E EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

PHILOSOPHY 2022 Newsletter

2021-22 Highlights

Eight former EMU philosophy students accepted offers (with full funding) to continue their philosophical studies in Ph.D. programs starting in Fall 2022. Dr. Andrew Antis who won the 2022 Part-Time Lecturer Distinguished Teaching Award.

Keep reading for more details and other exciting news from EMU Philosophy faculty and students!

Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy

EMU's 12th Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy (UCiP) welcomed students back to campus. We were pleased to continue the conference in a hybrid format, hosting both Zoom and face-to-face sessions. Despite being displaced from our traditional venue in McKenny Hall, and moved to the Student Center, the event was a great success. We were joined by students from across the U.S., Canada, Australia, and India.

Papers presented ranged across the numerous subfields of philosophy, with topics spanning food security to horror and anxiety. Of course, old favorites like Plato and Marx made appearances as well. It is always a joy to hear interesting philosophical arguments and ideas combined in novel and exciting ways. The conference continues to be an important event each year for EMU's philosophical community, and we're very pleased to contribute to philosophy in this way.



UCiP's keynote speaker this year was Dr. Jaime Ahlberg (University of Florida), who gave a presentation entitled "Dissolving Political Dirty Hands Dilemmas." The talk generated a fascinating conversation and raised tough problems for at least one set of theories of ethical behavior. We thank Dr. Ahlberg for her time and philosophical prowess. She joins a long line of terrific speakers who have shared their work at UCiP.

EMU students organized almost every dimension of this event. Special thanks to Natalie Anderson, Noah Cross, Kennedy DeFrancesco, Andrew Garcia, Omar Khali, John Milkovich, Christopher (Mac) Neaville, Zach Tobias, and Candice Wiesner for their hard work organizing the conference and ensuring that everything ran smoothly. Presenters from EMU included Omar Khali, John Milkovich, and Zach Tobias. Commenters from EMU included Noah Cross, Andrew Dase, Cameron Douglas, Omar Khali, Justin Luttermoser, John Milkovich, Morghan Roselle, Zach Tobias, Edgar Vasquez, and Candice Wiesner. Professor John Koolage, the faculty mentor of the UCiP team, could not be prouder of this event and of our students.

Acta Cogitata

ACTA COGITATA



Our undergraduate journal, Acta Cogitata, features creative work from undergraduate students from across the globe. The student editor for the 2021 edition, Christopher (Mac) Neaville, continued the tradition of exemplary graduate student service set by his predecessors delivering another excellent issue of the journal. The work of EMU student Omar Khali is included in this issue.

Read more at: <u>https://commons.emich.edu/ac/</u>

Philosophy Club

Over the last year, the Philosophy Club provided a forum for philosophical inquiry across a wide range of contemporary topics with discussions led by students. In addition, Philosophy Club supported student success by hosting peer review sessions at the end of each semester, in which students received constructive feedback on drafts of their final papers for philosophy classes.

We are grateful for the service and dedication of those who held leadership positions in Philosophy Club this past year: President Natalie Anderson, Vice President Zach Tobias, Treasurer John Milkovich, Secretary Christopher (Mac) Neaville, and Members-at-large Noah Cross, Kennedy DeFrancesco, Andrew Garcia, and Candice Wiesner.

Philosophy Speaker Series

The Speaker Series Committee (**Dr. Laura McMahon [chair]**, **Dr. Michael Scoville**, and **Dr. John Koolage**) invited a diverse group of philosophers from across North America and the U.K. for our 2021-2022 virtual speaker series, and also highlighted the work of Outstanding Graduate Student Essay Award winner, **Mac Neaville**. Our Distinguished Speaker for this year's series was **Dr. Helga Varden** (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign). Talks were also given by **Dr. Adrian Currie** (University of Exeter), **Dr. John Russon** (University of Guelph), and **Dr. Michael Doan** (Oakland University).



For information on upcoming talks, all of which are free and open to the public, be sure to check out the Philosophy Speaker Series page, accessible at:

https://www.emich.edu/history-philosophy/philosophy/beyond-classroom/speaker-series.php

We hope to see you at one of the 2022-2023 talks!

Endowed Scholarship Recipients

The **George Rhodes Endowed Scholarship** was created in memory of a philosophy major who passed away while he was an EMU student and is awarded annually to an outstanding philosophy major.

• 2022 Recipient: Justin Luttermoser

The **Sophia Endowed Scholarship** was established by Professors Kate Mehuron, Jill Dieterle, and Margaret Crouch and is awarded annually to an outstanding philosophy major or minor.

• 2022 Recipient: Andrew Dase

The **Esther Walker Barnard Endowed Scholarship** was established by a supporter of the Department of History and Philosophy and is awarded annually to an outstanding philosophy major.

• 2022 Recipient: Nicole Reid

The **Stephen G. Cassar Memorial Endowed Scholarship** was created by Professor George Cassar in honor of his brother and is awarded annually to an outstanding philosophy M.A. student.

• 2022 Co-Recipients: Joah DeCasas and Andrew Garcia

Prize and Award Recipients

The Philosophy Prize is given annually to our most outstanding graduating students.

- 2022 undergraduate recipient: Omar Khali
- 2022 graduate student recipient: Robert (Gabe) Kasper

The **Outstanding Essay Award** is given in recognition of excellence in philosophical writing.

- 2022 undergraduate recipient: **Zach Tobias** (for their essay "Varieties of Testimonial Injustice: Nonverbal Testimonial Injustice")
- 2022 graduate student recipient: **Christopher (Mac) Neaville** (for his essay "Clarifying the Role of Implicit Bias in Epistemic Injustice")

Other Student Accomplishments

Natalie Anderson presented "Lakatosian Research Programs and Closing the Loop" at the EMU Graduate Research Conference (with faculty mentor Dr. John Koolage).

Andrew Garcia presented "Silencing and Object-Level Ignorance: Being Sensitive to Other-Oriented Hermeneutical Injustice" at the EMU Graduate Research Conference (with faculty mentor Dr. Jill Dieterle).

Omar Khali presented "Self-Objectification and its Discontents: An Existential-Phenomenological Analysis of Body Dysmorphia" at EMU's Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy. His essay "Hegel, Marx, and the Realization of the Self in Work: Towards a Humanistic Ontology of Labor" was published in the 2021 issue of *Acta Cogitata*. Omar is continuing his philosophical studies in the Ph.D. program at Loyola University Chicago starting in Fall 2022.

John Milkovich presented "Home, Honor, and Anxiety" at EMU's Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy. John will continue his philosophical studies in the M.A. program at EMU starting in Fall 2022.

Maikel Mulet presented "Linguistic Epistemic Injustice, Equity, Differentiated Instructions, and the Overhaul of Philosophy Curricula" at the EMU Graduate Research Conference (with faculty mentor Dr. Jill Dieterle).

Christopher (Mac) Neaville presented "Clarifying the Role of Implicit Bias in Epistemic Injustice" at the EMU Graduate Research Conference (with faculty mentor Dr. Jill Dieterle). He also won the Outstanding Graduate Essay Award for his paper, "Clarifying the Role of Implicit Bias in Epistemic Injustice." Mac will be continuing his philosophical studies in the Ph.D. program at Arizona State University starting in Fall 2022.

Connor Prow presented "On Naturalness and Meat Eating" at the EMU Graduate Research Conference (with faculty mentor Dr. Jill Dieterle).

Zach Tobias presented "Imposed Food and Its Challenges to Food Security" at EMU's Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy and "Autonomy, Identity, & Food Choice: You Are What You Eat?" at the EMU Undergraduate Symposium (with faculty mentor Dr. Jill Dieterle). Zach also won the Outstanding Undergraduate Essay Award in Philosophy for their paper, "Varieties of Testimonial Injustice: Nonverbal Testimonial Injustice." They also presented that essay at The North American Society for Social Philosophy, 39th International Social Philosophy Conference, in July 2022. With support from an Undergraduate Research Stimulus Award, Zach co-authored with Dr. Dieterle a paper entitled "Identity and Food Choice: You Are What You Eat?," which is currently under review at the journal *Food Ethics*. Zach will be continuing their philosophical studies in the Ph.D. program at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign starting in Fall 2022.

Master of Arts Graduates

A record number of students completed their M.A. degrees in Philosophy during the 2021-2022 academic year.

Sarah Bruckler

- Capstone paper: "Restoring Representation: Addressing a Social Justice Concern in Robert Elliot's Faking Nature"
- Committee: Dr. Michael Scoville (Advisor), Dr. Peter Higgins (Reader), Dr. John Koolage (Reader)

Patrick Ewell

Capstone paper: "A Grand (Moral) Failure; or How the United States Federal Government Violated their Citizens' Right to Public Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic"

Committee: Dr. Jill Dieterle (Advisor), Dr. Brian Coffey (Reader), Dr. Michael Scoville (Reader)

Robert (Gabe) Kasper

Capstone paper: "The Religious Shape of the 'Care Structure' in Heidegger's *Being and Time*" Committee: Dr. Laura McMahon (Advisor), Dr. Kate Mehuron (Reader), Dr. John Russon (Reader)

Steven Kurz

Capstone paper: "Action, Narrative, and Forgiveness: Forgive Us Our Actions"

Committee: Dr. Laura McMahon (Advisor), Dr. Kate Mehuron (Reader), Dr. Jeremy Proulx (Reader)

Christopher (Mac) Neaville

- Capstone paper: "Clarifying Informational Structures and Structural Implications of Implicit Bias"
- Committee: Dr. John Koolage (Advisor), Dr. Peter Higgins (Reader), Dr. Laura McMahon (Reader)

Connor Prow

Capstone paper: "On Naturalness and Meat Eating"

Committee: Dr. Jill Dieterle (Advisor), Dr. Peter Higgins (Reader), Dr. Michael Scoville (Reader)

Wenxuan Shen

Capstone paper: "Personal Fullness"

Committee: Dr. Jill Dieterle (Advisor), Dr. Brian Bruya (Reader), Dr. John Koolage (Reader)

Faculty News



While spending the last few years in Taiwan and China, **Professor Brian Bruya** continued work on projects ranging across classical Chinese philosophy, crosscultural philosophy, educational psychology, and cognitive psychology. Those that recently came to fruition are two articles ("Fluid Attention in Education: Conceptual and Neurobiological Framework," co-authored with Yi-yuan Tang; and "To Render *Ren*: Saving Authoritativeness"), a Chinese translation of his article "*Qing* and Emotion in Early Chinese Thought," and an English philosophical comic translation (*Ways of Zen by* C. C. Tsai, Princeton University Press). Professor Bruya's monograph *Ziran yu Zhihui* [Nature and Wisdom] is soon to be published in China with People's Press, and the English version

(Ziran: The Philosophy of Spontaneous Self-Causation) just came out with State University of New York Press.

Professor Brian Coffey and his partner welcomed their first child into the world last September, so Professor Coffey dedicated much of the year to spending time with and caring for his adorable daughter. That said, Professor Coffey still found time to continue to use his expertise in ethics to benefit the community. He continued serving as a member on the Ethics Board for the City of Ypsilanti, as well as volunteering as a community member of the Ethics Committee at Saint Joseph Mercy hospital in Ann Arbor. Additionally, he once again served as a judge for both the Michigan High School Ethics Bowl, as well as the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. In terms of research, Professor Coffey has been concentrating on a few projects related to the scholarship of teaching and learning. He



presented a paper titled "Teaching a Multi-Step Process Using an Online Quiz Tool" at two different conferences last year.



Professor Jill Dieterle has a Faculty Research Fellowship for the Fall Semester. She will be on leave, working on a project at the intersection of Food Justice and Social Epistemology. Her paper "Agency and Autonomy in Food Choice: Can We Really Vote with Our Forks?" is forthcoming in *The Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*. Professor Dieterle served as the faculty mentor for Philosophy major Zachary Tobias' Undergraduate Research Stimulus Award. She and Zach co-authored a paper entitled, "Identity and Food Choice: You are What You Eat?". The paper is currently under consideration by the journal *Food Ethics*. Finally, Professor Dieterle is stepping down from her role as Faculty

Associate in the Graduate School so she can devote more time to teaching, mentoring students, and doing research.

Professor Peter Higgins is enjoying being the department head of History & Philosophy. (No, really!) Though he does not teach much in this role, Professor Higgins recently concluded a seven-week summer iteration of Global Justice (PHIL/PLSC 413/513). This was the Philosophy section's first upper-level undergraduate/graduate class in the summer term, as well as our first "hyflex" (in-person and Zoom) class. It was an intensive but highly enriching experience for students and instructor alike. Thanks to work mostly done before becoming department head, Professor Higgins published two articles this year: "Migration Justice and Legitimacy," in *Res Publica* (November 2021) and "Social Groups, Oppression, and the



(Legally) Undocumented," in APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy (Spring 2022). Professor Higgins's proudest accomplishment of 2021-22 was helping to qualify History & Philosophy faculty for EMU's new Research Release program, which reduces from four to three the number of courses faculty teach per semester in recognition of their scholarly work and accomplishments.



Professor John Koolage feels proud to continue to serve EMU's students, and in particular its philosophy students. His research agenda continues to move around a bit, but he has several new publications and scholarly and public works. He is pleased to report that his paper, with Lauren Williams and Morgen Barroso, on scientific infrastructure and bloodstain pattern analysis will finally be in print in *Science in Context. Teaching Philosophy* will be publishing his paper, with Natalie Anderson, on the roots of epistemic extremism. Meanwhile, he published a paper with numerous scholars from the MAC on the importance of shared governance in *Liberal Education* earlier this year. In non-journal venues, he was a contributing author to *Death Never Dies*, edited

by Lee Fearnside, writing about Sean Connery. He also contributed to the APA Good Practice Guide, writing about student evaluations of teaching, with Eileen Nutting, Julia Jorati, and Tim Davis. He was also interviewed for the Ethics and Education Podcast, talking about argument and curiosity as philosophical skills. He also contributed to the Blog of the APA. In other scholarly work, he presented work at the Central APA's Teaching Hub, and EMU's own CONNECT Teaching Conference. In much, much less exciting news, Professor Koolage continues to serve EMU and Philosophy in his capacities as a member of the APA's Committee on Teaching, the AAPT Studies in Pedagogy's editorial board, the EMU-AAUP's Bargaining Council, the APA's ad hoc committee on student evaluations of teaching, as well as numerous section, department, and university-level committees. Finally, Professor Koolage enjoyed teaching new work by Jon Tsou and Kristen Andrews in the areas of Philosophy of Psychiatry and Cognitive Science this year! He is looking forward to visiting new work by Alison Wylie, as well as some old favorites in Philosophy of Science this coming fall. He hopes you are all well, and that you will keep in touch as your own lives unfold in new and exciting ways.

This past year, **Professor Laura McMahon** taught Phenomenology and Feminist Theory in the fall, before going on parental leave in the winter. She published one article and one book chapter: "The Poverty and Richness of the Imagination: Sartre on (Anti-)Racist Ways of Seeing," *Sartre Studies International* Vol. 27, no. 2 (2021) and "The Phenomenological Sense of Hannah Arendt: Plurality, Modernity, and Political Action," *Hannah Arendt and the History of Thought*, eds. Marguerite La Caze and Daniel Brennan (Lexington, 2022). Professor McMahon also began her term as Secretary-Treasurer of the Society for Phenomenology and Existentialism (SPEP) in Fall 2021, and continued her term as President of the Canadian Society for Continental Philosophy (CSCP).



In the 2022-2023 academic year, Professor McMahon will be on sabbatical. She looks forward to being back in the classroom and working with students in Fall 2023!



Professor Kate Mehuron's research is newly focused on the topics of moral injury and complicity, examining the connections between philosophical and psychoanalytic concepts of both topics. Her paper "A Case of Moral Injury in Global Context: How a Remorseful Address to Migrant Communities Fails in Moral Repair" is accepted by the international conference Literary Landscapes: Forms of Knowledge in the Humanities, to be presented at its Spring meeting. Additionally, Professor Mehuron completed her commentary on Barbara Ehrenreich, *Living with a Wild God: A Non-Believer's Search for the Truth About Everything*, under review for possible publication. The

commentary elucidates how philosophical awareness played a significant ameliorative role in Ehrenreich's memoir, as she came to terms with her account of dissociative experiences and impending death.

In January 2022 Professor Mehuron was recognized as an Academic Associate Faculty in the Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute (MPI). This is an uncompensated honorary position that invites her ongoing *pro bono* educational activities at the Institute. In Winter 2022 she designed and instructed the *pro bono* course, "Memory: The Workings of Mind" to psychoanalytic psychotherapy candidates in the Adult and Child/Adolescent Advanced Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Program, a subsidiary training program of MPI. This course presented phenomenological, psychoanalytic, and narrative approaches to memory, showing applications to clinical understandings of dementia.

All of these educational and research activities are part of Professor Mehuron's ongoing practice, since 2006, as a certified philosophical counselor (American Philosophical Practitioner Association) and recent certification as an academic psychoanalyst (Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute).

Professor John Ouko presented a paper titled "The centrality of Restorative Justice Towards Achieving Transitional Justice in Africa" at the 9th Asixoxe – Let's Talk! Conference on African Philosophy held at the University of Bayreuth (Germany) in June 2022. Professor Ouko also worked on and submitted a Gen-Ed proposal for a new course, PHIL/AFC 246: Introduction to African Philosophy. He was also part of the General Education Humanities (GEKH) Professional Learning Community during the Winter 2022 semester. Professor Ouko also served as a judge at the 2022 Michigan High School Ethics Bowl that took place in February.





When **Professor Jeremy Proulx** is not teaching, he spends much of his time as a union negotiator and grievance officer for the lecturers' union here at EMU. Professor Proulx advocates for hundreds of part-time and contingent teachers—professors who teach a majority of the courses at highereducation institutions across the country, but do so on a part-time basis. Professor Proulx has also been working on a project related to this advocacy work, applying Herbert Marcuse's concept of technological rationality to the problem of adjunct labor in higher education. He has also been working on a paper about Francis Bacon's idea of the relationship between nature and technology. Otherwise, Professor Proulx spends his time playing with

his two little boys and renovating his 120-year-old home.

Over the last year, **Professor Michael Scoville** has been engaged in two different research projects, each of which connects to his teaching in environmental philosophy and normative theory. One project is focused on identifying and analyzing different concepts of nature at play in environmental theory and policy. An essay related to that project, "On the Concept of Independent Nature," was accepted for publication in *Environmental Philosophy*. The other project has different facets but is mainly focused on understanding evaluative attitudes—such as regret, affirmation, hope, anger, and resentment—and their importance for accounts of agency, responsibility, and normative reasons. These research



projects will inform Professor Scoville's teaching this coming year, notably, his Philosophical Approaches to Moral Psychology course in Fall 2022 and his Environmental Values, Justice, and Policy course in Winter 2023.

Beyond his research and teaching, Professor Scoville will continue to serve as section chair of Philosophy and will take over as chair of the Philosophy Speaker Series, in addition to serving on several other committees connected to the Philosophy program. He will also maintain his extensive involvement with the Environmental Science and Society (ENVI) program, serving as co-coordinator for ENVI, as a member of the ENVI steering committee, and as advisor for the Environment and Society concentration within the ENVI major. Professor Scoville was promoted to the rank of full Professor, effective September 2022. He is looking forward to another year of teaching and mentoring students, of engaging in research, and of serving the EMU academic community.

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https://www.emich.edu/foundation/give/index.php

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