Letter from the Chair

I wish all of you a belated Happy New Year! I hope that you and your family had a joyous holiday season. But time doesn’t stand still and the Department of Philosophy has already revved up the spring semester.

You may have heard some of the discussion of the impact that changes in technology may be having on higher education. It is hard to determine what is hype and what will really help students. The Department is making some exploratory moves with technology in an undergraduate course. We are looking into flipping Phil 1010, Critical Thinking. In a flipped class, the lecture and the homework are flipped. The students listen/watch the lectures outside of class via the web. In class, they do problem sets (often in small groups) with the instructor assisting them and stopping to discuss common problems with the entire class. Flipping a course as large as Phil 1010 is a lot of work. About 3,000 students take Phil 1010 every year. We have to work up the technology, test it, refine it, and, assuming all goes well, train instructors to use it. We hope that this change will help students learn and we are setting things up so that we can see and measure improvement (if it exists).

Our graduate students continue to receive recognition for their work. Archie Fields (MA Student) wrote a paper, "The Many Meanings of Success and the Failures of Fictions," that won the President’s Prize at the most recent meeting of the Southwestern Philosophical Society. This prize is awarded to the best paper submitted by a graduate student or recent Ph.D. Jesse Gero (MA 2010) graduated from NYU Law School and is an associate in the law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom in New York City. He reports that his training in philosophy is a big help in his legal work. James DiGiovanni (MA 2012) has been accepted into Harvard Law School.

Our undergraduates are also pulling down awards. Jim Nichols (BA 2013) won The Nation’s eighth annual Student Writing Contest. Jim’s winning essay focused on “how the rise and dominance of market liberalism has affected both civil society and his own life.” Kevin Thurston (BA 2013) had his essay, “Preference and Practical Reason: Evaluating Sen and Hausman” accepted for publication in The American University Undergraduate Journal. Brett Mullins (BA Student) had his paper, “Against Indifference: Popper’s Assumption of Distribution Preference,” accepted for presentation at the fall 2013 meeting of the Georgia Philosophical Society. The GA Phil Society very rarely accepts papers by undergraduates.

As always, we would love to see you at a departmental event. Check out the list of events on page 7 and come on down to see us!
Georgia State Philosophers continue to define academic excellence.

**Jessica Berry** has a publication out in the *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, ed. by Ken Gemes (University College London) and John Richardson (NYU). Dr. Berry’s piece is titled, “Nietzsche and the Greeks.” Dr. Berry also traveled to Ontario in October, where she was invited to participate in a workshop on ‘Nietzsche and Virtue’, and to the Pacific Northwest in November. While in the Pacific Northwest, Dr. Berry gave the Catherine Gould Chism Lecture in Humanities and Arts at her alma mater; The University of Pudget Sound.

Additionally, Dr. Berry received an internal Scholarly Support grant for Spring 2014 for further research toward a book on Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud.

**Andrew I. Cohen** is wrapping up his work on a book about ethics and public policy. He recently published (with co-author Jennifer Samp) a piece on corporate apologies in the *Journal of Moral Philosophy*. Some additional work on professional ethics is forthcoming in an anthology on engineering ethics. Dr. Cohen is also at work on a piece exploring the relative priority of distributive to reparative justice. He reports that the Ethics Center’s major conference on “Immigration, Toleration, and Nationalism” was a great success in Helsinki last summer; where, apparently, the sun never sets in June! He is now in talks with University College, Dublin to arrange a conference for the summer of 2015.

**George Graham** spent the Fall Term as a research fellow at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton writing a book on spiritual/religious delusion. Dr. Graham’s paper, “Being a Mental Disorder,” is in press with The MIT Press in a collection entitled *Classifying Psychopathology*. Together with the philosophers Terence Horgan (University of Arizona) and John Tienson (University of Memphis), Dr. Graham is helping to prepare a collection of their papers on consciousness and intentionality for publication by Oxford University Press. Dr. Graham has also been invited to the University of Oslo in Norway this summer to participate in a conference on the nature of addiction.


**Tim O’Keefe’**s chapter; “Epicurus’s garden: Physics and Epistemology,” was published as part of the *Routledge Companion to Ancient Philosophy*. He is currently working on a paper “The Sources and Scopes of Cyrenaic Skepticism,” which will be included in the book *The Socratic Schools*.

**Neil Van Leeuwen** was invited to give a talk at the Centre for Philosophical Psychology in Antwerp and at the Institut Jean Nicod in Paris. He recently completed his “The Imaginative Agent” piece, which was based on the talks for the volume of *Knowledge through Imagination*; set to be published by Oxford University Press. Dr. Van Leeuwen also published an article, an encyclopedia entry, and two book reviews.

**Eric Wilson** presented his paper; “Moral Self-Destruction: Kant on the Vice of Avarice” at the annual meeting of the German Studies Association in October. In March 2014, he will present “The Nature of Inclination: Kant on Habitual Desire” at the New York City Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy.
Philosophy: The roadmap to success!

Several research studies were conducted in 2013 on what employers are looking for in recent college graduates. The results of those studies may be surprising to some. Employers are less interested in a specific degree but rather a particular set of skills. Specifically, they are seeking college graduates with critical thinking and logic skills. You will acquire these skills with a degree in philosophy, making you more desirable to potential employers. Industries such as business, government, journalism, and marketing all have use for philosophy graduates.

Dr. Eddy Nahmias, Director of Undergraduate Studies, has provided a PowerPoint that shows how and why philosophy is important in the workforce today.


For more information, visit www.gsu.edu/philosophy

Faculty Bookshelf
Check out the latest publications from our faculty.

Neuroscience and Legal Responsibility
Nicole Vincent
Oxford University Press
February 2013

Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics, 2nd edition
Andrew I. Cohen
Christopher Heath Wellman
Wiley-Blackwell Publishing
December 2013

Critical Thinking: The Art of An Argument, 2nd Edition
George Rainbolt
Sandra Dwyer
Cengage Learning
January 2014
The Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics had several activities this past fall. In August, we discussed a manuscript on trade by Leif Wenar (Kings College, London). Our guest discussants included Jill Shankleman, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC and Director; JSL Consulting, Oxford, UK; Jedidiah Purdy (Duke Law); and Dale Jamieson (NYU Law, Philosophy). Our locals included Andrew Altman, Andrew I. Cohen, William Edmundson, Christie Hartley, George Rainbolt, Nicole Vincent, and Yongsheng Xu. This conference was part of the Center's continuing commitment to fostering cutting-edge research in social and political theory.

This Fall, the Center collaborated with GSU Housing and the Center for Ethics Student Forum on its annual ethics-in-film movie series in GSU's student housing. This year's theme was moral repair and social justice and featured films such as “Do the Right Things,” “21 Grams,” “American History X,” and others.

The Center sponsored a symposium on marriage in October, featuring L. Lynn Hogue (GSU Law), Mark Aaron Goldfeder (Emory Law), Maxine Eichner (UNC, Law), and Elizabeth Brake (Arizona State, Philosophy). The speakers discussed many themes in the continuing controversy about the ethics of marriage policy. Students and faculty also enjoyed the opportunity to meet with the panelists in classes and in other informal settings to hear more about their current research.

The Center is collaborating with the Department of Economics to arrange a symposium on immigration ethics and policy for this coming spring. Scheduled speakers include Kit Wellman (Washington University, St. Louis, Philosophy) and Richard Freeman (Harvard, Economics). In addition, the symposium will include comments by scholars, research presentations by featured guests, and a reception on Tuesday, March 11th.

GSU fares well at Annual Ethics Bowl Competition

The JBB Center for Ethics was the leading sponsor for Georgia State University's Ethics Bowl team, which competed in the annual Southeast Regional Ethics Bowl tournament in Clearwater, Florida in November. The Ethics Bowl features many schools in a collaborative competition. Students research and prepare to discuss the ethical issues in a dozen topical cases, ranging from prayer in public schools, the ethics of markets for bone marrow, sweatshop policies, academic ethics, HIV criminalization statutes, and others. Eleven Georgia State Undergrads attended the competition.

The students performed quite well in a tournament widely regarded as among the most competitive in the United States.
Their record was 2-1, beating Dartmouth (yes, that’s Dartmouth) and Eckerd College (a previous powerhouse in the competition), but only losing narrowly to the eventual regional champion, St. Petersburg College. Preparing for the Ethics Bowl was a demanding and rewarding opportunity for students to explore the relevance of clear and compelling ethical thinking to contemporary controversies. Georgia State should be proud that it showcased some of its brightest students in this annual event. Students typically join the team by enrolling in a linked upper-division ethics course, “Ethics and Contemporary Public Policy.” Coach Cohen reports he’ll be recruiting a team for next Fall’s competition.

YENIPHER DELAROSA (BA ‘13)

PHILOSOPHY MAJOR: In My Own Words

Yenipher Delarosa graduated Summer 2013 with a BA in philosophy with a pre-law concentration. She is currently a Breakthrough Fellow with the Georgia Center for Opportunity, an independent, non-partisan think tank. The GCO selects five of America’s top public policy graduates to for the Breakthrough two-year fellowship to carry out directed research, advocacy, and program delivery focused on poverty and social mobility in Georgia.

Yenipher writes: I always knew I wanted to major in philosophy. I knew that it could provide not just knowledge, but also critical thinking skills. Majoring in philosophy challenged me to question abstract concepts, issues considered by scholars through the ages that remain relevant today.

Harnessing the skills I gained through my studies I earned an internship with a U.S. member of Congress and was recently chosen among top public policy scholars to solve complex societal issues. As a public policy fellow at the Georgia Center for Opportunity, I work with the top officials, charities and non-profits using effective and measurable strategies enlightened by my time as a GSU philosophy major.

...“philosophy challenged me to question abstract concepts...”

Ethics Bowl, continued from p. 5

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The GSU Philosophy Department hosts lectures, seminars, and talks from national and international speakers.

SPRING 2014

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<th>JANUARY</th>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
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<td><strong>FRI/11th</strong> Spring semester classes end</td>
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<td>Pizza Friday - 12 PM</td>
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<td>Christopher McMahon (University of California, San Diego)</td>
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<td><strong>FRI/31st</strong></td>
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<td>Colloquium Series - 3 PM</td>
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<td>Geoffrey Sayre- McCord (UNC-Chapel Hill)</td>
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<td><strong>MON/17th - SAT/22nd</strong></td>
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<td>Center for Ethics Colloquia - 3 PM</td>
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<td>GSU Spring Break</td>
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<td>Kit Wellman (Washington U, St. Louis)</td>
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<td>Immigration Policy Symposium</td>
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<td>Colloquia - 3 PM</td>
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<td>Candice Delmas (Clemson U)</td>
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<td><strong>MON/17th</strong></td>
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<td>Prospective graduate student visitation day</td>
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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MA STUDENTS WHO SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED THEIR THESIS

Paul Sikkema’s thesis, “Targeted Killing: Modern Solution or Modern Problem?” was directed by Dr. Andrew Altman and his committee included Dr. Andrew I. Cohen and Dr. George Rainbolt. In January 2014, Paul began intelligence training at Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo, TX.

Ben Stanford’s thesis, “How the Cognitive Penetrability of emotions Undermines Rational Sentimentalism,” was directed by Dr. Andrea Scarantino and his committee included Dr. Andrew I. Cohen and Dr. Eric Wilson.

Archie Field’s paper, “The Many Meanings of Success and the Failures of Fictions,” won the President’s Prize at the Fall meeting of the Southwestern Philosophical Society. This prize is awarded to the best paper submitted by a graduate student or recent PhD.

Major, Brett Mullin’s paper, “Against Indifference: Poppers Assumption of Distribution Preference” was accepted for presentation at the Fall meeting of the Georgia Philosophical Society.

Jim Nichols (BA ’13) is the winner of The Nation’s eighth annual Student Writing Contest! Jim’s winning essay focused on “how the rise and dominance of market liberalism has affected both civil society and his own life.”

MA student, Aaron Sullivan, who’s paper, “How to Talk to Jerks and Poets: Using and Understanding Sarcasm and Metaphor,” has been accepted for presentation at Department of Philosophy at Mercer University on March 25, 2014.

CONGRATULATIONS FALL 2013 GRADUATES

PHILOSOPHY MAJORS WHO GRADUATED ARE:

Samuel Hood
Bryan Lariscy
Patricia Mazur

Aaron Rice
Evelyn Richardson
Kathryn Zinke
Toni Adleberg (MA ’12, now at UCSD) and Morgan Thompson (MA ’13, now at Pitt HPS) are primary authors on a paper co-authored with Dr. Eddy Nahmias that was recently accepted to Philosophical Psychology, “Do Men and Women Have Different Philosophical Intuitions? Further Data.” Furthermore, Toni, Morgan, and Dr. Nahmias, along with Sam Sims (MA ’13, now at FSU) are now working on a paper that explores why women are more likely than men to stop pursuing philosophy after their introductory courses.

Theresa “Ness” Creighton (BA ’04, MA ’08) passed her Prospectus defense so is now officially a PhD candidate in the GSU History department.

James DiGiovanni (MA ’12) has been accepted into Harvard Law School.

Jesse Gero (MA ’10) graduated from NYU Law School and is an associate in the law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom in New York City.

Morgan Thompson
PHI SIGMA TAU

Phi Sigma Tau is the student-run philosophy honors organization at Georgia State University. The annual Phi Sigma Tau conference showcases not only the work of graduate students, but also invites a well-regarded professional philosopher. Additionally, PST hopes to host other activities this year including a stress management group for the Department, as well as a “meet your professors night.” We are always open to suggestions from members and non-members alike. If you would like to know more you can contact PST president Maria Caruso at mcaruso2@student.gsu.edu.

CENTER FOR ETHICS STUDENT FORUM

The Center for Ethics Student Forum is a student organization affiliated with the Department of Philosophy and the Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics. Our mission is to nurture conversation on campus and in the community about pertinent ethical matters facing people today. We do this by providing an interactive learning environment for professors, staff and students from all departments. We host events based around ethical themes that are open to all students and faculty, as well as to members of the broader Atlanta community. The Forum’s student leadership council and advisor arrange activities, contact speakers, and publicize events. Any student is welcome to make suggestions regarding the Forum’s activities and to participate in the planning process. For more information, contact the Forum’s president Adam Shmidt at ashmidt1@student.gsu.edu.

PHILOSOPHERS’ GUILD

During the Fall 2013 semester, the Philosophers’ Guild welcomed several new members to the group by hosting a fun meet-and-greet. Our November screening of “Rain Man” was a great success; afterwards, we had a rousing debate on whether Charlie Babbit was a still a bad person by the end of the story. The Guild has several exciting events planned for the Spring 2014 semester. Thursday, February 6th, we will be hosting “Position Potluck”; participants will draw hot-button ethical positions from a hat and will pair off to debate the position with a partner. Thursday, March 6th, we will be hosting a discussion “Do we have a right to education?” We will discuss whether access to education is a basic human right, and if so, how it should be funded.

On Thursday, April 4th, we’ll be ending the 2013–2014 academic year with the much-anticipated annual Faculty versus Student Trivia night. Trivia is always a hit! See page 11 for more information.
Madison Olson (BA ‘13)

Madison writes: Honestly, the reason I became a Philosophy Major was because I wanted to go to law school and I heard philosophy majors score the highest on the LSAT, and it seemed interesting enough. However, I soon realized I had much more personal interest in philosophy other than it simply aiding my chances into getting into a better law school. Many people think of philosophy as this other worldly type of thing that they either cannot or will not understand or as something that really garners no meaning or worth in “the real world.” Philosophy to me, however, is something that taught me how to think and react in the real world. It taught me to analyze situations and arguments logically and creatively; and, how to take a position on a situation or argument and logically, soundly, and validly support it. My time in the Philosophy Department at Georgia State taught me that you should never be afraid to ask questions or challenge an idea.

The reason I stayed a Philosophy Major: all of the reasons listed above, my incessant curiosity, my love for healthy and thoughtful debate, and the brilliant faculty in the Philosophy Department at Georgia State. Make no mistake, a B.A. in Philosophy at Georgia State is not an easy achievement, it is a challenge. However, I would take this challenge again and again.

I leave my undergraduate career at Georgia State with a newfound confidence in my analytical and writing skills (among a plethora of other things), which gives me an edge over others who did not have the same training. Next, I plan on taking the LSAT, going to law school for Fall 2014 (and hopefully, into a J.D./MA Philosophy program), and taking it from there.

Madison graduated with Distinction in Philosophy and Research Honors in 2013. Under the direction of Jessica Berry, she wrote her Honors Thesis, “What Is Marriage For?” Madison is applying to law school and hopes to obtain a JD/MA in Philosophy.

Guild, continued from p. 10

On October 31, 2013, Philosophy competed against Religious Studies in a friendly game of Trick and Treat. The trick was for all majors to find the department and tell us the name of their favorite philosopher. As a treat, the department gave away a free candy bar. The Religious Studies majors had to name their favorite religious figure/thinker. The idea was to see which department could draw more majors. The Philosophy department crushed Religious Studies in a 24-15 victory! Who will win this year?

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We are accepting applications for Guild officers for the 2014–2015 academic year. If you would like more information, please email Casey Fowler at cfowler6@student.gsu.edu. We hope to see you at our upcoming events!

We will be presenting prizes to the winning team. All meetings for the Spring 2014 semester will be held in the Lucerne Suite (278 Student Center), and we will provide refreshments.

PHILOSOPHY MAJOR: In My Own Words

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MONEY MATTERS

Interested in lending your support? You can!

GSU’s Philosophy Department sponsors several special funds that are used to pay for departmental events and activities. They’re an excellent way to express your support.

Our faculty are receiving national recognition for the quality of their research and the excellence of their teaching. Our students are taking their place on the national stage – presenting papers at national conference, receiving prestigious scholarships, and finding new ways to connect their learning with the world around them.

Your generosity makes this vital work possible. Alumni and friends support every aspect of Department life, making it possible for us to deal with present needs, and to plan for the future. You can help us:

- build our program;
- attract and retain outstanding students and faculty;
- enhance quality teaching and research;
- bring distinguished speakers to campus.

If you would like to give to Philosophy, visit our website at www.gsu.edu/philosophy and click the “Giving” tab.