English 1B: On Faith and Faithlessness
San José State University, Spring 2014

Instructor: Daniel Hendel De La O
Course: Composition 2 (GE C3; 3 Units)
Course Information: Section 80 (26012)
Meetings: Mo/We 6:00 – 8:45 PM, BBC 125
Office: Faculty Offices 111
Office Hours: Tu/Th 10:30 – 11:30 AM or by appointment
Phone: 408.924.5019
Email: dhdelao@gmail.com
Web: eauzone.blogspot.com

It is only when men begin to worship that they begin to grow.
—President Calvin Coolidge

I don't believe in God, but I'm very interested in her.
—Arthur C. Clarke

Course Theme
This semester’s 1B course will examine the human phenomena of spirituality. We will examine various facets of spirituality and faith, including:

- What drives humans to believe in something larger than ourselves?
- How do spirituality and faith both simultaneously divide and unite us?
- What is the difference between being spiritual and being religious?
- Can one be moral without being religious?
- What happens when spiritual and secular interests intersect in society?
- How can religion and science coexist?
- Are all religions viewed equally?
- How are those who believe (and those who don’t) portrayed in the media?
- What place, if any, should spirituality have in our politics?
- How does our society regard non-believers?
- Does the existence of God need to be proven?

This semester, we will read a diverse assemblage of texts exploring these issues and others. An open mind, and a willingness to express your thoughts, will serve you well in this venture.

Required Materials
All books are available in an electronic edition (e.g. Kindle, Nook), though pagination may vary from print editions.

Books:
- Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality by Donald Miller (ISBN: 0785263705)
Audio:
- *Letting Go of God* by Julia Sweeney (ASIN: B000MM107I)*

Writing guide:

*Available as a compact disc; also available as a digital download from iTunes and Audible.com

**Course Description**

English 1B is the second course in SJSU’s two-semester lower-division composition sequence. Beyond providing repeated practice in planning and executing essays, and broadening and deepening students’ understanding of the genres, audiences, and purposes of college writing, English 1B differs from English 1A in its emphasis on persuasive and critical writing (with less attention paid to the personal essay), its requirement for fewer but longer essays, and its introduction to writing informed by research. Students will develop sophistication in writing analytical, argumentative, and critical essays; a mature writing style appropriate to university discourse; reading abilities that will provide an adequate foundation for upper-division work; proficiency in basic library research skills and in writing papers informed by research; and mastery of the mechanics of writing.

**Prerequisite:**
Passage of Written Communication 1A (C or better) or approved equivalent.

**Course Goals**

Building on the college-level proficiencies required in English 1A, students shall achieve the ability to write complete essays that demonstrate advanced proficiency in all of the following:
- Clear and effective communication of meaning
- An identifiable focus (argumentative essays will state their thesis clearly and will show an awareness, implied or stated, of some opposing point of view)
- An appropriate voice that demonstrates an awareness of audience and purpose
- Careful attention to review and revision
- Effective and correct use of supporting materials, including independent research (e.g., quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and citing sources)
- Effective analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and synthesis of ideas encountered in multiple readings
- Effective organization and development of ideas at paragraph and essay levels
- Appropriate and effective sentence structure and diction
- Command of conventional mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling, reference, agreement)

**Student Learning Objectives**

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are as follows:
- **SLO 1:** Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to refine the competencies established in Written Communication 1A.
- **SLO 2:** Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to use (locate, analyze, and evaluate) supporting materials, including independent library research, and identify key concepts and terms that describe the information needed.
- SLO 3: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to select efficient and effective approaches for accessing information utilizing an appropriate investigative method or information retrieval system.
- SLO 4: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to synthesize ideas encountered in multiple readings.
- SLO 5: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to incorporate principles of design and communication to construct effective arguments.
- SLO 6: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to identify and discuss issues related to censorship and freedom of speech.

SJSU Academic Policies

You are responsible for reading SJSU’s academic policies which are available online @www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policyforsyllabi.html.

Estimation of Per-Unit Student Workload

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Recording Policies

Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.

Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.

The Everyday Writer and LearningCurve

The new fifth edition of Andrea A. Lunsford’s The Everyday Writer with Exercises contains an access code for LearningCurve (http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/beta/everydaywriter5e/learningcurve/92533) an online adaptive quizzing program. LearningCurve quickly deciphers what you already know and helps you practice what you don't yet understand. It also provides you immediate feedback after each question, as well as cross references to additional instruction in The Everyday Writer.

Purchasing options:
- Print editions may be purchased at the Spartan Bookstore (ISBN: 9781457600043) or from Bedford/St. Martin’s online (http://bedfordstmartins.com)
- To purchase an electronic edition (which includes access to LearningCurve), visit the Spartan Bookstore (ISBN: 9781457633423) or Bedford/St. Martin’s online (http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/everydaywriter5e/)
If you own a used copy of *The Everyday Writer*, a new LearningCurve access code must be purchased from either the Spartan Bookstore (ISBN: 9781457643637) or Bedford/St. Martin’s online (http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/everydaywriter/lc).

If you own an edition older than the 5th, you will need to purchase a new LearningCurve access code from either the Spartan Bookstore (ISBN: 9781457643637) or Bedford/St. Martin’s (http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/everydaywriter/lc).

If you have any questions or problems logging in, please contact Bedford/St. Martin’s Technical Support. You may reach a representative via:

- Phone: 1.800.936.6899—for fastest service
- Email: BFW.TechnicalSupport@macmillan.com
- Online: http://www.macmillanhighered.com/techsupport

**SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website @ http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter.

**Class Protocols**

- In an effort to make you a better editor of your own work, I will sometimes make sentence-level corrections to only one page or paragraph of your essay. You should assume that the corrections I’ve made are applicable to your entire essay.
- All writing assignments are due on the dates indicated on EauZone, which contains the most up-to-date schedule and information.
- In order to assist you in keeping track of your grade, I have provided you with a blank grading log. It can be found inside the chart under the “Course Work” section of this syllabus.
- I will not accept any assignments that are unstapled.
- Late assignments must be emailed to me no later than the following class after the due date. However, they will be lowered one letter grade—I will not accept an assignment beyond this point.
- Assignments submitted via email, will be graded as any other. However, no marked-up hard copy will be returned to you.
- Without prior notification, missed in-class essays and presentations cannot be made up. If you must miss your presentation date, make prior arrangements with a classmate to switch days.
- You will automatically be docked 5 points off your final draft grade for coming to class on a writers workshop day without an essay.
- There is a participation component to your grade. Though only 10 points, it could mean the difference between letter grades. To receive all or most of these points, it is important that you actively engage in the classroom experience (e.g. frequently asking questions and/or commenting). Simply attending class is not sufficient to garner full points, as they are based on active participation, not attendance.
- *If* extra-credit is offered, it will only be once, so please stay up-to-date on your assignments.
- The use of laptops during class is restricted to note taking only—absolutely no social media during class time.
- I consider it highly disrespectful to sleep in class. If you fall asleep in class, you will be awoken and asked to leave.
- If you come to class after the first 15 minutes, please wait for an appropriate moment to enter so as not to disturb the class. Likewise, please do not pack up before our class time is over—I’ll be sure to get you out of class on time.
- I am always happy to correspond via email. However, please:
  - Indicate your section number in the subject line or somewhere in the body. This helps me reply to your email more quickly.
  - Email me individually rather than as a reply to a group message because I can easily miss these responses.
  - Note that due to the high volume of email I receive daily, it may take me a day (or two) to respond.
  - Do not message me to ask what happened in class on the day you were absent. As soon possible, obtain the email addresses of at least two other members of the class. They should be able to fill you in on any relevant information.
  - Do not contact me if you miss class unless it affects an in-class essay or presentation.

MLA Style
As is standard in American English classes, all typed work must be submitted in MLA Style. Samples are located in both The Everyday Writer and online at EauZone. Again, unstapled work will never be accepted. Please follow this sample heading for all typed work:

Name
1B: Section number
Assignment
Date

Editing Marks Guide
Here is a guide to some of the editing symbols (some standard, some my own) you’ll be seeing on your papers this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>^</td>
<td>Insert</td>
<td>AWK</td>
<td>Awkward phrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑</td>
<td>Fix spacing issue—usually when text is not properly double-spaced</td>
<td>ITL</td>
<td>Either add or remove italics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
<td>Indent 1x</td>
<td>FRAG</td>
<td>Fragment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ →</td>
<td>Indent 2x</td>
<td>HEAD</td>
<td>Issue with page header</td>
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<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Good point</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Comma splice</td>
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<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Meaning unclear</td>
<td>RO</td>
<td>Run-on sentence</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Add space</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**</td>
<td>Add quotation marks</td>
<td>SV</td>
<td>Subject-verb agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¶</td>
<td>Start new paragraph</td>
<td>TC</td>
<td>Title case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⊔</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>TNR</td>
<td>Change font to Times New Roman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2x</td>
<td>Double-space</td>
<td>WC</td>
<td>Word choice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes on Writing about Religion
Traditionally, Western writers have followed specific rules when writing about religion. Here are some general rules to take note of when writing about religious issues:

- Capitalize “god” when used as a proper noun (e.g. “By his mid-twenties, Zach had fully devoted himself to God.”)
- Do not capitalize “god” or “gods” when writing in general terms: “Ares was the Greeks’ god of war.”
- The names of deities or major spiritual figures are always capitalized (e.g. Allah, Jesus Christ, Isis, Buddha).
- Traditionally, pronouns referencing Christianity’s God are capitalized as a sign of respect (e.g. “God, in His divine wisdom, ordered Moses to ...”). However, MLA does not follow this. Additionally, non-religious writers may object to this practice. For the purposes of this course, adherence to this particular tradition is optional.
- Capitalize the name of Christianity’s most sacred text, the Bible—but it should not be italicized.
- Other sacred religious texts are also always capitalized (e.g. the Torah, the Vedas), but not italicized.
- When “biblical” is used as an adjective (e.g. “in biblical times”), it is written with a lowercase b, except when it is used as the first word in a sentence (e.g. “Biblical cities typically ...”).
- Islam’s most sacred text is properly spelled as the “Qu’ran,” but “Koran” and “Quran” are also acceptable.
- Customarily, historical dates in the West were based upon a system in which Jesus’ year of birth was marked as Year One; anything before that was BC (Before Christ) and anything after that was AD (Anno Domini). Having adopted a more multicultural view of history, contemporary writers now use BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era). Thus, Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 BCE, while Columbus reached the New World in CE 1492. Use these contemporary designations for the purposes of this class.

EauZone

I maintain the EauZone (eauzone.blogspot.com) as a centralized location for assignments, reminders, documents, important dates, links, and general class information. It also contains an easy-to-reference archive of the course work. In addition, this website will be the location of the course’s eReader (eR). These Web articles are required to complete some assignments.

On the homepage, click on “English 1B: On Faith and Faithlessness” under “Spring 2014 Courses” to be routed to our page. Feel free to use the “Comments” function in each posting; it is often a helpful way to communicate with classmates.

Grading Criteria

Essays will be graded by the following criteria:

- An “A” essay is organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment, written in a unique and compelling voice. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively with a solid command of grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- A “B” essay demonstrates competence in the same categories as an “A” essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas. It will respond to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical or usage errors.
- A “C” essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it will show weaknesses in fundamentals, such as development. It may show significant weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.
• A “D” essay will neglect to meet all the requirements of the assignment or may be superficial in its treatment of the topic. It may lack development or fail to stay on topic. It may contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that interfere with reader comprehension.
• An “F” essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

Course Work

Class sessions will employ a combination of lectures, group discussions, presentations, and writing workshops that will cover a range of activities, including analyzing, interpreting, outlining, revising, and editing.

All typed essays are approximately three full pages (750 words) and must be in MLA Style. Also, unless otherwise noted, all typed essays must always include a works cited page. Your semester’s coursework is comprised of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>SLO</th>
<th>Word Count*</th>
<th>Writers Workshop</th>
<th>In-class Essay</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Grade Log</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic</td>
<td>This in-class essay will be my first opportunity to evaluate your writing.</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Answer Responses</td>
<td>In-class, you will write a series of short answer responses to a variety of religious-themed stories.</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>This essay asks you to synthesize a variety of texts to create a snapshot of contemporary America’s views on atheism.</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>750</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>You will write a persuasive essay about the current debate over evolution vs. creationism.</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>750</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>Close Read</td>
<td>For this essay you will conduct a close reading a popular religious-themed meme.</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Item</td>
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<td>Writers Workshop</td>
<td>In-class Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Comparative Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Here, you will compare and contrast Julia Sweeney’s loss of faith in <em>Letting Go of God</em> with Donald Miller’s revived faith in <em>Blue Like Jazz</em>.</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>750</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td><strong>Annotated Works Cited</strong></td>
<td>For this assignment, you will organize and evaluate the sources for your research paper.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td><strong>Research Paper</strong></td>
<td>Your 10-page research paper will focus on the representation of spirituality in a major television show.</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<td><strong>Process Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Your 4-page final assignment asks you to reflect on your growth as a writer and thinker over the course of English 1B.</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td><strong>Multimedia Presentation</strong></td>
<td>You and two classmates will create a 10-minute multimedia presentation based upon a spirituality-related topic.</td>
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<td>Item</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>SLO</td>
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<td>Writers Workshop</td>
<td>In-class Essay</td>
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<td>Reflections</td>
<td>You will write 6 two-page reflections based upon a variety of topics related to contemporary spirituality.</td>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<td>60 [6x10]</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>Note that points are garnered by active participation in class, not attendance.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>Total word count: 10,100</td>
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<td>Total points: 300 /300</td>
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</table>

*One typed page in MLA Style is approximately 250 words; one handwritten page is approximately 200 words.

**You must provide your own laptop; Macs will require an Apple-specific adaptor to connect to the university’s projection system.

Final grade calculations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>300 - 290</th>
<th>268 - 260</th>
<th>238 - 230</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>300 - 290</td>
<td>268 - 260</td>
<td>238 - 230</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>289 - 281</td>
<td>259 - 251</td>
<td>229 - 221*</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>280 - 269</td>
<td>250 - 239</td>
<td>No Pass</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*At least 221 points must be earned to receive course credit

**Course Schedule**

Note that this schedule is subject to change. Always consult EauZone for the most up-to-date information and schedule. Consider any hard copy of this syllabus only a rough guide and out-of-date.

All assignments, including in-class essays, are due or take place on Wednesdays.

Key:
eR (eReader)
DB (Dropbox)
BLUE (Blue Like Jazz)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class/Readings/Lecture</th>
<th>Due/Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Week 01: Mo 27</td>
<td>Class: Syllabus review; Introductions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Week 02: Mo 03</td>
<td>Class: Lectures—“Engaging Writing as a Process 2.0” “Next Generation Learning Spaces: A Guide”</td>
<td>REFLECTION 01</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Class: DIAGNOSTIC; Watch—“God's Close-Up” from *This American Life* (2007); Multimedia presentation assignments  
Lecture—“Building a Better Multimedia Presentation” |  |
| | Week 04: Mo 17 | Readings:  
Class: SHORT ANSWER RESPONSES; Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Guest speaker (TBA); Lecture—“Essay Outlines 101” | REFLECTION 02 |
Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Watch—“Lisa the Skeptic” from *The Simpsons* (FOX); Lecture—“Twelve Essential Grammar Rules to Know” | SYNTHESES ESSAY |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Week 06: Mo 03</th>
<th>Week 07: Mo 10</th>
<th>Week 08: Mo 17</th>
<th>Week 09: Mo 24</th>
<th>Week 10: Mo 31</th>
<th>Week 11: Mo 07</th>
<th>Week 12: Mo 14</th>
<th>Week 13: Mo 21</th>
<th>Week 14: Mo 28</th>
<th>Week 15: Mo 05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Library research session (TBA); Lecture—“On Wordiness”</td>
<td>Class: Reading discussion; Multimedia presentations; Guest speaker (TBA); Lecture—“Spirituality on Small Screen”</td>
<td>Class: CLOSE READ; Writers workshop; Multimedia presentations</td>
<td>Due: REFLECTION 03</td>
<td>Due: REFLECTION 04</td>
<td>Due: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS; REFLECTION 05</td>
<td>Due: REFLECTION 06</td>
<td>Due: RESEARCH PAPER (UP TO PAGE 4; BRING TWO COPIES)</td>
<td>Due: RESEARCH PAPER (UP TO PAGE 8; BRING ONE COPY)</td>
<td>Due: RESEARCH PAPER (FINAL DRAFT)</td>
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<td>Week 16: Mo 12</td>
<td>Class: End-of-class review</td>
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<td>Due: PROCESS ANALYSIS</td>
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