

## **CAT 125**

Summer Session 2// 2024 // Synchronous Online // 4 Units

Maya VanderSchuit, mavander@ucsd.edu, Office hours: Tuesday: 1:50-2:50 on [Zoom](#),  
or by appointment.

\*\*\* the best way to contact me is via email (NOT Canvas messages)\*\*\*\*

Section Number:	Day :	Time:
516063	T/TH	11:00- 1:50

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

### **Required Texts & Technology**

- Netflix subscription
- Access to Canvas & Course Reserves
- Notebook & Writing Utensil
- Recommended: *They Say, I Say CAT Edition*

### **Course Calendar**

*Please note readings and screenings are liable to change as the class progresses. I will never add additional readings or assignments, but may revise and substitute what is already here (If I change anything, I will give you lots of notice and reminders!). All screenings and readings should be done before 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 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 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.

## **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.

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 during the *first two weeks of class* 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 and/ or meet with me in office hours. I will **not** be able to detail what we covered in class via email.

*Summer Policy: You are allowed 1 unexcused absence. For every absence after 2, you will lose 1/3 a letter grade of your overall grade. After 4 absences, you may fail the course.*

## **NETIQUETTE**

***Synchronous Virtual Learning Policy & Participation:*** To participate is to be present, to show up, to be aware, and to engage. Get ready for our Zoom meetings as though you were coming to class. Treat this synchronous class the same as you would for an in person class in terms of organizing yourself so that you are ready to learn, to participate and to engage with your classmates and instructor. You need to be distraction free and available. So where applicable—let your employer know of your class schedule, organize child care and let other people in your household that your meeting is not to be interrupted. You will not be able to participate in the interactive components of our Zoom lecture on a cellular phone, so you must have access to a computer for class.

***Video Visibility Policy:*** Because nonverbal feedback is helpful in human interactions, I expect students in this class to keep their cameras on during synchronous online meetings. You will not be marked as “present” if your video is off. With this in mind, please plan where you will be during class time so you can participate in a setting that is free from visual distractions. If you believe you have a legitimate reason not to have your camera turned on, please consult with me well in advance of the class period, and I will make a determination.

## **TARDINESS**

Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment and will adversely affect your grade. Three tardies are equivalent to one absence. \*\*\* If you arrive at, or past, the 25 min mark you will be marked absent.

## **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 the 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 and Weekly Annotations
- Turning in “In class assignments” to Canvas
- Working respectfully with others
- Coming to section ON TIME
- 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%
- **Final Reflection** -- 15% (Complete/Incomplete)
- **Participation** -- 10%
- **Reflective Journals + Weekly Annotations**-- 20% (Complete/Incomplete)

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 evaluations, then the whole section receives extra credit on 1 assignment (instructors choice).

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

### **WHAT IS DUE & WHEN?**

All screenings, readings, and reflections should be done \*before\* you arrive at class on the due date.

### **Week 1: Introduction to 125/R & Stories and Power**

Topics: Personal Narrative, Storytelling, Power & Permission

### **Due Thursday (8/8/24)**

- Read:
  - Ocean Vuong, "[Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong](#)"
  - Gilbert, "[Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness](#)" Non-highlighted [version here](#)
  - 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)
- Watch:
  - "[The Power of Vulnerability](#)" Brene Brown

- **OPTIONAL:**

- Read: **\*\*highly recommend\*\*** Rene Gladman "[Untitled Environments](#)" (downloadable PDF option on website); [Finding Fred. "A Genius of Empathy"](#) (Ep 1)

**Reflection #1 CV/Resume: due Friday, August 9th by 11:59pm:** After Resume/CV Workshop, upload your revised Resume/CV here. When you do so, write a short (100 word) reflection where you briefly discuss what stands out to you as your most key experience(s) on this document in terms of what you are hoping to do after college.

**Weekly Annotations & Reflections: Annotation 1 due Friday August 9th by 11:59pm (on Week 1 readings)**

## **Week 2: Laughter, Joy, and Pain & Organizing Silences and Creating Space**

Topics: emotional appeal

### **Due Tuesday (8/13/24)**

- Watch *Nanette* (Netflix)
  - OPTIONAL: [Hannah Gadsby Ten Steps](#) to *Nanette* (If you don't have Netflix, read this and look up youtube excerpts of the comedy routine)
- Read:
  - Roxanne Gay, "[Some Jokes are Funnier Than Others](#)"
  - Audre Lorde, "[The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action](#)"
  - Gloria Anzaldúa "[Speaking in Tongues](#)"
  - [Joseph Azam, "Last, First, Middle"](#)
  - **OPTIONAL:** Paige Sarlin, [The Irresistible Rise of Story: Documentary Film](#) (PDF download option on site); Noor Hindi's [Against Erasure](#)

### **Due Thursday (8/15/24)**

- Vauhini Vara, [Ghosts](#) (2021)
- [UC Personal Statements](#) & [Statements of Purpose](#)

**Reflection #2 Personal Narrative Proposal:** Write a quick proposal (200-300 words) for your personal narrative. Your proposal should be ONE paragraph and address 1) your topic 2) your audience 3) the genre of your essay. Be as specific as you can in this as that will help support you in the drafting process. As you begin drafting, this proposal might be revised to become the first paragraph of your essay.  
(Complete/Incomplete) Due 8/14/24 at Midnight

**Weekly Annotations & Reflections: Annotation 2 due Friday (8/16/24) by 11:59pm on Week 2 readings**

**Personal Essay Draft #1 Due Thursday (8/15/24) before class for Peer Review** ([Peer Review Directions for \\* in class\\* review](#))

**Personal Essay Final Draft Due by Sunday (8/18/24) 11:59pm**

### **Week 3: Telling a Story: Fashion & On Curiosity and Asking Questions**

Topics: logical appeals

#### **Due Tuesday**

- Read:
  - Marita Golden, [My Black Hair: a Tangled Story of Race and Politics in America](#) (2015)
  - Nadra Kareem Nittle, [A Guide to Understanding and Avoiding Cultural Appropriation](#) (2021)
  - Minh-Ha T. Pham, [Fashion's Cultural Appropriation Debate: Pointless](#) (2014)
  - Review: Gilbert, "[Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness](#)"

#### **Due Thursday**

- Watch:
  - "[The Medium is the Message](#)" (Video)
  - Oscar-winning short film [Hair Love](#) (2019)

OPTIONAL: Jenn Shapland, [A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Make Money From Again](#) — this text talks about the "form" of gendered clothing, as well as her regrettable urge to turn hobbies into a money-making endeavor. & Tanisha C. Ford, "Dashiki" chapter 1 of [Dressed in Dreams](#)

**Due Friday 8/23/24 at 11:59pm : Weekly Annotations & Reflections Annotation 3 on Week 3 readings**

**Reflection #3 Due Friday 8/23/24 : Public Performance Proposal:** Write a quick proposal (150-250 words) for your public performance. Your proposal should include 1) a one-paragraph description of your topic, and 2) a mood board with pictures, colors, and fonts that communicate the general feel of your presentation and showcase how you intend to use your slides to support your thesis or central claim effectively.



## **Week 4: Turning Out: Questions and Researching Answers (Example about Food) & Talking About your Stuff**

### **Due Tuesday**

- Read:
  - [Crying in H Mart](#) (Michelle Zauner) (added to syllabus 10.12.23) PDF [here](#)
  - Chantha Nguon & Kim Green, "[The Gradual Extinction of Softness](#)" (2021)
  - "[Fried Chicken is Common Ground](#)" (Osayi Endolyn)

### **Due Thursday:**

- Tom Chiarella, "[The Invisible Grip](#)" & "[How to Tell a Dragon Slaying Story](#)"
- Listen:
  - [Less is More Hidden Brain Podcast](#)
  - "[1619, 'The Birth of American Music.'](#)" (Episode 3)
  - "[How to Save a Planet, 'Black Lives Matter & the Climate'](#)"

OPTIONAL: Watch *Chef's Table*, "Mashama Bailey" (Vol 6, Ep 1)

**Due Friday (8/30/24) at 11:59pm : [Weekly Annotations & Reflections](#) *Annotation #4 on Week 4 readings***

### **Due Thursday: [Public Performance \(Rough Draft of Script and Slides\)](#)**

\*\*Due before class so you are ready to do peer review

\*\*Due to Canvas by midnight

[\(in class peer review worksheet link here\)](#)

\*\*\*\*NO OUTLINE FOR SUMMER CLASSES

## **Week 5: The Internet and Digital Decluttering & On Reflection**

***NOTE: Speeches will happen in person and be performed in class during Week 5. Please check the Public Performance Folder on Canvas for the Schedule.***

### **Due Tuesday**

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

**Due Friday (8/6/23) at 11:59 : Weekly Annotations & Reflections Annotation #5 on Week 5 readings OR scholarly reading of your choice related to your presentation topic.**

**Due Tuesday (9/3/24): All Final Public Performance Slides and Scripts must be uploaded before class.**

**Final Reflection Due by Saturday at 11:59pm (9/7/24)**

### **Additional Readings & Screenings:**

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!