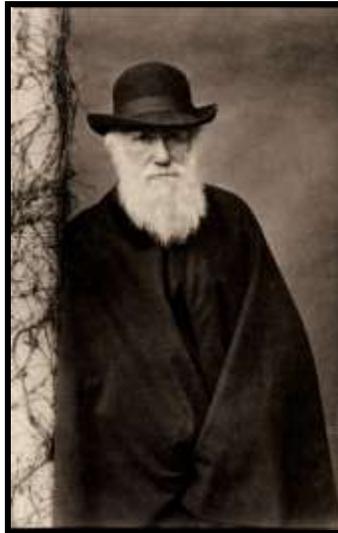


## DARWIN



2009 marks the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Charles Robert Darwin and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of his ground-breaking work *On the Origin of Species*. This course aims to introduce you to the ideas contained within Darwin's two major works, *Origin* and *The Descent of Man* (1871) while viewing those ideas within their historical context. After providing some background to Darwin's life, we will examine the British tradition of natural theology and see how David Hume problematized any concrete claims about divine design in nature. This will lead us to examine Darwin's explanation for the design-like appearance of organism, his theory of descent with modification through natural selection. We will then explore how he used this idea to explain, among other things, human morality. This project to secularize the study of nature met opposition and support from both scientists and philosophers in his day; we will examine these reactions and see how Darwin's ideas were sufficiently powerfully to "suit anyone who had an axe to grind" (as George Bernard Shaw noted). Within America in particular, opposition has also come from religious believers who equate acceptance of evolution with amorality (and often immorality). We will examine the history of this opposition and will end by asking whether Darwin's ideas – and evolutionary theory in general – can tell us anything about how human society ought to be and how we ought to act.



**FACULTY**

**Instructor:**

Professor John M. Lynch  
Barrett Honors College and Center for Biology & Society, Arizona State University.

**OU Faculty Co-ordinator:**

Dr. Piers J. Hale,  
Department of the History of Science, University of Oklahoma

**READING**

**The following texts will be made available to you *and are to be read in advance* of our first meeting.**

- David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* Hackett, 1998, ISBN: 0872204022. Reading for all comprises pp. 1 – 89, 107 – 125.
- Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* Oxford World's Classics, Oxford, 1996, ISBN: 019283438X
- Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* Penguin Classics, Penguin, 2004. ISBN: 0140436316. Reading for all comprises pp. 21 – 279, 621 – 689.
- William Paley, *Natural Theology*. Oxford World's Classics, Oxford, 2008, ISBN13: 978-0-19-953575-0. Reading for undergraduates comprises pp. 7 – 46, 213 – 283. Graduate students should read the whole work.

**ASSESSMENT**

**Please note:** The percentages noted here will give you an indication of the relative expectation of effort for this class. However ***a passing grade of 60% or more is required in each area for students to pass this course.***

**Pre-meeting writing: 20% of the total for the class:**

One week before the start of the class (February 4<sup>th</sup> 2009) students should electronically submit a five page written summary of the main arguments for each of the required readings (ie **4 essays each of 5 pages.**) Essays should be double-spaced, size 12 Times Roman, with one-inch margins. You should avoid the use of lengthy quotations, aiming to provide a concise and coherent synopsis of the author's argument(s). Please aim to turn in a well crafted piece of work. Use parenthetical page citations (e.g. Darwin, 23) to



the points you refer to. *Each of the essays is worth 5% of the total.* In the last paragraph of your essay you should note two significant questions about the reading that you would like to discuss further. You will need to be prepared to think about these questions when we meet.

**Active participation in discussion and debate: 50% of the total for the class:**

The importance of thorough preparation for this course cannot be overstated. For this class to be a success you must come to the first class ready to engage in discussion of the set texts for the day. You should come to class with at least one question about the reading that you would like answered. This question should be beyond those you raised in your written piece and should ideally related the text for the day to the other texts for the course. Please also note that full participation requires questioning and discussion during the lecture portions of the course. The importance of participation is reflected in the fact that a full 50% of the grade for this class is allocated on this basis.

**Final research paper: 30% of the total for the class:**

You will be expected to research and write an in-depth paper on one aspect of the materials covered in this course.

**It will be due four weeks after the end of the teaching session. ie: on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009**, submitted through D2L.

**Expectations for Undergraduate students:**

Your paper will be **10-12 pages** in length, the topic and title of which you will negotiate with Professors Lynch and Hale by the end of the morning session of the last day of class, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February. Further details of what makes a good research paper will be discussed in class.

**Expectations for Graduate students:**

Your paper will be **20-25 pages** in length, the topic and title of which you will negotiate with Professors Lynch and Hale by the end of the morning session of the last day of class, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February. Further details of what makes a good research paper will be discussed in class.

**Questions?**

The faculty liaison for this OSLEP course is Dr. Piers J. Hale, an historian of science at OU. If you have specific questions about the assessments or expectations you may email him after January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 at [phale@ou.edu](mailto:phale@ou.edu) Please give any correspondence the subject heading "OSLEP DARWIN"



**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 – 12:00 **Darwin's Life and Time**

An introductory lecture with ample opportunities for questions and discussion which will cover Darwin's life and the various threads leading to the publication of *Origin* in 1859.

1:30 – 5:00 **Design & Natural Theology: A Discussion.**

*Reading:* Paley & Hume (as above).

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 – 12:00 **On The Origin of Species: A Discussion**

*Reading:* *Origin*.

1:30 – 5:00 **Responses to Darwin**

A lecture, again with ample opportunities for questions and discussion, which will look at some of the varied contemporary responses to Darwin's theories.

7:00 – 9:00 **Lynch's Public Lecture: "Was There a Darwinian Revolution?"**

Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History.

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 – 12:00 **The Descent of Man: A Discussion**

*Reading:* *Descent*, as above.

1:30 – 5:00 **Darwinizing Society**

We will examine and discuss how various political groups have used Darwin's ideas (and name) to justify their ideas, and question whether Darwin can be used to support *any* coherent system. We will in particular examine the eugenics movement in the United States.



**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 – 12:00 **American Anti-Evolutionism to 1987**

A lecture, again with ample opportunities for questions and discussion, which will look at opposition to (human) evolution in the 100 years before the Supreme Court decision in *Edwards v. Aguillard*. Opposition in this time was largely based on the arguments coming from Young-Earth Creationists. The history and content of these arguments will be examined.

1:30 – 4:30 **American Anti-Evolutionism after 1987**

A lecture, again with ample opportunities for questions and discussion, which will look at opposition to evolution after *Edwards v. Aguillard*. This last period has been characterized by arguments under the rubric of “intelligent design” and continued claims that “Darwinism” has negative social and moral implications.

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 – 12:00 **Darwin after 150 years: A Final Discussion**

A student-lead discussion examining, and expanding upon, some of the themes we have examined during our time together. There will be some preparation required in the evening(s) before this class.



**GRADING PRACTICES AND STANDARDS**

All OSLEP Seminars are graded S/U, with an S grade being awarded for work of a traditional B grade or higher. In the course of the seminar individual assignments will be graded according to the criteria laid out below

Percent	Letter Grade
90-100	A exceptional
87-89	B+ competent
84-86	B competent
80-83	B- competent
77-79	C+ adequate
74-76	C adequate
70-73	C- borderline
67-69	D+ inadequate
64-66	D inadequate
60-63	D- inadequate
00-59	F unacceptable

The following guidelines offer a characterisation of the type of work that might be associated with various ranges of grades.

**90% to 100% (A)**

“A” grade work is *exceptional*, showing strong evidence of original thinking and good organisation. The student will have shown a capacity to analyse and synthesize information, as well as a superior grasp of the subject matter in hand and an ability to make sound critical evaluations based upon an extensive knowledge base. Work of this standard should be well argued, well documented, and well written.

**80% to 89% (B- to B+)**

Work of this grade is *competent*, showing evidence of a reasonable-to-solid grasp of the subject matter. It should also show evidence of critical and analytical thinking. The work should also indicate a familiarity with the literature. It should be clearly written, accurate and coherent, including major points from the course material and an appreciation of their importance.



**70% to 79% (C- to C+)**

Work of this grade is of *adequate* performance, showing a fair understanding of the subject matter and an ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material. It may include some errors and slight misconceptions, but should be indicative of a reasonable engagement with the course material. An acceptable although uninspired piece of work, it should not contain serious errors, but may lack style and vigour in its articulation.

**60% to 69% (D- to D+)**

Work of this grade is *adequate, but poor*. Poorly articulated and lacking in a coherent argument it may also lack sufficient documentation. Although it may provide some relevant information, it omits many important points and contains a number of substantial errors or misconceptions.

**00% to 59% (F) Inadequate.**

Work of this standard is *inadequate*, showing little or no understanding of the subject matter. Exhibiting little evidence of critical and analytic skills, this work contains only a limited or irrelevant use of the literature. Poorly articulated it is likely to lack coherence and be difficult to comprehend. Work of this grade is not of degree standard.

