**CAS 100A**

“This I Believe” Speech - Assignment Sheet

Date Due:

* October 2, 5, 7, 9. If we run over, the 12th will be used as well.

What to Expect:

* During this **4-6 minute** speech you are invited—or challenged—to articulate and express an outlook, principle, or attitude you hold dear or simply to which you adhere. According to the official website of “This I Believe,” this kind of speech affords speakers the opportunity to “learn about themselves and their peers, and experience the delight of realizing their views and voices have value.” If you’d prefer, you can also craft and deliver a “This I Used to Believe” speech, in which you tell us about the transformation or dissolution of a belief.
* “This I Believe” contributions are anecdotal, personal, and sometimes quirky. In your own speech, aim to be everyday without being banal, or to be grand without being haughty. You should not totalize (“Life all boils down to this”) or proselytize (“Convert to veganism!”).
* The current producer of the show asserts that “[t]he goal is not to persuade Americans to agree on the same beliefs. Rather, the hope is to encourage people to begin the much more difficult task of developing respect for beliefs different from their own.” *There should be no overt calls to action or attitude change in your speech. You’re not trying to sway or convince us (though, of course, all language influences). Aim to be* ***invitational.***

Grading:

* This assignment is worth **15% of your final course grade (150 points)**
* For a more full breakdown of points for this assignment please look to the grading rubric, posted on ANGEL.
* I expect your speeches to be well-researched, well-organized, well-rehearsed, and properly formatted according to assignment guidelines
	+ Below are some brief grade guidelines
	+ **“A” speeches** are those that go above and beyond these tasks – demonstrating clear success and understanding of the assignment
	+ **“B” speeches** are those that accomplish these tasks with good success, with some errors and room for improvement
	+ **“C” speeches** are average – with research holes, poor organization, and a demonstrated lack of rehearsal
	+ **“D” speeches** are below average – with significant errors, lack of organization and research, and a clear lack of rehearsal
	+ **“F” speeches** are those that do not abide by the requirements, demonstrate little to no rehearsal, and do not show evidence of proper research, organization, and/or formatting
* I grade speeches rigorously. I expect you to treat each speech assignment as you would a midterm paper in another research class. I will grade your speeches with the aim of helping you improve.

Speech Organization:

* Your speech should contain an attention-getting introduction with a concise thesis and preview of the main points you will discuss.
* The body of the speech should have well-organized main ideas, and these points should be connected with clear transitions
* The conclusion of the speech should be focused and include a review of the main points and a creative, artistic closing

Speech Guidelines: (from http://thisibelieve.org/guidelines)

* *Tell a story.* Be specific. Take your belief out of the ether and ground it in the events of your life. Consider moments when belief was formed or tested or changed. Think of your own experience, work, and family, and tell of the things you know that no one else does. Your story need not be heart-warming or gut-wrenching—it can even be funny—but it should be *real*. Make sure your story ties to the essence of your daily life philosophy and the shaping of your beliefs.
* *Name your belief.* If you can’t name it in a sentence or two, your speech might not be about belief.
* *Be positive.* Please avoid preaching or editorializing. Avoid speaking in the editorial “we.” Make your essay about you; speak in the first person.
* *Be personal.* Write in words and phrases that are comfortable for you to speak. We recommend you deliver your speech aloud to yourself several times, and each time edit it and simplify it until you find the words, tone, and story that truly echo your belief and the way you speak.

Speech Requirements:

* Time Limit: 4-6 minutes [10 point deduction for every 15 second over or under the time limit]
* Visual Aid: A visual aid is **optional** for this presentation. If you choose to use an electronic visual aid, upload it to the Visual Aid Drop Box on ANGEL.

Deadlines/Feedback Opportunities

* I am more than happy to provide you with help/feedback on your outline/speech/visual aid in advance of your speaking date. If you need assistance or want to have me review your outline or watch your speech, please stop by my office hours or set up an appointment to meet with me.
* **You must turn in a print outline to me on the day of your speech AND submit a digital copy to the ANGEL dropbox before you come to class.**
* You can hear some sample speeches at [*http://thisibelieve.org/*](http://thisibelieve.org/)and *http://wpsu.org/radio/program/thisibelieve*

Advice on Outlines

Plan to start your problem speech outline as early as you can. Trying to write your outline the day or two before you are assigned to speak will be a miserable experience. If you can start early and give yourself at least a couple of days to practice your delivery with the completed outline/note cards, you will be more successful on your speech and you will learn more from the experience.

Please note that your outline is incredibly important in how your grade is determined. The outline is where you demonstrate your research for this assignment. Your outline is where I will turn to look for the content of your speech after my initial evaluation of your speech in class. A poorly constructed outline can thus have great impact on your grade. **Treat your speech outline like you would a research paper.**

*Examples of I Believe In:*

* Family’s spaghetti sauce recipe
* Picking up loose change
* Improvisation
* A firm handshake
* Taking pictures frequently

*You have violated the genre if:*

* Your speech contains overt attempts at persuasion or conversion (avoid “shoulding” all over us)
* Your speech is confrontational instead of invitational
* You speak about an overtly religious belief (though a belief that is generally in keeping with your religion is totally fine)