Opening Statement

Desmond P. Hogan
Princeton University
Associate Professor

Announcement of Honors

Presentation of Prizes

Dickinson Prize

John Martyn Warbeke 1903
Prize in Aesthetics

John Martyn Warbeke 1903
Prize in Metaphysics and Epistemology

Class of 1869 Prize in Ethics

Alexander Guthrie McCosh Prize
Alya Rashda Ahmad
Manasseh Alexander
Harry Bound
Andrew Denton Charette
Felipe Doria
Nicholas Leonard Foster
Daniel Junho Han
Paul Daniel Haws Jr.
Liam Alexander Lynch
Maximilian David LeVine Manicone
David Christopher McElroy
Gagandeep Kaur Reen
George Cohalan Rettaliata
Yasmine Sabrina Shafaie
Shanila Shakil
Nalanda Sharadjaya
Matthew Leaman Silverman
Stella Marie Sokolowski
Daniel S. Te
Allen Yayra Kweku Van-Tay
Daniel Vogler
Wei Xiao Zhang
**Chair**
Gideon A. Rosen

**Director of Undergraduate Studies**
John P. Burgess

**Director of Graduate Studies**
Hendrik Lorenz

**Professor**
Lara M. Buchak
John P. Burgess
Adam Newman Elga
Daniel Garber
Hans Halvorson
Elizabeth Harman, *also University Center for Human Values*
Mark Johnston
Thomas P. Kelly
Sarah-Jane Leslie
Hendrik Lorenz
Benjamin C. A. Morison
Alexander Nehamas, *also Comparative Literature*
Gideon A. Rosen
Michael A. Smith

**Associate Professor**
Johann D. Frick, *also University Center for Human Values*
Desmond P. Hogan
Boris C. Kment
Sarah E. McGrath

**Assistant Professor**
Grace E. Helton
Harvey Lederman
Una Stojnic
Lecturer
Roman Altshuler
Sam Berstler
Ryan D. Cox
Matthew Evpak
Marcus Gibson
Benjamin Holguin
Victoria McGeer
Steven Cole Mitchell
Cosim Sayid
Lauren Schaeffer
Johanna Schmitt
Timothy Stoll
Silvia De Toffoli
Eric Tracy
Yuna Won

Associated Faculty
Charles R. Beitz, Politics
Renee Bolinger, University Center for Human Values
Andrew Chignell, Religion, University Center for Human Values
Robert P. George, Politics
Jonathan Gold, Religion
Mirjam Kotwick, Classics
Sanjeev R. Kulkarni, Electrical Engineering
Melissa S. Lane, Politics
Tania Lombrozo, Psychology
Victoria McGeer, University Center for Human Values
Alan W. Patten, Politics
Philip N. Pettit, University Center for Human Values
Peter Singer, University Center for Human Values
Anna Stilz, Politics, University Center for Human Values
Alya Rashda Ahmad
Disability is often unreflectively taken to be intrinsically harmful, but Elizabeth Barnes rejects this with a model that takes disability to be neutral with respect to wellbeing. I argue that a model of disability ought to be neutral with respect to the body while construing disability as harmful, and I defend such a model of disability.

Manasseh Alexander
Traditional arguments in favor of privacy appear to presuppose that the less individuals are constrained within the public sphere, the greater their private sphere freedoms will be. Thus, more individualism has often been equated with more autonomy. However, these arguments underestimate the importance of public sphere interpersonal interactions—in promoting autonomy through self-respect and self-esteem—and furthermore, the function of civility. Using civility, we may be able to salvage an argument in favor of privacy.

Harry Bound
This thesis concerns Aquinas’ *De Ente et Essentia*. The first chapter presents Aquinas’ account of universals and the mind. The second chapter gives an account of Aquinas on language, culminating with how this account of language can be applied to God.
Andrew Denton Charette
The principle aim of this work is to outline a new methodology for undergoing moral inquiry. It examines the method of reflective equilibrium as outlined by John Rawls, and a later defense of the method by Thomas Scanlon, as well as critique of the method by Sarah McGrath and Thomas Kelly. In drawing on that critique, it highlights the central concern of the method of reflective equilibrium or any other method of moral inquiry: producing divergent results when employed competently by different individuals. This paper then examines recent work in the field of experimental philosophy by John Mikhail on shared moral intuitions and the universal moral grammar hypothesis. Drawing on that work, it proposes a new methodology for determining moral principles, in which moral principles are selected based upon their ability to explain intuitions about different abstract cases. Finally, it examines some potential implications of this method for the question of moral realism and the future of moral philosophy.

Felipe Doria
Modern epistemology often deals with two kinds of belief: full-on beliefs and credence. This thesis tries to defend credence monism, a position that holds that only credences exist. In particular, I consider how (1) moral encroachment, (2) pragmatic encroachment and (3) our practices of holding each other responsible—all of which are often explained in terms of full-on beliefs—may be explained in terms of credence.
Senior Thesis Abstracts

Nicholas Leonard Foster
In this thesis, I examine some of the moral concerns surrounding genetic engineering and argue in favor of the interest-normative view. This view helps guide us in justifying the use of such technologies, suggesting that only those procedures that are consistent with justice should be permitted. It shows why other justificatory principles fail, why some enhancements should be forbidden, and why some gene therapies should be strictly enforced.

Daniel Junho Han
In my thesis, I address the divine hiddenness argument against theism. In particular, I look at arguments against theism that McBrayer and Swenson address in their paper “Scepticism about the argument from divine hiddenness”. I then proceed to argue for theism using epistemic, theological, and second-order arguments.

Paul Daniel Haws Jr.
I assess the attempts to give an account of the colors as dispositions to appear colored (Johnston 1992) and as surface reflectance types (the predominant physicalist approach). Both accounts are found lacking in terms of their ability to adequately capture important features of color, namely, principles of unity, revelation and explanation. In addition, both accounts make the “property mistake,” i.e., they identify color with the property of being colored.
Liam Alexander Lynch
My thesis has two components: a twenty-minute dance film reflecting on my relationship with my grandfather and his condition of dementia, and an essay focused on the interpretation of art. In the essay I sift through the ideas that philosophers have proposed about literary interpretation, voicing my support for ‘hypothetical intentionalism.’ Next, I apply hypothetical intentionalism to the artistic practice of dance. Finally, I offer a contextualized interpretation of my own dance film.

Maximilian David LeVine Manicone
In the tradition of Brian Skyrms, I use reinforcement learning to model the evolution of communication conventions in agents cooperating on a task. My simulations result in compositional signaling conventions in agents with the cognitive capacities of baboons. I argue that use of singular terms, utterances that refer to single entities, is a plausible candidate for the final missing step in the story of the evolution of the complex language used by humans.

David Christopher McElroy
There is ongoing debate about the nature of moral claims. This thesis presents a view of moral reasons as a subset of standard decision-theoretic reasons for action. It presents a modified version of Gilbert Harman’s theory of moral relativism, arguing that the normative force of moral agreements comes from decision-theoretic rationality. It then attempts to show that combined with a dispositional theory of value, such a theory explains common intuitions about moral disagreement.
Gagandeep Kaur Reen
In her thesis _Corporate Moral Agency_ Gangadeep Kaur examines corporate responsibility through the lens of the doctrine of Moderate Collectivism, focusing on Odwalla’s corporate response to its contamination crisis.

George Cohalan Rettaliata
This thesis examines the duties of various individuals during the Covid-19 pandemic. I argue on behalf of variable thresholds of duty depending on one’s primary role responsibility. When special duty ceases to exist, action beyond what duty requires can be supererogatory or morally excessively costly as I define it to be. This thesis also includes a discussion on the implications of partial non-compliance with prioritization of treatment and vaccination respectively.

Yasmine Sabrina Shafaie
My thesis defends the moral permissibility of certain forms of quid pro quo sex. I define the moral position of the offeree in these cases and explore how the offeror impacts this exchange. I also describe situations in which there are no significant harms to third parties. This thesis discusses the pure morality of workplace sex, the law, and workplace rules as they should be for quid pro quo sex.
Shanila Shakil
Women and men have different communicative styles, both shaped by social conventions. Women, in particular, are systematically stereotyped and forced into using language that is prone to more error. This susceptibility is exacerbated by the fact that the healthcare system is not trained to recognize and engage with women’s communicative styles. Consequently, women maybe experiencing disproportionate problems as they are not being understood or believed by their doctors.

Nalanda Sharadjaya
This thesis examines the relationship between accounts of personal ethical development in Søren Kierkegaard and Iris Murdoch, with a thematic emphasis on the role played by the inner life in the process of becoming a “better” person.

Matthew Leaman Silverman
The problem of algorithmic bias is one that is often debated in the ethics of information technology, but there is a more fundamental and pressing problem facing us in the problem of tainted base rates. I then explain different theories of moral encroachment and position it as a potential solution to this problem, focusing on moderate moral encroachment as the more likely and defensible option of the two main varieties.
**Stella Marie Sokolowski**

This thesis critiques and analyzes recent theories of retributivism with focus on Jean Hampton’s “expressive” theory. I argue that Hampton’s theory does not justify what she defines as hard punishment—punishment that uses serious physical or psychological harm as a means. Towards the end, she evaluates the plausibility of a world without hard punishment and asks the reader to think about prison abolition and reform.

**Daniel S. Te**

As a society, one of our greatest moral imperatives is to address the racial and economic inequalities in urban ghettos. I outline three principles that we ought to follow for a just intervention. After reviewing strategies such as residential integration and egalitarian pluralism, I find that what satisfies these principles is not simply implementing strategies, but changing the scope of intervention, i.e., establishing formal metropolitan regional governance to facilitate progress.

**Allen Yayra Kweku Van-Tay**

My thesis focuses on the idea that although immanent causation is metaphysically difficult to work out, compatibilism and event causality are unworkable options and as such we must wrestle between the mechanics of agent causation and accepting the looming threat of determinism.
Daniel Vogler
There is a longstanding debate about whether corporations have duties to society beyond serving the interests of their shareholders. Stakeholder theory refers to the view that corporations have duties to promote the interests of parties like workers, employees, and local communities. This view has traditionally been defended by appeals to institutional justice. This thesis defends the same position by appealing to the ethical duties of corporate decision-making agents.

Wei Xiao Zhang
This thesis investigates two sets of issues concerning Albertus Magnus’s theory of place in *De natura loci*: 1) the “philosophy of science” underlying Albert’s theory of place within the greater context of his natural philosophy; and 2) how Albert’s philosophy of place informs his normative conceptions of human nature. **PART 1** argues that Albert’s philosophy of science synthesizes an Aristotelian model for the discernment of causation with a robust method of reading, compilation, and attribution. Albert’s synthetic knowledge production remains textually rooted both in its reasoning and observational evidence, a far cry from either formalized experimentation or pure deduction. In **PART II**, I show that, for Albert, place is the conduit between humans and their natural world; his theory of place bridges his cosmology and anthropology.