Spring 1-15-2011

ENG 4300-4390-003-097: Belief in Fiction and Nonfiction

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Belief is such an integral part of our lives. It shapes who we are and influences what we do as well as how we perceive and respond to others. We will use the term belief in the broadest sense to cover all dimensions of the term—personal, religious, social and political. Exploring how belief is represented in a variety of texts can help us understand the multidimensional nature of belief and its impact on our lives.

This class will be conducted as a seminar. Class members will take an active part in leading class discussion and giving oral presentations. I look forward to exchanging ideas with you and learning from you.

Texts:
- Dickens, Charles. Hard Times (1854)—Norton 2nd ed
- Silko, Leslie Marmon. Ceremony (1977)
- Tolstoy, Leo. Confession (1884)
- A collection of short stories (a packet on loan to you)
- Handouts to be distributed in class

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Regular attendance and active participation are required. According to the 2010-2011 online catalog,

Students are expected to attend class meetings as scheduled. When an absence does occur, the student is responsible for the material covered during the absence (emphasis added). When possible, the student should notify the instructor in advance of an anticipated absence.

Instructors will grant make-up privileges (when make-up is possible) to students for properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, or participation in an official University activity; and such absences will not militate against students in classes in which attendance is used directly in determining final grades (emphasis added). It is the student's responsibility to initiate plans for make-up work and to complete it promptly (emphasis added). If in the instructor's judgment the duration or number of absences renders make-up unfeasible, the instructor may contact the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Department Chairperson to determine an appropriate action.

In addition, the 2010-2011 online catalog includes the following sentences regarding absences: "If a student establishes a record or pattern of absences of concern to the instructor, the instructor may ask of
the Vice President for Student Affairs that inquiries concerning the absences be made. The Vice President for Student Affairs also serves as the University contact person when catastrophic events result in extended student absences.

Unless you have received my consent prior to your absence and you are able to provide me with documented evidence showing that your absence is legitimate and excusable, you are not allowed to make up tests, graded in-class exercises and/or quizzes.

Every excused absence (i.e., an official university activity, emergency or medical illness) must be supported by written evidence from a proper authority, which you will present to me upon your return to class.

If you are to take part in an official university activity, you must also give me in advance a letter explaining the purpose and date of your anticipated absence.

If you have an emergency or if you are sick, you or someone you know must e-mail me at dsuksang@eiu.edu or call me at home (348-0479) or at work (581-6986) BEFORE class begins on the day of your absence. If you cannot reach me, you can leave a message on my voice mail (at work) BEFORE class begins on the day of your absence. I will check my e-mail and voice mail before going to class. You must also show me documented evidence supporting your absence upon your return.

A phone notification or an in-class personal notification is appreciated, but it is not considered an automatically legitimate excuse. Remember it is **your responsibility** to contact either your classmate(s) or me to find out what you have missed and/or if there have been any changes made on the original syllabus during your absence.

**If you have more than 4 unexcused absences, 5 points per unexcused absence will be deducted from your total score at the end of the semester before I convert it to a percentage.** After your second unexcused absence, you must see me to discuss your performance in the class.

**Don't forget to sign your name on the attendance sheet that I will pass around at the beginning of each class period.**

It is very important that you participate actively and seriously in all class activities. Remember that nobody knows everything and that everybody has something valuable to offer. We can have fun learning from each other and growing together as a group.

*Computer/Printer Problems: If your printer does not work, you must e-mail your assignment to me before class, not after class. If your computer does not work, you can turn in a handwritten copy of the assignment that you want to submit. You cannot use a broken computer or printer as an excuse for not turning in your assignments on time.
You must save all of your quizzes, reading responses, papers (including drafts), midterm, and/or in-class exercises.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. You are required to **read all assigned selections before each class** and to participate in all class activities.

2. **Reading Responses to the short stories and nonfiction selections** (25X4=100points): This requirement is designed to help you think analytically and critically about your reading assignments before class discussion. **You are required to write 4 substantial responses to reading assignments as indicated on the syllabus.** You may write two (2) extra responses to replace the ones that receive low grades. Do not wait until the last minute to write the required two responses. You will not be allowed to respond to other selections after the last response indicated on the syllabus. It is your responsibility to get your work done on time.

   Each response must be **at least 750 words long (3 typed, double-spaced pages, 250 words per page). It can definitely be longer.** This minimum length requirement is to help you learn how to develop your thoughts/ideas. Responses that are shorter than the minimum length requirement will not receive many points. **You will turn in your response at the beginning of each class period before class discussion on the day when the response is due.** For example, if you choose to respond to the reading selections assigned for Monday, you must be ready to turn in your response at the beginning of that Monday class. You are to respond to all the reading selections assigned for each day unless I indicate otherwise. **If you respond to only one of the two assigned selections, you can get only up to half of the total score (12 ½ points).** Please do not place your response in my mailbox or slide it under my office door. Your response may disappear before I get to see it. Also, you may put it in the wrong mailbox. I will not be responsible for responses placed in my mailbox. You should always give your work to me personally. You can submit your work to me personally earlier than the due date. I will accept late responses only if your absences are caused by “illness, emergency, or participation in an official University activity”; however, you must present documented evidence upon turning in your responses.

   **Evaluation:** Each response is worth 25 points. Your grade is based on the quantity and quality of your response. If your response meets the **minimum length requirement (750 words)** but is generalized or unengaged, you will receive approximately 15-17.5 points (60-70%). If your response is below 750 words, you will get less than 60 %. You will receive more than 70% if your response not only meets or exceeds the required length but also shows that you have thought carefully about the reading assignment and have responded to it energetically, specifically, imaginatively, critically, and independently. If you simply summarize the plot when responding to a short story, you will not get more than 15 points (60%).

   I am more interested in reading your ideas/speculations and critical/analytically comments that are supported by textual details. Questions at the end of each short story or essay can help guide your critical/analytical response.

3. **Reading quizzes:** There will be at least 7 reading quizzes, which **will not be announced ahead of time (70 points). They will be given before class discussion.** I may give you more than 7 quizzes to allow you to drop the quizzes that receive low grades. **I will give you up to 20 minutes to work on a quiz. If you arrive late, you will have less than 20 minutes to complete the quiz.** If you come to class after the quiz has been given, you are not allowed to make up that quiz. These reading quizzes are intended to help you keep up with the reading assignments. If your absence is an unexcused absence, you will not be allowed to make up a quiz. Oversleeping is not a legitimate excuse. You will be allowed to make up a quiz if you have documented evidence showing that your absence is legitimate and excusable.
4. An oral presentation (25 points—15 points for a presentation and 10 points for a handout).
You will present information on one of the terms that you have signed up for. After you have chosen a term, you will research all aspects of the term and prepare a well-written handout for the class (at least 1 single-spaced page). You will have 10-12 minutes to deliver your oral report. In addition to the factual information you are presenting, you are required to offer your observations about what you have learned about the term. Your handout for the class must include a list of the sources that you have consulted. You must use at least 3 creditable sources. Don’t forget to put words that are not your own inside quotation marks and document them properly. You can e-mail your handout to me before or after your presentation so that I can make copies for the class. The information presented by each student will be on the final exam. If you are absent on the day of your presentation because of illness, you need to let me know so that I can reschedule your presentation.

*You are not allowed to use information from Wikipedia.com, but you can consult other reputable encyclopedias, texts, and websites. Your sources must be reliable and creditable.

5. Class discussion: As a group you are responsible for leading class discussion on a novel (55 points). You will not receive many points for this activity if you are obviously not well prepared. You must give me your list of thoughtful questions that can initiate critical responses, not the simple yes-no responses, before class discussion. If you do not turn in a list of questions before each class discussion, 5 points per each class discussion will deducted from the 55 points allocated for this assignment. You are not to summarize the text for the class. You have to assume that your classmates have read the text.

The group as a whole is fully responsible for leading class discussion on a novel. Therefore, please make sure that all your group members are conscientious about their assigned responsibility. All the members must be ready to step in and lead class discussion if the member with an assigned task is absent. You should stay in touch with each other throughout the discussion period.

6. There will be a final exam (100 points).

7. You will write 2 analytical papers (100x2=200 points). Each paper is at least 1,250 words long (5 double-spaced, typed pages--250 words per page). It can be longer. There will be three mandatory conferences (1. to discuss your proposal; 2. to discuss your first draft; and 3. to get your graded paper back). Your papers will be based on the primary texts listed on the syllabus. You are not to use secondary sources. If you must use secondary sources, you must turn in a copy of each of your sources along with your paper. Both of your paper will address the theme of belief.

Paper#1: This paper is based on the short stories on the syllabus. You are required to use at least two stories. Here are some possibilities:
1. You can compare and/or contrast two stories by focusing on how the theme of belief is represented.
2. You can look at more than 2 stories and discuss the types of belief represented in the stories.
3. You can compare and/or contrast two characters with emphasis on their values/beliefs.

Paper#2: This paper is based on the novels on the syllabus. You can choose to work on one novel or two novels.
You are required to follow the steps below for each paper:

1. Write a proposal for your paper that is at least 250 words long (typed and double-spaced). In your proposal you will talk about what your topic is, why you choose this topic, and what points you plan to discuss in your essay. I can give you some suggestions when we discuss your proposal in conference.

2. Write your first draft at home. Your first draft must be complete even though it is not polished. There must be at least 4 points of discussion/comparison.

3. Meet with me in conference to discuss your first draft.

4. Revise your first draft at home.

5. Submit the following items in the order listed below before or on the due date:
   a. a cover sheet, which includes your name, the course number, the course section, the instructor's name, the due date of the assignment, and the title of your essay
   b. your proposal
   c. your first draft
   d. your other drafts (if any)
   e. your "final" copy **Please type the word "FINAL" on the first page of your "final" copy and number each page of the text of the essay, except the first page. The cover sheet is not to be numbered.

PAPERS: All major papers must be typed and double-spaced. They will be graded in accordance with the "Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU's English Department," which will be given to you.
   To prevent any mishaps, you should save copies of your papers on a flash drive. Save all notes and drafts.

LATE PAPERS: Each paper must be turned in on time unless you have received my permission to turn it in later than the due date. I will accept late papers also in cases of severe illness, official university activity and other urgent reasons upon presentation of a valid excuse issued by a proper authority.

REVISION: You are allowed to revise Paper #1 only because there is not enough time for you to revise Paper#2. You must turn in the original with your revision before the due date or on the due date in class. I will not accept your revision without the original, and I will not accept late submissions. You will receive up to 10 additional points on your revised version.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is a serious academic offense and will not be tolerated. If I discover plagiarism in any of your reading responses or formal papers, you will receive an F for the course. I will also report such an act to the Judicial Affairs Office. Therefore, please don't do it!
Since you are all experienced writers, I assume that you know how to paraphrase, quote and cite primary texts and secondary sources. I am also ready to help you whenever you have any questions about how to deal with your sources. It is perfectly legitimate for you to use other people's words, phrases or ideas, but you MUST acknowledge your sources by putting quotation marks around words or phrases that belong to another author and properly documenting them. Your quotes, summaries and paraphrases must also be properly introduced and documented.

***The Department's statement on plagiarism: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) --has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others [encompasses] all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources."

GRADING POLICY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unannounced quizzes</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Papers (100 X 2)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class discussion requirement</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation on a belief system</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading responses (25X4)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>550</td>
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</tbody>
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Your final grade is based on the number of points you have accumulated. Here is the grading scale for this course:

- A 90-100%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 60-69%
- F Below 60%

*I expect you to ask me questions if my instructions are not clear. Otherwise, I will assume that you understand what I ask you to do and will expect that you do it properly and well. If you choose to remain in this class, I assume that you accept my policies and course requirements.

*I am here to help you succeed in your academic pursuit. Please feel free to talk to me anytime. I believe in openness; feel free to discuss any problems with me so that we can solve them together. Please remember that I am ready to help and talk with you. Come by my office (3335 / 314 I CH) during the office hours, or make an appointment with me after class, or call me to set up a time that is convenient for you.

*If you have documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

You can also go to the Writing Center to get additional help.

I look forward to getting to know you, working with you, and learning from you. I hope we have a good semester together.
Eng 4300:003/097 Dr. Suksang Spring 2011

Syllabus: This syllabus may need to be adjusted at times. If you are unable to attend class, make sure you find out if there have been any changes made on the syllabus.

*You are to read all reading selections at home before each class meeting.*

Week #1

M Jan 10  Introduction

**Assignment:** I'd like you to write a letter to me in which you respond to the following questions: What does it mean to believe in something? Do you think that belief is the same as faith? Is belief the same as opinion and truth? I would like you to include at least 5 of your beliefs in your letter and tell me what has made you hold those beliefs. You can include more than 5 beliefs, however.

**Please give your letter to me on Wednesday, 12 January.**

W Jan 12  Discuss the concept of belief.  *Sign up for an oral presentation.*

F Jan 14  Read and discuss Kofi Annan's Nobel lecture, “The Earth Charter” and “Why I Volunteer” (nonfiction--handouts)—**Response#1 (Respond to all selections.)*

Week#2

M Jan 17  **Dr. King’s birthday—No class**

W Jan 19  Oral presentations (10-12 minutes each)

F Jan 21  Oral presentations

Week#3

M Jan 24  Oral presentations

W Jan 26  Read and discuss Robert Coles’s “I Listen to My Parents and I Wonder What They Believe” and a chapter from John Stuart Mill’s *Autobiography*: Chapter II “Moral Influences in Early Youth. My Father’s Character and Opinions” (nonfiction—handouts)—**Response #2 (Respond to all selections.)*

W Jan 28  Read and discuss an excerpt from Charles Darwin’s *Autobiography* “Religious Belief” (nonfiction—handout) and Benjamin R. Barber’s “America’s Knowledge Deficit” (nonfiction—handout)—**Response #3 (Respond to all selections.)*

Week#4

M Jan 31  Read and discuss E.M. Foster’s “What I Believe’ and Mark Twain’s “Corn-pone Opinions” (nonfiction—handouts)—**Response #4 (Respond to all selections.)*

W Feb 2  Read and discuss Leo Tolstoy’s *Confession* (Chapters I-VII--13-55).—**Response #5*

F Feb 4  Read and discuss Leo Tolstoy’s *Confession* (ChaptersVIII-XVI—55-93).—**Response #6*

Week#5

The short stories that are numbered are in the packet.

M Feb 7  Read and discuss Andrew Lam’s “Grandma’s Tales” (#1) and Peter Ho Davies’s “Next Life” (#3).—**Response #7 (Respond to both stories.)*

W Feb 9  Read and discuss Hazel Campbell’s “Easter Sunday Morning” (#11) and Maxine Clair’s “The Creation” (#6).—**Response #8 (Respond to both stories.)*

F Feb 11  **Lincoln’s birthday—No class**
Week#6
M Feb 14 Read and discuss Faye Moskowitz’s “Jewish Christmas” (#4) and Philip Roth’s “The Conversion of the Jews” (#15). -- Response #9 (Respond to both stories.)
W Feb 16 Read and discuss Rukhsana Ahmed’s “The Spell and the Ever-Changing Moon” (#10) and Zabun-Nissa Hamidullah’s “No Music Before Mosque” (#12). -- Response #10 (Respond to both stories.)
F Feb 18 Read and discuss Fay Weldon’s “Chew You Up and Spit You Out” (#8) and Ken Lipenga’s “Waiting for a Turn” (#9). -- Response #11 (Respond to both stories.)

Week#7
**Conferences on your proposal on Paper #1 during my office hours this week
M Feb 21 Read and discuss Grace Ogot’s “The Rain Came” (#13) and Leslie Marmon Silko’s “The Man to Send Rain Clouds” (#16). -- Response #12 (Respond to both stories.)
W Feb 23 Read and discuss Ba’bila Mutia’s “The Miracle” (#14) and Stuart Dybek’s “Thread” (#5). -- Response #13 (Respond to both stories.)
F Feb 25 Read and discuss Hard Times (Book the First, Chapters 1-12—7-65)

Week#8
**Conferences on the first draft of Paper#1 during my office hours this week
M Feb 28 Read and discuss Hard Times (Book the First, Chapters 13-16—65-84 and Book the Second, Chapters 1-6—85-124).
W Mar 2 Read and discuss Hard Times (Book the Second, Chapters 7-12—125-163 and Book the Third, Chapters 1-4—163-188).
F Mar 4 Read and discuss Hard Times (Book the Third, Chapters 5-9—188-219).

Week#9
M Mar 7 Read and discuss Things Fall Apart, Chapters 1-8 (3-52).
W Mar 9 Read and discuss Things Fall Apart, Chapters 9-15 (53-100).
F Mar 11 Read and discuss Things Fall Apart, Chapters 16-25 (101-148) and discuss the novel as a whole.

Paper#1 Due: Turn in Paper#1 on Friday, 11 March, in class. You can also turn it in earlier on Monday, 7 March, or Wednesday, 9 March.

Week#10 Spring Break 14-18 March

Week#11
Conferences to get Paper#1 back during my office hours this week
M Mar 21 Read and discuss A Lesson Before Dying, Chapters 1-9 (1-74).
W Mar 23 Read and discuss A Lesson Before Dying, Chapters 10-19 (75-151).
F Mar 25 Read and discuss A Lesson Before Dying, Chapters 20-28 (152-225).

Week#12
M Mar 28 Read and discuss A Lesson Before Dying, Chapters 29-31 (226-256) and discuss the novel as a whole.
W Mar 30 Read and discuss When Rain Clouds Gather (Chapters 1-5—7-74).
F Apr 1 Read and discuss When Rain Clouds Gather (Chapters 6-9—75-144).

Revision of Paper#1 due: Turn in your revision of Paper#1 on Friday, 1 April, in class. You can also turn it in earlier than the due date.
Paper#2 Due: Turn in Paper#2 on Friday, 22 April, in class. You can also turn it in earlier on Monday, 18 April, or Wednesday, 20 April.

Week#16
M Apr 25    Watch Whale Rider.
W Apr 27    Watch Whale Rider.
F Apr 29    Discuss Whale Rider.

**If you want to get your paper done ahead of time, you can set up a conference with me to discuss your proposal or to go over your first draft before the specified schedule for each step.

Final Exam: Wednesday, 4 May: 12:30-2:30 p.m.