

CAT 125A: Mindful Rhetoric

Spring 2021

Instructor: Dr. Liz Gumm, Associate Director of Writing, Sixth College

Course Time & Day: Monday & Wednesday 10:00am-10:50am PST

Zoom ID for live lectures: 982 0768 7050 (psw: ZenCats)

Dr. Gumm's Office Hours: Fridays 10:00am-12:00pst PST (except April 9 & May 14); and by appointment on Tuesdays & Wednesdays

Zoom ID for Office Hours: 440 468 1865

Email: egumm@ucsd.edu

Course Description

In this public rhetoric and practical communication course we will explore the intersection between attention and expression. In particular, we will examine how the quality of our attention impacts the quality of our expression, a practice in mindfulness. Mindfulness, broadly speaking, is "the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us" (Kabat-Zinn). Mindfulness and other contemplative practices are often not taught in the classroom, but they are key components to making a fulfilling life path, whether towards a professional career, graduate school, or an unconventional journey. Some key questions considered are: What kind of attention have you paid to your presentation of self? How is opportunity impacted by your attention and self-expression? How might you develop a flexible self-narrative that allows you to blossom in a variety of spaces—from the classroom, to the hourly wage job, to the corporate boardroom, to the community forum? In this course, you will use the strategies of mindfulness to inform your rhetorical practices of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Exercises and assignments are loosely structured so as to allow you to mindfully compose texts that will support your present and/or future life-intentions.

Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify how different genres and citation conventions are appropriate for establishing credibility in different contexts
- Develop proficiency in public presentation, documentation, and curation.
- Direct written, spoken, and digital compositions to multiple audiences.
- Examine your authority as a writer

Materials

- 3 month subscription to Netflix to begin March 29, 2021
 - Students in China may need to connect through a [VPN](#)
 - I will host “watch parties” through my Zoom screen share, which may be an alternative to subscribing to Netflix, but the schedule will not be flexible.
- A webcam or other camera set up that will allow you to film yourself for your speech assignment
- Note taking materials for lecture and section

Attendance

You create the majority of a class’s success. Without the students, there is no class - only readings. Enrolling in a course means that you agree to be a part of a specific community for a specific term. I see attendance--including mine and the TAs--as a gesture of respect to our educational community. **This attendance is even more important now that we have moved to an online platform.** However, because of the current health crisis, attendance will look necessarily different.

I appreciate your respect for the following policies that I see as integral to a successful online course:

Lecture

- Lecture attendance is not required, but you do have a lecture component of your participation.
- I am a better teacher when students are present and engaged, so I would prefer for as many of you to attend the live lecture as possible. Attendance is an important component of creating a class community; while there are many of you, all of your contributions are important for everyone’s learning, including mine!
- Please see our specific [directions for attendance at live lectures](#)

Section

- Attendance at section is required for this course. Your work during sections is important for your development in public rhetoric and practical communication. You need to be a part of a community in order to give communication purpose. In many ways your section meetings are composition labs during which you workshop ideas and strategies for your projects, which are all geared towards a specific audience.
- Section meetings are NOT recorded; you need to be enrolled in a section time that you can attend live
- Cameras are expected to be on for every discussion section you attend. If you have technology or environmental issues, please contact your TA and Dr. Gumm.
- Late arrivals and early departures are more significant to the functioning of sections. Students arriving later than 10 minutes to section (without TA approval) or leaving before the final 10 minutes of section (without TA approval) will be counted as absent.

- In the event of an absence, please let your TA know as soon as possible, preferably before the absence. Knowing about absences facilitates our ability to support you, particularly when assignments are due.
- You are allowed 3 unexcused absences with no penalty to your participation grade; any absences after 3 will result in a loss of 1/3 a letter grade on your participation grade; any absence after 6 will result in a failure of the course. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact your TA and Dr. Gumm as soon as possible.

Technology

Given that our courses this quarter are conducted online, a technology policy seems a little silly. However, for the success of our course, we need to follow some general etiquette with how we use this technology. These guidelines are applicable to live lecture, live section, and digital collaborations:

- Please mute yourself whenever you are not speaking; this avoids the distraction of environmental noise
- Please attend to your immediate environment to make it as little distracting as possible (visually and aurally) - For example, you may want to ban pets or roommates from the room (although, let's face it - pets are more than welcome to class).
- Please do not attend live sessions if you are going to be actively engaged in another activity; online education is not an excuse to multitask. [Indeed, multitasking is one of the main causes for poor performance in online courses.](#) If you are a student whose brain requires some doodling or other activity in order to listen well, you should let me and your TA know. Students who are actively on their phones or are clearly not engaged in the live session may be dismissed from the session by the host (instructor or TA).
- Be mindful of the chat function in Zoom - the default is that any comment you make will be made visible to the entire session, including the instructor; however, the chat function is a great place to ask for clarification, offer comments if you are shy, or pose questions. Students who misuse the chat may be dismissed from Zoom.
- Recordings of lectures will be made available only to the specific course and only during the specific term.
- If you have technical difficulties, please keep your TA and instructor updated.

What you can expect of me...

- I will be prepared for lecture and invested in the material
- I will be enthusiastic and animated during discussions (probably 95% of the time)
- I will respond to emails within 48 hours
- I will be as invested in your work as you are
- I will treat your work with honesty and compassion

- I will learn as many names as I can
- I will make fun of myself and probably make very cheesy jokes
- I may curse, but I will try not to
- 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 earnest feedback about the course seriously

What I expect of you...

- You will, when you do, attend lectures on time, with a good attitude
- You will attend section on time, with a good attitude
- You will take responsibility for your actions and feelings, especially as they manifest within the course
- You will do the work assigned, both readings and writings, to the best of your ability (even if what qualifies “best” changes)
- You will do your own work with your best effort (even if what qualifies “best” changes)
(See [UCSD Policies on Academic Integrity](#))
- You will read the syllabus and refer to it throughout the quarter
- You will treat your fellow classmates, your TAs, and myself with dignity; you will not engage in racist, sexist, classist, ablist, homophobic, transphobic, ethnocentric, fat-shaming, faith-shaming, or otherwise hateful communication. There is a difference between disrespectful/hateful speech and reasonable disagreement.
- You will offer your fellow writers honest and engaged critique.
- You will speak respectfully to me or your TA if you have any problems with the assignments or teaching methods; you will give us 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)

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.

Assignment Grading Schema:

A+ = 97%	A = 95%	A- = 92%
B+ = 87%	B = 85%	B- = 82%
C+ = 77%	C = 75%	C- = 72%
D = 65% (no D+ or D-) ¹	F = 50%	

Assignments

Major Assignments

[Statement/Personal Essay](#) -- 20%

- Includes draft, draft reflection, final, final reflection, and peer review

[Public Performance](#) -- 20%

- Includes draft, draft reflection, final, final reflection, and peer review

[Multimodal Research Essay/Website](#) -- 20%

- Includes proposal, draft, draft reflection, final, final reflection, and peer review

Minor Assignments

[Mindful Rhetoric Analyses](#) (3) -- 15%

[Interview](#) - 10%

CV - 5%

[Lecture Participation](#) - 5%

Section Participation - 5%

¹ While a D is technically a passing grade, you should know that any work that receives C- or below is considered marginal in acceptability; be wary of presenting such work for a public audience. If you take this course P/NP, you must make at least 72.5% overall to pass the course.

Discussion Section Schedule

Please visit each TA's Home Page on the Course Canvas Page for the specific login information for discussion sections and office hours

A01	MW	9-9:50	Marianna	m1hovhan@ucsd.edu
A02	MW	11-11:50	Marianna	
A03	MW	12-12:50	McKenzie	m4ross@ucsd.edu
A04	MW	2-2:50	Wambui	lwainain@ucsd.edu
A05	MW	1-1:50	McKenzie	
A06	MW	3-3:50	Wambui	
A07	MW	4-4:50	Makenzie	mrread@ucsd.edu
A08	MW	5-5:50	Alissa	amtu@ucsd.edu
A09	MW	11-11:50	Makenzie	
A10	MW	12-12:50	Lucy	lmoiseenko@ucsd.edu
A11	MW	1-1:50	Alissa	

Course Schedule

*This schedule is subject to change. Please pay attention to weekly announcements by your instructor and TA. Any reading listed should be read before the date under which it is listed.

Week 1 - Introducing Attention

Monday March 29

Lecture - Why Mindful Rhetoric?

Section - Getting to Know You

Tuesday March 30 @ 6pm PST - *The Social Dilemma* watch party (Zoom: 994 2419 6871, psw: ZenCats)

Wednesday March 31

Lecture - The Attention Economy & Thinking Rhetorically

WATCH: [The Social Dilemma on Netflix](#) AND [Jo Pang's "How Mindfulness Transforms Us"](#)

Recommended - [Read Chatfield "The Attention Economy"](#)

Section - Metacognition & Reflection

Week 2 - Exploring Ethos: Tradition & Innovation

Monday April 5

Lecture - Understanding the Rhetorical Situation & Developing Ethos

READ: [Duchovny "My Urge to Fail and Fail Again"](#) & [Wolchover "A Different Kind of Theory of Everything"](#)

Section - Personal Narrative Evaluation

Wednesday April 7

Lecture - Disciplinary Communities & Professional Persona

Section - Writing about the Self

What's Due?

Wednesday April 7 by 11:59pm PST - **Mindful Rhetoric Analysis #1**

Week 3 - Embodied & Spatial Rhetorics

Monday April 12

Lecture - Body Language & Rhetoric

READ: [Chiarella “The Art of the Handshake”](#) & [Oaklander “COVID-19 Killed the Handshake”](#)

Section - Embodied Rhetorical Analysis

Wednesday April 14

Lecture - How to Read the Room & Affective Rhetoric

Section - Digital Embodiment

What’s Due?

Wednesday April 14 by 11:59pm PST - **DRAFT Personal Statement/Essay**

Week 4 - Labor of Logos: The Art of Listening

Monday April 19

Lecture - Listening as Rhetorical Art

READ: [Glenn “Defining Silence”](#) & [Roach “Fighting by Ear”](#)

Section - Personal Statement/Essay Peer Review

Wednesday April 21

Lecture - Inner Rhetoric

Section - Audience Ghosts

What’s Due?

Wednesday April 21 by 11:59pm PST - **CV & Mindful Rhetoric Analysis #2**

Week 5 - Framing & Curiosity

Monday April 26

Lecture - Audience Analysis & Framing

Section - "The Mind of a Beginner"

Wednesday April 28

Lecture - The Gift of Curiosity

READ: [Gilbert "Passion vs. Curiosity"](#)

Section - Analyzing by Curiosity

What's Due?

Wednesday April 28 by 11:59pm PST - **FINAL Personal Statement/Essay** & **Interview Plan**

Week 6 - Patience for Pathos: Failure, Difficulty, & Discomfort

Monday May 3

Lecture - Pathos & Rhetoric of Vulnerability

READ: [Bennett "The Danger in Fake Positivity & Spiritual Bypassing"](#)

WATCH: [Brene Brown's "The Power of Vulnerability"](#)

Section - Personal & Professional Boundaries

Wednesday May 5

Lecture - Ideology: Personal & Communal Stories

Recommended: [Leack "Thoughts on the Murder of George Floyd"](#)

Section - 1-minute updates & Digging into "Failure"

Friday May 7 @ 6pm PST - *Nanette* watch party (Zoom: 920 4006 5548; psw: ZenCats)

What's Due?

Wednesday May 5 by 11:59pm PST - **DRAFT Public Performance**

Week 7: Humor & Holding Space

Monday May 10

Lecture - Funny ways to care for others & yourself

WATCH: [Hannah Gadsby's Nanette on Netflix](#)

READ: TBA

Section - Disciplinary humor & developing ideas for final project

Wednesday May 12

Lecture - Improv, Extemporaneity, & Creativity

READ: [The Oatmeal's "Eight Things I've Learned about Creativity"](#)

Section - Public Performance Peer Review

Friday May 14 @ 6pm PST - "Aparna Nanchurla" watch party (Zoom: 928 4252 8338 ; psw: ZenCats)

What's Due?

Wednesday May 12 by 11:59pm PST - **Final Project Proposal**

Week 8: Semiotics & Multimodal Rhetoric

Monday May 17

Lecture - The Medium is the Message

WATCH: [The Standups, Season 2 Episode 6, "Aparna Nanchurla" on Netflix](#)

READ: [Petersen "Jennifer Lawrence and the History of the Cool Girl"](#)

Section - The Making of a Meme

Wednesday May 19

Lecture - The Art of Citation and Understanding Affordances

Section - Website Analysis

What's Due?

Wednesday May 19 by 11:59pm PST - **FINAL Public Performance**

Week 9: Kairos & Chronos

Monday May 24

Lecture - Attention as a Relationship with Time

READ: [Greater Good's "Seven Ways to Find Purpose in Life"](#)

Section - Live Performances

Wednesday May 26

Lecture - Mindful Goal Setting

Section - Final Project Peer Review

What's Due?

Wednesday May 26 by **Section Time - DRAFT Final Project**

Week 10: Conferences - No Lecture or Section

What's Due?

Wednesday June 2 by 11:59pm PST - **Interview & Mindful Rhetoric Analysis #3**

Finals Week

Monday June 7 by 11:59pm PST - **FINAL Project**