

CAT 3D: Subversive Speculation: BIPOC Genre Fiction

Spring 2022

Lecture: MOS 113, M/W/F 10:00am-10:50am

Instructor: Jennifer Marchisotto
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Office Hours: Mon. 2-4 @
Mandeville Coffee Cart

Course Description

CAT 3 is a 6-unit course and the final course in Sixth's writing intensive sequence. While the topics of CAT 3 range, all invite students to imagine the intersection of culture, art, and technology in the future. The overarching purpose of CAT 3 is to build on those skills developed in CAT 2 (argumentative writing and critical analysis) and teach students how to create new knowledge through research and art/world making.

Course Topic

Speculative fiction creatively reimagines the world we live in, using fantastic elements to play with alternative versions of history, the present, and the future. This CAT 3 course will examine the ways BIPOC authors have used genre fiction to challenge traditional white patriarchal narratives. From science fiction, to fantasy, to horror, we will think about the ways authors of color employ the fantastic to imagine new futures not bound by the marginalizing and alienating assumptions that underpin contemporary American and Eurocentric societies. We will read and watch texts from a range of perspectives illustrating the ways speculative fiction has been used to confront issues like immigration, cultural appropriation, state violence, and more. We will also read contemporary scholarship on this topic to understand the ways in which speculative fiction is discussed in academic contexts.

Course Objectives:

Building off what you learned in CAT 1 & 2, by the end of CAT 3 you should be able to:

- Understand and practice effective research, including developing research questions.
- Use research to make an effective multimodal argument towards a specific audience.
- Engage with cultural products, including art/popular culture, as the result of research but also as legitimate objects of research.
- Develop an independent research project, finding and evaluating appropriate sources, and composing research genres, like annotated bibliographies and literature reviews, etc.) proposal process, and revision.
- Effectively collaborate with peers in the process of research and development of a multimodal project.

Core Concepts:

By the end of CAT 3, you should be able to understand and define the following terms/ideas:

- Resistance/Revolution
- Interdisciplinarity
- Art as argument
- Research as a process
- Interpersonal Communication

Required Texts and Technology:

- *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon, available through the UCSD Bookstore
- *They Say, I Say* CAT Edition

Program Policies

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), 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.

Etiquette and Conduct

CAT students are expected to comply with the [UCSD Principles of Community](#). In light of the on-going impact COVID-19 is having on all of our lives, please find below additional information on respectful engagement as part of both in-person and remote classroom spaces.

- 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.
- Remember that it may sometimes be difficult to understand tone in written responses and consider how your audience might interpret your response in a remote context.
- If any student posts content to the course website that violates UCSD's Principles of Community, the post will be removed and your instructor will reach out to the author via email to discuss the issue.

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>

According to the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), “Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the OSD. Students are required to present their AFA letters to the MCWP Program Representative/OSD liaison in advance so that accommodations can be arranged.” Contact OSD at (858) 534-4382, osd@ucsd.edu. Per university policy, OSD accommodations are not retroactive. The CAT OSD liaison is Lynette Brossard: lbrossard@ucsd.edu.

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 is 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.

Discrimination and Harassment

Please see Canvas for [UCSD’s Principles of Community](#) for a description of your campus’s commitments.

CalFresh & Basic Needs Information

If you are facing food insecurity, we encourage you to contact 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 major assignments require you to submit a rough draft before the final due date. While the draft is not graded as such, not submitting a draft will result in failing the assignment.
- In order to receive a letter grade, all assignments must be submitted through Turnitin on Canvas.
- For each day work is late, your grade on that assignment goes down by $\frac{1}{3}$ of a letter. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive an F.

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.

Course Policies

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 $\frac{1}{3}$ 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 $\frac{1}{3}$ a letter grade.

Participation and Attendance

Participation and attendance in lecture and discussion section are very important. Lecture attendance ensures that you understand and can ask questions about the specificities of your topic. Our lecture will also be interactive, and will involve a great deal of small group work. Discussion sections build community and provide a space to work through your ideas and engage with your peers. Work done during these times contributes to your overall participation grade as well as to your assignment grades.

If you must miss a lecture or discussion, please contact your peers and teaching assistant about what you miss.

For Lecture and Section:

- You are allowed 6 absences from lecture and 4 absences from discussion section (i.e. 2 weeks of CAT 3). For every additional absence, you will lose $\frac{1}{3}$ a letter on your course grade.
- Arriving more than 10 minutes late for section two times counts as one absence.
- Overall, your health and well being should be the priority. If you have an emergency or if there are any extenuating circumstances that would cause you to miss more than two weeks of class, please let me and your TA know as soon as you are able so that we can make sure to provide any necessary support.

Engagement

CAT courses are designed to support and strengthen your communication and thinking skills. Your participation in the course is required for the development of these skills and will be assessed according to the following rubric:

Excellent (10)- 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.

Good (9) - You are usually prepared for lecture and section, demonstrated by: 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.

Adequate (8) - 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.

Developing (7) - 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.

Unacceptable (5) - 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.

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

For our class, the assignments should build on one another. Your individual assignments are a chance for you to reflect on and synthesize your individual research. The group assignments are a space for you to collaborate with your peers, using your individual experiences to inform a collective, interactive, research project.

Individual Assignments - 50% (total)

- Literature Review (20%)
- Reading Journals (5 total, 4% each) (20% total)
- Portfolio Reflection (10%)

Group Assignments - 40% (total)

- Major Research Project (Choose Your Own Adventure) (20%)
- Project Proposal (10%)
- Project Showcase (10%)

Engagement - 10%

Grading Policies

- Failure to turn in the major writing assignments will result in a failure of the course, regardless of numerical grade.
- Grades are assigned by letter and correspond to specific numerical percentages. Limitations on possible points enable more effective holistic grading on essay assignments, as well as discourage arguments over points.

Assignment Type	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Developing	Incomplete or Inappropriate
Major	A+ = 97	B+ = 87	C+ = 77	D = 65	F = 50
	A = 95	B = 85	C = 75		
	A- = 91	B- = 81	C- = 71		
Minor	10	9	8	7	5
Complete/ Incomplete	10			0	

- For purposes of **final course grades** as calculated by Canvas's gradebook the following ranges will determine letter grades submitted to eGrades:
 - A+ (96.6-100)
 - A (93.6-96.5)
 - A- (89.6-93.5)
 - B+ (86.6-89.5)
 - B (83.6-86.5)
 - B- (79.6-83.5)
 - C+ (76.6-79.5)
 - C (73.6-76.5)
 - 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 your TA for an appointment to discuss the grade.
 - Attend your appointment having read the TA's comments and the CAT rubric thoroughly.
 - Only after you have discussed your essay with your TA may you request a regrade from the course instructor. To request a regrade you must write a letter to the instructor 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 your TA has graded too generously.

TA Information

TA Name	Section #	Day/Time	Location	Email
Michael Ferrari	D01	MW 8-8:50am	Center 202	mferrari@ucsd.edu
Emily Yang	D02	MW 6-6:50pm	Center 224A	elyang@ucsd.edu
Denise Rodriguez	D03	MW 11-11:50am	SSB 106	dtrodrig@ucsd.edu
Aminta Dunn	D04	MW 12-12:50pm	Center 223	amdunn@ucsd.edu
Denise Rodriguez	D05	MW 1-1:50pm	Center 223	dtrodrig@ucsd.edu
Alissa Tu	D06	MW 2-2:50pm	Center 223	amtu@ucsd.edu
Jess Silbaugh-Cowdin	D07	MW 3-3:50pm	Center 224B	jsilbaug@ucsd.edu
Jess Silbaugh-Cowdin	D08	MW 4-4:50pm	Center 224B	jsilbaug@ucsd.edu
Ryne Heslin	D09	MW 5-5:50pm	Remote	rheslin@ucsd.edu
Ryne Heslin	D10	MW 8-8:50am	Remote	rheslin@ucsd.edu
Michael Ferrari	D11	MW 9-9:50am	Center 223	mferrari@ucsd.edu
Aminta Dunn	D12	MW 11-11:50am	Center 224A	amdunn@ucsd.edu
Neon Mashurov	D13	MW 2-2:50pm	Center 208	nmashuro@ucsd.edu
Neon Mashurov	D14	MW 3-3:50pm	Center 224A	nmashuro@ucsd.edu
Alissa Tu	D15	MW 4-4:50pm	Center 208	amtu@ucsd.edu
Emily Yang	D16	MW 5-5:50pm	Center 208	elyang@ucsd.edu

Course Schedule

**All assignments are due by midnight on the day they are listed unless otherwise noted.
When in doubt, check the prompts!**

****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.**

Week 1 - Introduction to the course and defining “Speculative Fiction”

Common readings for CAT 3

Monday: Introduction to the course

- Homework:
 - Read Octavia Butler, “[A Few Rules for Predicting the Future](#)”
 - Read Walter Benjamin, “[Thesis on History](#)”

Wednesday: Discuss Readings

- Homework:
 - Read Marek Oziewicz “[Speculative Fiction](#)” from the Oxford Research Encyclopedia

Friday: Discuss readings, defining “Speculative Fiction”

- Homework:
 - Read “[Introduction](#)” by Sami Schalk
 - Listen to “[People of Color in Fantasy and Horror](#)” (1 hour)
 - *Optional:* Read “[Black to the Future](#)” by Mark Dery

Week 2 - Genres of the Genre

TSIS Chapters for this week: Ch. 20 “Getting Started on Research”

Monday: Afrofuturism

Homework:

- Watch “[Sci-fi Stories that Imagine a Future Africa](#)” Nnedi Okorafor *TED Talk*
- Read “[Africanfuturism Defined](#)” and “[Sunrise](#)” by Nnedi Okorafor

Wednesday: Africanfuturism

- Homework:
 - Read “[Deus ex Machina: Tradition, Technology, and the Chicanafuturist Art of Marion C. Martinez](#)” by Catherine S. Ramírez

Friday: Chicana/chicanofuturism

- **DUE: Reading Journal #1**

- Homework:

- Read “[Metaphor and Materiality: Disability and Neo-Slave Narratives](#)” by Sami Schalk
- *Optional:* Read “[The Past, Conditionally: Alternative History in Speculative Fiction](#)” by Carl Abbott and “[Historical Fiction v. Speculative Fiction](#)” by Cheryl Wollner

Week 3 - Speculating about the Past

TSIS Chapters for this week: Ch. 21 “Finding Sources” & Ch. 22 “Evaluating Sources”

Monday:

- Homework: Speculating about the past
 - Read “[The Book of Martha](#)” by Octavia Butler

Wednesday: What can we explore through alternative pasts

- Homework:
 - Read “[A Dead Djinn in Cairo](#)” by P. Djèlí Clark
 - *Optional:* read “[Night Doctors](#)” by P. Djèlí Clark and Listen to “[Interview of author Phenderson Djèlí Clark at the Zora Neale Hurston Festival in Eatonville, Florida](#)” (30 min.)

Friday: Discuss readings

- Homework:
 - **DUE Friday 4/15 at midnight: Draft Individual Major Assignment (Literature Review)**
 - *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon (ch. 1-4)

Week 4 - Speculating about the Past

TSIS Chapters for this week: Ch. 25 “Avoiding Plagiarism” & Ch. 28 “Annotated Bibliographies & Lit Reviews”

Monday: the role of memory in collective imagination

- Homework:
 - *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon (ch. 5)

Wednesday: the role of memory in collective imagination

- Homework:
 - *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon (ch. 6-7)

Friday: the role of memory in collective imagination

- **DUE: Reading Journal #2**
- Homework:
 - *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon (ch. 8-9)

DUE SUNDAY 4/24 @ MIDNIGHT: Group Project Proposal

Week 5 - Speculating about the Past

TSIS Chapters for this week: Ch. 16 "Collaborating"

Monday: Concluding *The Deep*

- Homework: Continue revising Literature Review

Wednesday: What have we learned from the past

- Homework:
 - Continue revising Literature Review

Friday: Where the past and future meet

- DUE: Final Individual Major Assignment (Literature Review)
- Homework:
 - Read "[The Green Ribbon](#)" by Alvin Schwartz
 - Read "[The Husband Stitch](#)" by Carmen Maria Machado

Week 6 - Speculating about the Present

TSIS Chapters for this week: Ch. 32 "Choosing Media" & Ch. 33 "Designing Text"

Monday: Adaptation in speculative fiction

- Homework:
 - Read "[The Yellow Wallpaper](#)" by Charlotte Perkins Gillman
 - Read "Scales as Pale as Moonlight" and "Jaguar Woman" by Sylvia Moreno-Garcia

Wednesday: Women and speculative fiction

- Homework:
 - Read "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" by Ursula K. LeGuin
 - Read "[The Ones Who Stay and Fight](#)" by N.K. Jemisin

Friday: Women and speculative fiction continued

- DUE: Reading Journal #3
- Homework:
 - Read "[Being Indian is Not a Superpower](#)" and "[Rising Star](#)" by Stephen Graham Jones
 - *Optional:* read "[Interview: Stephen Graham Jones](#)" by Julia Rios

Week 7 - Speculating about the Present

TSIS chapters for this week: ch. 35 "Giving Presentations"

Monday: The role of culture

- Homework:
 - Finish draft of Group Major Research Project

DUE Tuesday 5/10 at midnight: Draft Group Major Research Project (Choose Your Own Adventure)

Wednesday:

- Homework:
 - Read “[Loneliness is in your Blood](#)” by Caldwell Turnbull
 - *Optional:* read “[Help Me Follow My Sister to the Land of the Dead](#)” by Carmen Maria Machado

Friday: Life and Death

- Homework:
 - Read “[The Future of Bodyminds, Bodyminds of the Future](#)” by Sami Schalk

Week 8 - Speculating about the Future

Monday: Speculating about the Future

- Homework:
 - Read “Speech Sounds” by Octavia Butler
 - Read “[A Room of One’s Own](#)” by Tochi Onyebuchi
 - Listen to the [Us in Flux interview with Tochi Onyebuchi](#) (1 hour)

Wednesday: Today’s Tomorrow

- Homework:
 - Read “What’s Expected of Us” by Ted Chiang

Friday: What is fate?

- DUE: Reading Journal #4
- Homework:
 - Watch *Black Panther*

Week 9 - Speculating about the Future

Monday: The Superhero

- Homework:
 - Read “The Token Superhero” by David F. Walker

Wednesday: Continue discussing *Black Panther* and readings.

- Homework:
 - Continue working on Group Major Assignment

Friday: Continue discussing readings

- DUE: Final Group Major Assignment
- Homework:
 - Finish Group Major Assignment, prepare Project Showcase

Week 10 - Presentations

Monday: NO CLASS - Memorial Day Spring 2022

Wednesday: Showcases

- DUE: Project Showcase
- Homework:

Friday: Showcases and Wrapping Up

- DUE: Reading Journal #5
- Homework:
 - Finish Final Portfolio

Finals Week

- Final Portfolio is DUE Tuesday 6/7 by 3pm