Practices from religious confession to psychoanalysis share the assumption that speaking about the self is a way of learning who we are, where we come from, and what we want. A related tradition of autobiography shifts the emphasis from speech to writing. This course examines the practice of autobiographical writing, from its confessional roots and flourishing as a genre in the Romantic period to formal experiments in contemporary memoir and graphic novels. Reading texts from a broad range of cultural and historical contexts, we will explore, among other issues, how the self is constructed through reading and writing, the relationship between memory and identity, truth and lying, excuses and accusations, the claims of authenticity, the tension between inner and public life, and the peculiarities of an individual voice. Moreover, we will have occasion to question the nature and limits of autobiography as a discourse by referring to competing practices and technologies of self-presentation, from philosophy to social media.

Core Learning outcomes: Texts and Ideas is intended to foster your appreciation of the importance of humanistic learning. It provides the foundation of your liberal arts education through encounters with literary and philosophical works that have been influential in shaping the contemporary world and significant instances in which the ideas in these works have been debated, developed, appropriated, or rejected. As a part of the College Core Curriculum, it is designed to extend your education beyond the focused studies of your major, preparing you for your future life as a thoughtful individual and active member of society.

Course Readings (Books available at NYU Bookstore):

Additional readings are available online; class announcements will be sent via email through NYU Classes. You are responsible for making sure you receive these emails. Check the classes site periodically to ensure that you are following all updates.

Assignments and grade distribution: In-class midterm and final exam; 2 one-two-page analysis papers; 2 four-five-page papers and 1 six to eight-page paper. All late work will be penalized. Participation: 20% (Analysis papers count as participation); Paper I: 5%; Paper II: 15%; Paper III: 20%; Midterm: 15%; Final: 25%.
Lecture: Zakir Paul (zp299@nyu.edu)
Recitations: Daniella Gitlin (dg2655@nyu.edu) Wendy Lotterman (wendy.lotterman@nyu.edu)

Attendance and Participation: Presence in lecture and recitation is essential. Regular attendance and informed participation are basic requirements of the course. Bring your texts and reading notes to class. If you must miss a session, send an email well in advance (at least 24 hours) explaining why you cannot attend (sickness, religious holiday, exceptional circumstances are acceptable reasons). See page 4-5 for the Core Statement on Academic Integrity and Core Grading Guidelines.

Office Hours: 19 UP, 304, W 2:00-4:00 and by appointment. To meet with your TAs contact them by email and make an appointment.

Recitations: Weekly recitation sections are an integral part of the course and attendance and informed participation is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>011</td>
<td>Wendy Lotterman</td>
<td>F 9:30-10:45</td>
<td>WAVE 567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>012</td>
<td>Wendy Lotterman</td>
<td>F 11:00-12:15</td>
<td>BOBS LL 146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>013</td>
<td>Daniella Gitlin</td>
<td>F 9:30-10:45</td>
<td>GCASL 388</td>
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<tr>
<td>014</td>
<td>Daniella Gitlin</td>
<td>F 11:00-12:15</td>
<td>SILV 504</td>
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</tbody>
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Important dates
Analysis Papers: Dates Assigned in Recitations; counts toward participation.
Paper 1: due 9/26 by 5 pm (email directly to your TA).
Midterm: 10/24 in class, further details TBD.
Paper 2 due 10/31 by 5 pm (email directly to your TA).
Paper 3 due 12/5 by 5 pm (email directly to your TA).
Final: Monday, Dec 17 in class. Further details TBD.

Reading Schedule

**Week 1**
W 9/5 Introductory session.

**Week 2**
M 9/10 Augustine, Confessions I-IV.
W 9/12 Augustine, Confessions V-VIII.

**Week 3**
M 9/17 Augustine, Confessions IX-X + Taylor.
W 9/19 Rousseau, Confessions, TBD; critical excerpts from De Man & Lejeune.

**Week 4**
M 9/24 Rousseau, Confessions, TBD.
W 9/26 Rousseau, Confessions, TBD. Paper I due.

**Week 5**
M 10/1 Rousseau, Confessions, TBD.
Lecture: Zakir Paul (zp299@nyu.edu)
Recitations: Daniella Gitlin (dg2655@nyu.edu) Wendy Lotterman (wendy.lotterman@nyu.edu)

W 10/3 Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*.

**Week 6**
Tu 10/9 Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
W 10/10 Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; critical excerpts from Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

**Week 7**
W 10/17 Nabokov, *Speak Memory*.

**Week 8**
M 10/22 Nabokov, *Speak Memory*.
W 10/24 Midterm.

**Week 9**
M 10/29 Nabokov, *Speak Memory*.
W 10/31 Levi, *Periodic Table*.

**Week 10**
M 11/5 Levi, *Periodic Table*.
W 11/7 Levi, *Periodic Table*.

**Week 11**
M 11/12 Soyinka, *Aké: The Years of Childhood*.
W 11/14 Soyinka, *Aké: The Years of Childhood*.

**Week 12**
M 11/19 Soyinka, *Aké: The Years of Childhood*.
W 11/21 No Class, Thanksgiving Break

**Week 13**

**Week 14**
W 12/5 Satrapi, *Persepolis*.

**Week 15**
M 12/10 Satrapi, *Persepolis* (Film). **Paper III due**.
W 12/12 Satrapi, *Persepolis*.

**Final Monday December 17.** Further details TBD.
Statement on Academic Integrity: The College Core Curriculum, College of Arts and Science

As a student at New York University, you have been admitted to a community of scholars who value free and open inquiry. Our work depends on honest assessment of ideas and their sources; and we expect you, as a member of our community, likewise to maintain the highest integrity in your academic work. Because of the central importance of these values to our intellectual life together, those who fail to maintain them will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University.

Plagiarism consists in presenting ideas and words without acknowledging their source and is an offense against academic integrity. Any of the following acts constitutes a crime of plagiarism.

- Using a phrase, sentence, or passage from another person’s work without quotation marks and attribution of the source.
- Paraphrasing words or ideas from another’s work without attribution.
- Reporting as your own research or knowledge any data or facts gathered or reported by another person.
- Submitting in your own name papers or reports completed by another.
- Submitting your own original work toward requirements in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors.

Other offenses against academic integrity include the following.

- Collaborating with other students on assignments without the express permission of the instructor.
- Giving your work to another student to submit as his or her own.
- Copying answers from other students during examinations.
- Using notes or other sources to answer exam questions without the instructor’s permission.
- Secreting or destroying library or reference materials.
- Submitting as your own work a paper or results of research that you have purchased from a commercial firm or another person.

Particular emphasis is placed on the use of papers and other materials to be found on the World-Wide Web, whether purchased or freely available. In addition to having access to the same search engines as students, faculty also have at their disposal a number of special websites devoted to detecting plagiarism from the web.

Plagiarism and other cases of academic fraud are matters of fact, not intention. It is therefore crucial that you be diligent in assuring the integrity of your work.

- Use quotation marks to set off words that are not your own.
- Learn to use proper forms of attribution for source materials.
- Do your own original work in each class, without collaboration, unless otherwise instructed.
- Don’t use published sources, the work of others, or material from the web without attribution.
- For further information, consult the College of Arts and Science website on academic integrity at http://core.cas.nyu.edu/docs/CP/4321/AcademicIntegrity.pdf.
Grading Guidelines: The College Core Curriculum, College of Arts and Science

The College Core Curriculum is designed to provide students with an intellectually rigorous general education in the liberal arts. Because Core courses seek to stretch you beyond your previous schooling and major course of study, they will likely be among the most academically challenging experiences you undertake as an undergraduate. The following guidelines outline our common expectations concerning the evaluation of students’ work across the curriculum.

The grade of A marks extraordinary academic performance in all aspects of a course and is reserved for clearly superior work. In large lecture courses such as those in the Core, it would be unusual for more than 20–25% of students to earn grades in this range, or for more than 10% to merit marks of straight A.

As a faculty, we are similarly concerned to reserve the mark of B+ to signify very good work.

It is our hope and desire that the majority of students will want and be able to do good work in their Core courses, work in the B range. Because these courses are intended by design to foster your intellectual development, the difference between merely satisfactory and good work will frequently depend on outstanding effort and class participation. For this reason, class participation is typically a substantial component of the overall grade in Core courses.

The grade of C denotes satisfactory work—regular attendance, ordinary effort, a minimum of demonstrated improvement across the semester. It is expected that every student is capable of and motivated to perform at least at this level.

Grades below C are reserved for less than satisfactory and, in the D range, for poor work and effort, and mark a need for improvement.

The grade of F indicates failure to complete the requirements for a course in a creditable manner. It marks a judgment about the quality and quantity of a student’s work and participation—not about the student—and is therefore in order whenever a student fails to complete course requirements, whatever his or her intentions or circumstances may be.

The temporary mark of I (Incomplete) is given only when sudden and incapacitating illness, or other grave emergency, prevents a student from completing the final assignment or examination for a course. It must be requested by the student in advance; all other course requirements, including satisfactory attendance, must have been fulfilled; and there must be a reasonable expectation that the student will receive a passing grade when the delayed work is completed. Students must make arrangements with the faculty member to finish the incomplete work as soon as circumstances permit within the following semester. If not completed, marks of I will lapse to F.