

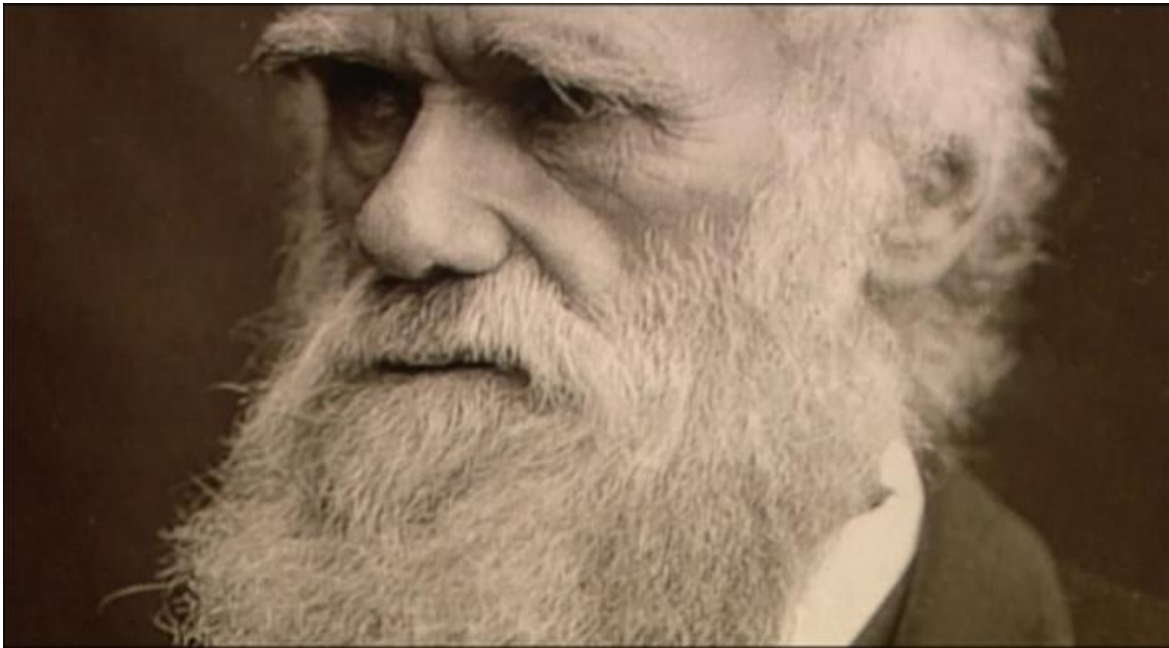
History 312: The Darwinian Revolution

Dr. Jerry Jessee

Office Hours (virtual): Monday 1pm/Tuesday 9am

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Virtual Classroom



Charles Darwin, or "Charwin."

Course Description:

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection is one of the greatest (maybe *the* greatest) intellectual and cultural turning points in the modern era. Since the *Origin of Species* was published in 1859, the way we have thought about the natural history of the world has been profoundly altered. So too have ideas about ourselves. Too often we approach Darwin's theory of natural selection as a simple case of science versus religion, where the "facts" of human evolution contradict a "literal" interpretation of the bible. Yet, the conundrums presented by Darwinism for how we think about ourselves are infinitely more complex than whether Darwin's theory disproves Genesis. If humans have evolved via natural selection and are thus part of what Darwin's friend T.H. Huxley called the "cosmic process," then are we, like those animals, determined by nature? Or are we so endowed with free will, reason, and culture to have escaped our biological natures?

Put another way, Darwin's theory asks us to consider whether our *biology is our destiny*.

On the one hand, biological explanations for how we as humans behave and how our societies are organized hold special attraction to many people because to appeal to nature makes it seem like how we are is the way it is supposed to be. On the other hand, many other people reject this idea, focusing instead on how our behaviors and society are products of human choices and social norms. To take but one example: Are the differences that we perceive between genders a product of evolutionary adaptations or are they rather a function of socially constructed norms for how women and men should be? Some in this latter camp go so far as to argue that our very ideas about human nature say less about what that nature actually is than what we think it *should* be.

In this course, we take a historical perspective on the Darwinian Revolution to explore the ways that Darwin's theory has shaped how we think about ourselves and how, in contrast, our beliefs of who we are has shaped Darwinian theory. This course does not require any scientific background, nor does it aim to turn you into a biologist. Rather, by studying Darwin's ideas in their broader social, cultural, and scientific contexts, it endeavors to enable you to critically analyze science and enter, with informed judgment, into the fascinating, complex, and controversial debates taking place today concerning Darwinian biology's increasing role in our society. In short, this course aims to prepare you to answer the question: Is biology destiny?

Everything we do in this class is designed to enable you to answer this essential question. To foster your engagement with this inquiry, this course is organized into three units, each of which contains weekly modules that run from Tuesday to Monday and contain specific learning objectives. As you proceed through the weekly modules, you will encounter two types of online learning experiences. Often, the activities I have created for you require that you work at your (or your group's) own pace throughout the week, provided you complete all the activities and assignment by our Monday meeting time. This is the *asynchronous* part of the course. On Mondays, we will meet via zoom at our regularly scheduled hour (3:30-4:45). This is the *synchronous* learning experience. We will not be meeting on Wednesdays (except in week 1). You must attend these synchronous class meetings.

A few notes on pace and protocol involved with these modules:

This course proceeds on a week-to-week basis via the modules, which again run from Tuesday to Monday, our meeting time. It would be a good practice to always log into this course the day after our Monday meeting to plan for what you must do for the week. Sometimes the activities I have planned for you are entirely self-directed. Other times I have you engaging in group work, which means you will have to plan for that work throughout the week with your other group members. Always check what you must do early in the week!

Each module will contain an introductory video by me introducing you to the objectives and activities for the module. Included also is a module checklist, which outlines the module objectives and everything you need to accomplish. You must proceed stepwise through these activities. Indeed, Canvas will require you to do so. Any assignment for that week's module is

due by 3:30 pm on Monday (again, the day we meet). Due to the highly structured nature of these modules you cannot work ahead in this course.

One more note about expectations. Typically, in a face-to-face class we would meet for a total of 150 minutes per week for a 3-credit class with an additional homework workload of about 2 hours per credit (6 hours for the 3 credits). Please be sure to mark enough time during the week to complete the assignments and activities for this course.

Learning Outcomes:

Essential Question:

Is biology destiny?

Enduring Understanding:

Darwinian evolutionary theory has profoundly shaped not only our understanding of natural history but also our perceptions of ourselves and our place within nature.

Course Objectives:

Any engaged student who works assiduously in this course will be able to:

- 1) Analyze Darwin's impact on reductionism in biology and its effects on how humans have understood nature and society in the past and today.
- 2) Analyze how Darwinian theory has shaped and been shaped by society.
- 3) Evaluate differing interpretations about the impact of Darwinian theory on science and history.
- 4) Analyze primary and secondary historical sources to make interpretations about the question of whether biology is destiny.

Required Reading:

Books (Required as Rental Texts):

Appleman, ed, *Darwin* (referred to as *Darwin Reader* in schedule)

David Quammen, *The Reluctant Mr. Darwin*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

H.G. Wells, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

Richard Lewontin, *Biology as Ideology*

Books (Optional)

Kurt Vonnegut, *Galapagos* (optional). This book is available for purchase but is not required for this course. If students so request, I will offer an extra credit assignment based on this book.

Otherwise, we will not be using this book.

Canvas Articles:

Some readings will be made available to you through Canvas.

Schedule Overview:

Unit 1: Introducing the History of Darwinian Theory
Week 1 Course Introduction
Week 2 Reductionism in Science
Week 3 <i>Frankenstein</i>
Unit 2: Darwinian Theory
Week 4 Pre-Darwinian Theory
Week 5 Darwin's Kiwi Egg
Week 6 On the Origin of Species
Week 7 Reception of Darwin's Theory
Unit 3: Reductionism in Modern Biological Thought
Week 8 Ethics and Altruism in a Darwinian World
Week 9: Midterm
Week 10 Vivisection and the Island of Dr. Moreau
Week 11 The Modern Synthesis
Week 12 Eugenics
Week 13 Sociobiology and Evolutionary Psychology
Week 14 Biology as Ideology
Week 15 "Gattaca"
Final: Wednesday, May 19 10:15-12:15

Assignments:

Writing Assignments: There are two types of writing assignments in this course: 1) assignments to be completed in preparation for our Monday meeting discussions; 2) assignments completed collaboratively during our Monday meetings.

Class Participation: Students are expected to participate in our Monday meetings. See discussion and participation rubric below.

Reading Quizzes: Various readings to be discussed during our Monday meetings will be quizzed prior to the meeting as part of that week's module. Please see the quiz and writing rubric under the Student Resources tab in Canvas.

Midterm: There will be a midterm week 9, which will cover material through units 1-2. A study guide and directions will be provided.

Final Paper: The final paper will require you to write an 8-10 page paper that addresses the essential question for this course. The prompt and guidelines for the paper will be handed out later in the semester. The paper will be due during our scheduled final period.

Grades (weighted percentages):

Writing Assignments: 20%
Class Participation: 10%
Reading Quizzes: 20%
Midterm: 20%
Final Paper: 30%
Total: 100%

Grading Scale (percentage):

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	60-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	F	59 and below
B	83-86	C-	70-72		

Course Protocols:

Attendance

I will record attendance during our Monday zoom meetings. Students who miss 2 classes will be docked a 1/3 of a grade from their final grade. Students who miss 3, 2/3rds of a grade, 4 a full grade (and so on). For example, if you were to earn a B in this class, but missed 2 classes, your final grade would be a B-. Absences will be unexcused except in extraordinary circumstances, which will require a note from an authority explaining the absence. If you miss an assignment for a class in which you have an excused absence, you must make every effort to make up any missed assignments within a reasonable amount of time. Expected Instructor

Response Times

- I will attempt to respond to student emails within 24 hours. If you have not received a reply from me within 24 hours please resend your email. I only check my email once during the weekend, so response time may be delayed until Monday.
 - ***If you have a general course question (not confidential or personal in nature), please post it to the Course Q&A Discussion Forum found on the course homepage. I will post answers to all general questions there so that all students can view them. Students are encouraged to answer each other's questions too.

- I will attempt to reply to and assess student discussion posts within 48 hours of discussions closing.
- I will attempt to grade written work within 72 hours, however longer written assignments may take me longer to read and assess.

Student Expectations

In this course you will be expected to complete the following types of tasks.

- communicate via email
- complete basic internet searches
- download and upload documents to the LMS
- read documents online
- view online videos
- participate in online discussions
- complete quizzes/tests online
- upload documents to Canvas to submit an assignment
- participate in synchronous online discussions

Course Structure

This course will be delivered entirely online through the course management system Canvas. You will use your UWSP account to login to the course from the [Canvas Login Page](#). If you have not activated your UWSP account, please visit the [Manage Your Account](#) page to do so.

Technology

Protecting your Data and Privacy

UW-System approved tools meet security, privacy, and data protection standards. For a list of approved tools, visit this website. <https://www.wisconsin.edu/dle/external-application-integration-requests/>

Tools not listed on the website linked above may not meet security, privacy, and data protection standards. If you have questions about tools, contact the UWSP IT Service Desk at 715-346-4357.

Here are steps you can take to protect your data and privacy.

- Use different usernames and passwords for each service you use
- Do not use your UWSP username and password for any other services
- Use secure versions of websites whenever possible (HTTPS instead of HTTP)
- Have updated antivirus software installed on your devices

Course Technology Requirements

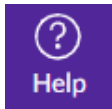
- View this website to see [minimum recommended computer and internet configurations for Canvas](#).

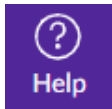
- You will also need access to the following tools to participate in this course.
 - webcam
 - microphone
 - printer
 - a stable internet connection (don't rely on cellular)

UWSP Technology Support

- Visit with a [Student Technology Tutor](#)
- Seek assistance from the [IT Service Desk](#) (Formerly HELP Desk)
 - IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
 - IT Service Desk Email: techhelp@uwsp.edu

Canvas Support



Click on the  button in the global (left) navigation menu and note the

options that appear:

Support Options	Explanations
Ask Your Instructor a Question Submit a question to your instructor	Use Ask Your Instructor a Question sparingly; technical questions are best reserved for Canvas personnel and help as detailed below.
Chat with Canvas Support (Student) Live Chat with Canvas Support 24x7!	Chatting with Canvas Support (Student) will initiate a <i>text chat</i> with Canvas support. Response can be qualified with severity level.
Contact Canvas Support via email Canvas support will email a response	Contacting Canvas Support via email will allow you to explain in detail or even upload a screenshot to show your particular difficulty.
Contact Canvas Support via phone Find the phone number for your institution	Calling the Canvas number will let Canvas know that you're from UWSP; phone option is available 24/7.
Search the Canvas Guides Find answers to common questions	Searching the Canvas guides connects you to documents that are searchable by issue. You may also opt for Canvas video guides .
Submit a Feature Idea Have an idea to improve Canvas?	If you have an idea for Canvas that might make instructions or navigation easier, feel free to offer your thoughts through this Submit a Feature Idea avenue.

All options are available 24/7; however, if you opt to email your instructor, s/he may not be available immediately.

- Self-train on Canvas through the [Self-enrolling/paced Canvas training course](#)

Complete Assignments

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas unless otherwise instructed. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from instructor *before the due date*. Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.

All discussion assignments must be completed by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will affect the student's grade.

Late Work Policy

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make-up assignments or quizzes, or late work accepted without a serious and compelling reason and instructor approval.

Viewing Grades in Canvas

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to Grades. Click on the Grades link to view your points.

Course Policies

Netiquette Guidelines

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

- Do not dominate any discussion.
- Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Popular emoticons such as 😊 or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.
- Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.

- Share tips with other students.
- Keep an “open-mind” and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.
- Think and edit before you push the “Send” button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- Using humor is acceptable

Build Rapport

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that we can help you find a solution.

Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is the student’s responsibility to understand when they need to consider unenrolling from a course. Refer to the UWSP [Academic Calendar](#) for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student’s family.

Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed

If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation of disability to Disability Services and meet with a Disability Services counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start.

The Disability and Assistive Technology Center is located in 609 Albertson Hall and can be contacted by phone at (715) 346-3365 (Voice) (715) 346-3362 (TDD only) or via email at datctr@uwsp.edu

Statement of Policy

UW-Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability.

If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform the instructor and contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center in 609 ALB, or (715) 346-3365.

Commit to Integrity

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

UWSP Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures

Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures

UWSP 14.01 Statement of principles

The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the university of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the university of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

UWSP 14.03 Academic misconduct subject to disciplinary action.

(1) Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

- (a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- (c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- (d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- (e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
- (f) Assists other students in any of these acts.

(2) Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to: cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course; submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another; submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course; tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

Religious Beliefs

Relief from any academic requirement due to religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03, with notification within the first three weeks of class.

Other Stuff:

Notice on Copyright of Course Material: As the instructor, I retain all copyright on lectures, slides, assignments, and other course materials. I do not allow anybody to photograph, film, or otherwise record lectures without my express permission. I do not allow anybody to distribute course materials or otherwise send audio or visual recordings of lectures to people not currently enrolled in this class without my express permission. Posting course material that I have created onto course-sharing websites directly violates my copyright on my academic materials.

Synchronous Discussion Rubric

	Excellent "A"	Proficient "B"	Developing "C"	Unacceptable ">C"
Frequency	Student frequently initiates conversation more than once in class.	Student initiates contribution once in each class.	Student contributes only every few classes.	Student does not initiate contribute and requires professor to solicit input.
Quality	Comments are always insightful, constructive, and demonstrate clear engagement with class material. Always employs appropriate terminology.	Comments are mostly insightful, constructive, and demonstrate engagement with class material. Frequently employs appropriate terminology.	Comments are sometimes constructive with signs of engagement and insight. Terminology and comments not always relevant to discussion.	Comments are uninformative, lacking appropriate terminology, and demonstrate lack of engagement with class material.
Listening	Student listens attentively and builds upon remarks of others.	Student mostly attentive and usually builds upon remarks of others.	Student is often inattentive and requires reminders to stay focused. Student	Student does not listen to others, does not pay, attention, and/or detracts from the discussion.

			sometimes disruptive.	
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***Note: I reserve the right to alter this syllabus for any reason.**