



## I. Synopsis:

February 12, 1809 marked the birthdays of two figures, each of them a revolutionary figure: Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin. Interestingly, each of them played roles in the controversy that we shall explore in this course.

The roles of Creationism and evolution in American society are often presented as conflicts between mutually antagonistic forces. In reality, there are many “creationisms” that range from literal interpretations of text to broad theological and evolutionarily informed explanations of human origins and the meaning of life. Not surprisingly, the debate is itself a reflection of complex realities of North American life and culture in this century. We will explore

these phenomena, using original texts, speakers and student projects to place the debate into a larger sociocultural context.

Note: This course is open to anyone, regardless of your personal or religious beliefs. Our role will be to pull back and examine the phenomena as anthropologists, as we try to understand an important American cultural phenomenon. Mutual respect is essential. We will not proselytize for one side or the other.

**II. Format:** Although I will be guiding you through the essentials, you will also be playing active roles in the course, through class discussions, reading presentations, project presentations, etc. It is essential, therefore, that you be actively involved in every aspect of this course. If you are not prepared to do so, I suggest you not take ANT 309.

## III. These themes will be integrated throughout the course.

- Darwin wasn't the first or the only evolutionist: The history of evolution as a concept.
- “Science” and “Belief” as mutually different but complementary ways of looking at the world.
- Evolution as a science and “Evolutionism” as a belief system. It's important to tell the difference.
- Use and misuse of “Evolutionism,” past and present.
- The depiction and mis-depiction of “evolution” past and present.
- This is a big and diverse world: A global and anthropological look into creation stories. Where did they come from? What do they tell us about the underlying cultures?
- The West, and Particularly America: The cultural and historical roots of American Creationism.
- Scientific, political, religious and legal argumentation in the debate: Important trials.
- “Evolution and religion need not conflict”: Why most of the large mainstream American denominations accept evolution.
- “Evolution and religion must always be in conflict”: Views from the left; Views from the right. Why many Americans reject evolution.
- Where we are today: Science, religion and American culture.

## IV. Readings:

Reading guides for will be posted on ANGEL.

- *The Old Testament*. Selected readings from different versions (Selected portions, available on-line)
- Charles Darwin: *The origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (Selected portions, available on-line)
- Charles Darwin: *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*. (Selected portions, available on-line)

- Selected articles, essays and passages from all sides of the creation-evolution controversy: From well before Darwin to the present day (On ANGEL and on-line)

## V. Requirements:

- **Assignments:** Throughout the semester you will be given reading and other assignments with specific due dates. Some assignments are generic (Everyone does them). Others—especially those relating to the project—are individualized. Each assignment will have a due date. You are expected to complete the assignment by that date and to come to class prepared to discuss the outcomes of the assignment. If you are having trouble with an assignment, let me know and I will try to help you. If, however, you are not adequately prepared (in my judgment) for a particular class, you will be sent away and an absence will be recorded for that day.
- **Critical/analytical essays (60%):** These involve studying and analyzing selected issues covered in the course. You will get detailed guides for each.
- **Project (30%):** You will be working on a multi-step course project throughout the semester. This will involve (1) identifying a research theme, (2) developing an annotated bibliography, (3) preparing case studies relevant to your theme and presenting them in class and (4) using the accumulated materials to prepare a final research paper or comparable project. You must complete each step of the project on time to pass the course.

Throughout the semester we will hold “Paper Sessions” in which you will present results of your project in class.

These sessions will cover specific themes related to your course projects.

- **Class Participation (10%).**

## VI. ANGEL

- **Course materials, assignments, guides, handouts, links etc.**, will be posted on ANGEL: Look for the link: SPRING 2009 - ANT309 // Creation Controv // Section 01
- **Study guides:** Each week a study guide covering the relevant readings and class materials will be posted. These will help you focus your readings and link them with the class content.
- **Handouts:** Handouts relate to the materials covered in class. They may include (1) illustrations, diagrams, charts, etc, referred to in class, (2) in-class exercises that we will be working on in class, (3) guides to movies and videos covered in class, and (3) preparatory exercises. Important: You must download and print these handouts and bring them to class on the assigned dates.



## VI. Policies: Good Cop Bad cop zone!

### 1. Attendance and Personal/Sick Days:

College is preparation for the real world. This is your job, and I'm your supervisor. Employers don't look kindly on workers who fail to show up. Nor do I. Your grade in this course is a certificate that you have met the course requirements, of which attendance is a part. Also, lectures are based on case studies that cannot be looked up elsewhere. You are thus allowed a maximum of two (2) Personal/Sick days without penalty.



To qualify for a Personal/Sick day absence you must notify me ahead of time (or in the case of a real emergency, immediately thereafter) that you will be absent and the nature of the absence, If you do not notify me, it will be counted as an unexcused absence (see below)

- In the real world, you are expected to notify your supervisor ahead of time if you will be missing work. This applies to ANT 309, as well. To qualify for a Personal/Sick day absence you must notify me ahead of time (or in the case of a real emergency, immediately thereafter) that you will be absent and the nature of the absence, If you do not notify me, it will be counted as an unexcused absence (see below)

- b. 10% will be deducted from the final grade for each unexcused absence.
- c. There are rare circumstances where exceptions may be made. These apply *only* to documented major emergencies beyond your control—the validity of which will be determined by me—or for pre-approved college business. You may also be required to complete an extra makeup-assignment.
- d. You are expected to notify me immediately of any anticipated absence (Just like you notify your boss at work).
- e. You are responsible for tracking your absences to make sure you don't exceed the limit.
- f. If you can't attend on a regular basis, don't take this course.
- g. **To be counted present you must be here in mind as well as body.** The following will result in your being removed from the class and counted as absent: Sleeping, reading non-course related materials, listening to your iPod, MP3 player etc., playing with your cell phone, etc. chatting with neighbors, or engaging in other activities that detract from your and others' learning.

2. **Cell phones/Electronic Devices:** Turn off cell phones before coming to class. Sending and receiving text messages/calls are not permitted during class time. If you believe you have a legitimate reason for being reached by cell phone during class, please see the instructor for permission. Laptop computers may be used in class for note-taking only.



- 3. **Writing:** As college students you should use appropriate conventions of writing. If you lack these skills you should get outside help from the Center for Excellence in Learning in B-10 Cooper.
- 4. **Study time:** You should devote at least six hours/week to course work outside of class, plus additional time before exams/projects.
- 5. **Get help when you need it:** Small problems can be kept small if caught

## ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT EVALUATION ver 12/30/04

The following standards provide students with clearly defined expectations regarding course performance as well as potential evaluators (graduate schools, employers, etc.) with a basis for interpreting student grades in Anthropology courses at SUNY Brockport. Students may request copies be sent to prospective employers and/or graduate admissions committees.

[Note: The College recognizes +/- grades. The award of + or - within a grade range will reflect the degree to which the student meets the standards within that grade range.]

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF A:** A grade of A represents the highest level of performance. The A student masters virtually all of the concepts and data of the course, is able to integrate these data and concepts and develop new insights (at least for the student) from them. An A paper is virtually flawless in organization, grammar and style. Consistent performance at the A level in different courses indicates that the student should perform well in a variety of demanding situations, such as graduate school, executive positions, professional training programs, etc. (Allowable grades: A, A-)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF B:** A grade of B represents solid comprehension of course materials and concepts. The B student understands virtually all of the concepts and data of the course and is able to integrate them in a meaningful whole. B papers are soundly and clearly organized with few stylistic or grammatical errors. Consistent performance at the B level reflects the ability to work toward thorough mastery of the subject matter and is a sign of academic reliability. The B student should be able to handle graduate level work and perform effectively in many post-graduate occupations. (Allowable grades: B+, B, B-)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF C:** A grade of C represents very basic comprehension of the main concepts of the course and their implications. A C level student is able to keep up with the basic requirements of the course. C level papers are reasonably organized, although grammatical and stylistic errors may interfere with communication.

in time. If you have any difficulty please call me, e-mail me or drop by my office (C-10 Cooper) before you fall behind.

6. **Withdrawals/Incompletes:** See

<http://www.brockport.edu/policies/index.php>.

7. **Academic honesty:** Familiarize yourself with College policies on academic honesty/dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is fraud and will be treated accordingly.

**Any student engaging in academic dishonesty while conducting course-related business risks failing the course, and will be referred to the College for further disciplinary action. See *Student Policies*.**

8. **Behavior:** This course is for mature adults only. If you don't fit that description drop the course now. *The following will not be tolerated and may result in your being removed from the course with a grade of E, and in additional disciplinary action by the college:* (1) disturbing other members of the class; (2) damaging or illegally removing college or public property (including library materials) while conducting course business; (3) failing to follow guidelines regarding handling of laboratory materials; (4) violations of other college policies relating to academic honesty outlined in *Student Policies*.

## VII. Special needs:

Students with documented disabilities may be entitled to specific accommodations. SUNY Brockport's Office for Student with Disabilities makes this determination. Please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at (585) 395-5409 or osdoffic@brockport.edu to inquire about obtaining an official letter to the course instructor detailing any approved accommodations. The student is responsible for providing the course instructor with an official letter. Faculty work as a team with the Office for Students with Disabilities to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Consistent C or C+ level performance indicates the ability to obtain a respectable liberal arts education and handle the basic expectations of the college graduate. (Allowable grades: C+, C, C-). [Note: Some programs accept only courses that have a minimum grade of C. The grade of C- may not count in such programs.]

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF D:** A grade of D represents passing, but unacceptable work. A D student minimally understands the most basic concepts of the course and uses them correctly, but may not demonstrate sufficient understanding of their implications. Nonetheless, the D student must demonstrate a passing knowledge of the course materials. D level papers demonstrate a basic knowledge of the topic under investigation, although they are marred by one or more of the following: poor writing style, grammatical errors, and ineffective organization. (Allowable grades: D+, D, D-)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF E:** The grade of E represents an inability to meet minimal criteria for D. No credit is awarded. (Allowable grade: E)

**POLICIES REGARDING ACADEMIC HONESTY, INCOMPLETE GRADES, AND WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE:** See Student Policies.

**EXPECTATIONS REGARDING WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS, PAPERS:** Students taking courses at all levels should demonstrate writing competency comparable to successful completion of ENL 112—*College Composition* or the equivalent. Students lacking this competency should be concurrently enrolled in *College Composition* or in a remedial course recommended by the College. Students in upper division courses should be able to formulate problems, utilize available library resources to research them, and write standard term papers. Students experiencing difficulties in these skills are advised to consult with their instructor for assistance and guidance.