
 - Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
 - ➤ COVID-19 and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
 - ➤ Anti-racism resources

TYPICAL WEEK

- Mondays
 - Complete the week's readings & your initial discussion board post by 11:59 pm
- Tuesdays:
 - Class is held on zoom, synchronously, from 8-11 am PST
 - We'll generally do an activity related to the week's theme & materials and go over upcoming assignments
- Wednesdays:
 - Drafts & proposals of major assignments due 11:59 pm (CV/Resume, Personal Narrative, Public Performance) weeks 1, 2, and 4
- Thursdays:
 - No class on zoom—you will have asynchronous assignments to complete by the end of the day:
 - 3 responses to your peers' posts: 2 of those responses should reflect on what your peers said about the readings, and the last should try to answer a discussion question that your peer posed
 - Peer review assignments during weeks 1, 3, and 5
- Fridays
 - Discussion Synthesis assignments due 11:59 pm
 - Major final assignments due 11:59 pm

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!

<u>Weeks 1-3:</u> 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.

<u>Weeks 3-5</u>: 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				
Mon 8/5	Read: (26 pages total) • Ross Gay, "Dispatch from the Ruins" (from Inciting Joy) (25 pages) • Ocean Vuong, "Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong" (1 page/poem) Watch: (20 min total) • "The Power of Vulnerability" —Brené Brown (20 min) Due 11:59 pm: • Syllabus Activity • Week 1 Discussion Board			

Tues 8/6	Class on zoom 8-11 am PT					
	In class: • Introductions • Go over syllabus • Review CV/Resume assignment					
Wed 8/7	Due 11:59 pm ■ CV/Resume draft					
Thurs 8/8	Asynchronous activities: no zoom Office Hours: 9-11 am on zoom, 2-3 pm in-person Due 11:59 pm: Week 1 Discussion Board responses (2) CV/Resume Peer Review					
Fri 4/5	Due 11:59 pm: • Discussion Synthesis #1 • CV/Resume Final					
	WEEK 2: Stories & Power—Organizing Silences and Creating Space					
Mon 8/12	 Read: (~18 pages total) Audre Lorde, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action" (4 pages) Joy Harjo, "An American Sunrise" (brief poem) Joseph Azam, "Last, First, Middle" (7 pages) Vauhini Vara, Ghosts (2021) (alternative format, ~6 pages total) Gloria Anzaldúa "Speaking in Tongues" (8 pages) UC Personal Statements & Statements of Purpose (~1 page total) Due 11:59 pm: Week 2 Discussion Board 					
Tues 8/13	Class on zoom 8-10 am PT In class: Review Personal Narrative Assignment Activity/Free-write					

Wed 8/14	Due 11:59 pm: Personal Narrative Proposal					
Thurs 8/15	Asynchronous activities: no zoom Office Hours: 9-11 am on zoom, 2-3 pm in-person Due 11:59 pm: • Week 2 Discussion Board responses (2)					
Fri 8/16	Due 11:59 pm: Discussion Synthesis #2 Personal Narrative Draft					
WEE	K 3: Laughter, Joy, and Pain & On Curiosity, Delight, & Asking Questions					
Mon 8/19	 Read: (21 pages total) Elizabeth Gilbert, "Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness" (3 pages) Ada Vilageliu-Diaz, Critical Humanities, Vol 1: Pandemic Literature and Theory: "The Book of Delights by Ross Gay" (3 pages) Ross Gay, "(Foot, End, Etc.) Notes", (from The Book of (More) Delights) (3 pages) Ross Gay, "Mullberry Picking", (from The Book of (More) Delights) (2 pages) Ross Gay, introduction to Inciting Joy (~5 pages) Roxanne Gay, "Some Jokes are Funnier Than Others" (~5 pages) Watch "The Medium is the Message" (Video) (2 min) Hannah Gadsby: Nanette (Netflix) (1 hr) Transcript of Nannette (if no Netflix access) 					
	Due <u>11:59 pm</u> ■ Week 3 Discussion Board					
Tues 8/20	Class on zoom 8-10 am PT In class: • Go over Personal Narrative Peer Review & Final • Activity/Free-write					

Wed 8/21	Due 11:59 pm: • Personal Narrative Peer Review (2)					
Thurs 8/22	Asynchronous activities: no zoom Office Hours: 9-11 am on zoom, 2-3 pm in-person Due 11:59 pm Week 3 Discussion Board responses (2) Asynchronous Activity: Reverse Outline					
Fri 8/23	Due 11:59 pm:					
WEEK 4	a: Telling a Story, Researching & Asking Questions—Fashion, Food & Music					
Mon 8/26	FASHION/HAIR • Read: (~24 pages total) ○ 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) FOOD • Read (~16 pages total) ○ Chantha Nguon & Kim Green, "The Gradual Extinction of Softness" (2021) (~10 pages) ○ "Fried Chicken is Common Ground" (Osayi Endolyn) (~6 pages)					
	MUSIC • Listen (35 min) ○ 1619 Podcast: "The Birth of American Music," (Episode 3) (35 min) ■ Alternative link via Spotify • Read (6 pages) ○ Hanif Abdurraqib, "I Wasn't Brought Here, I Was Born; Surviving Punk Rock Long Enough To Find Afropunk" from They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us (6 pages) Due 11:59 pm: • Week 4 Discussion Board					

Tues 8/27	Class on zoom 8-11 am PT In class: Review Public Performance assignment Activity/Free-write					
Wed 8/28	Due 11:59 pm: • Public Performance Proposal					
Thurs 8/29	Asynchronous activities: no zoom Office Hours: 9-11 am on zoom, 2-3 pm in-person Due 11:59 pm— Week 4 Discussion Board responses (3) Asynchronous Activity: Mind Map					
Fri 8/30	Due 11:59 pm: • Discussion Synthesis #4 • Public Performance Draft					
	WEEK 5: Social Media, Busy-ness, & On Reflection					
Mon 9/2	Due 11:59 pm: • Week 5 Discussion Board Read • Tom Chatfield, "The Attention Economy" (~7 pages) • The Dolly Parton Challenge (very short, mostly images) • Tim Kreider, "The Busy Trap" (~4 pages) • Roxanne Gay, "When Twitter Does What Journalism Can't" (~4 pages)					
Tues 9/3	Class on zoom 8-11 am PT In class: • Go over Public Performance Peer Review & Final • Activity/Free-write					
Wed 9/4	Due 11:59 pm: • Public Performance Peer Review (2)					

Thurs 9/5	Asynchronous activities: no zoom Office Hours: 9-11 am on zoom, 2-3 pm in-person Due 11:59 pm: • Week 5 Discussion Board Responses (2)	
Fri 9/6	Due 11:59 pm: Public Performance Final	

ADDITIONAL/OPTIONAL READINGS & SCREENINGS

"How to Save a Planet, "Black Lives Matter & the Climate" (46 min)

"The Danger of Fake Positivity & Spiritual Bypassing"

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

Ask a Librarian: Library Support

Chat or make an appointment with a librarian to focus on your research needs

Course Reserves, Connecting from Off-Campus and Research Support

Find supplemental course materials

First Gen Student Success Coaching Program

Peer mentor program that provides students with information, resources, and support in meeting their goals

Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS)

Intellectual and personal development support

Writing Hub Services in the Teaching + Learning Commons

One-on-one online writing tutoring and workshops on key writing topics

Supplemental Instruction

Peer-assisted study sessions through the Academic Achievement Hub to improve success in historically challenging courses

<u>Tutoring – Content</u>

Drop-in and online tutoring through the Academic
Achievement Hub

<u>Tutoring – Learning</u> <u>Strategies</u>

Address learning challenges with a metacognitive approach

Support for Well-being and Inclusion

Basic Needs at UCSD

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

Counseling and Psychological Services

Confidential counseling and consultations for psychiatric service and mental health programming

Triton Concern Line

Report students of concern: (858) 246-1111

Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)

Supports students with disabilities and accessibility across campus

Community and Resource Centers Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

As part of the Office of Equity,

Diversity, and Inclusion 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

Get Involved

Student organizations, clubs, service opportunities, and many other ways to connect with others on campus

<u>Undocumented Student</u> 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