

Spring 2000

Trinity Graduate School and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Trinity International University

COURSE TITLE: Intelligent Design -- The New Player in the Creation-Evolution Controversy

DATES: Jan. 28, 29; Feb. 25, 26; March 31, April 1

INSTRUCTOR: William A. Dembski, Ph.D.

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COURSE PURPOSE:

In the last decade or so, an alternative to scientific creationism has emerged that challenges Darwinian evolution and its naturalistic legacy. Known increasingly as **intelligent design** or **design theory**, this alternative does not treat the biblical book of Genesis as a scientific text, but instead argues on general scientific and philosophical grounds that Darwinian evolution is a failed scientific research program. Because a vast naturalistic superstructure has been built on Darwinism, its impending collapse at the hands of intelligent design promises to be one of the great upcoming cultural convulsions (witness the recent furor in Kansas). This course will examine intelligent design as a cultural and intellectual movement and show how Christian theology and apologetics stand to benefit from it.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) Diligent reading of the assigned texts as assessed through class participation and questions posed by instructor to individual students. (30% of grade)
- (2) 5,000 to 6,000 word critical review of Rob Pennock's **Tower of Babel**. For examples of critical reviews consult **Books & Culture** and **First Things**. We will not read Pennock's book for class. Pennock's book is supposed to be the "state-of-the-art" refutation of intelligent design. Your task is to use what you've learned in this course to assess and answer Pennock's critique of intelligent design. If (per impossible) you happen to agree with Pennock, then you will need to write a joint critical review of my book (see below) and Pennock's, showing why intelligent design is a failed intellectual project. (70% of grade)

REQUIRED TEXTS:

DBB -- Michael J. Behe, **Darwin's Black Box** (New York: Free Press, 1996).

PP -- Percival Davis and Dean Kenyon, **Of Pandas and People**, 2nd ed. (Dallas, Tx.: Haughton, 1993).

ID -- William A. Dembski, **Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science & Theology** (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999).

DT -- Phillip E. Johnson, **Darwin on Trial**, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993).

DDOM -- Phillip E. Johnson, **Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds** (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997).

TB -- Robert T. Pennock, **Tower of Babel: The Evidence against the New Creationism** (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999).

ASSIGNED READINGS:

January 28, 6 pm to 10 pm: DDOM, in its entirety

January 29, 9:30 am to 12:10 am: DT, chapters 1 to 7

January 29, 1:30 pm to 4:10 pm: DT, chapter 8 to end of book

February 25, 6 pm to 10 pm: PP, chapters 1 to 6

February 26, 9:30 am to 12:10 am: DBB, chapters 1, 2, 3, and 7

February 26, 1:30 pm to 4:10 pm: DBB, chapters 8 to 11

March 31, 6 pm to 10 pm: ID, chapters 1 to 4

April 1, 9:30 am to 12:10 am: ID, chapters 5 and 6

April 1, 1:30 pm to 4:10 pm: ID, chapters 7 and 8 and the appendix