



PHI SIGMA TAU BULLETIN

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FALL 2016, ISSUE 29

WELCOME HOME PHILOSOPHERS!

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OFFICERS
FALL 2015

- **President:**
Shaula Rocha
- **Treasurer:**
Charles Sarkiss
- **Admin. Assistant**
Sean Daniel Johnson
- **Public Relations:**
Stefan Sanchez
- **Faculty Advisors:**
Amelie Benedikt
Rebekah Ross



WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

Craig Hanks, Chair

2015-16 was an eventful year around the Department of Philosophy, and 2016-17 has opened with a celebration of dance and dance scholarship, as we were co-hosts for Engagement, a three-day symposium of Philosophy and Dance – the first of its kind in North America. Together with the Division of Dance we welcomed three dance companies and over 75 scholars from around the world. The executive director of the American Society for Aesthetics noted that we “set a very high standard for such endeavors in the future,” and “demonstrated the truly interdisciplinary potential of this type of project.” We also open the year by co-sponsoring the university’s annual observances of Constitution Day, and by co-sponsoring a symposium on Space Settlement.

In May 2016 we completed our 2-year process of Academic Program Review, which that included a departmental self-study, a visit by an external review team, and an evaluation report from the team. It was an opportunity to think about what we do well, and what we might do better, to individually and collectively engage in the quintessential philosophical activity of self-reflection. What did we learn? We learned that we are in very good-shape, with a talented faculty committed to excellence in teaching and research, wonderful students, strong connections to the profession and across the university, exceptional staff support, and strong support throughout the university administration. The review team noted, “Texas State demonstrates seriousness of purpose by including philosophy in its core curriculum, as do very prestigious universities such as the University of Chicago, Princeton, and Georgetown. Besides teaching the advantages of the examined life, philosophy structures students’ thinking in productive ways, improves their writing and reading abilities, enables them to recognize flawed arguments, encourages them to ask good questions, and fosters a sense of humility.”

We continue to grow, opening the year with eight new members of the faculty! Lori Gallegos de Castillo (Stony Brook University), Keisha Ray (Utah), Vaughn Baltzly (Maryland), Amy Pommerening (Purdue), and Anthony Cross (Princeton) all join us as fulltime continuing faculty, and bring expertise including bioethics, moral psychology, Latin American philosophy, African American philosophy, aesthetics, political philosophy, and Ancient Indian philosophy. We also welcome three recent graduates of our MAAPE program as MA-Lecturers: Blake Edwards, Quique Montemayor, and Travis Stockton. This fall we have 48 faculty members teaching in the department, 45 of us teaching face-to-face on-campus. As we learned in our self-study, we teach philosophy to over 10,000 students each year, more than UT-Austin and TAMU combined.

This year, we have expanded opportunities for students and faculty. The Dialogue Series is cooperating more closely with the Common Experience, and will host over 80 events in the fall semester. We plan to host symposia in Spring 2017 on Philosophy of Food, Philosophy of Technology and Philosophy of John Dewey, as well as our annual student symposia. We will send teams to Ethics Bowl and International Business Ethics Case Competitions, and plan to again bring home awards! We are the new home for The Acorn, an important journal dedicated to the study of pacifism and nonviolence. We also host two student journals Phiction and Texas Philosophical, each of which is entering new phases of productivity and growth. And, we continue our work toward offering a BA in Religious Studies.

As you might imagine, with dozens of philosophers around, there is more! We invite you to join us – visit the campus, attend a dialogue, or check-out the website. The growth and the success of the department has always been guided by the interests and efforts of you, our students and alumni. You can look forward to hearing from us more often, and we welcome your questions, suggestions, feedback, and comments. Thank you for your support.

PHILOSOPHY
DIALOGUE
SERIES



TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY PHILOSOPHY DIALOGUE SERIES

The Texas State Philosophy Department, in conjunction with *The American Democracy Project*, is proud to present **The Fall Dialogue Series at Texas State**. The Series is a platform for open, critical discussion of a number of topics and is returning for its 21st year, kicking off on Monday September 26, 2016 in our spacious Dialogue Room in the Comal Building. Some highlights for the upcoming semester will include:

A dialogue with Jo Ann Carson (TXST) and the students of the Philosophy Dialogue course on September 27th 12:30P on *The Temple of Mars: If War is Hell, Why Is It Worshipped?* Wednesday dialogues at the San Marcos Public Library* will also begin this week, a dialogue “War Forum: What It Is Like to Go to War”.

For more information on the series, and to pick up your own copy of the full Dialogue Calendar, come by the Philosophy Main Office (Comal 102.) *The San Marcos Public Library portion of the Dialogue Series is sponsored by the Philosophy Dialogue Series, San Marcos Public Library, Texas State Common Experience, and National Endowment for the Humanities. Located at 625 E. Hopkins Street.

TXST EXCELS AT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ETHICS COMPETITION

Coleen Watson, Faculty

Texas State once again competed, and did very well, at the International Business Ethics Case Competition (IBECC) this past April in Boston, MA. Both undergraduate and graduate teams took on the topic of food waste. Food waste has become a major issue in the food industry as more and more companies and consumers learn about wasted food's troubling environmental impacts, such as thrown out food sitting in landfills producing the highly potent greenhouse gas methane, and the unnecessary cost to consumers, who waste on average 25% of all groceries bought in the United States.

The undergraduates presented their case as a part of the Dole Company, addressing how the company can help limit wasted fruits and vegetables at the farming and production level. The graduate team acted as Walmart executives trying to tackle food waste at their retail stores. Both teams worked incredibly hard, and came up with innovative solutions that could be potentially applied at these companies.

Graduate students Shaula Rocha, Blake Edwards, and Travis Stockton took home second place trophies in the 25-minute round.

Undergraduate students Sean Johnson, Jennifer Meyer, Sam Long, and Curtis Knicker took home second place trophies in the 90-second round. An excellent showing by our students!

NEW FACES IN THE PHILOSOPHY DEPT.

Blake Edwards

M.A., Applied Philosophy & Ethics
Texas State University

As an avid traveler I've been bouncing around the U.S. attempting to visit every state, I hope to complete my visits to all 50 states in the next 5-10 years. When I'm not traveling I love watching movies, reading, playing video games, and stressing over which flex players to start on my fantasy team. In the fall all of these passions take a back seat to football. Go Broncos!!!

Enrique Montemayor

M.A. Applied Philosophy & Ethics
Texas State University

I thoroughly enjoy playing tennis, soccer, and doing yoga. If I am not out getting my endorphin-fix for the day, then I'm probably with my wonderful fiancé and either serenading or anthropomorphizing our incredibly spoiled and yappy dogs. I also try to make time for reading and thinking about the dissolution of the self.

Travis Stockton,

M.A., Applied Philosophy & Ethics
Texas State University

"I like to spend my time studying philosophy of education and political philosophy. I also enjoy going out and meeting new people. This fortunately has taken me to many fun places, and given me the opportunity to engage in dialogue with all sorts of people from all over. I also enjoy delivering pizzas."

Anthony Cross

M.A., Philosophy
Princeton University

My ten-month-old currently has the monopoly on my free time—but despite this, I still aspire to several hobbies: I am an avid and sometimes competitive cyclist; I enjoy the arts, especially photography; and from time to time I try to do a bit of picking on the guitar. My wife and I also enjoy gardening together, and we have high hopes for taking our daughter camping and hiking in our new home state.

Amy Pommering

Ph.D., Philosophy
Purdue University

In moments of reprieve from academic passions and teaching, I am an avid lover of sports. I follow college volleyball, men's basketball, baseball as well as pro-football and pro-hockey with obsessive vigor. I hope to one day have a Ken Burn's level of knowledge about MLB, but I am not there yet. Other than following sports, I am a news' & political junkie, enjoy exercising, listening to music on a loud volume, and horror movies.

Keisha Ray,

Ph.D., Philosophy
University of Utah

When I am not working, I spend time with family and friends, go to concerts and Spurs games, swim, read dystopian novels, play tennis, and try new Austin restaurants.

Lori Gallegos de Castillo

Ph.D., Philosophy
Stony Brook University

Since arriving to San Marcos, I have spent my free time swimming at Canyon Lake, practicing Crossfit, having family and friends over, and helping my partner Rodrigo with his new auto dealer business. Some of my favorite things to do are going out to enjoy good food and drink, hiking and camping, traveling and exploring, painting, and listening to different kinds of music.

Vaughn Baltzly

Ph.D., Philosophy
University of Maryland

Until recently, I used to say that philosophy was my hobby – but now, I am privileged to do that for a living. (I'd had a non-academic 'day job' for the previous six years.) So let's see: I dabble in running, hiking, and snowboarding, and I aspire to develop some culinary skills. (Hopefully to the level where the exercise thereof would require the use of more than a single pot or pan.) So perhaps soon I will have elevated one or more of those

UPCOMING CONFERENCES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

2017 Pacific Division Meeting of the APA

April 12–April 15, 2017

Submission Deadline: April 12, 2017

The APA Pacific Division invites volunteers to chair sessions or comment on papers at its annual meeting. Volunteering is a significant route onto the program and we endeavor to find spots for anyone who wishes to attend the meeting. The 2017 meeting will be held from April 12 to 15 in Seattle, Washington, at the Westin Seattle.

<http://www.apaonline.org/event/2017pacific>

Philosophical Perspectives on Critical Psychiatry: Challenges and Opportunities

May 20–May 21, 2017. Submission Deadline: November 15, 2016

For the purposes of this conference, Critical Psychiatry can be seen as fertile territory for an interdisciplinary engagement between philosophy and psychiatry. Critical Psychiatry has drawn upon the philosophical resources of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory to criticize the implicit positivism at work in mainstream psychiatry and the power/knowledge complexes discerned by Foucault to challenge entrenched notions of epistemic authority within psychiatry. The concern for oppression within Critical Psychiatry is shared by queer theory, feminist theory, and broader theoretical concerns with social justice. Presentations will be strictly limited to 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes for discussion. Abstracts will be peer reviewed blindly, so the author's identifying information should be attached separately. We especially encourage submissions by service users. Detailed abstracts should be 600-1000 words and sent via email by November 15, 2016 to Christian Perring (cperring@yahoo.com), Douglas Porter (douglasporter@cox.net), and Scott Waterman (scott.waterman@uvm.edu). Notices of acceptance or rejection will be distributed in January.

Eastern Washington University Philosophy Club 2017 Student Conference: A Dialogue About the Environment

Conference Dates: February 24–25, 2017 Submission Deadline: November 1, 2016

The philosophy club of Eastern Washington University is seeking papers for the 2017 Student Philosophy Conference being held in Spokane, Washington the weekend of February 24th and 25th. This conference will be focusing on all areas of environmental philosophy and welcomes submissions from all undergraduate and graduate students. Papers should be 10-12 pages in length, and submitted to ewuphilclub@gmail.com no later than 5:00 pm (pt) on November 1st. Notification of acceptance will be sent by November 18th.

Session blocks will be created with 30 minute presentations with similar topics. Suggested reading time is 20-25 minutes leaving 5-10 minutes for Q/A. Since this is a student lead conference there are limited funds, so the conference cannot pay for travel expenses, but we are glad to suggest close by hotels and will work with hotels to try and get cheaper rates.

Any further questions feel free to email ewuphilclub@gmail.com and we are glad to answer any inquires.

Great Lakes Philosophy Conference: Ethical Intersections

Dates: March 24-26, 2017 Location: Adrian, Michigan

Deadline for Submissions: January 5th, 2017. Notification of Acceptance: February 15th, 2017

Any paper that relates to the theme of ethical intersections, broadly construed, will be considered. Topics might include, but are not limited to, interpersonal ethics, social ethics, ethics within and across disciplines and specialties, the intersection of ethics and politics, applied and professional ethics, metaethics, and ethical theory. In addition, there will be a specialty track at the conference dedicated to issues related to refugees, migrants, and border spaces. Participants in this track will have the opportunity to submit their work for publication in a forthcoming edited anthology on the topic.

To submit a paper for consideration, please submit an extended abstract of up to 500 words. Full papers will also be considered. All submissions will be peer-reviewed. Please submit abstracts or papers as .doc, .docx, or .pdf. Please submit your abstract to our conference website: <http://greatlakesphilosophyconference.weebly.com>.

STUDENTS IN PHILOSOPHY

TXST SYMPOSIUM & TEXAS PHILOSOPHICAL CALL FOR PAPERS

19^h Annual Texas State Philosophy Symposium

Hosted in April 2017. Undergraduate or graduate papers on any philosophical topic are welcome.

Papers should be suitable for a 20-minute presentation, submitted for blind review (author's name on cover page only), and are due in February 2017. Send by email (.doc or .docx file) to Amelie Benedikt, ab53@txstate.edu

Texas Philosophical

This journal is open to any philosophical essays written by Texan undergraduate students during the FY15-16 school year. Deadline for consideration is noon on 31st May 2017. Please check TexasPhilosophical.com for information regarding submission. Papers are to be emailed as a word document or in rich text format to TXPHIL@txstate.edu.

ΦΣΤ ACTIVITIES

In addition to our regular dialogues, Phi Sigma Tau members will be coming together this fall for several fun activities. Members will join in movie nights, bowling at Sunset Lanes, participation in the Talk of the Times, and fundraising with our Book/Bake Sales.

TALK OF THE TIMES

Talk of the Times, an activity of the *American Democracy Project* at TXST University, is a weekly open forum on current events and issues led by members of Phi Sigma Tau.

Discussions are held on Fridays in the Comal Building.

PHILOSOPHY ALUMNI BANQUET



Our annual **Alumni Banquet** will be on Friday, October 14th 2016 from 5:30-9:00PM. This is a catered event, with dinner options for both omnivorian and vegetarian diets. The tickets this year will \$20.00 for attendees. It is being held at the Price Center, 222 W. San Antonio Street San Marcos, Texas 78666. Please contact Camrie Pippier at cp1292@txstate.edu for more information.

The Historic Price Seniors Center. Financed, and named after, philanthropist H. Y. Price, Jr., this grand structure was donated to the City of San Marcos in 1995 to be used for “youth and/or senior citizen programs.. Photo courtesy of www.price-center.org.

AN OPEN INVITATION TO PARICIPATE

Blake Edwards, Faculty

Freshman attending Texas State University are required to take University Seminar as part of the Common Experience initiative. This initiative is designed to give students a common experience that will help facilitate dialogue and community participation between students, faculty, and the community at large. As part of this initiative, each Freshman is assigned a Common Reading book that will help them facilitate and participate in desired dialogue. This year’s book choice is “What It Is Like to Go to War,” by Karl Marlantes, a highly decorated service member who served as a Marine in Vietnam and became a scholar and writer after returning from war.

After reading Marlantes’ book, which chronicles his experiences in Vietnam and the challenges he faced both at war and upon returning home, I encourage all Texas State University community members to read this book. Marlantes’ accounts of war are visceral, pulling readers into the decisions we force our young men and women to make while at war. His poignant questions ask those who have not served to truly understand the mentality of a soldier, while his introspection and self-criticisms are reminders to those who served of the sacrifices they made and the toll taken on them both physically and mentally. Marlantes’ stories are a reminder that war is not always good or bad, but, rather, often stuck in a grey area of uncertainty. His reflections are a reminder of what we ask young soldiers to fight for and what soldiers on both sides of the trenches inevitably lose. The overall project prompts the reader to understand that wars are complex, the issues our veterans face are complex, and the societal justifications for war are also often complex. A must read for any society prepared and willing to go to war and essential to understanding the greater complexities of war itself, I encourage all Texas State University members to get a copy of this book and become active participants in this year’s Common Experience initiative. The project transcends Texas State and is invaluable in shaping the country we wish to be.

BOBCAT BUILD 2016



Rebekah Ross, Faculty

On April 2, 2016, Phi Sigma Tau participated in Bobcat Build for their second year. The university service project was started 12 years ago as a way to say "Thank You" to the San Marcos community. It now represents the second largest, one-day community service project in the state of Texas. The Phi Sigma Tau team joined other Texas State students as they spread across the city attending to various job-site projects from cleaning up to restoring park trails and everything in between.



TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Pictured above:

Travis Stockton, Shaula Rocha, and Blake Edwards