

SPRING  
2018

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

# PHILOSOPHY

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
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# Thinking about a major?



## PHILOSOPHY PHILE

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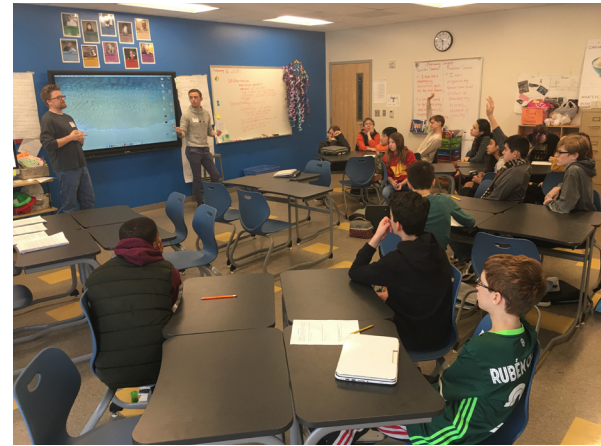
Andrew I. Cohen  
Director  
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# Major in Thinking. MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY



## Philosophical outreach at Renfro Middle School

Graduate students Mary Meg Donnelly, Chase Halsne, Joseph Murphy, and Emily Tilton had the opportunity to teach philosophy to Laura Gary's 8th grade class at Renfro Middle School in Decatur, GA. The students really enjoyed the discussion. Mary Meg and Emily discussed philosophy of gender and asked what role it plays in our lives. Chase and Joseph taught the students about utilitarianism and deontology theories.



## Careers in Philosophy



The Philosophers' Guild invited alumni (L to R) Ben Freed, MA '12, Cameron Hamilton, MA '12, and Paul Vickery, MA '12 to discuss how philosophy has prepared them for their careers. See our [Why Philosophy](#) page for more information.



\*As an “experimental philosopher” I try to get out of the proverbial armchair sometimes. But as a *philosopher*, I always get back in.

I think the Department of Philosophy is in great shape. We have faculty members who produce world-class research and teach inspiring classes, talented graduate students who develop new ideas and superbly teach thousands of undergraduates each year, about 150 curious and hardworking philosophy majors, and we have three top-notch staff members who hold it (and us) all together.

But as the Dude from The Big Lebowski might say, “Yeah, well, that's just, like, your opinion, man.” It's important, every once in a while, for us to take a cold, hard look at ourselves in the mirror and make sure we're carrying out our teaching, research, and service missions as well as we can. We'll be doing just that over the next 18 months or so, as we undergo what's called an Academic Program Review (APR).

The APR starts with surveys, one of faculty, another of students, and another of alumni, which I hope many of you reading this newsletter have already taken, or will by the March 9 deadline. The faculty will use the survey results and a lot of other data to do a self-study, and we will also be visited and reviewed by three philosophy professors from other universities, as well as by a committee of faculty from other departments at GSU. With all this information, the departmental committee, led by Professor Jessica Berry, will write a final report, including our action items for how we want to improve, build, and engage with the strategic plans of the College of Arts and Sciences and the University.

I'm highlighting the APR process here because I want to encourage everyone associated with the department to be involved. Whether you are alumni or current students, faculty or staff, administration, or friends of the department, please let me or the APR committee know what you think we are doing well and what we could be doing better or differently. We really will listen. Of course, we may not have the resources to do some things that you want us to do or that we already wish we could do (so feel free to contribute to the cause! See p. 12). But part of our job is to do all we can and be creative with the resources we have.

As I said, I think the department is generally in great shape and am relieved that I took the helm of a ship that is headed in the right direction. But we are always ready to try new things and to build in new ways on our existing strengths and successes. On the next page you'll see some of the recent initiatives we've rolled out. We look forward to reflecting on ourselves with your help.



EDDY NAHMIAS

Professor | Chair of Philosophy  
[enahmias@gsu.edu](mailto:enahmias@gsu.edu)

## *The Arrington Library in the Rainbolt Reading Room*





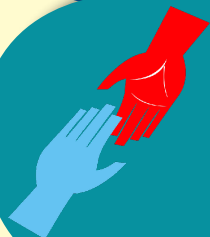
# NEW INITIATIVES

## The Arrington Library in the Rainbolt Reading Room (see page 4)



When George Rainbolt, after chairing the Philosophy Department for 17 years, went on to become Dean at University of North Florida, we decided to convert his office into a quiet workspace for our students and dubbed it the “Rainbolt Reading Room.” Recently, we also acquired a collection of over 1000 philosophy books from Bob Arrington, who was a philosophy professor at GSU from 1969 until 2000 and also served as Chair and Associate Dean. Dr. Arrington’s wife, Margarita, donated his book collection after his death, and we have now created the Arrington Library. We are deeply grateful to the Arrington family for this wonderful collection that will be a valuable resource for our faculty and students. Come check it out!

## Philosophical Outreach (see page 3)



Until we can convince U.S. elementary and secondary schools to include philosophy in their curricula, we will have to “invade” them one class at a time. The Department’s Philosophy Outreach program aims to bring philosophy to students at Atlanta-area schools. This semester eight graduate students and two faculty members are teaching philosophy at City of Decatur’s middle school and high school, on topics such as: What can we know? What distinguishes science from pseudo-science? What is gender? Does science challenge free will? If you are a philosopher who wants to teach students at local schools to be more curious, to question what they know, and to discover the history of ideas, let us know. And if you know of local schools or teachers that are looking for a dose of philosophy, let us know.

## MA Concentration in Philosophy of History to prepare for Masters in Teaching (MAT)



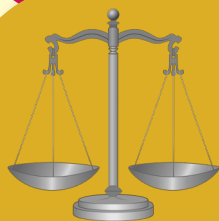
Speaking of getting philosophers into the schools, with the help of the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), we have created a new concentration that allows students to complete their MA such that four history of philosophy courses can then be applied to the subject specialization courses for the MAT degree. Students can expeditiously complete the MAT degree in a year (summer-fall-spring-summer) and be certified to teach history (and perhaps other social sciences) in public middle and high schools. These students may also be funded during their MAT studies by a scholarship from the Squire Family Foundation whose mission is based on the belief that “all students in American elementary and secondary schools should have an opportunity to study philosophy in order to develop their ability to understand and evaluate their own beliefs and values, as well as those of others, so that they can become open-minded, respectful, thoughtful adults and responsible citizens.” Sounds right to us!

## New BIS major in Biomedical Sciences includes Phil 3740 Bioethics



GSU has created a new interdisciplinary degree in Biomedical Sciences. One of the required courses will be PHIL 3740 Biomedical Ethics. The course will be offered this summer and Spring 2019. We are excited to be a part of this new major.

## New Minor in Law and Ethics



This fall we will roll out a new Minor in Law and Ethics. Building on the success of the philosophy major with pre-law concentration, this minor is designed to complement any major for students interested in the study of law and planning a career in law, public service, advocacy, or policy. The courses in the minor will develop skills and knowledge needed for a critical assessment of law, especially in light of the principles of ethics and social values, and it will improve students’ argumentative, writing, and logical skills invaluable for law school and many other careers in legal fields.

## Online sections of PHIL 1010 Critical Thinking



Last summer we began offering online sections of PHIL 1010 Critical Thinking. This spring we have four sections and this summer we’ll offer another six. We will be evaluating how the online students do. Many online courses suffer from high drop rates among students. If we can figure out how to overcome that problem and find that online students do as well as the in class students, we hope to offer more online sections in coming semesters.

## New Proseminar for MA students



This spring we are experimenting with a series of six sessions designed to better prepare our first-year MA students for their futures. It will include advice, tips, and samples of work to facilitate graduate students’ progression through the phases of writing samples, theses, applications to doctoral programs, alternate careers, and more.



# FACS



**ANDREW I. COHEN**

Associate Professor | [aicohen@gsu.edu](mailto:aicohen@gsu.edu)

Andrew I. Cohen is finishing up an anthology with Rowman & Littlefield International on Philosophy and Public Policy. It features several noted authors providing original essays that offer rigorous treatment of topical issues in policy. He and his collaborators continue work on moral injury as part of a NEH-funded project. Dr. Cohen is also continuing work on a book on reparations and apologies for historic injustice.



**ANDREW J. COHEN**

Associate Professor | [cohenaj@gsu.edu](mailto:cohenaj@gsu.edu)

Andrew J. Cohen's new book, *Toleration and Freedom from Harm: Liberalism Reconceived*, was released January 2018. In addition, Dr. Cohen is teaching the first Introduction to Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) course.



**JESSICA BERRY**

Associate Professor | [jberry@gsu.edu](mailto:jberry@gsu.edu)  
Executive Editor, *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*

Jessica Berry's article, "The Will to a System: Nietzsche on Philosophy as Psychopathology," which examines Friedrich Nietzsche's (and Sigmund Freud's) criticism of philosophy and philosophers, appeared in *The Nietzschean Mind*, available in February 2018 as part of the Routledge Philosophical Minds series.



**CHRISTIE HARTLEY**

Associate Professor | [chartley@gsu.edu](mailto:chartley@gsu.edu)

In 2017, with Lori Watson, Christie Hartley published "Political Liberalism and Religious Exemptions," in *Religious Exemptions*, edited by Kevin Vallier and Michael Weber (Oxford University Press). Her book with Dr. Watson, *Equal Citizenship and Public Reason: A Feminist Political Liberalism*, is forthcoming from Oxford University Press, and her paper "Contractualism, Disability and Inclusion" will appear online in early 2018 in the *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Disability*. In January of 2018 she presented her paper "Reciprocal Cooperation and Reciprocity of Justification" at the Oxford University Workshop on Reciprocity.

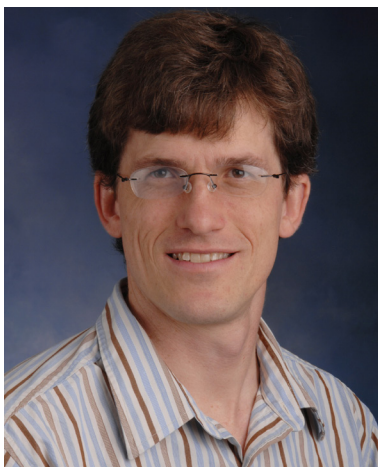


**NEIL VAN LEEUWEN**

Associate Professor | [nvan@gsu.edu](mailto:nvan@gsu.edu)

Dr. Neil Van Leeuwen wins Humanities Research Center fellowship! As an HRC fellow, Dr. Van Leeuwen will be on research leave supported by a Provost's Fellowship, working on his book, *Religion as Make-Believe*, which is contracted with the Harvard University Press.





### EDDY NAHMIAS

Professor & Chair | [enahmias@gsu.edu](mailto:enahmias@gsu.edu)

Eddy Nahmias is doing experimental philosophy research with Bradley Loveall (MA student in philosophy) and Corey Allen (PhD student in Neuroscience and Neuroethics) examining why people think consciousness is necessary for free will and moral responsibility and what philosophical theory best explains the relationships. He presented their work as a keynote speaker at the X-Phi conference in Osnabruck, Germany in October, and they are writing a chapter for a collected volume. Dr. Nahmias also gave a talk on punishment theory at a conference at Yale Law School last October and is guest lecturing for a law and psychology course there in February. Finally, he helped to organize a conference at Duke University in honor of his mentor, which will also lead to a collected volume: *The Natural Method: Essays on Ethics, Mind, and Self in Honor of Owen Flanagan*.



### WILLIAM EDMUNDSON

Regents Professor of Law  
Professor of Philosophy | [wedmundson@gsu.edu](mailto:wedmundson@gsu.edu)

William Edmundson's book, *John Rawls: Reticent Socialist* (Cambridge UP) will be released, May 2018.



### SEBASTIAN RAND

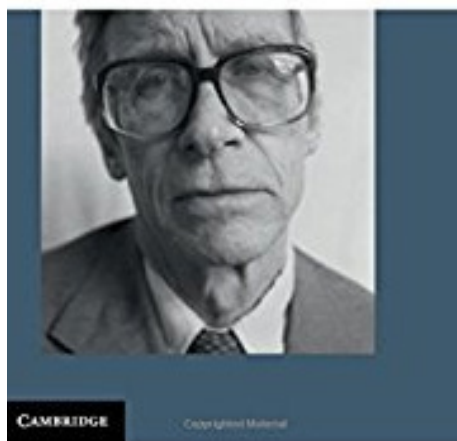
Associate Professor | [srand@gsu.edu](mailto:srand@gsu.edu)

Sebastian Rand recently published "Hegel's Philosophy of Nature," in *The Oxford Handbook of Hegel*, and "Hegel's Anti-ontology of Nature," in *Ontologies of Nature: Continental Perspectives and Environmental Reorientations* [Series: *Contributions To Phenomenology*, vol. 92], 2017.

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### John Rawls: Reticent Socialist

William A. Edmundson



### ANDREA SCARANTINO

Professor | [ascarantino@gsu.edu](mailto:ascarantino@gsu.edu)

Andrea Scarantino spent the Fall semester in Berlin thanks to funding provided by the Humboldt Foundation. He published target articles on emotion theory in both *Emotion Review* and *Psychological Inquiry* and a response to commentators in the latter. He continued editing the *Routledge Handbook of Emotion Theory*, with 65 chapters that will cover all major themes in emotion theory (and is the basis of his current graduate seminar). Dr. Scarantino gave eleven talks in 2017, including talks in Bangkok, Thailand; Berlin, Osnabrück, and Jena, Germany; Milan, Italy; Antwerp, Belgium; as well as a keynote address at the International Association for Computing and Philosophy 2017 for his Herbert A. Simon Award for Outstanding Research.



### ERIC WILSON

Associate Professor  
Undergraduate Director | [ewilson30@gsu.edu](mailto:ewilson30@gsu.edu)

Eric Wilson published "Kant and Hume on Morality" in the online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (co-authored with Lara Denis).



# events

## CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY 16

#### PHILOSOPHY STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

Keynote Speaker

Bryce Huebner (Georgetown University)

Title: *Disorders of Consciousness: Neurotechnologies and Neuroethics*

11:00 AM - 5:30 PM

### FEBRUARY 23

"Philosophy: Food for Thought"

FREE PIZZA



12:00 pm-1:00 PM

Conference Room, Rm. 1618

#### GUEST SPEAKER



**Laurie Paul** (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

Title: *Transformative experience, discovery, and technology*

3:00 PM, Conference Rm. 1618

### FEBRUARY 26

#### PHILOSOPHERS' GUILD

Meeting (Free Food)

4:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Seminar Room, Rm. 1642

#### SUMMER REGISTRATION

Register for summer courses

### MARCH 5

#### PHILOSOPHERS' GUILD

Meeting (Free Food)

4:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Seminar Room, Rm. 1642

### MARCH 11-MARCH 17

#### SPRING BREAK

No classes

### MARCH 26

#### FALL REGISTRATION

Register for summer courses

#### PHILOSOPHERS' GUILD

Meeting (Free Food)

4:30 pm-5:30 PM

Seminar Room,  
Rm. 1642



### MARCH 30

#### GUEST SPEAKER

**Steve Stich** (Rutgers University)

Title: *Moral*

*Sentimentalism and the Boundaries of Morality*

3:00 PM, 25 Park

Place, 2nd floor

Conference Rm. 223



### APRIL 6

"Philosophy: Food for Thought"

FREE PIZZA



12:00 pm-1:00 PM

Conference Room, Rm. 1618

#### GUEST SPEAKER

**Charles Griswold** (Boston University)

Title: TBA

3:00 PM



### APRIL 9

#### GUEST SPEAKER

**Rob Jenkins**

Title: *Teaching in Community Colleges*

4:30 PM

### APRIL 23



Join the Philosophers' Guild for the annual Students vs. Faculty trivia night. Who will be this year's victor's?!

FREE PIZZA

4:30 PM-6:00 PM

Conference Room, Rm. 1618



#### JOIN THE LISTSERV

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In the body of the message, include only two words: **subscribe philfriends**



# Jean Beer Blumenfeld CENTER FOR ETHICS

Dr. Andrew I. Cohen  
Director, Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics  
Associate Professor, Philosophy  
[aicohen@gsu.edu](mailto:aicohen@gsu.edu)

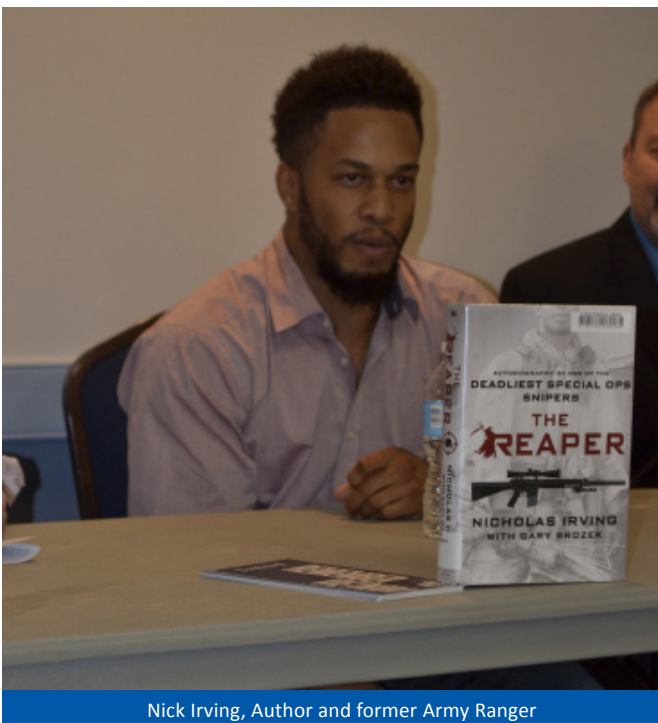
The Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics had a great fall term and is in the midst of a stimulating spring 2018. In the fall, the Center hosted several events, including a screening of "Poverty, Inc." to a packed room who discussed themes from the film with panelists Magatte Wade (an activist and entrepreneur, CEO of Tiossan), and several local scholars and experts. The Center also hosted two events in the week leading up to Veterans Day. One was a discussion about reintegrating combatants with service, led by author and former Army Ranger Nick Irving, and featuring Sue Verhoef (Atlanta History Center), Rich Williams (US Vietnam War Commemoration Office), and Mark Eister (GSU Military Outreach). The Center also hosted a screening of "Almost Sunrise," a documentary about the challenges two Iraq war vets faced when coming home. A great discussion afterwards featured Nick Irving, Rich Glickstein (Shepherd Center), Dean Sarah Cook (GSU Honors College), and Maj. Gen. Maria Britt (Ret.). The Jean Beer Blumenfeld Center for Ethics also hosted the annual GSU Ethics Bowl team's trip to regionals. The team performed well and featured some of GSU's best and brightest undergrads squaring off against students from other teams from throughout the southeast. Coming up: some guest speakers in two classes (Chris Suprenant, University of New Orleans) on February 1, and a manuscript workshop featuring Gina Schouten (Harvard, Philosophy) this May.



Magatte Wade, Activist and Entrepreneur, Tiossan



Panelist (L to R): Rich Williams, Sue Verhoef, Nick Irving, Mark Eister



Nick Irving, Author and former Army Ranger



# Graduates

\* Denotes graduation with distinction

## BA Recipients

Alisa Dugic

Aya Effoua

Jarrett Faber\*

Breyana Fleming\*

Kevin Harden\*

Tiffany Nanguy\*

Nicholas Ponzio

April Samataro

Ray Shin

Ashleigh Staine

## MA Recipients

Leo Feldblyum\*

Dan Kemp

Marie-Kerguelen Le Blevennec

Gaetano Venezia

### Peter Nennig

Peter is the 2018 winner of the Outstanding Grad Student Teaching Award. This award goes to one or more graduate students for excellence in teaching, including (but not limited to) faculty teaching reviews, student evaluations, student performance, and innovative course design.

### Matthew Schrepfer

Matthew is the 2018 winner of the Outstanding Grad Student Research Award. This award goes to one or more graduate students completing their MA thesis in the academic year of the award, for excellence in research, including (but not limited to) MA thesis work, research papers, conference presentations, and participation in faculty-led research projects.

### Hunter Cantrell

Hunter's paper, "Justifying the Fight Against the Islamic State," has been accepted for presentation at the Twenty-seventh Annual Conference of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics (APPE) in Chicago, Illinois in March.

### Dan Kemp (MA '17)

Dan successfully defended his MA thesis "Aristotle's Appeal to Nature and the Internal Point of View." Committee members were Dr. Tim O'Keefe (Chair of Committee), Dr. Andrew J. Cohen, and Dr. Hal Thorsrud (Agnes Scott College).

### Marie K. Le Blevennec (MA '17)

Marie successfully defended her MA thesis, "Nietzsche on Realism in Art and the Role of Illusions in Life-Affirmation." Committee members were Dr. Jessica Berry (Chair of Committee) and Dr. Sebastian Rand.

### Gaetano Venezia (MA '17)

Gaetano successfully defended his thesis "Same-sex Marriage as a Waste of Time: The Importance of Norms and the Impotence of Law."

**Several our students and alumni presented at the APA Central Conference in Chicago, February 2018.**

- Robert Bingle, now at Duke University
- Leo Feldblyum, Georgia State University
- Marie Le Blevennec, Georgia State University
- Stephen Marrone, Georgia State University
- Eric Murphy, now at McGill University
- Brennan Neal, Georgia State University
- Peter Nennig, Georgia State University
- Matthew Schrepfer, Georgia State University
- Adam Shmidt, now at Boston University

### 2017 Kay Craigie Scholar Tiffany Nanguy

Tiffany is the 2017 recipient of the Kay Craigie Scholarship. This scholarship supports academically successfully philosophy majors who face financial barriers to realizing their dreams.

### 2017 Beiswanger Award Winner Jarrett Faber

Jarrett is the 2017 winner of the George W. Beiswanger Award. This award is given to an undergraduate major on the basis of overall academic excellence.

### Leo Feldblyum (MA '17)

Leo's paper "Compositionality and Concept Individuation in Hegel's 'Philosophy of Subjective Spirit,'" was accepted for presentation at the 32nd International Hegel Congress of the International Hegel-Society in June 2018 at the University of Tampere in Finland.

### MA students have had papers accepted to the Midsouth Philosophy Conference at Rhodes College in Memphis, March 23-24:

Jackson Kushner's "The Publicity of Reasons: A Distinctive Standard for Claims and Arguments in Public Reason."

Russell Helder's "Virtue and Wealth in Adam Smith: What's the Difference?"

Matt Kelly "Harm and Habit: Toward an Ontological Economy of Race."

Sam Munroe "Constructivism and Philosophical Debates about Personhood: A Response to Forst."

Maggie Owens "Varieties of Epistemic Injustice"

Emily Tilton "Against a Ban on Breast Implants: A Feminist Approach." Emily's paper was also accepted to our Georgia State University Student Philosophy Conference and the Kent State Philosophy Graduate Student Conference. Emily's paper, "Social Power, Epistemic Harms, and Case Structure: Against the Implementation of the Presumption of Innocence in (Most) Sexual Assault Cases" was also accepted by the Inclusive Philosophies Conference at Purdue!



# alumni news



**Alex Economides, MA '12**

I've been living and working back in London since leaving GSU. I went to law school, did my training at a firm called Travers Smith LLP, and qualified as a solicitor in 2016. I stayed at Travers Smith after qualifying, and am currently an associate in the Pensions department. I've chosen to specialise in quite a technical area of law, so having a philosophy background has definitely been helpful.



**Cameron Hamilton, MA '12**

Cameron is currently the Chief Data Scientist of a company called Systematrix Solutions, leading a team of 12 data scientists. We develop artificial intelligence solutions to solve problems in the banking, healthcare, law enforcement, and internet of things (IOT) industries. I earned my MS in May 2016, but began working full-time in Jan 2016. And yes, philosophy absolutely has an influence on my career- one of the major stumbling blocks for data scientists seems to be communication: most can develop software, but sometimes have a hard time articulating how a problem should be solved or why their approach will work. I feel that the argumentative skills I developed (by necessity) within the philosophy program have allowed me to break problems down to a more fundamental level and to convey solutions to both my team and to our clients.



**Caitlyn McCoyd, BA '15**

Right now I work for an electronic medical record company called athenahealth. I work in implementation and training – basically, I travel to medical offices all over the U.S. and train the staff how to use the medical record system when they “go live”. I am based out of the Atlanta office, which is located in Ponce City Market, but my role is about 80% travel. So I travel almost full-time for my job. I get to go to some pretty interesting places, as well as meet and work with interesting people. I enjoy the training aspect and working so closely with others, because I enjoy getting to know them as individuals. The healthcare IT field is also an interesting field to be in. I've certainly learned a lot about medical practice, healthcare workflows, insurance plans, patient care, and the nuances of different specialties. Not to mention the part about how I get paid to travel and rack up Delta Skymiles and rewards points with hotels! I've been in this role for about a year now. The first job I took post-graduation was with a web design company, handling some copy-writing and editing, social media marketing, and SEO. Then I joined a startup, handled social media campaigns from a Customer Success role. Now that I'm with athena, the next role I am hoping to grow into (either within the company or an external position) would be something project related in implementation or account management. I like teaching others how to be rock stars at what they do and I love feeling a part of something larger than myself to accomplish good work.



**Tiffany Nanguy, BA '17**

Tiffany is currently a Case Clerk and Litigation Support for Caplan Cobb LLC. I provide litigation support senior-level paralegal and administrative support to the partners at Caplan Cobb. While clerks don't decide cases, we regularly impact a case's outcome by influencing an attorney's readiness for trial. I carefully review motions, supporting briefs, case decisions and exhibits before an attorney does for accuracy, and to determine if additional information is needed to support their arguments. Caplan Cobb LLC is a rising law firm in the midtown area that was established in 2014. Here, we specialize in business litigation, appellate practice and litigation of constitutional torts. Caplan Cobb's lawyers have been recognized for maintaining the “very highest standards of excellence, professionalism and public service.” In addition, the firm was voted a Best Place to Work 2017 (Small Company) by the Atlanta Business Chronicle.

## Calling all Alumni!

We want to hear from you! Send your updates to Felicia Thomas at [ftomas@gsu.edu](mailto:ftomas@gsu.edu).



# 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 quality 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](http://www.gsu.edu/philosophy) and click on the "Connections" tab.

