



Message from the Chair

Spring greetings from Washington, D.C.! This semester, in January, we welcomed a second, new, tenure-track faculty member, **Avery Archer**. We held a very productive faculty retreat in February, which yielded much-needed updates to our curriculum. During spring break, we moved the department to a new location: the fifth floor of Rome Hall. We are now located in our own suite, and most seem very pleased with our new digs!

It has been an amazing semester for both student and faculty accomplishments. The president of our Undergraduate Philosophy Club, graduating senior **Harry Rosenberg**, a Thacher-Reynolds and CCAS Undergraduate Research Fellow, had his project featured during the GW Research Days showcase of undergraduate research in March. He is the first philosophy student to have won a prize at this annual event. In her second year as director of graduate studies, Assistant Professor **Laura Papish** grew the applicant pool for our new Master of Philosophy from zero to 25 in the space of one year, and has otherwise been just indefatigable in this role. The excellent teaching of our part-time faculty was also richly rewarded: Thanks largely to his rewarding experiences in classes taught by **Cameron Bassiri**, **Dimitir Kirlov** and **Michael Sigrist**, the parents of graduating senior **Bo Donoghue** made an extremely generous donation to the department. Alums have, as usual, been extremely generous, and we are planning an alumni weekend in the next two years to catch up with all of you!

As usual, very little of our activity would be possible without the tireless, cheerful energy of our academic department administrator, **Amanda McLaughlin**. The spring semester has been an especially busy time with the challenges of the departmental move, but Amanda has maintained her levelheaded professionalism throughout, and we are very grateful!

Tad Zawidzki
Chair, Department of Philosophy



Department Spotlights



2016 Griffith Lecture: Dr. Meena Krishnamurthy

The department's annual Griffith Lecture was delivered on January 29, 2016, by Dr. Meena Krishnamurthy, assistant professor of philosophy and the program in philosophy, politics, and economics at the University of Michigan. Professor Krishnamurthy works in social and political philosophy, mostly on topics in democratic theory. She is developing an account of the nature and value of (political) distrust, particularly as it is formulated and explored in the work of radical political thinkers, such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.

Photo: Dr. Krishnamurthy delivering her talk "Loving Distrust."

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Thacher Lecture: Dr. Jay Garfield

On April 15, 2016, the annual Thacher Lecture was delivered by Dr. Jay Garfield on the topic "Knots in the Dao," co-written with Graham Priest. Professor Garfield is Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Professor of Humanities and head of studies in philosophy at Yale-NUS College. His research addresses topics in the foundations of cognitive science and the philosophy of mind, as well as the history of Indian philosophy, topics in Buddhist philosophy, philosophy of logic and methodology in cross-cultural interpretation.

Photo: Dr. Jay Garfield delivered the 2016 Thacher Lecture.

Phi Sigma Tau Honor Society Induction

The Spring 2016 Induction Ceremony for new members into GW's chapter of Phi Sigma Tau, the international honor society in philosophy, took place on Friday, April 29, 2016, led by honor society faculty advisor Professor Mark Ralkowski. The department is proud to announce that the following students were inducted after careful consideration of their academic records:

Katherine Bell, Christopher Blocher, Patrick Campbell, Felipe Esteban Chiriboga Vega, Yaron Ginsberg, Jerry Douglas Harrison, Yasushi Hattori, Molly Hogan, Arthur Kaufman, Ross Levy, Marissa Mangini, Rodolfo Martinez-Don, Kaylee McNeil, Alex Monteverde, Kent Rigg, Nicholas Sanchiz, Justin Brandt-Sarif, and Nicola Young.

Photo: Phi Sigma Tau Honor Society inductees pose for a picture at the departmental induction ceremony.

Philosophy Club Update

The GW Undergraduate Philosophy Club enjoyed another exciting and successful semester. With an ever-growing membership base, our focus was to expand and improve our social programming, creating a community of philosophically-engaged students.

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Undergraduate Conference

The GW Philosophy Club hosted its annual Undergraduate Philosophy Conference under the leadership of club president **Harry Rosenberg**. This year's theme was "Minds, Brains, and Persons," with student presenters from around the country.

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Thacher-Reynolds Fellowship

The 2015-2016 Thacher-Reynolds Fellow, **Harry Rosenberg**, presented his impressive research paper "Cognitive Phenomenal Intentionality" to department faculty. Harry has been very active in the department this year, most notably as Philosophy Club president.

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Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Michèle Friend



The GW Philosophy Club has chosen Associate Professor of Philosophy **Michèle Friend** as the subject of the Spring 2016 Faculty Profile. Professor Friend responded to questions posed by Philosophy Club Secretary **Nicola Young** below.

When did you decide to pursue a career in philosophy? What were some of the first philosophical questions that piqued your interest?

In high school I started a philosophy club where I forced my friends to read Sartre, Kafka and Plato and have discussions. Between high school and university I took a “gap year” to make some life decisions. The choice was between physics, philosophy and training horses. I ruled out physics because it might be boring sometimes and no one would talk to me except other physicists. On the choice between horses and philosophy, I reasoned as follows: If I injure myself badly, then I can't train horses any longer, but I can continue with philosophy. If I go senile, I can't continue with horses, and no one would notice in philosophy; so the safer bet, given life's contingencies, was philosophy. I also liked the idea of philosophy since I could do philosophy of all sorts of things: physics, mathematics, politics, history, language and art, so the breadth of philosophy appealed to me.

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Faculty News



During the Spring 2016 semester, **Avery Archer** gave colloquium talks at the University of South Carolina and the University of Albany. Both talks critically explored the idea that intentions, like beliefs, may come in degrees. In his first colloquium talk, Professor Archer focused on developing an alternative to the claim that intentions come in degrees, and in his second he advanced several criticisms of competing views. Both talks grew out of a shorter paper that Professor Archer presented at the Great Plains Symposium in Lawrence, Kan., late last year.

In April, Professor Archer will be chairing a session exploring the question of whether there can be reasons for attitudes at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Practical Reasons Conference. Additionally, he has been invited to deliver a paper at the Annual Midwest Epistemology Workshop, which is being hosted by University of Wisconsin-Madison over the summer.

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Student News

Liza Dawson, graduate student, recently had a paper accepted in the *Journal of Medical Ethics*, entitled “Addressing Ethical Challenges in HIV Prevention Research with People who Inject Drugs,” which was co-authored with **Steffanie A. Strathdee, Alex John London, Kathryn E. Lancaster, Robert Klitzman, Irving Hoffman, Scott Rose and Jeremy Sugarman**. In May, she presented a paper, entitled “The Common Rule and Research with Data, Big and Small,” at the Harvard Petrie-Flom Center **conference** on “Big Data, Health Law, and Bioethics.” In addition, in late June, Liza is planning to attend the Brocher Summer Academy in the Ethics of Global Population Health, on the Ethical Design of Randomized Studies for Economic Development **workshop**, at the Brocher Foundation in Geneva, Switzerland.

Kevin Liu submitted a paper, “Application of Existentialist Philosophy to Second-Generation Immigrants,” to the *Reed Undergraduate Journal of Existentialism*, and it was published in May.

Natalie Mathes is finishing up her sophomore year and looking forward to piloting a new internship program for a consulting

firm in Boston, Mass., called Strategy of Mind that she discovered from a [LinkedIn](#) article. The firm uses philosophy, as opposed to traditional algorithms, in working with their clients, as explained by co-founder Ryan Stelzer.

Harry Rosenberg won one of two prizes in the humanities at this year's Research Days for his thesis research entitled "Cognitive Phenomenal Intentionality." Harry is the first student to win a prize at Research Days for a project in philosophy.

Department News

Recent Graduates

Congratulations to our 2016 graduates! A full list of BA and MA degree recipients can be found on our website along with [asampling of photos](#) from the Philosophy Department Graduation Reception.

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Alumni Updates

Sultan Alamer, MA '14, after finish his master's program, Sultan was accepted into the PhD in political science at GW. He is now in his second year in this program.

Riad Alarian, BA '14, graduated from the University of Edinburgh (Scotland) with a MSc in political theory in November, and received a distinction for his graduate thesis on modern readings of the Sharia. He currently works as an editor for *Muftah Magazine*.

Matthew Calardo, BA '13, hopes all is well in the GW Philosophy Department! In particular, he wishes professors Zawidzki, Ralkowski, Sigrist and Venner nothing but the best.

Matthew T. Doheny, BA '71, worked for 26.5 years as an elementary school teacher in the New York State Public Education system and retired in 2010. He received two awards from his local school district for excellence in education.

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Donor Recognition

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

The Department of Philosophy would like to gratefully acknowledge the following generous donors who made a gift to the school from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015.

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