UNDERGRADUATE AWARD WINNERS

ARLENE AND ALVIN ALTMAN SCHOLAR: BABAFEMI FATADE
Babafemi Fatade is the 2016 Arlene and Alvin Altman Scholar. This scholarship is given to a philosophy major on the basis of academic excellence and economic need. Preference is given to students from segments of American society whose members historically have been denied equal educational opportunity due to prejudice and discrimination.

GEORGE W. BEISWANGER SCHOLAR: MELANIE FARNHAM
Melanie Farnham is the 2017 George W. Beiswanger Scholar. This award is given to a philosophy major on the basis of overall academic excellence, including (but not limited to): program GPA, overall GPA, undergraduate research projects, BA thesis work, and participation in academically-oriented departmental activities. Dr. Beiswanger was Professor of Philosophy from 1963 to 1970.

KAY CRAIGIE SCHOLAR: JOSEPH MURPHY
Joseph Murphy is the 2016 Kay Craigie Scholar. This scholarship is awarded to academically successful philosophy majors who face financial barriers to realizing their dreams. Ms. Craigie earned her BA in philosophy from Georgia State University in 1968.

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PHILOSOPHY LISTSERV
Join the Friends of Philosophy listserv and get announcements about talks, conferences, and social events in the Department.

To join, send an email to: listserv@listserv.gsu.edu

In the body of the message, include only two words:

subscribe philfriends

Like us on Facebook!
Philosophy at Georgia State University
“Every deep thinker is more afraid of being understood than being misunderstood.”
- Friedrich Nietzsche
THE OTHER and Plato’s Cave

Since 1970, the percentage of those born into families in the top income quartile who earn a bachelor’s degree has jumped from 40% to 77%. Over that time period, the percentage of those born into families in the bottom income quartile who earn a bachelor’s degree has barely budged. It went from 6% to 9%. When it comes to earning a bachelor’s degree, the income of your parents makes a big difference. This big difference makes a big difference. In addition to the well-documented income premium for holding a college degree, life expectancy at age 25 is about six years shorter for those with only a high school diploma than it is for those with a bachelor’s degree. One does not choose the income quartile of one’s family. The differential rates of bachelor’s degree attainment by family income indicate that the US is not providing equality of opportunity to its citizens.

There are many causes of inequality of opportunity. Family structures are a cause of inequality of opportunity. Parenting plays a powerful role in shaping people and some have better parents than others. Racism is a cause of inequality of opportunity. Because US schools are funded via local property taxes, those who live in places with high property values have access to better schooling than those who live in places with low property values. (In other countries, schools located in areas with concentrations of poverty have more resources than schools located in areas with concentrations of wealth.) There are many other causes of inequality of opportunity, but I want to focus on a feature of the US higher education system that reduces its ability to be an engine for equality of opportunity.

Within higher education, there is a prestige hierarchy and many schools work very hard to move up in that hierarchy. In itself, I see no problem with the existence of a prestige hierarchy. The problem is that the traditional hierarchy is not based on how much schools are doing to help students and the US. Instead it is in large part based on features such as the average SAT/ACT score of the students who enroll, the percent of applicants who are rejected, and the percentage of students who graduate. SAT and ACT are highly correlated with family income. (An article in the Wall Street Journal suggests that SAT is an acronym for “Student Affluence Test.”) The easiest way for a school to increase its graduation rate is to increase the SAT/ACT scores and grades required for admission. Admitting students from high-income families reduces the amount of financial aid that a school has to offer. Thus it is no surprise that many schools enroll a low percentage of low-income students. US universities often sell themselves as engines of equality of opportunity, but many of them fail to contribute to this goal.

Georgia State really is an engine of equality of opportunity. Approximately 60% of Georgia State’s undergraduates in 4-year programs receive Pell grants. Most Pell money goes to students with family incomes below $20,000 so the majority of GSU’s undergraduates are in the bottom income quartile. At the national level, there is a negative correlation between Pell status and graduation rates. GSU has bucked that correlation. Each of the past three years, the GSU graduation rates for Pell and non-Pell students have been within one percent of each other. In addition, GSU is not one of those schools constantly seeking to raise its admission requirements. Although the details are complicated, the simplified version is that if a student completes a college-preparatory curriculum in high school and earns a B average, that student will be admitted to GSU’s 4-year programs. The requirement to enter GSU’s 2-year programs is essentially to have a high school degree. Georgia State is not seeking to move up in the traditional hierarchy. GSU is moving up in a hierarchy that matters, the hierarchy of schools helping students. The US already does a good job providing higher education to children from families on the upper rungs of the socio-economic ladder. The challenge facing the US is to make higher education a path to greater opportunity for students from all backgrounds. Georgia State is helping to increase equality of opportunity and, in my view, that is something of which we should be very proud.
GSU HOME OF THE
JOURNAL OF
NIETZSCHE STUDIES

The Journal of Nietzsche Studies is an international journal dedicated to publishing research about German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. In fall 2016, Dr. Jessica Berry was named executive editor of the journal and it is now housed at Georgia State University. Dr. Berry says: “Moving the journal’s editorial home to Georgia State will increase the visibility of the university and enhance the Department of Philosophy’s existing strength in German philosophy.” For more information, click here.

JESSICA BERRY
Associate Professor | jberry@gsu.edu

Jessica Berry was invited to speak at Birkbeck - University of London in July, the University of Calgary in September, and Marist College, where she delivered the keynote address for the 7th Annual Mid-Hudson Undergraduate Philosophy Conference in November. Her presentation, “The Will to a System: Nietzsche and Freud on Philosophy as Psychopathology” is forthcoming as a chapter in the Nietzsche volume of the series Routledge Philosophy Minds.

SANDRA DWYER
Principal Senior Lecturer | sdwyer@gsu.edu

Sandra Dwyer (and George Rainbolt) gave a presentation How to Implement Teacher Training in Philosophy: Best Practices at the January Meeting of the American Philosophical Association meeting in Baltimore. She was invited to give this presentation because she directs the Department’s program to train our graduate students in how to teach. This program has been widely recognized as a national model.

EDDY NAHMIAS
Professor | enahmias@gsu.edu

Eddy Nahmias delivered a keynote address for the conference “Does Neuroscience Have Normative Implications?” in April in Chicago. He gave an invited talk at a conference on Punishment at Cornell University in June. He presented a paper (with Eyal Aharoni) at the “Against Incarceration” conference in New Orleans in September.

GEORGE GRAHAM
Professor | ggraham@gsu.edu

George Graham and Robert McCauley (Emory) continue to work on a book on mental illness and the cognitive science of religion. Some ideas from the book were presented this past term at meetings of the International Association for the Cognitive Science of Religion (Vancouver) and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (Atlanta). A paper that Graham co-authored with Terence Horgan (Arizona) and John Tienson (Memphis), on consciousness and intentionality, which originally appeared in the Blackwell Companion to Consciousness (2007), has been translated into French and published in Paris in a book devoted to consciousness and representationalism (Vrin, Paris 2016). Owen Flanagan (Duke) and Dr. Graham have published a paper in an MIT Press collection on current crises in psychiatric research.

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Ellen Logan, Business Manager for Philosophy and Religious Studies announced her retirement after 22 years. More than just a business manager responsible for scheduling and budgets, Ellen has offered her infinite wisdom and advice to the department and students with a smile.

Ellen has made such a positive impact at GSU, here are few fond thoughts about her:

“Thank you Ellen for all that you do for us in the philosophy department. You were always there to give advice, provide assistance, and keep operations in the department smoothly. You will be missed by all of us.”
- Michael Lundie, MA Candidate

“Ellen has been more than a supervisor, she has become a great friend. I appreciate her encouragement and support. Working with her has been an absolutely pleasure.”
- Felicia Thomas, Administrative Specialist, Administrative

“Ellen has prevented my mess-ups from becoming disasters on more than one occasion. Her patience and understanding has helped this program go smoothly, and her sharp wit makes her a joy to talk to. The grad students will miss you, Ellen. Enjoy your retirement, and thank you!”
- Joel Van Fossen, MA Candidate

“I started working here in 2010. From the beginning, Ellen has been a wonderful colleague and friend. She’s helped me (and my advisees) with countless forms, processes, and so on. I can’t imagine getting through my first year without her. Above all, I’ve really appreciated Ellen’s patience with my cluelessness and her perceptive sense of humor about the world we live in.”
- Eric Wilson, Associate Professor

A celebration in her honor is set for Tuesday, January 31 from 4pm to 6pm in the 2nd floor conference room of 25 Park Place. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Felicia Thomas at fthomas@gsu.edu.
**SPRING SEMESTER BEGINS**  
**JANUARY 9**  
Welcome Back!

**PIZZA FRIDAY**  
**JANUARY 13**  
12:00 PM  
Computer Lab, Rm. 1646

**MLK JR. HOLIDAY**  
**JANUARY 16**  
University Closed

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**JANUARY 27**  
Neurophilosophy Forum  
Sarah Brosnan (GSU, Psychology, Neurophilosophy)  
3:00 PM, Conference Rm. 1618

**PIZZA FRIDAY**  
**FEBRUARY 10**  
12:00 PM  
Computer Lab, Rm. 1646

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**FEBRUARY 10**  
Peter Balint Colloquium  
3:00 PM, Conference Rm. 1618

**PHI SIGMA TAU CONFERENCE**  
**FEBRUARY 17**  
Email Dr. Andrew I. Cohen for more info at aicohen@gsu.edu

**SEMESTER MIDPOINT**  
**FEBRUARY 28**  
Last day to withdraw

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**MARCH 3**  
Robert McCauley (Emory University)  
3:00 PM, Conference Rm. 1618

**PIZZA FRIDAY**  
**MARCH 10**  
12:00 PM  
Computer Lab, Rm. 1646

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**MARCH 14**  
Stefano Maso Talk  
3:00 PM, Conference Rm. 1618

**PIZZA FRIDAY**  
**APRIL 21**  
12:00 PM  
Computer Lab, Rm. 1646

**JBB CENTER FOR ETHICS CONFERENCE**  
**APRIL 4 - APRIL 7**  
Conference Rm. 1618  
For more info, e: ethics@gsu.edu

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**APRIL 24**  
Last day of classes.

**FINAL EXAMS**  
**APRIL 25 - MAY 2**
The Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics is having another excellent year. Last summer we had a workshop to discuss *Immigration* and the *Limits of Democracy*, a manuscript by Sarah Song (Law, Philosophy, UC-Berkeley). Guest discussants included Margaret Moore (Political Studies, Queens University) and Michael Blake (Philosophy, Univ. of Washington). Coming up in spring of 2017 is another workshop to discuss a manuscript by Annie Stilz (Princeton, Political Theory), *A Theory of Territory and Borders*. Guest discussants will include Colleen Murphy (Philosophy, Illinois) and John Simmons (Philosophy, UVA). The Center is among the cosponsors for GSU’s ethics bowl team. The team competes annually with other regional schools to discuss topical cases in ethics and policy. This year’s team competed in Orlando and discussed issues such as body identity disorder, climate change refugees, gun control, drug decriminalization, and other topics. The cases gave students an excellent opportunity to research and prepare arguments on vital themes of the day. The Center sponsored a colloquium by Judith Lichtenberg (philosophy, Georgetown), who spoke about the merits of life sentences without parole. Coming up this spring, the JBB Center will sponsor a major conference on overcriminalization and indigent legal care. Cosponsored with GSU’s Center for Access to Justice, this cross disciplinary conference will feature keynotes addressing this policy issue with important normative dimensions. This Spring the Center also plans to bring to campus for a colloquium Peter Balint (Politics, Univ. of New South Wales – Canberra).

**OVERCRIMINALIZATION AND LEGAL INDIGENT CARE CONFERENCE**

**Keynote speakers:**
David Boonin (Philosophy, University of Colorado)
Jelani Jefferson Exum (Law, University of Toledo)
Doug Husak (Philosophy, Rutgers University)

There has been growing lay and scholarly concern with the access to legal services available to poorer persons in our society. Many commentators note that moral and policy difficulties of related trends are compounded by what some see as overcriminalization. This interdisciplinary conference will bring together leading scholars in philosophy, legal theory, and related fields to present original scholarship on these issues.

**April 6-7, 2017**
25 Park Place, 16th Floor
Conference Room 1618
Atlanta, GA 30303

For more information, go to ethics.gsu.edu
Class of 2016
Congratulations, Graduates!

GIVING

GSU’s 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 equality of their research and the excellence of their teaching. Our students are taking their place on the national stage—presenting papers at national conferences, 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 attract and retain outstanding students and faculty, enhance quality teaching and research, and bring distinguished speakers to campus.

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

ALUMNI NEWS

Maria Montello - MA ‘11
Maria is an instructor of philosophy at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) in Cambodia. Most recently, Maria has been instrumental in starting the first Philosophy Masters of Arts (MA) program. Last fall, they began the semester with 14 students in their first cohort. Maria writes: “In light of the country’s history and current social and political environment, this is noteworthy. We are making long-term investments in Cambodia’s future leaders.” The Philosophy MA at RUPP was created with the generous support of Sr. Luise Ahrens, Maryknoll sister and twenty-five year missioner in the field of higher education in Cambodia. This initial funding has also allowed the program to provide scholarships to top students, especially women and the very poor.

If you would like to help support the RUPP Philosophy MA program, please go to www.mklm.org/mmontello and indicated in the “Comments” box that you would like your donation to support Maria Montello’s project at RUPP. More details about the program are available at www.tinyurl.com/philosophyrupp

Calvin Warner - MA ‘15
After graduating in May, Calvin joined Paycom in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Paycom is a cloud technology company that handles payroll and other Human Resources functions for businesses. Calvin works on setting up new clients into the Paycom systems. He writes: “It’s a pretty neat place to be; we are the fastest growing company in Oklahoma and also rated that top place to work in Oklahoma.”

Maria pictured here with one of her students named Navy.

Photo courtesy of Maria Montello

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