

# "Not "Just a Theory": Examining the influence of a general education biology course on evolution knowledge and acceptance"

by Dr. Emily Walter, Western Michigan University

*Only 4 in 10 Americans agree  
that humans and higher apes  
share a common ancestor.*

*Can educators repair this major  
gap in scientific literacy?*

*Does knowledge of evolution  
correlate with evolution  
acceptance?*

*How can a one-semester course  
influence evolution knowledge  
and acceptance?*

**Monday, February 23, 2015**

3:00 – 4:00 PM

Science 2, room 109

For further information:  
[www.csufresno.edu/biology](http://www.csufresno.edu/biology)



This study examines the influence of a general education biology course on students' knowledge of macroevolution and evolution acceptance. Using a sequential explanatory mixed methods design, students were given pre- and post-instruction surveys of macroevolution knowledge and evolution acceptance. Twelve initially low-scoring students were also interviewed to examine how the course influenced post-instruction changes to their survey responses. Findings include (a) statistical examinations of whole-class data and (b) triangulated perspectives of interviewed students regarding how the course influenced their knowledge and acceptance of evolution.

Dr. Emily Walter specializes in evolution education and faculty development. She has a B.S. in biology from Iowa State University and an M.S. in biology from Western Illinois University. After developing a passion for student success at a community college, Dr. Walter shifted her career focus to biology education research, and completed her PhD in Learning, Teaching, and Curriculum from the University of Missouri in 2013. She is currently a postdoctoral research associate for an NSF-WIDER project at Western Michigan University.