

**Course Title: Navigating Social Barriers Through Public Rhetoric**



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

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

**CAT 125**

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

**Office Hours: 10:00 a.m. MW through zoom**

**& by appointment through zoom in office CT0163 in the Catalyst Administration Building**

**Join Zoom Meeting:**

**<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89452281627?pwd=Q5pscwtZpR9rajPNe9B5uQJpdaD6U3.1>**

**Meeting ID: 894 5228 1627**

**Passcode: RVza6Y**

**Ms. Morales**

**Course Description:** This course delves into the broader discipline of social dynamics and communication, with a focus on how public rhetoric influences, creates, and dismantles social barriers. Through an exploration of historical and contemporary examples, students will engage

critically with topics such as power structures, social justice, and identity politics to understand the evolving role of rhetoric in shaping societal norms and addressing inequality.

This iteration prioritizes applied rhetoric and real-world challenges. Students will investigate current social issues, learning how to navigate through and challenge social barriers in real-time, both online and in person. What sets this class apart is its unique approach to public rhetoric as a tool for activism and change. Instead of simply analyzing speeches or media, students will participate in hands-on projects that require them to craft and deliver rhetoric aimed at dismantling social barriers, fostering inclusion, and advocating for marginalized communities. This practical approach empowers students to not only critique rhetoric and see the atypical experiences of others, but also to become agents of social transformation themselves.

### **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.
- 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
- 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 than four times or more, or coming to class later than 10 minutes, and if it happens more than 3 times) will also impact your grade and will be counted as 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, I will deduct 1/3 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. This only applies to work that is NOT credit no credit. Assignments such as group reports, preliminary work for Personal Narrative and Public performance that is credit/no credit, and annotations, or the CV/Resume which are not a part of the assignments that can be late. 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 also do not accept late work for the final reflection.
- 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 full 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 letters. 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 may post articles, ideas, and questions related to the course and the week's topics.
- E-Mail. The primary methods of communication this semester will be e-mail, Canvas, and Zoom. UCSD requires you to use your official UCSD email address for communications. I teach several sections of several subjects, so it helps me to know which course you are referring to when you have questions. Failure to follow this protocol may result in my failure to respond promptly or at all.

**Each time you email, be sure to include:**

1. Course name number and section in the subject line
    - a. i.e. CAT 125.A009
  2. A greeting
  3. A brief description of the purpose for the email
- Artificial Intelligence. Writing is a process, so I welcome you to use large language model chatbots like ChatGPT like any other writing tool — e.g. journals, outlines/maps, drafts, etc. — to develop your essays. However, writing is also a way of thinking through problems. Thus, the bulk of your work must represent your own observations and analyses, especially when it comes to personal experiences. Please keep in mind, chatbots also tend to be factually incorrect, vague, and biased. If you use a chatbot for any of the writing assignments in this class, I expect you to explicitly state as much in a footnote or endnote. Failure to do so will be considered cheating.

## **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 5)

## **Grade Contesting Policy**

- Wait 48 hours between when your work was returned and when you contact your Professor.
- Make an appointment to speak with your Professor in person or through zoom
- Come to the appointment having read your TA/Professor's comments thoroughly and with a written explanation/argument for why your paper/assignment should be re-graded. Your explanation should take into account the comments from your 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 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. Draft must be uploaded on the due date for feedback to be given in time for final draft.

### 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/video 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). There will also be a few extra pass/fail assignments in the last three weeks that will be geared towards helping you with your public performance video.

- Personal Narrative -- 25
- Public Performance -- 30
- Reflective Journals and Annotations -- 25
- Final reflection -10
- Participation -- 10

### Required Texts & Technology

- 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 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/R**

Topics: Personal Narrative, Storytelling, Power & Permission

**Read:**

[“The Price of Rain” by Franny Choi](#)

- Suggested: “Someday I’ll Love Ocean Vuong”

**Watch:**

- [“The Power of Vulnerability”](#)

**Listen:**

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

→ Friday/Thursday class: Resume/CV Workshop

**Due Saturday Reflection #1: CV/Resume:** 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.

**Group Report 1 Due Sunday**

**Week 2: Stories & Power**

**Reflection #2 due Saturday by 11:59pm–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)

**Group Report 2 Due Sunday**



### **Read**

- Emily McCrary-Ruiz-Esparza, [Generation Amazing!!! How We're Draining Language of Its Power](#) (2022)
- [The Problem of Evil: An Excerpt from Mean](#) By Myriam Gurba
- [One GhettoNerd at the End of the World 1974-1987 the golden age](#) by Junot Diaz

### **Due Friday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections**

### **Week 3: Writing About the Self(s)**

**Due Saturday : [Personal Essay Draft #1](#) Due for Peer Review ([Peer Review Directions](#))**

**Group Report 3 Due Sunday**

### **Read:**

- Gloria Anzaldúa "[Speaking in Tongues](#)"
- [UC Personal Statements](#) & [Statements of Purpose](#)
- [Duplex](#) by Jericho Brown

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

### **Due Friday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections**

### **Read:**

- Audre Lorde, "[The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action](#)"

### **Watch:**

- John Leguizamo's "[Latin History for Morons](#)"

**Group Report 4 Due Sunday**

### **Week 5: Curiosity & Asking Questions about difference**

**Key term:** logical appeals and introduction to research

### **Read:**

- "[The Medium is the Message](#)" (Video)

- Review: Gilbert, [“Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness”](#)

**Watch:**

- [“Examined Life”](#) (2008)

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

**Group Report 5 Due Sunday**

**Week 6: Telling a Story: Changing the Narrative**

**Due Friday: [Weekly Annotations & Reflections](#)**

Write: On Monday/Tuesday: In class reflection on the personal essay

**Read:**

Brandon Stanton’s [Humans of New York](#)

TedxBrighton Amy Oulton’s [“Changing The Way We Talk About Disability”](#)

**Listen:**

Latin@ Stories Episode 243 [How learning and using my Inuit has awakened my Inupiaq Spirit](#)

**Due Saturday 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**

**Week 7: Turning Out: Questions & Researching Answers on Representation**

**Due Friday : [Weekly Annotations & Reflections](#)**

**Watch:**

- HHelen Hong, Filmmaker/activist Pearl J. Park, and Advocate Christopher Punongbayan. elen Hong, Filmmaker/activist Pearl J. Park, and Advocate Christopher

Punongbayan. [“What I Hear When You Say Model Minority”](#)

**Read:**

- Jessica Hagedorn [“Filipino Boogie”](#)

**Listen:**

Inequity Agents of change Podcast Diverse Joy season 1 [Episode five “Representation of Interracial relationships on TV”](#)

**Due: Saturday by 11:59pm Annotated Bibliography for Public Performance** → 3 sources (1 must be academic!) on your topic due on Canvas. In conjunction with outline

**Due by Saturday at 11:59pm: Reflection # 4 Outline for Public Performance**

**Group Report 7 Due Sunday**

**Week 8: Talking About Your Stuff**

**Due Friday: Weekly Annotations & Reflections**

**Watch:**

Food, Beauty, Mind-Philosophy Tube

**Read:**

- [“How to Tell a Dragon Slaying Story”](#) & Tom Chatfield, [“The Attention Economy”](#)
- Tim Kreider, [“The Busy Trap”](#)

**Listen:**

Inequity Agents of change Podcast Diverse Joy Season 1 Episode 11 [“Intersectional Joy”](#)

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

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

**Group Report 8 Due Sunday**

### **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](#)"

**For 125R due by Friday at 11:59pm posted to the discussion board : Video/Speech (Final Draft)**

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

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

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

*No required reading! Just writing & reflecting & watching each other's videos/performances*

**[Final Reflection Due by Friday at 11:59pm](#)**

### **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 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"](#)

Wambui Wainaina, "[Biographical Friction](#)"

Ali Wong, *Baby Cobra* (Netflix)