



Autobiography in American Literature and Performance

THE 1431 | Fall 2025
Quest 1: The Examined Life

General Information

Professor

- Dr. B. Manuel Simons, Ph.D. (they/them)
Please feel free to call me Dr. Simons.
- Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00 - 5:00 pm (Drop-In) and [other times by appointment](#).
- Office Location: [CON 223](#) – Constans Theatre Building, Room 223 (2nd Floor)
- Email: bmanuel.simons@ufl.edu | Phone: 352-273-0505

Response & Availability

- ❖ My drop-in office hours are Wednesdays 3:00 - 5:00 pm in [Constans Theatre Bldg](#), Rm. 223 (2nd Fl.)
- ❖ To meet on a different day or time, click the link to [set up an appointment](#).
 - I respond to emailed questions within 24 hours on school days.
 - I respond to phone voicemails within 8 hours on school days.
 - I do not respond to emails or voicemails on Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays observed by UF.
 - I provide feedback and grade assignments within 7 school days after the due date.

Teaching Assistant

- Corey Burton (he/him)
- Office Hours: Email Cory to obtain his office hours.
- Email: burton.corey@ufl.edu

Course Summary

The course explores the ways in which modern and contemporary American artists and writers have utilized self-examination as the basis for artistic creation. Often merging the factual with the theatrical or dramatic, autobiographical performance and literature personalizes the values, incidents and relationships that shape human experience and give life meaning.

Course Description

Why do we tell stories, and why do we enjoy having them imparted to us? It is perhaps one of the most basic human desires to examine experiences, provide form to them, and relate them to others. It may be posited that the digital era has provided individuals with greater access to storytelling and narrative—in all its variant forms and delivery mediums—than ever before. This era has also seen the increased positioning of ‘Self’ as the subject of dramatic narratives, ranging from the loosely autobiographical to the openly confessional.

This course explores the ways in which American artists and writers have utilized self-examination as the basis for artistic creation. The course examines the use of autobiography in theatre, dance, film, and literature from the mid-twentieth century to the present. To represent the wide breadth of communities that comprise the American populace and address the requirements of UF’s Quest Program, this course includes a focus on historically marginalized American artists and writers. This course investigates such questions as:

- What social or cultural factors provide the context for autobiographical exploration?
- What risks or rewards do artists take in placing themselves as subjects of public works?
- While a Socratic form of self-examination is a life-long process, what situations or life events may lead to an intensified period of introspection?
- Is there a difference in experiencing an intensely autobiographical work as part of a live, collective audience as opposed to a solitary reading?
- Does autobiographical work encourage self-examination on the part of the viewer or reader?
- What narrative and formal techniques have artists and writers used to relate personal experience, and what are their effects?

These questions and others will be examined through an analysis of specific literary and performance works, critical essays, full and small group class discussion, formal analytical writing, less formal reflective writing, and an out-of-classroom experiential encounter with live theatre performance.

Quest and General Education Credit

- Quest 1
- Humanities (H)
- Writing Requirement (WR) 2000 words

This course accomplishes [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) objectives and select *student learning outcomes* (SLOs) of the subject areas listed above. SLOs are the abilities, skills, and knowledge that students will develop by the conclusion of a given course or program of learning.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

By the conclusion of this Quest 1 course, students will be expected to be able to:

1. Identify, describe, and explain the social, cultural, and historical contexts, themes, and methodologies used in an examination of self and the human condition. (*Addresses **Content** SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities & Quest 1*)
2. Analyze and evaluate autobiographical literary texts and performances by artists and writers that depict how social positions, disparities, and constraints among different groups are constructed and mediated in the United States. (*Addresses **Critical Thinking** SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities*)
3. Identify, describe, and explain the methodologies of literature, film, and theatre as they affect the use of autobiography in American performance and literature from mid-twentieth century to the present. (*Addresses **Critical Thinking** SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities & Quest 1*)
4. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of performance and literary techniques to convey the meanings and purposes of human experiences. (*Addresses **Critical Thinking** SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities & Quest 1*)
5. Relate the use of autobiographical literature or performance to one's student experience at UF and after. (*Addresses **Connection** SLOs for Quest 1*)
6. Create a short literary or stage narrative based on an examination of personal experience. (*Addresses **Critical Thinking** SLOs for Quest 1*)
7. Formulate and present clear and organized responses to course material in both written and oral formats relevant to the humanities disciplines employed in the course. (*Addresses **Communication** SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities & Quest 1*)

Students can accomplish the above SLOs via thorough and thoughtful engagement and participation in this course, which includes all of the following components:

I. Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are mandatory and count from day one of this course. This professor takes absence and lateness extremely seriously.

Absence Count

Course Grade Penalty

1	No Penalty (except on 11/21 and your group presentation due date)
2	No Penalty (except on 11/21 and your group presentation due date)
3	- 5 points / Half a Letter Grade Deduction
4	- 10 points / Full Letter Grade Deduction
5	- 15 points / Full Letter Plus Half a Letter Grade Deduction
6	- 20 points / Two Full Letter Grades Deduction
7	- 30 points / Three Full Letter Grades Deduction
8	AUTOMATIC COURSE FAILURE

If you provide official documentation such as [a verification of visit to the Student Health Care Center \(SHCC\)](#), doctor's note, police report, letter from employer, or other document for an absence, then the penalty for that absence will be waived, up to a maximum of 30 points. However, it is crucial to note:

8 absences result in automatic failure of this course—even if documentation was provided for previous absences.

- Three latenesses or early departures will be excused. Each additional lateness or early departure results in 3 points deducted from the course grade.
- Lateness or early departure of more than 10 minutes constitutes a full absence.

If you must miss a class meeting for any reason, please notify the professor and any group partners PRIOR to the missed class; this does NOT “excuse” your absence; it is simple professional courtesy.

If absent, it is YOUR responsibility to obtain information about missed course content, which may include information or directions for upcoming assignments. Class buddies, study partners, or small study groups are strongly recommended. Reach out to your classmates and build community.

Absence for religious observance is excused without documentation and receives no penalty. Students are expected to inform the professor within the first two weeks of the course about all dates they will be absent for planned religious observances.

Absence for ANY reason other than religious observance requires valid written documentation to be excused within the above parameters. If you are sick, see a healthcare or wellness provider and get a note. Otherwise, absence for any kind of sickness will **not** be excused, in line with above parameters.

Please Note: Class will be held on November 21, which is the Friday before Thanksgiving Break. Students are hereby advised to schedule travel **after** this date as UF policy does not excuse absence for holiday travel. A ‘No Penalty’ absence will **not** apply for 11/21 and group presentation due dates.

All requirements for class attendance, punctuality, and due dates are consistent with UF policies listed at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

II. Readings & Materials

1. **Required Reading:** There are no textbooks assigned for this course. Instead, shorter readings are assigned throughout the course and are typically available via links on the course syllabus. Important: Students are expected to bring to every class a paper or electronic copy of the reading for the current week.
2. **Required Viewing:** Film and video viewings are also assigned in this course. Typically, films/videos will be available via links on the course syllabus.

3. **Required Theatre-Going:** Attendance to a live theater production produced by UF's School of Theatre and Dance is also an important assignment in this course. Each student will receive a coupon entitling them to a ticket to 2 different theatrical productions. Attendance to 1 of those productions is required as an experiential learning component of this course in conjunction with completing a written assignment wherein students will respond to the production. Early in the semester, the professor will provide each student with their coupon and information about how to exchange the coupon for theatre tickets. Students will be responsible for obtaining a ticket and will be given ample time to do so—**before** the performance sells out. A student who fails to obtain a ticket in a timely manner remains accountable for the assignment—even if the show sells out—as all students are herewith most vehemently advised:

obtain your theatre tickets in a timely manner upon receipt of your coupon.

Both of these materials are highly recommended but not required:

- Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, *A Pocket Style Manual*, 9th Ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020. \$19.99 Kindle/\$34.37 Spiral Bound. [Available on Amazon.](#)
- Purdue University OWL (Free Online)
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html
(MLA style for citing sources used in papers/assignments)

III. Coursework & Assignments

Reading & Viewing Responses

Each week of this course, students will read an **average** of 25 pages and view an **average** of 35 minutes of video/film/performance and prepare a brief response to the reading or viewing. These responses will:

- Help students think about and process the meanings of assigned readings/viewings;
- Prepare students for thoughtful participation in class discussions about the readings/viewings;
- Enable students to demonstrate how well they understand the readings/viewings, which informs the professor about aspects of the readings that may be unclear to the class, so that the instructor can address those aspects in a subsequent lesson; and
- Provide opportunities for students to respond to the readings/viewings not only with their minds, but also with their hearts—making personal, emotional, or creative connections to the material.

Students will respond to a question or prompt provided by the professor about the week's readings/viewings. The format of students' responses will vary according to the directions provided by the professor. Sometimes, the assignment will call for a response to be written in two or three paragraphs totaling 250 – 300 words. Other times, the assignment will call for a response to be prepared in a creative or media format (e.g., not only text, but also image, photo, audio, or video).

Please note: one of the response assignments will require students to see a live theatre performance on campus and this response will be worth triple credit—meaning it will count as 3 responses.

These assignments will help you accomplish SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 as listed above.

Analytical Essay

Students will write an analytical essay that examines and compares two autobiographical works studied in the course. At least one of the two works examined in the essay must be a text; the second work may be a text or film/video. This essay requires that you put forth a claim or *thesis* and present a compelling argument about the two autobiographical works you choose to analyze. Your thesis will necessarily make a claim that pertains to or involves both autobiographical works. You will use evidence in the form of quotations from each of the two autobiographical works to support all the main ideas and key points of the argument you make throughout the essay. Your entire argument, including all the evidence you provide, “builds a case” to prove your thesis to be true. You will complete a First Draft and a Final Draft.

Cite your sources using [MLA format with both in-text citations and a works cited page](#). NOTE: For information on citing time-based sources such as a video, scroll to the “Online Video” section of the linked webpage.

This essay is 1,000 – 1,200 words and will count toward the 2,000-word UF Writing Requirement pending a grade of C (74) or higher in the course.

This assignment will help you accomplish SLOs 2, 3, 4, and 7 as listed above.

Autoethnographic Essay

The word *autoethnographic* is the adjective form of the word autoethnography. According to rhetoric and composition scholar Danielle Gray (2018), “autoethnography is a study of oneself in order to understand one’s culture.” By examining and analyzing our own life experiences from a cultural perspective, we can gain insight into and draw conclusions about how our culture has helped to shape who we are. Each of us are, in fact, members of **many** cultures and subcultures. In this context, for example, one’s race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, gender identity, or sexual orientation may define one’s cultural affiliation(s). However, one’s culture or subculture may also be defined as what one does, where one lives, what one values, what event or circumstance one has experienced, etc. For example, one may be, or have been, involved in gaming culture (like *Minecraft* or *Halo* culture), skater culture, Dungeons & Dragons culture, win-at-any-cost culture or toxic workplace culture or another type of toxic culture, tattoo culture, music-related culture (like Hip Hop culture or being a “Dead head” or techno culture), cancer survivor culture or another type of survivor culture, university or sports-related culture (like Gator culture!), or Texan culture or New Yorker culture. Clearly, there are so many different kinds of culture.

For this assignment, you will write an essay that examines or investigates your own experience (particular moments, a relationship, a life event, etc.) and analyzes what your lived experience reflects about a culture, or subculture, of which you are a member. As with the Analytical Essay described above, this essay requires that you craft a thesis and present a compelling argument about what it means to participate in a culture based on one’s own experience from within that culture. Gray (2018) provided examples of this type of analysis as a rich description of “what it’s like to be ‘x’—a first generation college student or a multi-racial teen from Bellingham, WA, or a female softball player, or an aspiring jazz musician, or a survivor of a terrible car accident, [or] a *World of War Craft* player” or a member of another kind of culture (Gray, 2018). To support your argument, you will draw upon evidence gathered from research into your own experience and at least 2 autobiographical works examined in this course. You will need to provide enough evidence to support all the main ideas and key points of the argument you make throughout the essay. Your entire argument, including all the evidence you provide, “builds a case” to prove your thesis to be true.

Cite your sources using [MLA format with both in-text citations and a works cited page](#).

This essay is 1,000 – 1,200 words and will count toward the 2,000-word UF Writing Requirement pending a grade of C (74) or higher in the course.

This assignment will help you accomplish SLOs 1, 2, 5, and 7 as listed above.

Group Production Project

Students will work in small groups to present a 10 – 12-minute presentation based on one of our course readings. As a group, students will imagine or re-imagine a staged adaptation, interactive theatrical environment, or experiential performance based on an excerpt of one of our course readings. The format and specifications for these presentations will be discussed further in class and written directions will be provided. An informative handout devised by the group will accompany the presentation and be distributed to the entire class. After the presentation, each student will submit a written self-assessment detailing their specific contributions to the project. The instructor will provide students with guiding questions to be answered in their self-assessments. This project will not be considered complete until the instructor receives the post-presentation self-assessment. Please note: The instructor will afford class time for groups to work together on the preparation of their presentations. However, groups will also need to meet and work outside of class to properly prepare their presentations. While the format may be different, this outside work is no different than doing homework or studying for an exam—in that the need for students to invest significant time outside of class is inherent to rigorous learning at the university level.

This assignment will help you accomplish SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 as listed above.

Self-Reflection

Towards the conclusion of the course, students will prepare a self-reflection that will explore the connections between your learnings in this course and your own life. Specifically, one of the questions students will reflect upon is: How do your learnings in this course connect to your life experience at UF and beyond? The professor will provide more specific instructions for this assignment later in the semester. This assignment will require about 2 hours for the student to complete.

This assignment will help you accomplish SLO 5 as listed above.

Contributions to the Classroom Community

- ENGAGE: Your robust and consistent in-put during class discussions and learning activities, including full-class discussions, small group work, in-class writing, and other classroom activities.
- LISTEN: Your focused attention on the lesson and on your professor and peers as they instruct, present, or contribute to class discussions and learning activities.
- COMMUNICATE: Your open, proactive, cooperative, and respectful communication with your professor and classmates at all times.

These actions will help you accomplish SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 as listed above.

Rubric for Contributions to the Classroom Community

	EXEMPLARY 90% - 100% 45 - 50 points	PROFICIENT 80% - 90% 40 - 45 points	DEVELOPING 70% - 80% 35 - 40 points	UNSATISFACTORY < 70% < 35 points
E N G A G E	Student initiates thoughtful contributions (questions, responses, observations, etc.) more than once in each class meeting.	Student initiates a thoughtful contribution (question, response, observation, etc.) once in each class meeting.	Student initiates a thoughtful contribution (question, response, observation, etc.) once in at least half of the class meetings.	Student does not initiate a thoughtful contribution (question, response, observation, etc.) in at least half of the class meetings and needs the instructor to solicit input.
L I S T E N	Student always listens to and makes collegial eye contact with the professor and classmates whenever they are speaking or presenting. Student's remarks always respond to, relate to, or productively build upon professor's or peers' comments or questions; this includes sometimes reminding the class of pertinent comments made by someone earlier in the discussion. Student never multitasks on an electronic device; they are attentive at all times in every class meeting.	Student nearly always (at least 93% of the time) listens to and makes collegial eye contact with the professor and classmates when they are speaking or presenting. Student's remarks almost always respond to, relate to, or productively build upon professor's or peers' comments or questions. On rare occasions, the student needs encouragement or a reminder of the topic at hand. Still, the student never multitasks on an electronic device; and is attentive nearly always.	Student sometimes (5% - 7% of the time) does not listen to or make collegial eye contact with the professor or classmates when they are speaking or presenting. Sometimes the student's comments do not pertain to or productively build upon peers' comments or questions. Student is sometimes distracted, off-topic, off-task, or their attentiveness is inconsistent.	Student often (more than 7% of the time) does not listen to or does not make collegial eye contact with the professor or peers when they are speaking or presenting. Student's comments infrequently respond to or build upon the professor's or peers' comments or questions. Student is often distracted or inattentive.
C O M M U N I C A T E	Student always shows respect for the professor and for all classmates, both in speech and manner, and student shows respect for the method of shared inquiry and discussion in our class. Student does not dominate discussion. Student respectfully challenges, critiques, or analyzes ideas, and student encourages and supports others to do the same. Student always works with the professor and peers in a cooperative, mature, gracious, and supportive manner. This manner of communication pertains to classroom interactions as well as courteous email etiquette, timely email responses, and willingness to meet with the professor if asked to do so.	Student always shows respect for the professor and for all classmates, both in speech and manner, and respect for the method of shared inquiry and discussion in our class. Student may occasionally (but not more than 7% of the time) have difficulty accepting challenges to their own ideas or occasionally may lack diplomacy when challenging or critiquing others' ideas. Overall, however, the student works with the professor and peers in a cooperative, mature, gracious, and supportive manner. This manner of communication includes classroom interactions as well as courteous email etiquette, timely email responses, and willingness to meet with the professor if asked to do so.	Student always shows respect for the professor and for all classmates, both in speech and manner, and respect for the method of shared inquiry and discussion in our class. Student may need an occasional reminder to cooperate, to put their best foot forward, or to work with the professor or peers in a more mature, gracious, or supportive manner. Communication includes classroom interactions as well as respectful email etiquette, timeliness of email responses, and willingness to meet with the professor if asked to do so.	Student shows any lack of basic respect for the professor or classmates. Often dominates the discussion or disengages from the process. When contributing, student may be hostile, argumentative with, or dismissive of their professor or peers; or the student may resort to ad hominem attacks. Communication includes classroom interactions and email etiquette, timeliness of email responses, and level of responsiveness to meeting with the professor if asked to do so.

Assignment Evaluation

Assignment	Total Points	Percentage of Grade
Reading Responses (10)	250	25%
Essays (2)	300	30%
Group Presentation	200	20%
Self-Reflection	100	10%
Contributions to the Classroom Community	150	15%
TOTAL	1000	100%

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Grade	Percent	Score	GPA
A	94 – 100	940 – 1000	4.00
A-	90 – 93	900 – 939	3.67
B+	87 – 89	870 – 899	3.33
B	84 – 86	840 – 869	3.00
B-	80 – 83	800 – 839	2.67
C+	77 – 79	770 – 799	2.33
C	74 – 76	740 – 769	2.00
C-	70 – 73	700 – 739	1.67
D+	67 – 69	667 – 699	1.33
D	64 – 66	640 – 666	1.00
D-	60 – 63	600 – 639	0.67
E, I, NG, S-U, WF	0 – 59	0 – 599	0.00

Writing Requirement

Satisfactory completion of this course confers 2,000 words towards the UF Writing Requirement (WR), which ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. While helping students meet learning outcomes of content, communication, critical thinking, and connecting, the instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on students' written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

Course grades have two interconnected components: Writing Requirement credit and the overall course grade. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must earn an overall course grade of C (74) or higher AND satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

NOTE: A course grade lower than C (74 points) results in zero (0) writing credit for this course.

Formatting Written Assignments

Written assignments will be submitted as MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents to the course site on Canvas. **PDFs will NOT be accepted.** Papers should be formatted in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered. You must include a word-count at the top of the first page. **Include your name, course number, date submitted, word-count, and a captivating and appropriate title for all written assignments.** *Note:* In addition to turning in assignments on Canvas, students will sometimes be asked to bring in on the due date a print-out of the assignment on paper.

The Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the Writing Studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations.

IV. Course Schedule

Important

All assignments, including readings, are due by or before the start of class on the date listed. Students are expected to complete assigned readings and prepare for class discussions by due dates.

- [Reading assignments with links appear in underlined blue.](#)
- Assignments to turn in on Canvas appear next to the uppercase word **DUE in yellow-highlighted, bold.**

W e e k	Topics & Inquiry Questions	Class Date	Assignments
1	How do we begin our journey into the world of autobiography?	F 8/22	Introduction: What is this course about?
2	Why does autobiography matter?	M 8/25	Orientation: Who are we? And how might the autobiographical knowledge we already possess contribute to our experience in this course? Guidance: Professor shares instructions for Response #1 due by Friday..
		W 8/27	Class Lecture/Discussion: What is autobiography? Why study it? Guidance: Professor shares instructions for Response #2 due next week.
		F 8/29	RESPONSE #1 DUE - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas. BRING A PAPER COPY OF RESPONSE TO CLASS & TURN IN ON CANVAS Class Discussion: Why do people create autobiographies? Total combined length of videos is approximately 25 minutes. 1. Native American Hoop Dance and Hip-Hop, from Minneapolis to Albuquerque KQED Arts (entire video)

			<p>2. Dancing an Indigenous Future with Albuquerque's Native American Hip-Hop Scene KQED Arts (entire video)</p> <p>3. Maya Angelou, STILL I RISE (entire video)</p> <p>4. Maya Angelou, Inspirational Speech (entire video)</p> <p>5. Tim Miller, MY QUEER BODY (entire video)</p> <p>CONTENT ALERT: Racism, homophobia, profanity, sexually explicit material.</p>
3	What can an autobiography say about us and the society in which we live?	M 9/1	NO CLASS: U.S. Holiday
		W 9/3	<p>RESPONSE #2 DUE - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas.</p> <p>Class Discussion: What does Margaret Cho's autobiographical performance illuminate for us?</p> <p>(Total combined length of videos is approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes plus about 30 minutes of reading)</p> <p>1. Margaret Cho, I'M THE ONE THAT I WANT - Part 1 (entire video)</p> <p>2. Margaret Cho, I'M THE ONE THAT I WANT - Part 2 (begin at 11:30 and watch to the end)</p> <p>3. Edward Said-Framed: The Politics of Stereotypes in News (entire video)</p> <p>4. Summary of ORIENTALISM by Edward Said. (Required: read pages X, 1, and 9 - 14.) (Pages 2 - 8 are optional.) Consider the questions on the last page and come to class with answers in mind.</p> <p>CONTENT ALERT: Racism, sexism, eating disorders, profanity, slurs, sexually explicit material.</p>
		F 9/5	Class Discussion: How do Cho's and Said's ideas connect and interact?
4	What do autobiographies reveal about the workings of social and historical contexts and conditions in the lives of their subjects?	M 9/8	<p>HEADS-UP: Be ready to obtain theatre ticket and see on-campus performance; professor will share further information as soon as it becomes available.</p> <p>Class Lecture/Discussion: What historical contexts and events propel the narrative of Dr. Angelou's autobiography? Why does this book matter?</p> <p>Maya Angelou, I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS (pp. 1 - 21; from beginning of book to end of Chapter 4)</p> <p>CONTENT ALERT: Racism, hate speech, rape, sexual abuse, pedophilia.</p> <p>Information on Response #3 - Visual Map</p>
		W 9/10	Class Lecture/Discussion: How do you write an analytical essay? Part 1
		F 9/12	<p>Class Lecture/Discussion: How do you write an analytical essay? Part 2</p> <p>Note: Be working at home on your Response #3 Visual Map due next week.</p>
5	How do autobiographies work to reveal their subjects?	M 9/15	<p>SEE THEATRE PERFORMANCE; professor will share specifics as soon as available.</p> <p>Class Lecture/Discussion: What is the significance of Maya Angelou's autobiography? Why does this particular story matter?</p>

			Maya Angelou, I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS (pp. 22 - 81; Chapters 5 through 16) <i>Side-Note:</i> Reading the <u>entire</u> book is optional, but encouraged.
		W 9/17	RESPONSE #3 DUE - Visual Map Response Worth Double Credit - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas. Creative Lab: Exploring our Visual Maps, Part 1 BRING VISUAL MAP (hard copy or on laptop) to class; be ready to share & discuss it. ALSO , turn in your Visual Map on Canvas.
		F 9/19	Creative Lab: Exploring our Visual Maps, Part 2 BRING VISUAL MAP (hard copy) to class and be prepared to share & discuss it. You ALSO have already turned in your visual map on Canvas on the due date.
6	How and why do autobiographies perform the self?	M 9/22	Caged Bird Farewell & Peer Workshop Prep Class Lecture/Discussion: <i>How</i> does I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS convey Maya Angelou's personal development and self-discovery?
		W 9/24	ANALYTICAL ESSAY: FIRST DRAFT DUE Group Production Project: Directions & Autobiography Excerpts
		F 9/26	BRING A PAPER COPY OF ESSAY TO CLASS & TURN IN ON CANVAS Peer Review Writing Workshop, Part 1 - using the first draft of the Analytical Essay; this will support everyone's development as writers.
7	How does autobiography represent historically marginalized voices? (Part 1)	M 9/29	BRING A PAPER COPY OF ESSAY TO CLASS (again) Peer Review Writing Workshop, Part 2 - using the first draft of the Analytical Essay; this will support everyone's development as writers.
		W 10/1	Class Lecture/Discussion: How will you achieve a successful essay revision?
		F 10/3	RESPONSE #4 DUE - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas. Class Lecture/Discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nancy Mairs' chapter: "Young and Disabled" from her book WAIST-HIGH IN THE WORLD: A LIFE AMONG THE NONDISABLED (pp. 124-145) 2. Susan R. Jones' article titled TOWARD INCLUSIVE THEORY: DISABILITY AS SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION (pp. 1-4 of PDF) 3. Marisa Hamamoto & Piotr Iwanicki of Infinite Flow Dance Company in GRAVITY choreographed by Gary Franco (2 mins, 30 secs) 3. Marisa Hamamoto & Piotr Iwanicki and the ensemble of Infinite Flow Dance Company in BRILLIANT MINDS choreographed by Phillip Chbeeb (1 min, 45 secs)

			<p>4. Season 1 trailer for Ryan O'Connell's Netflix series SPECIAL (2 mins)</p> <p>5. Season 2 trailer for Ryan O'Connell's Netflix series SPECIAL (3 mins)</p> <p>Class Lecture/Discussion: Why does Nancy Mairs deploy autobiographical discourses to represent the lives of women with disabilities? How does Mairs put these discourses to work as performance?</p>
8	How does autobiography represent historically marginalized voices? (Part 2)	M 10/6	Class Lecture/Discussion: What are theories of disability? How are such theories reflected in autobiographical artworks?
		W 10/8	Creative Lab: Disability Theory Scenes (Part 1)
		F 10/10	TOP 8 CHOICES OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY EXCERPTS DUE Creative Lab: Disability Theory Scenes (Part 2)
9	How do artistic methodologies function to bring autobiographies to life? (Part 1)	M 10/13	Group Production Project: Introduction and Requirements
		W 10/15	Work Session: Group Projects
		F 10/17	NO CLASS: UF Homecoming
10	How do artistic methodologies function to bring autobiographies to life? (Part 2)	M 10/20	Work Session: Group Projects
		W 10/22	ANALYTICAL ESSAY: FINAL DRAFT DUE Work Session: Group Projects
		F 10/24	Work Session: Group Projects
11	How do artistic methodologies function to bring autobiographies to life? (Part 3)	M 10/27	Work Session: Group Projects
		W 10/29	RESPONSE #5 DUE - Theatre Response Worth Triple Credit - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas. Work Session: Group Projects

		F 10/31	GROUP PRESENTATIONS DUE: [Groups 1 & 2]
12	What can presentation illuminate about the meanings of autobiographies both for presenters and audiences?	M 11/3	GROUP PRESENTATIONS DUE: [Groups 3 & 4]
		W 11/5	GROUP PRESENTATIONS DUE: [Groups 5 & 6]
		F 11/7	GROUP PRESENTATIONS DUE: [Groups 7 & 8]
13	How might autobiography reveal and heal?	M 11/10	NO CLASS: U.S. Holiday
		W 11/12	PROJECT REFLECTION - SELF-ASSESSMENT DUE: - Direction/Prompt in Canvas. RESPONSE #6 DUE - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas. Class Lecture/Discussion: What does Zoe Thorogood discover at Earth's center? And, why is it so lonely at the center of the Earth? Zoe Thorogood, IT'S LONELY AT THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH (graphic memoir) CONTENT ALERT: Suicide, self harm, profanity.
		F 11/14	Class Lecture/Discussion: <i>How</i> does Zoe Thorogood bring us on her journey? And, how will you write a great Autoethnographic Essay (upcoming paper)?
14	What might autobiography teach us about how we become who we are?	M 11/17	How will you write a great Autoethnographic Essay?
		W 11/19	RESPONSE #7 DUE - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas. Class Lecture/Discussion: How and why does MOONLIGHT convey its protagonist's personal development and self-discovery? (Part 1) MOONLIGHT a film directed by Barry Jenkins; co-written and based on a play by Tarell Alvin McCraney . (1 hour, 50 mins) Note: The film MOONLIGHT is available to watch at the UF Library -or- on your laptop or other devices connected to UF wifi on- campus. It can also be watched off- campus on your laptop/devices using these methods . Try the UF Proxy Server method first; it's usually the easier option. CONTENT ALERT: Racism, homophobia, hate speech, gun violence, physical violence, drug use, profanity.
		F 11/21	Class Lecture/Discussion: How and why does MOONLIGHT convey its protagonist's personal development and self-discovery? (Part 2) NOTE: Class will be held on this date. See information in 'Please Note' in the Attendance section above.

15		M 11/24	NO CLASS: Fall Break
		W 11/26	NO CLASS: Fall Break
		F 11/28	NO CLASS: Fall Break
16	How might autobiography reflect, shape, and transform who we are?	M 12/1	Class Reflection Discussion: What knowledge, skills, and abilities have we acquired or sharpened? What new or changed perspectives or meanings have we found?
		W 12/3	SELF-REFLECTION DUE - Directions and specific prompt are in Canvas. BRING DIGITAL DEVICE TO CLASS TO COMPLETE GATOREVAL Self-reflection Session: Who are you now versus who we were on the first day of the course? How might your growth in this course impact your life, study, and career at present and beyond UF? (Last Class Meeting)
		F 12/5	NO CLASS: UF Reading Day
	FINALS	M 12/8	NO CLASS - AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC ESSAY DUE (in Canvas prior to 10:40 AM)
		W 12/10	NO CLASS <i>Happy Holidays!</i>

V. Quest Learning Experiences

1. Details of Experiential Learning Component

The experiential learning component will involve attending a live theater performance on campus and writing one of your weekly responses about the experience. The instructor will provide further specifics in class well in advance of the assignment.

2. Details of Self-Reflection Component

The self-reflection component is woven throughout the course in many of our activities, discussions, and in class writing. Specifically, however, you will create a final self-reflection assignment as detailed above that connects learning in this course to your life experience at UF and beyond.

VI. Additional Course Policies

Due Dates

All assignments are due at the start of the class period on the date listed on the course schedule.

- The penalty for late assignments is 3 points deducted for each day the assignment is late.
- Submission of late assignments without penalty requires a valid, officially documented reason, such as absence excused by a doctor's note. If an assignment is missed due to an officially documented excused absence, then it will be due no later than 7 days after the student's return to school.
- An assignment missed due to unexcused absence cannot be made up.

Class Demeanor & Conduct

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, to participate with a positive attitude, and to conduct themselves in a professional manner that is always respectful to the instructor and fellow students. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion must be avoided.

You may consume only small, hand-held snacks with a wrapper (like a protein bar or apple slices in a baggie). You may consume only beverages with a very secure lid. You must properly dispose of all trash. Do not ever leave trash in the classroom; doing otherwise will result in the termination of food and beverage privileges for everyone in the class.

An open line of communication between us is of the utmost importance. Always feel free to communicate with me; my job is to guide and support you in learning. If you have a question, concern, confusion, or problem relevant to this course, please don't worry, don't fret, and don't go to other people before you come to me. **Reach out to me and I will be happy to help and support you.**

Please see the section below 'Welcome & Expectations: How We Thrive in This Classroom' for more specific information regarding classroom demeanor and conduct.

Canvas and Email

All students in this course are required to use Canvas, UF's official learning management system. Students will access Canvas frequently for updates to the course schedule, to access assignment information and materials, to turn in assignments, and for other important course information.

All students are required to have an active UF email account (@ufl.edu), which they check at least once a day (or more often, if possible). State laws require that all emails related to a course must come from students' UF accounts rather than personal accounts (such as Gmail or Yahoo).

Emails to the instructor should be respectful and use professional standards of language and communication. The instructor will make every effort to respond to student emails within 24 hours during weekdays and within 48 hours during weekends and holidays.

Both Canvas and UF email are extremely important modes of communication between student and instructor, and the instructor will use Canvas and UF email to communicate crucial course information to students.

To resolve technical issues with email or Canvas visit the [UF Computing Help Desk website](https://ufcomputinghelpdesk.com/) or email helpdesk@ufl.edu or call 352-392-HELP (4357).

Content Alert

In this course, we will cover content and materials that some may find difficult. It is important that in a process of learning and intellectual development we do not shy away from engaging with materials that may be controversial or challenging. In class, if you need to step away briefly as we are examining particular content, you may do so without penalty, but please remember that you are responsible for any information covered in your absence.

Content in the humanities sometimes includes works and discussions that address themes, situations, actions, or language that can be offensive to some students on the grounds of sexual explicitness, profanity, violence, or blasphemy. As UF is devoted to the principle of academic and artistic freedom, it is not the University's practice to censor controversial works on any of these grounds. Part of the student's work is to learn how to investigate and analyze content that may convey perspectives that differ from their own views. Learning can be challenging and uncomfortable, at times. Our goal is to establish a learning environment that is both a safe space (physically, emotionally, mentally) AND a brave space where we can experience new ideas, take healthy and creative risks, and grow as scholars and human beings. If you have questions or concerns about these issues, then please communicate privately with the instructor as early as possible in the semester.

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint, or belief.

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

PLEASE NOTE: An accommodation letter does **not** automatically excuse students from an unlimited number of absences or latenesses. Students are expected to arrange a meeting with their professor within the first week of classes to develop mutually agreeable accommodation parameters regarding absences and/or latenesses and determine how the student will meet course learning objectives within the accommodation parameters.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be

notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

In-Class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may NOT publish recorded class lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does NOT include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services.

A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states:

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

The Honor Code specifies several potential violations, including *plagiarism*. Section 3.E. prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A Student must not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another person or Entity **[including ChatGPT and any other source of artificial intelligence]**.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
2. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
3. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
4. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the student did not author.

Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in the referral of the student to the Dean of Students for consideration of academic and student status sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TA in this class.

The Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code may be read in their entirety at:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

Students' ongoing enrollment is confirmation that they understand and agree to comply with the requirements and policies of the course as described in this syllabus.



The professor reserves the right to alter the syllabus and/or course schedule as deemed necessary. Students will be notified in writing of any significant changes to the syllabus and/or schedule.

VII. Welcome & Expectations: How We Thrive in This Classroom

Our classroom is a place for curiosity, collaboration, and creativity. These guidelines help us start on time, stay engaged, and make the most of our shared learning.



Arriving and Beginning Class

- Arrive a few minutes early, prepared for a prompt start, notebook open, pen at the ready.
- At the official UF start time of our class period, direct your full attention to the instructor.
- Bring all materials needed for class: notebook, pen, reading, etc.



Engagement During Class

- Participate with respect, curiosity, and an open mind.
- Listen actively to all speakers so every voice is valued.
- Keep contributions on topic and remain engaged through the last minute of class; students wait to gather belongings until class is over.



Technology Guidelines

- Keep phones silenced and out of sight.
- Keep laptops and tablets closed and out of sight.
- Use technology only if the professor invites you to do so for a specific learning task and keep it dedicated solely to our course work.



Professional and Respectful Conduct

- Communicate with courtesy, maturity, and professionalism.
- Welcome differing viewpoints and respectful disagreement.
- Avoid interrupting or talking over others.
- Treat classmates, guests, and the instructor with kindness.



Shared Responsibility

- We all share responsibility to maintain focus, creativity, and respect in this classroom.
- Should disruption occur, the professor may communicate with the student privately outside the room, during office hours, or via email.
- Behaviors that disrupt learning may result in a 5-point grade deduction per occurrence.
- Repeated or serious disruption may lead to being asked to leave the classroom.
- Positive participation benefits everyone's learning.

By joining this course, you agree to these shared practices so we can learn, create, and grow together in a respectful and engaging environment.

VIII. Important Student Resources

ACADEMIC & CAREER

- **E-Learning Technical Support:** Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- **Career Connections Center:** Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- **Library Support:** Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- **Teaching Center:** Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- **Writing Studio:** 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- **Student Complaints On-Campus:** [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage](#) for more information.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- **Student Health Care Center:** Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit the Student Health Care Center at [2140 Stadium Rd, Gainesville, FL 32612](#).
- **Sexual Assault Recovery Services:** Visit [Student Health Care Center](#) or call 352-392-1161.
- **University Police Department:** [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 911 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- **Food Insecurity:** [Visit UF's Food Pantry website](#) or call 352-294-3601 or email fieldandfork@ufl.edu for help if you are experiencing food insecurity.
- **Veterans and Military-Affiliated Students Resources:** Visit the [UF Collegiate Veterans Success Center website](#) or call 352-294-7233 or email vetsuccess@dso.ufl.edu for resources, community, and support.
- **Other Concerns and Needs:** See this [comprehensive list of concerns](#) with links to UF resources for help and support.