

First Year Reading Experience Writing Assignment

This assignment is required for all students registered for English 1010, English 1011, or English 1020

What do you believe?

This year's First Year Reading Experience book, *This I Believe*, is a collection of short essays written by people from all walks of life—rich, poor, young, old, powerful and ordinary. They address topics that are profound, playful, scientific, religious, and culinary. They have in common the individual writers' willingness to share their thoughts — to take a stand publicly — about something they take seriously, whether it is faith in God or a belief in barbecue.

As you read through these essays, think about what you believe. What matters to you? On what principle would you be willing to take a public stand? What has led you to your belief? Why is it important?

As a part of the First Year Reading Experience, we'd like you to write your own This I Believe essay and bring it with you when you come to campus in the fall. Your essay should be brief. Aim for about two pages (or five hundred words). Take your time. Choose your topic carefully. Write, rewrite, and polish your essay, and bring us the best possible account of your belief.

If you would like some guidelines about writing this particular kind of essay, visit the website of the This I Believe organization by following this link:

<http://thisibelieve.org/guidelines/>

What to do with your essay

Once you have completed your essay, be sure and save it in an electronic file. You might want to e-mail it to your UTC e-mail account. On the first day of your freshman English class (English 1010, English 1011, or English 1020), please bring a hard copy of your essay with you to class. If you are enrolled in an on-line section of English 1010 or 1020, please go to the course Blackboard site for instructions on what to do with your essay.