

## **CHANGE IN STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD EVOLUTION**

**Kassandra E. Brantley, Department of Biology**

**Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Leslie S. Jones, Department of Biology**

Since Georgia students receive very little pre-collegiate instruction on evolution, they use a typical repertoire of misconceptions to justify their creationist aversions to the theory. Surveys were administered at the end of a non-majors biology course in which the socio-political dimensions of the evolution/creationism controversy were emphasized. Qualitative analysis revealed students recognized that the controversy is rooted in perceived conflict between religion and science, as well as the obvious inconsistency between scriptural and biological accounts. Their testimony indicated changes in both their understanding of and receptivity toward the theory of evolution. Students recognized that the theory made scientific sense based on recorded empirical evidence and indicated that some parts of the theory hold up under logical review.