

Course Calendar
CAT 125R
Creativity: Within and Around
Lauryn Smith
Fall 2024

Course Description:

Creativity is present in our everyday lives, from the airplanes flying overhead to the music we listen to, to the clothing we put on in the morning. For example, consider skateboarding: the board you ride on to class is the product of years of experimentation, development, customization, and artistic self-expression. There is a story within the board of a changing culture, community, and a passion for movement. We will dissect this example and many others together throughout the quarter. In this class you will read, watch, and listen to various pieces of media from music videos to podcasts to memoirs to poems and analyze them through the lens of creativity. You will have assignments geared towards preparing you for what comes next, whether that is graduate school or the workforce, and you will have a chance to consider what role creativity might play in your present and future life. The projects in this course are flexibly structured so you can use them in whatever way will most benefit you.

Required Texts & Technology

- Access to Canvas & Course Reserves
- Netflix subscription
- Google Docs or other word processor, Google Drive
- Zoom, working webcam and microphone
- Recommended: *They Say, I Say CAT Edition*

Course Calendar

Please note readings and screenings are liable to change as the class progresses. All screenings and readings should be done before you arrive at section the first day of that week (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.

Readings:

All read/watch/listen materials should be completed before our first meeting each week. You are required to complete all of them.

WEEKS BEGIN ON MONDAY AND END ON SUNDAY

Week 0: Welcome & Introduction to 125R

Key question: What does "creativity" mean to you?

Read:

- Canvas page, familiarize yourself
- Course Policies
- Course Calendar

Due:

Sunday 11:59 pm

Buckley Waiver

Course Policies Quiz

Create Course Folder and Document for in-class work (will be used as portfolio)

Week 1: Personal Narrative, Storytelling, Power & Permission

Read:

- Ocean Vuong, "[Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong](#)" & Gilbert, "[Curiosity and Devotion to Inquisitiveness](#)"
- Tim Kreider, "[The Busy Trap](#)"

Listen:

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

→ Thursday in section: Resume/CV Workshop

Due:

Friday 11:59 pm

Reflection #1: CV/Resume

Week 2: Stories & Power

Read:

- Emily McCrary-Ruiz-Esparza, [Generation Amazing!!! How We're Draining Language of Its Power](#) (2022)

Listen:

- Heavyweight, [#45 Sgt. John Kappahn](#)

→ Thursday in section: Personal Narrative Outline

Due:

Monday 11:59 pm

Reflection #2: Personal Narrative Proposal

Wednesday 11:59 pm

Weekly Annotations and Reflections

Week 3: Writing About the Self(s)

Read:

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

Watch:

- Mae Martin, SAP (Netflix)
- ART 21, Barbara Kruger, [Part of the Discourse](#)
- ART 21, Jack Whitten, [An Artist's Life](#)

→ Tuesday in section: Rough Draft Peer Review

Due:

Monday 11:59 pm

Personal Narrative Rough Draft

Week 4: Organizing Silences & Creating Space

Read:

- Audre Lorde, ["The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action"](#)
- Paul Kalanith, [When Breath Becomes Air](#) Prologue

Due:

Monday 11:59 pm

Weekly Annotations and Reflections

Week 5: Curiosity & Asking Questions

Read:

- Jill Lepore, [What We Learn from Leafing Through Seed Catalogues](#)
- The Kennedy Center, [The Skeleton of a Scary Story](#)

Watch:

- watch the first 4 embedded videos from *The Skeleton of a Scary Story* Reading
- ["The Medium is the Message"](#)

Tuesday 11:59 pm

Personal Essay Final Draft

Week 6: Telling a Story

Read/ Look:

- Richard Long, [A Line Made by Walking](#)
- Amanda Thomson, [walkDrawings](#)

Watch:

- Wired, [The Roots of Dirt](#)

Listen:

- 99% Invisible, [The Double Kick](#)

Due:

Monday 11:59 pm

Weekly Annotations and Reflections

Thursday 11:59 pm

Reflection #3: Public Performance Proposal

Week 7: Turning Out: Questions & Researching Answers

Watch:

- Roadkill Garage, [S5 Ep 59](#)
- Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell, [Time Travel](#)

Listen:

- Unexplainable, [Awestruck](#)

→ Tuesday in section: Annotated Bibliography

→ Thursday in section: Mood Boards

Due:

Monday 11:59 pm

Weekly Annotations and Reflections

Friday 11:59 pm

Public Performance Outline and Annotated Bibliography

Week 8: Talking About Your Stuff

Listen:

- NPR, [Noah Kahan on TikTok fame, his sold-out arena tour and taking his mom to the Grammys](#)

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Read:

- ["How to Tell a Dragon Slaying Story"](#) & Tom Chatfield, ["The Attention Economy"](#)

→ Thursday in section: Rough Draft Peer Review

Due:

Monday 11:59 pm

Weekly Annotations and Reflections

Wednesday 11:59 pm

Public Performance Rough Draft

Week 9: The Internet & Digital Decluttering

Listen:

- [Search Engine](#): How do we survive the media apocalypse?

→ Tuesday in section: One Minute Presentations

Due:

Monday 11:59 pm

Weekly Annotations and Reflections

Monday 11:59 pm

Public Presentation Video, Slides, and Script

Week 10: On Reflection

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

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

→ Tuesday and Thursday in section: Live Presentations

Due:

Sunday 11:59 pm

Final Reflection and Portfolio

Recommended Readings & Screenings that related to the course topics:

<https://technical.ly/diversity-equity-inclusion/ruha-benjamin-q-and-a/>

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)

David Sedaris, "[Stepping Out](#)"

Jenny Slate, *Stage Fright* (Netflix)

Sarah Todd, "[What Rescue Dogs Can Teach us about Vulnerability](#)"

Alexandra Schwartz, "[Improving Ourselves to Death](#)"

"[The Subaltern](#)"

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

Ali Wong, *Baby Cobra* (Netflix)

[Richard Long's A Line Made by Walking | Amanda Thomson | Perspectives](#)