



## **CAT 125: In Our Feelings: Emotion and Public Rhetoric**

Fall 2024

**Instructor:** Dr. Jennifer Marchisotto

**Office:** CT0159

**Office Hours:** Mondays 11:00AM-2:00PM and by appointment

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### **Course Description**

CAT 125 courses are 4-unit, 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. Please note that students must only take one of these two courses to fulfill their upper-division writing requirement. Students must have completed the lower-division writing sequence—CAT 1, CAT 2, and CAT 3—before taking CAT 125 or CAT 125R.

### **Course Topic**

From political speeches to online fan communities to the Hallmark Channel, we all consume media for both education and pleasure—affecting how we move through the world in both direct and indirect ways. In this CAT 125 course, we will think about how rhetorical choices (made by both ourselves and others) shape written presentations of the self, and critically reflect on how those choices contribute to our public identities as we move within and between larger communities. Drawing on work in affect theory, we will analyze popular written and visual texts to better understand the way media and pop culture evoke and manipulate audiences' emotions for specific purposes. With a better understanding of the affective relationship between author/creator and audience, you will reflect on your own position as a rhetorical subject and more confidently make effective choices in your own writing. Whether you are preparing for graduate school, or plan to enter the workforce following graduation, you will be presenting yourself to new audiences through written and spoken words. Job applications, personal statements, even e-mails all tell stories about who we are. In this course, we will specifically look at the way seemingly private emotions are shaped through public rhetoric and popular culture.

**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.

### **Required Texts/Technology**

- Access to Canvas
- Recommended: *They Say, I Say* CAT Edition

### **Course Objectives**

By the end of the quarter, you should be able to:

- Develop increased experience and proficiency in public presentation, documentation, and curation.
- Direct written, spoken, or digital compositions to multiple audiences.
- Examine their own authority as writers and understand how different genres and citation conventions are appropriate for establishing credibility in different contexts.

## **Course Policies**

### **Communication**

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.

### **On Inclusion and Creating an Equitable Classroom:**

Please note that in this class, we will discuss the politics of race, and gender, among other intersections of identity, such as class, ability, 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), 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.

### **Etiquette and Conduct**

CAT students are expected to comply with the [UCSD Principles of Community](#). This means you should always:

- Be respectful and kind to classmates and the instructor at all times. Our class will often deal with sensitive issues. While I neither expect nor wish students to always agree on ideas, differences of opinion need to be discussed considerately. Any individual who, as a result of their words or behavior, silences their classmates will be held accountable.
- *Respect Diversity*. Be sensitive to the rich and diverse, multi-cultural community in which we are participating, and show respect to authors and fellow attendees at all times. Please avoid any language that is—or that could be construed as—offensive toward others. Racist, sexist, and heterosexist comments are unacceptable, as are derogatory and/or sarcastic comments and jokes directed at religious beliefs, disabilities, weight, and age.

### **My Responsibility to the Course:**

- I will prepare for class thoughtfully and with enthusiasm.
- I will respond to emails within 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays)
- I will treat your work with honesty and compassion
- I will be willing to allow for extensions if you demonstrate engagement in the course and come speak with me early about needing one
- I will be a safe sounding board for ideas, whether related to your assignments or not
- I will take feedback about the course seriously

### **Your Responsibility to the Course:**

- You will participate in discussion section thoughtfully and on time.
- You will do the work assigned, both readings and writings, to the best of your ability
- You will do your own work with your best effort (See [UCSD Policies on Academic Integrity](#))
- You will offer your fellow writers honest and engaged critique.
- You will speak respectfully to me if you have any problems with the assignments or teaching methods; you will give me the chance to correct mistakes or address any miscommunication
- You will own your part of class culture (you will recognize that your experience with the class is in part your responsibility)

### **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.
- 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  $\frac{1}{3}$  a letter grade.

### **Discussion Board Responses**

Each week, you will have a discussion board prompt to complete in response to that week's readings. It will lead into the following week's discussion. These discussion boards will be due by each Monday at 11:59 and will require you to both share your own reflections on the reading and respond to one of your peers. Unlike the Annotation and Reflection assignments, which ask you to respond to a single reading at a time on your own, these prompts are meant to encourage discussion and help synthesize ideas and concepts from different authors.

### **Participation and Attendance**

Participation includes:

- Being present and engaged as an active participant and listener
- Contributing to small and large group discussions
- Completing in-class writing assignments
- Completing any online modules thoughtfully and on time.
- Reading all assigned readings fully and carefully

There are many different ways you can contribute to our conversations. **You don't have to have a fully-formed interpretation of the text in order to make a positive contribution to our discussion.** Some excellent ways to contribute include pointing out a section you found particularly interesting or confusing, asking a classmate a follow-up question about something they have said, or offering textual evidence that either supports or complicates an interpretation one of your classmates has suggested. **If you are finding it difficult to join the conversations we are having in class, do not hesitate to talk to me.** I am happy to strategize with you about making our discussions more accessible to everyone.

CAT Program-Wide Attendance Policy:

- You are allowed 2 absences from section (1 week of CAT 125). For every subsequent absence you will lose  $\frac{1}{3}$  a letter from your overall grade. We do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.
- If you miss a total of two weeks, you are eligible to fail the course, regardless of numerical grade.

These absences are yours to use as you choose. If you have an emergency or if there are any extenuating circumstances that would cause you to miss more than a week and a half of class, please let me know as soon as you are able so that I can make sure to provide any necessary support.

### **Accommodations:**

Everyone should have the opportunity to succeed and learn during our time together. My goal is to make full participation and success in this class accessible to all students. If there is any feature of this course, from the readings to the assignments to the way we work together in class, that could be made more accessible to you, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. I am willing to consider any modification that will enable you to experience the class more effectively. You do *not* have to disclose or document any disability or illness, physical or mental, to me or to anyone else in order to discuss accommodations with me.

In addition, there are many resources available to you through UCSD. The peer tutors at the Writing Center can help you with any writing assignment at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to final revisions. The Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS) offers tutoring and support in both academic subjects and study skills. Both of these resources exist to help you get the most out of your education, and are highly recommended for *all* students. If you have a documented disability, the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) can support you in identifying and requesting relevant accommodations. Contact the OSD for further information: <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu>

### **CalFresh & Basic Needs Information**

If you are facing food insecurity, we encourage you to contact [calfresh@ucsd.edu](mailto:calfresh@ucsd.edu), call (858) 246-5581, or visit the [CalFresh Website](#). For more information on food and housing resources, please visit the [Basic Needs Center](#) or **The HUB Basic Needs Center** located at the Original Student Center, Building A, Room E-100, to the left of the Triton Food Pantry.

### **Assignment Submission and Late Work**

- All written assignments must be submitted to Canvas, with the exception of in-class work.
- All assignments must be formatted according to [MLA guidelines](#) including a header clearly identifying your name, and other required information.
- In order to receive a letter grade, all assignments must be submitted through Turnitin on Canvas.
- Assignments are due on or before the due date and time listed. Failure to submit on time will result in the loss of  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a letter grade for each day late including weekends. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive an F.
  - This includes draft deadlines for the major assignments. While drafts are not given a formal letter grade (they are assessed on a complete/incomplete basis), failure to submit them on time will result in the penalty noted above.

- Make-up or late engagement work must be approved first. In other words, engagement work not turned in on time will receive no credit, unless the instructor or TA has granted an exception.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is expected of everyone at UC San Diego. This means that you must be honest, fair, responsible, respectful, and trustworthy in all of your actions. Lying, cheating or any other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated because they undermine learning and the University's ability to certify students' knowledge and abilities. Thus, any attempt to get, or help another get, a grade by cheating, lying or dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office and will result in sanctions.

Sanctions can include an F in this class and suspension or dismissal from the University. So, think carefully before you act by asking yourself: a) is what I'm about to do or submit for credit an honest, fair, respectful, responsible & trustworthy representation of my knowledge and abilities at this time and, b) would my instructor approve of my action? You are ultimately the only person responsible for your behavior. So, if you are unsure, don't ask a friend—ask your instructor, instructional assistant, or the Academic Integrity Office. You can learn more about academic integrity at [academicintegrity.ucsd.edu](http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu) (Source: Academic Integrity Office, 2018).

## **Assignments and Grade Breakdown**

### **Major Assignments- 55%**

1. [Personal Essay](#) (25%)
2. [Public Performance](#) (30%)

### **Minor Assignments-35%**

1. [Reflections](#) (4 total) (20%) Graded complete/incomplete
2. [Final Reflection](#) (15%)

### **Participation- 10%**

1. This includes in class participation, writing assignments, attendance, and the [annotation and reflection assignments](#).

### **Grading Policies**

- [CAT Writing Rubric](#)
- For purposes of **final course grades** as calculated by Canvas's gradebook, the following ranges will determine letter grades submitted to eGrades:
 

○ A (93.6-100)	○ B- (79.6-83.5)
○ A- (89.6-93.5)	○ C+ (76.6-79.5)
○ B+ (86.6-89.5)	○ C (73.6-76.5)
○ B (83.6-86.5)	○ C- (69.6-73.5)

- D (60-69.5)
- F (0-59.9)
- If you feel as though you earned a grade different than what you received on an assignment you may request a regrade. All disputes over grades must be conducted according to the following guidelines:
  - **Wait 48 hours after receiving a grade before disputing it.**
  - Contact me for an appointment to discuss the grade.
  - Attend your appointment having read my comments and the CAT rubric thoroughly.
  - After you have discussed your assignment and feedback, if you still feel as though you earned a grade different from what you received, may you request a regrade. To request a regrade you must write a letter to me stating your case and providing specific evidence as to why you believe your grade should be changed. Such evidence must discuss elements of your writing, including thesis, use of analysis, organization, and argumentation.
  - I will review your letter and the assignment(s) in question and make a decision based on that evidence. However, please note that I reserve the right to lower your grade should I feel it was originally graded too generously.

### **Course Schedule (Subject to Change)**

\*\*PLEASE NOTE: Many of the readings in this class deal with content that may be triggering. The texts discuss topics such as violence, racism, sexism, and ableism among others. I will do my best to provide content warnings for specific readings; however, I cannot anticipate all potential triggers. If you have specific concerns about content please speak with me. I will not require you to disclose any specific information, but am happy to help you develop a strategy for engaging with the course materials in a safe way.\*\*

All assignments should be completed before the following class meeting.

#### **Week 0- Introduction to the Course**

**9/26**

Thursday: Introduction to the Course

- Homework:
  - Read "[Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong](#)" by Ocean Vuong
  - Read "[Affective Economies](#)" by Sara Ahmed

#### **Week 1-Defining public rhetoric**

**9/30-10/4**

Tuesday: Asynchronous Class

- Homework:
  - Read "[Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness](#)" by Gilbert

- Be prepared to discuss what you hope to do after graduation and bring in a draft of your CV/Resume if you have one.
  - For information about what a CV/Resume is/should be see [here](#).

#### Thursday: Workshopping CV/Resumes

- Homework:
  - Listen [Finding Fred, “The Genius of Empathy”](#) (Season 1, Ep 1 from October 22, 2019)
  - [UC Personal Statements](#) & [Statements of Purpose](#)
  - *Optional:* read “[Film Bodies](#)” by Linda Williams

Reflection #1 (CV/Resume) due Friday 10/4 by 11:59pm

### **Week 2- Representation and Power**

**10/7-10/11**

Reflection #2 (Personal Essay Proposal) due Monday 10/7 by 11:59pm

#### Tuesday: Representation and meaning

- Homework:
  - Read Emily McCrary-Ruiz-Esparza, [Generation Amazing!!! How We’re Draining Language of Its Power](#) (2022)
  - Read “[Yes, It \\*Is\\* About Disability: Reflections on Disability and Media Criticism After Sundance 2020](#)” by Laura Dorwart
  - *Optional:* Watch [Crip Camp](#)

#### Thursday: The work of representation

- Homework:
  - Finish draft 1 of your Personal Essay
  - Read [UC Personal Statements](#) & [Statements of Purpose](#)

[Weekly Annotations & Reflections](#) #1 due Friday 10/11 by 11:59pm

### **Week 3- Claiming Space**

**10/14-10/18**

Draft 1 of your Personal essay due before class, Tuesday 10/15

#### Tuesday: Who is listening? Peer Review

- Homework:
  - Read Gloria Anzaldúa “[Speaking in Tongues](#)”
  - Read selections from [Hunger](#) by Roxane Gay
  - Read “[Centered and Seen](#)” by Sumiko Saulson



Thursday: Who is talking back?

- Homework:
  - Read "[The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action](#)" by Audre Lorde
  - Read "[How to Make a Paper Crane from Rage](#)" by Elsa Sjunneson

## **Week 4- Creativity and Choice**

**10/21-10/25**

[Weekly Annotations and Reflections](#) #2 due Monday 10/21 by 11:59pm

Tuesday: How to talk back

- Homework:
  - Read "[Why A.I. Isn't Going to Make Art](#)" by Ted Chiang
  - Vauhini Vara, [Ghosts](#) (2021)

Thursday: writing is personal

- Homework:
  - Finish Personal Essay

Personal Essay Final Draft due 10/27 by 11:59pm

## **Week 5- Using forms**

**10/28-11/1**

[Weekly Annotations and Reflections](#) #3 due Monday 10/28 by 11:59pm

Tuesday: Personal Essay In-class reflection and introducing genre

- Homework:
  - "[The Medium is the Message](#)" (Video)
  - Review: Gilbert, "[Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness](#)"
  - Read "[Hallmark Movies are Fascist Propaganda](#)" by Amanda Marcotte

Thursday: Using and manipulating expectations

- Homework:
  - Read "[Redesigning Blatantly Racist Brands is Not Enough](#)" by Debbie Millman
  - Read "[Using PowerPoint, Artists Ask How Performative Presentations Shape Our Thinking](#)" by Shannon Mattern
  -

## **Week 6- Storytelling**

**11/4-11/8**

[Weekly Annotations and Reflections](#) #4 due Monday 11/4 by 11:59pm

Tuesday: What is your story?

- Homework:
  - Read "[How to Tell a Dragon Slaying Story](#)"

Thursday: The personal and the public

- Homework:
  - Watch *Nanette* on Netflix

Reflection #3 (Public Performance Proposal) due Friday 11/8 by 11:59

## **Week 7- Popular Culture**

**11/11-11/15**

[Weekly Annotations and Reflections](#) #5 due Monday 11/11 by 11:59pm

Tuesday: Identity

- Homework:
  - Finish Outline

Reflection #4 (Annotated Bibliography) due Tuesday 11/12 by 11:59

Outline of public performance due Thursday, 11/14 before the start of class

Thursday: Intersections, workshopping Performance Outline

- Homework:
  - “[On White Queer Fandom and the Erasure of Fans of Color](#)” by Stitch
  - Read “[Not Here to Make Friends](#)” by Roxane Gay
  - Watch Selected clips from *Last Week Tonight* with John Oliver:
    - [Octopuses](#)
    - [Cereal](#)
    - [Pennies](#)

## **Week 8- Presentation strategies and examples**

**11/18-11/22**

[Weekly Annotations and Reflections](#) #6 due Monday 11/18 by 11:59pm

Tuesday: Visual Presentation Styles

- Homework:
  - TBD reading or video
  - Keep revising Presentation

Thursday: Peer Review

- Homework:
  - TBD reading or video
  - Keep revising Presentation

## **Week 9- Presentations continued**

**11/25-11/29**

[Weekly Annotations and Reflections](#) #7 due Monday 11/25 by 11:59pm

Draft 2 of public performance due Tuesday, 11/26, by noon for asynchronous peer review

Tuesday: Asynchronous Peer Review

- Homework:
  - Practice your presentation

Thursday: No Class: Fall Break

- Homework:
  - Practice your presentation

## **Week 10- Re-Defining Public Rhetoric**

**12/2-12/6**

Tuesday: Presentations

- Homework:
  - Practice your presentation

Thursday: Presentations

- Homework: Finish reflection

Final Reflection due 12/8 by 11:59pm