

**Phil 3611**  
**Philosophy of Biology**  
**Class Number 77735**  
**Section TR11**  
**Tues, Thurs 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM**

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In this course, we will examine a range of philosophical questions that arise within the biological sciences, with a focus on evolutionary biology. Besides those questions that often pop in popular media (what is meant by ‘evolution’? what is ‘intelligent design’? what is ‘Darwinism’?), there are a variety of conceptual issues of interest. What is evolutionary theory? What are the units of selection? What are species? What are organisms? Are all biological phenomena reducible to genes? What are adaptations, and how do we identify them? Is there a progressive trend in the history of life? Is there such a thing as ‘human nature’?

This course is an introduction to these and other core philosophical issues in the biological sciences for the advanced undergraduate. It is designed for philosophy majors with an interest in the epistemology and metaphysics of science, biology majors with an interest in philosophical debates pertinent to their subject of study, and others who share one or the other of these vantage points (e.g. anthropology or psychology majors, among others).