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# Mathematics As A Liberal Art

Math 105 Spring 2024

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Fowler 309 MWF 3:00pm- 3:55pm

<http://sites.oxxy.edu/ron/math/105/24/>

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## Automathography

This assignment is adapted from Colton Sawyer's *Automathography* (<https://www.coltonwsawyer.com/teach/automath>)

### 1 Purpose

The Automathography assignment is designed for me to get to know more about you as a person and your background in mathematics. It is also a way for you to be creative in expressing your thoughts about these topics to me. You can think of this as a text with three parts: 1) An initial understanding of the character (you!); 2) a story arc where the character works together with another person (me!) to achieve a common goal; and 3) a reflection on the experience of the character.

### 2 Description

Experiencing your automathography (a mathematical autobiography) is a way for me to get to know more about you and your relationship with mathematics. Automathographies can take a variety of forms, but all address the same points: You. For this assignment, you are to create an automathography that addresses several key themes around your experiences with math by providing your answers to the following questions:

1. What do you think mathematics is?
2. What are your initial reactions/thoughts/feelings when you hear the term "mathematics"?
3. What are some key memories (highlights or lowlights) in your mathematical background (i.e. prior experiences with mathematics, both in and outside of the classroom)?
4. What do you hope to get out of this mathematics course?

## Part 1

The first part of the automathography is to communicate an understanding of who YOU are. This can be in **any medium** you choose: poems, lyrical compositions, comics, artwork, sculptures, essays, videos, TikTok mash-ups—so long as the four points above are **clearly addressed** with your submission. After turning in your automathography, a **required** portion of the project is to have a short (10-15 minute) meeting with me about your automathography to help me understand its nuances. Included in this meeting will be to make a game plan for how to achieve what you hope to get out of this course. You are welcome to meet with me in my office during my office hours or to make an individual appointment.

## Part 2

The second part of the project is a sort of “check-in” with your goals for the course. This is like a story arc where characters come together to achieve a common goal. This part should address the following questions, and should be in a similar format as your first part:

1. How has the class content related to your key memories of mathematics?
2. What are **two (2)** skills you have developed in this first half of the semester that have helped you understand the course content or have aided in study practices?
3. What are **two (2)** things that we (both you and me!) can do to make the second half of the semester successful?

As always, you are welcome to meet with me in office hours or by appointment to talk about how you've progressed in this course with regard to your prior experiences.

## Part 3

The final part of the project is a reflection (again, in a medium of your choice that relates to the previous submissions) about how your experience this semester in the course. In particular, please use the following prompt to help shape this ending part:

- What are **four (4)** of the most important discoveries, realizations or ideas from this class that you think might stick with you over time and/or influence you in the future?
- What have you experienced in the class that might have a long-term effect on you intellectually or personally?

Your experiences can include (but aren't limited to!) things you didn't realize about mathematics, skills you've gained by working with other students and your professor, topics you understood (or didn't!), and ways that the instruction resonated with you. Regardless of what you chose, **explain** why these things are important to you.