

**UGS 303 (63695) – Fall, 2010**  
**Printed Title**  
**"Difficult Dialogues: Sci/Religion"**

**Actual Title**  
**"Intelligent Design, Evolution, Creationism, and**  
**Science: Exploring the 'Culture War' in 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
**America"**

**READING AND PROJECT SCHEDULES and SEQUENCE**  
**OF DISCUSSION TOPICS**

**TIME & PLACE:** T-Th 2 - 3:30 p.m., WAG 308

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Chris Bell

Office: GEO 3.314A

Phone: 512-471-7301 (don't bother)

Email: [cjbell@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:cjbell@mail.utexas.edu)

Office Hours: M 3:30-4:30, or by appointment

**Sequence of discussion topics and associated readings**

Aug. 26 Introductions, structure, scope, content, and expectations (yours and mine); thoughts on paper topics

Aug. 31 VIEWING (in-class): "Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed"

**ASSIGNMENT:** Write a Position Paper about the film: Two pages (= front and back of one piece of paper), double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. **Email to Chris by no later than midnight Sept. 1**

Sept. 2 Discussion of "Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed"

READINGS: Expelled Exposed (part), posted online at [www.expelledexposed.com](http://www.expelledexposed.com);

Read sections on Richard Sternberg and Intelligent Design posted at the URLs below' also peruse the site for topics related to your position paper

<http://www.expelledexposed.com/index.php/the-truth/sternberg>

<http://www.expelledexposed.com/index.php/the-truth/id>

- Sept. 7 Logical fallacies, critical thinking, and Monty Python
- READING: Shermer, M. 1997 (2002). How thinking goes wrong: Twenty-five fallacies that lead us to believe weird things. Pp. 44-61 *in* Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience, Superstition, and Other Confusions of Our Time. Revised and Expanded (By M. Shermer). W. H. Freeman, New York.
- Initial discussion of paper topics
- Sept. 9 VIEWING (in-class): “The God Who Wasn’t There”
- ASSIGNMENT:** Write a Position Paper about the film: Two pages (= front and back of one piece of paper), double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. **Email to Chris by no later than midnight Sept. 10.**
- Sept. 14 Discussion: “The God Who Wasn’t There”
- READING: No reading today (review your position paper and be prepared to discuss)
- Sept. 16 Defining Science, defining Intelligent Design, and exploring the legal roots of the ‘Culture War’
- READING: The Constitution of the United States of America (posted online in many places).
- Sept. 21 What is Creationism?
- READING: A Creationist Continuum (handed out in class)
- PAPER: Final Decision on Paper Topic Due Today:** To be emailed to Chris by no later than midnight. [cjbell@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:cjbell@mail.utexas.edu)
- Sept. 23 **Information literacy: \*\*Meeting in PCL 1.124\*\* (basement of PCL)**
- \*\*NOTE: WE MEET IN A DIFFERENT PLACE TODAY\*\***
- NOTEBOOK: Turned in for first time**
- Sept. 28 Discussion of writing assignment and writing techniques

- Sept. 30      VIEWING (in class): “Flock of Dodos”  
  
READING: no reading today
- Oct. 5        Discussion: Flock of Dodos  
  
READING: no reading today
- Oct. 7        Additional topical discussion and guidance on papers  
  
**PAPER: Outline and Preliminary Annotated Bibliography due in class**
- Oct. 12      Out-of-class viewing exercise: View “Christopher Hitchens: The Moral Necessity of Atheism” posted on You Tube as eight videos, viewing time approximately 75 minutes.
- Oct. 14      Out-of-class viewing exercise: View “Does god exist? David Wolpe vs. Sam Harris” posted on You Tube as 11 videos, viewing time approximately 102 minutes  
  
**ASSIGNMENT:** Write a Position Paper about Hitchens **and** Wolpe v. Harris videos (from You Tube): Two pages (= front and back of one piece of paper), double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. **Email to Chris by no later than midnight Oct. 15.**
- Oct. 19      Discussion: Hitchens and Wolpe v. Harris videos (from You Tube)  
  
READING: No reading today (review your position paper and be prepared to discuss)
- Oct. 21      Academic Freedom: issues in the Culture war  
  
READINGS: AAUP “1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure” posted online at  
  
<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/1940statement.htm?PF=1>

**NOTEBOOK: Turned in for second time**

- Oct. 26      Academic Freedom continued  
 READINGS: Discovery Institute's posting on Academic Freedom...  
<http://www.discovery.org/csc/freeSpeechEvolCampMain.php>  
 ...and The Free Speech On Evolution Campaign posting  
<http://www.discovery.org/csc/freeSpeechEvolCamp2.php>  
 Text of 2008 Florida Senate Bill entitled "An Act Relating to Teaching  
 Chemical and Biological Evolution" posted online at  
[http://ncseweb.org/webfm\\_send/787](http://ncseweb.org/webfm_send/787)  
 See also 1-paragraph call-to-action statement at:  
<http://offensivechristians.com/florida-battle-for-academic-freedom-heats-up>
- Oct. 28      Exploring Intelligent Design: The Wedge Document  
 READING: posted online at:  
[http://www.infidels.org/library/modern/barbara\\_forrest/wedge.html](http://www.infidels.org/library/modern/barbara_forrest/wedge.html)  
 Forrest, B. 2001. The Wedge at work: How intelligent design creationism  
 is wedging its way into the cultural and academic mainstream. Pp. 1-53 in  
 Intelligent Design and Its Critics. Philosophical, Theological, and  
 Scientific Perspectives (R. T. Pennock, ed.). The MIT Press, Cambridge,  
 Massachusetts.
- PAPER: First draft of paper due in class**
- Nov. 2      The Wedge document continued  
 READING: The "Wedge Document": "So What?"  
 Posted online at:  
<http://www.discovery.org/scripts/viewDB/filesDB-download.php?id=349>
- Nov. 4      The issue of Naturalism. Part I.  
 READING: Johnson, P. E. 2001. Evolution as dogma: The  
 establishment of naturalism. Pp. 59-76 in Intelligent Design and Its  
 Critics. Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Perspectives (R. T.  
 Pennock, ed.). The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

- PAPER: First (student) review due**
- Nov. 9 The issue of Naturalism. Part II.
- READING: Pennock, R. T. 2001. Naturalism, evidence, and creationism: The case of Phillip Johnson. Pp. 77-97 in *Intelligent Design and Its Critics. Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Perspectives* (R. T. Pennock, ed.). The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Nov. 11 The issue of Naturalism. Part III. Rebuttals and open forum
- READINGS:
- Johnson, P. E. 2001. Response to Pennock. Pp. 99-101 in *Intelligent Design and Its Critics. Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Perspectives* (R. T. Pennock, ed.). The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Pennock, R. T. 2001. Reply: Johnson's *Reason in the Balance*. Pp.103-107 in *Intelligent Design and Its Critics. Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Perspectives* (R. T. Pennock, ed.). The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- PAPER: Second draft due**
- Nov. 16 The Dover Trial
- READING: pp. **7-35; 64-89; 136-139** from:  
United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania  
Case No. 04cv2688  
Tammy Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District et al.  
Memorandum Opinion  
December 20, 2005
- Nov. 18 Can we achieve a rational dialogue?
- READING: Harris, S. 2004. Reason in exile. Pp. 11-23 in *The End of Faith*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, New York.
- Nov. 23 Exploring a University Treasure: Technology and religion meet in the making of the Gutenberg Bible (on display in the HRC)
- READING: TBA
- NOTEBOOK: Turned in for Third time**

**PAPER: Second (CJB) review returned**

**Nov. 25**      **Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)**

Nov. 30      Personal reflections:

READING: TBA

Dec. 2      Final comments and Course Evaluations

**PAPER: Final draft of paper due**

**There is no final exam.**

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## Policy Statement

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 Office Hours: M 3:30-4:30, or by appointment

**TEXT:** There is no text for this course; we will use selected readings and other sources (videos, etc.) throughout the semester.

**PREREQUISITES:** There are no prerequisites.

**GRADING:** The grade for the class is based on the following:

A) Class Participation	<b>30%</b>
B) Class Paper	<b>35%</b>
Draft #1	5%
Draft #2	10%
Final	20%
C) Student review	<b>10%</b>
D) Notebook	<b>15%</b>
E) Position papers	<b>10%</b>

Grading elements for Class Participation:

- Attendance (required; see below)
- Preparation
- In-class discussions and projects

- University Lectures (must attend/view at least one University Lecture on Oct. 4 or 5)

Grading elements for Notebook:

- Thoughts and reflections on readings, videos, movies, course discussions, etc.
- Description/reflection of course content as it pertains to other courses or activities
- Comment/reply section

### **GRADING:**

Final course grades will be based on the following scale

A	94-100	C	73-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	59 or less

**READINGS AND VIEWINGS:** You are required to read/view all the materials designated under the "READING" and "VIEWING" headings on the Syllabus. Readings should be completed before you come to class on the day for which they are assigned. You are required to watch and listen carefully to the videos and movies we will discuss in class. Some of the readings and videos will be challenging, but my expectation is that you will work through them and be prepared to discuss them in class on the date for which they are assigned (i.e., read or view the material before arriving in class that day!). For some days, there may be multiple readings, and the number of assigned pages will vary from day to day; you must plan ahead and budget your time carefully so that you can complete the readings on time.

Most readings will be posted on the UT Library Electronic Reserves site. This system is **occasionally unreliable**, so plan ahead to access the readings. I will not accept excuses for failure to do the reading because the web site could not be accessed.

The Electronic Reserve readings can be accessed by going to the following URL

<http://reserves.lib.utexas.edu/eres/>

go to “Student Access to Electronic Reserves Course pages”

Select **Instructor** (or “any search field”) and fill in Bell, and hit “search.” You will then see a link to UGS303 “Difficult dialogues”; click on the “UGS303”. For copyright reasons, the course page is password protected. Your password is **discourse**.

Read the copyright stuff, hit “accept” and you will be carried to a page with a link to the PDF file for the readings. Readings are sorted alphabetically by author’s last name.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** Because this seminar is centered on dialogue, it is absolutely essential that all students not only attend each meeting, but also participate in discussions. Attendance and active participation during in-class discussions and projects will be the basis for the majority of your participation grade. The University policy is to respect religious holidays; please notify me well in advance of any conflicts that result from religious holidays or observations.

**UNIVERSITY LECTURES:** The University Lecture series is sponsored by the School of Undergraduate Studies and provides special lecture opportunities for first-year students at UT. Two events will be presented in the Fall semester, and will be available for viewing online if you cannot attend the live event. I encourage you to attend both, but **you are required to attend at least one**. For more information about the series see <<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/uls/>>.

October 4 “Cirque du Politique.” UT Speech coach Martin “Randy” Cox will discuss current political discourse and campaign politics, illustrated by presenting prize-winning students on controversial topics of the day.

October 5 “The Great Debate: How do you Change the World?” The University claims that we change people and they change the world. Notable faculty will be asked in front of on-stage student juries what they teach that could help students change the world. Participants include Larry Speck, Leigh McAllister, David Springer, Sean Theriault, and David Laude. John Daly will moderate.

**Semester paper:** Each student is required to write a semester paper. Two topics are provided, and you are free to choose the one that interests you most, or to develop your own relevant topic (subject to advance instructor approval). Length, structure, scope, and format will be discussed in the early weeks of class. You must select your topic by no later than September 21. An outline and annotated bibliography is due in-class on October 7, the first draft is due October 28. Each student will provide a peer-review of another student paper (author and reviewer will be anonymous); peer reviews are due in class on November 4. The second draft is due November 11, and my review will be returned on November 23. Final draft is due December 2. It is essential that you meet all deadlines. Note that my reviews are returned to you on Nov. 23, the Tuesday of Thanksgiving week. **DO NOT** make plans to leave Austin early for Thanksgiving; attendance in class that day is required.

**Topic #1. The Dover Intelligent Design Trial.** Intelligent Design had its debut in Federal Court in 2005. In the months leading up to the trial, during the trial, and following the Memorandum Opinion by the judge, the trial had a significant impact on the 'culture war,' both locally (Dover, Pennsylvania) and nationally. Choose **one** of the tracks below and explore the implications of the trial for the 'culture war' in the United States.

Investigate media coverage of the trial from its inception through today. How was/is various aspects of the trial portrayed (e.g., individual testimony, the trial as a whole, the judge)? You must include a diversity of sources; these can include newspaper articles, popular-press periodicals (e.g., Time, Newsweek, The Economist, Scientific American, Skeptical Inquirer. etc.), on-line blogs and commentaries, You Tube videos, television news programs). You must also include at least two of the five books published about the trial itself.

**Topic #2. Exploration of Origins issues in the context of the ‘culture war’ in the United States.** The scientific investigation of ‘origins’ (e.g., of the universe, of Life, of particular groups of organisms, of humans) has for many decades stimulated controversy among and between scientists and other groups within our society. These issues emerged again in recent years as a focal point of contention between (among others) proponents of Intelligent Design on one hand and theistic evolutionists and methodological naturalists on the other. In your paper, investigate how different authors represent scientific research on ‘origin’ issues, and how they respond to criticism and feedback from those with other opinions. This will include reference to the numerous books discussing the many facets of Intelligent Design, and also can be explored through other popular-press media (e.g., newspapers, magazines, films, documentaries, You-Tube postings, etc.).

If you would like additional assistance with writing, The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. The Writing Center is located in FAC 211 (phone: 471-6222); for more information, see their web site at <http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu/>

#### **NOTEBOOK:**

The Notebook is intended to be a (more-or-less) personal notebook of thoughts, questions, and comments pertaining to the readings, videos, discussions, projects, and activities associated with this course. As you work through the assigned readings, use the notebook to jot down discussion ideas, questions to ask in class, references to track down for further reading, critiques of the article, or thoughts and opinions about videos or movies (especially thoughts and opinions that were not incorporated into Position Papers). You can use the notebook to help you remember key points or questions for position papers. I am especially interested in your comments and reflections about how

course content from this seminar (including discussions, comments made by other students, topics, readings, ideas, etc.) influence your thinking in this course, other courses, and in your personal (non-academic) life. In other words, are you able make connections between content of this course and other aspects of your life?. Your notebook will be turned in three times for evaluation. Content and organization will necessarily be individuated, but I will be looking for evidence that you are taking this portion of the course seriously, and are regularly making a serious written record of your thoughts and questions pertaining to the course and the topics we explore. I will occasionally reply to comments, usually by attaching a sticky-note; these will permit an informal, written comment-reply dialogue between us. I will not share your notebook or its contents with anyone else.

**POSITION PAPERS:** We will watch five movies/videos during the semester. For each, you will prepare a brief (two pages) position paper on your opinions of the video (for example, your reaction to its content, your opinion of the quality of argumentation, your assessment of its goals and whether they were achieved, etc.).

**UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE:** The University Honor Code reads “The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.” In all of your writing, you must avoid plagiarism and always provide adequate citation to your sources of ideas, information, and data.

**OFFICE HOURS:** If you have any questions that are not answered during discussion sessions, or if you are confused by a concept or topic we cover, or if you want more information on a topic, please do not hesitate to come to see me in office hours. If you cannot meet during scheduled office hours, please feel free to make an appointment that suits your schedule. Questions? Comments? Clarifications? Concerns? Call them out in class or come see me in office hours.

**OTHER ISSUES:** Please notify me as soon as possible of any modifications or adaptations you may require to accommodate a disability-related need. The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 or 471-4641.