

SOUTHWESTERN

BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

What you believe to be true will control you whether it's true or not.
—Jeremy LaBorde

Course Title: PHILO 2483; Intelligent Design or Unintelligent Evolution
Class Dates, Time, and Term: Monday afternoon, Fall 2009
Room: TBA
Professor: William A. Dembski

COURSE DESCRIPTION This course provides an overview of the broad cultural, intellectual, and scientific movement known as intelligent design as well as of its chief antagonist, the view that cosmological and biological origins are best explained as the result of an accidental evolutionary process. Three hours.

COURSE GOALS The goal of this course is to help students understand how evolutionary theory and intelligent design fit within a Christian worldview.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES In this course the student will:

- Come to understand the main scientific and theological issues raised by the debate between evolution and design.
- Be able to summarize the main scientific challenges that the theory of intelligent design raises against the theory of Darwinian evolution.
- Learn to write critical reviews appropriate to the debate between evolution and design.

COURSE TEXTS

Required

- [DO'L] Denyse O'Leary, *By Design or by Chance? The Growing Controversy on the Origins of Life in the Universe* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2004).
- [D&W] William A. Dembski and Jonathan Wells, *The Design of Life: Discovering Signs of Intelligence in Biological Systems* (Dallas: Foundation for Thought and Ethics, 2008).
- [WmD] William A. Dembski, *The End of Christianity: Finding a Good God in an Evil World* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2009).
- [KWG] Karl W. Giberson, *Saving Darwin: How to Be a Christian and Believe in Evolution* (New York: HarperOne, 2008).
- [SCM] Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design* (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

Recommended

- Phillip E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1993).
- Michael Behe, *Darwin's Black Box* (New York: Free Press, 1996).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- (1) Daily précis statements — 20 percent positive.
- (2) Midterm exam — 20 percent positive.
- (3) Final exam — 30 percent positive.
- (4) 2,000- to 2,500-word critical review of FC — 20 percent positive. Due last class meeting.
- (5) At least 10 posts defending aspects of the Christian worldview totaling at least 3,000 words on “hostile” websites — 10 percent positive.
- (6) Active class participation — up to 5 percent negative.
- (7) Pop quizzes – up to 5 percent negative.
- (8) Single-page one-sided executive summary of YOU (with clearly recognizable picture of yourself) — up to 5 percent negative if not handed in or carelessly done. Due second class meeting in hardcopy form as well as emailed to me.

GRADES

Grades will be determined by the following scale: 100-98 (A+); 97-93 = A; 92-90 (A-); 89-88 (B+); 87-83 (B); 82-80 (B-); 79-78 (C+); 77-73 (C); 72-70 (C-); 69-68 (D+); 67-63 (D); 62-60 (D-); Below 60 = F.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of another's work as one's own. When the professor concludes that a student has plagiarized an assignment, the student will receive the grade of zero for the assignment, and the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will be notified about the incident. The same actions apply to other acts of academic dishonesty such as cheating on examinations (see Ethical Conduct section in SWBTS catalog).

SPECIAL NEEDS

Individuals with documented impairments who may need special circumstances for exams, classroom participation, or assignments should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester in order for special arrangements to be considered.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- (1) DO'L
- (2) DO'L
- (3) D&W
- (4) D&W
- (5) D&W
- (6) D&W
- (7) WmD
- (8) WmD
- (9) KWG
- (10) KWG

- (11) SCM
- (12) SCM
- (13) SCM
- (14) SCM

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Mario Beauregard and Denyse O’Leary, *The Spiritual Brain* (New York: HarperOne, 2007).
- Michael Behe, *The Edge of Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 2007).
- William A. Dembski, ed., *Uncommon Dissent: Intellectuals Who Find Darwinism Unconvincing* (Wilmington, Del.: ISI Books, 2004).
- Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (Bethesda, Maryland: Adler & Adler, 1985).
- Antony Flew with Roy Abraham Varghese, *There Is a God: How the World’s Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind* (New York: HarperOne, 2007).
- Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay W. Richards, *The Privileged Planet* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2004).
- Phillip E. Johnson, *Reason in the Balance: The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law, and Education* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1995).
- Robert C. Newman and John L. Wiester, *What’s Darwin Got to Do with It?* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2000).
- Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2004).
- Jonathan Wells, *Icons of Evolution* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2000).
- Benjamin Wiker, *Moral Darwinism* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2002).
- Thomas Woodward, *Doubts about Darwin: A History of Intelligent Design* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2003).