

*adopted by Committee
with dissent*

FINAL ORIGINS CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

Some Guidelines and Goals for Discussion and
Instruction in the Creation-Evolution Dialogue

*adopted by
Board*

Foreword

It is obvious that we disagree deeply and on many points. But in order to do something positive and constructive we must find common ground, discover and define things we can agree on, as a basis both for our further discussion and, ultimately, for the instruction of students regarding these issues. The following are offered in a spirit of compromise and conciliation as a possible basis for proceeding affirmatively.

1. Students should be made aware, from the outset, that the question of origins is a deep controversy which their elders have not resolved and on which they must make their own final judgement.
2. Students should be made fully aware that some persons on both sides of this issue are honest, intelligent, tolerant, competent, objective and sincere - and that some persons, on both sides, unfortunately are not; that the personal characteristics of any advocate are not the ultimate criteria by which to judge that person's position; that they must beware that any advocate may not necessarily be giving an accurate representation of either the opposing view or even of the side he supports. These are facts of life necessary for critical understanding.
3. Students should be taught that the popularity of a position among any group, does not determine its validity.
4. No scientific position should be presented as being necessarily more or less moral, ethical, righteous, religious or Godly than any other.
5. Students should be taught, as a logical rule, that the demonstration of inconclusiveness, defects, or even out and out falsity of one position does not necessarily support any other position.
6. The rhetorical device of ridicule is out of place and not to be used in discussion or instruction on this subject.
7. In teaching any form of evolution or creation, positive arguments for each position should be made.
8. In teaching about them, the assumptions underlying the various positions should be identified and explained.
9. In teaching about them, the strengths and weaknesses of the various positions should be identified and explained.
10. Evolution should be taught in such a way that simply teaching about it should not contradict or support any religious beliefs.
11. Creationism should be taught in such a way that simply teaching about it should not contradict or support any religious beliefs.

12. In an academic context, evolution should be taught as a scientific concept to explain human observations to the human mind.
13. In an academic context, scientific creationism should be taught as a scientific concept to explain human observations to the human mind.
14. The various forms of creation and evolution should be distinguished, when teaching them, to make clear that some forms of each are compatible with one another, i.e., it is possible to hold a combined form of both, and that some forms of each as defined by their proponents are not compatible but are mutually exclusive. The essential point is that the student be exposed without prejudice to the whole spectrum of possible positions.
15. Let us agree, and teach, that it is at least conceivable to some that creation could have occurred.
16. Let us agree, and teach, that it is at least conceivable to some that evolution could have occurred.
17. Let us agree, and teach, that it is at least conceivable to some that both creation and evolution could have occurred.
18. Let us agree on a definition of "creation": the making or origination of something from nothing. If created, something is made to exist which did not exist in any form prior to its creation. A synonym for creation is "exnihilation," the opposite of annihilation.
19. Let us agree on a definition of "scientific creationism": the scientific evidence supporting a sudden occurrence of fully functional kinds. Scientific creationism holds that this sudden occurrence was a singular event and that the resulting forms have changed only slightly due to the process of environmental adaptation.
20. Let us agree on definitions of "evolution": evolution is a type of change in the physical and chemical world following natural laws. Evolution is the generation of new things from pre-existing things through the action of natural processes. Evolution includes the origin of living things from non-living things by physical and chemical processes. Biological evolution is the origin of some living things from other preexisting species, new varieties, species, genera, and higher taxa of living things by descent with modification. Change within a population or species is termed microevolution. Change at or above the species level resulting in new species and higher taxonomic groups is termed macroevolution.
21. Let us agree on a definition of natural processes: natural processes are the properties and regularities of physical, chemical and living things which are at least potentially observable or discoverable by human beings. The so called "laws" of logic, mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy, geology, biology, among others, are human attempts to formally state these properties and regularities. The laws of natural science are approximate generalizations about these properties and regularities which are reached inductively. As such, any scientific law is subject, among other things, to modification.

ORIGINS CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
Final Goal Statements

1. All students shall develop and then apply skills in decision making, the use of logic and the scientific method.
2. All students shall develop an increased awareness of, respect for, and critical understanding of their own personal belief system and belief systems different from their own.
3. All students shall develop an understanding of scientific, theological, and philosophical explanations of the origins of man, other living forms, and the universe and the limitations and assumptions of each.
4. All students will recognize that in the consideration of the subject of origins, as in other important issues that have not been resolved, there exists a wide spectrum of explanations.
5. All students will recognize that all theories are subject to disproof in light of new data.
6. All students will recognize the kinds of evidence used in an attempt to explain the origins of man, other living forms, the universe, and the assumptions that underlie the use of these evidences.