

Racial Identity Autobiography
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The goal of this assignment is to explore your own racial identity and, in so doing, develop a better understanding of racial identity in general. Although racial and ethnic identity are sometimes intertwined, for the purpose of this assignment, please limit your discussion to racial identity. Some students find this assignment to be difficult. To help you get started, several suggestions are listed below. These are intended solely as suggestions. You are neither required to discuss all these elements, nor are you limited to them.

- When, why, and how you first became aware of your race
- Influence of skin color (or other physical characteristic(s) attributed to race) on your life
- Others' response to your physical characteristic attributed to race
- Messages from family members about skin color or other physical characteristics.
- Family stories about your own racial group, other racial groups, or race in general
- Media and cultural messages about race
- Friendships and other relationships within and apart from your own racial group
- Participation in groups or activities centered on race or racial issues
- Experiences with stereotypes, prejudice, and racism (as victim, as perpetrator, or as both)
- What it means to you (if anything) to identify with your racial group
- What you like and don't like about being a member of your racial group

Evaluation

Your autobiographies should consist of no more than six typed, double-spaced pages in a standard 12-point font and with standard one-inch margins. There is no length minimum, but given the brevity of the assignment, I strongly recommend that you write as close to the upper limit as possible. Please note, as well, that it is typically more challenging and time-consuming to express complex ideas well in a short space compared to a longer space. Plan accordingly.

Although there are no "wrong" responses in an autobiographical assignment, there certainly are inadequate and superficial ones. It is expected that your autobiography integrates relevant course lectures and readings, as well as at least three sources not assigned for class. You will be evaluated on both content (32 points) and writing (8 points), so please take care to submit work that is as well organized and technically strong as possible.