

YOUR AUTOMATHOGRAPHY

MATH 302-01, SPRING 2016

1. WHAT IS TO BE DONE

Mathematician Paul Halmos once wrote a book entitled, *I want to be a mathematician: an automathography*. Since nobody had ever heard of an “automathography” before, he explained what it meant: it was a story of his life with mathematics. He reasoned that an “autobiography” would be too broad.

You are to write an automathography. You will give a personal account of your life with mathematics up to this point. The primary grading criterion is that you present a reflective account describing how you got where you are.

A list of courses you took is not sufficient (or even desirable; it’s not reflective). Rather, focus on impressions and important turning points. If asked for an account of my life with my wife, I could give a journalistic list of how we met, when and where we went on dates, the day and time that I proposed, the songs performed at our wedding, and so forth. Or I could tell what I first noticed about her, how my feelings for her developed, the course of our first fight, and so on. The second kind of account is what I’m asking for.

To put the same thing a different way, it is vitally important that you *reflect* on your experience. I don’t care nearly so much what happened as I care what it meant for you and for your future in mathematics.

2. DUE DATE

The paper should be turned in on or before January 25.

3. GRADING

In addition to the usual criteria, I will assess the following content questions:

- (1) Is the account personal and reflective?