Statement of Purpose

Evolution has been known for its controversial subjects in relation to religious views. When teachers and students encounter the topic of Evolution many emotions emerge. These emotions, if not dealt with, create division among students and create negative attitudes that lead to a lack of participation. The topic of evolution is not just about the content provided, but it is also about open discussion and examination. The evolution curriculum in schools desperately needs to recognize that this is not just a scientific issue, but a social one as well and should be treated as such. This unit recognizes the relevant need for a direction of change in teaching this unit and will provide the skills needed to make it happen by incorporating exercises focusing on building inner confidence in ones rationale and conversing intensely with peers.

Students at the highschool level have formed many belief systems about all subjects concerning their education by the time they reach senior year. The implication of emotional intelligence\*, into this curricula, will help guide and build on the students skills in order to recognize their own emotions and that of others. The concept of “emotional intelligence” has been extensively popularized in the corporate and in the higher education world as many individuals, such as CEO’s and college administrators, profess the potential ability of emotional intelligence to predict various markers of success. Research has shown that the development of emotional intelligence was correlated with greater individual performance, often above and beyond that associated with one's level of general intelligence. Since the controversy surrounding evolution is public and political, the combination of both strong academic rationale and societal need for understanding one another will not only enhance this topic, but students will have the ability to constructively deal with other not related controversial issues.

This design incorporates conflict management throughout the unit of evolution while enriching students scientific education and furthering the skills of scientific inquiry concerning evolutionary content. By implicating certain strategies, such as the development of language use and democratic approaches, throughout the unit, will not only prepare teachers for possible conflict, but it will also help students to be aware of their emotions and views throughout each subunit.