

Department of Philosophy

Fall 2024 Newsletter

A Note from the Chair

Dear SIUE Philosophy Community,

Our 24-25 academic year is well under way, and we have a number of exciting things to announce and look forward to. As you'll see below, we are welcoming two new members to our faculty ranks this year. We are also looking forward to hosting our second ever Carol Keene Visiting Scholar. Additionally, we recently have seen a burst of interest in philosophy, with our majors number being the highest it's been in many years. It is a great time to be a part of SIUE philosophy.

One final note. We are currently exploring the possibility of converting our newsletters to an electronic format. In our view, there are a number of advantages to replacing physical copies of the newsletter with an e-version. Nothing yet is settled, but I wanted to alert newsletter recipients to the possible change, and, if you have any feedback for me regarding the change, to invite you to contact me.

Warm Regards,

Chris

Current Events



Visiting Scholar and Undergrad Philosophy Conference November 7-9, 2024

We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Lauren Ross of the University of California Irvine as our Carol Keene Visiting Scholar this fall. Dr. Ross will deliver a keynote for the Undergraduate Philosophy Conference as well as a public lecture at the Edwardsville Town Library.

Thursday, Nov 7: **"Social Structures: What Do They Cause and Explain?"**
5 PM at the Edwardsville Public Library

Friday, Nov 8: **"Types of Causation in the Life Sciences"**
4 PM in Alumni Hall 2401

Student papers will be heard in the Lovejoy Library 3rd Floor Conference Room on Friday afternoon and all day Saturday. Please join us for some or all of the conference!

The Department hosts a few colloquium talks each semester, inviting colleagues from other institutions in the area to share their work. Our Fall 2024 series includes two colloquium:

- Babak Mohammadizadeh Khoshroo (SIUE): "Hearing Musical Emotions through Feeling Them"
September 20, 2023 at 1:30 PM
- Marina DiMarco (Wash U): "Explanation Laundering"
October 11, 2023 at 1:30 PM

Both talks will be held in the Lovejoy Library 3rd Floor Conference Room (LL 3201).



SIUE PHILOSOPHY
COLLOQUIUM

People in Philosophy

Alumni Spotlight

What have you been up to since graduating from the program?

Upon graduation, I began working for an early stage technology startup in downtown St. Louis. I was hired as the first data analyst. We were focused on providing transparency in consumer packaged goods label data (i.e. the labels on the packaging of the products consumers buy from retailers etc). This transparency comes in the form of transforming complex product label data (e.g. nutrient fact panels, ingredient declarations, marketing claims, allergens etc.) into more consumable attributes such as "Gluten Free", "Organic", "Non-GMO" etc

Our data has many use cases, but is most visible for consumers within common US retail stores. Our data appears online and in stores in the form of various qualifying attributes that provide transparency to the consumer as they consider their purchase options on the shelf, perhaps with a dietary restriction in mind.

After 7 years of working towards our mission, we experienced a successful acquisition exit. Today, I lead our Data Operations department within the company we were acquired by where I continue to focus on our original mission - to bring this level of transparency to consumers on a global scale.

Outside of my profession, my wife and I have 2 children and we live in the Edwardsville area.



Weston Blake
Class of 2014

How has the study of Philosophy benefited you?

Philosophy has benefited me in many aspects as it truly changes the way you think in your everyday life. I have seen an immense benefit in the critical thinking/problem solving skills I gained via the Philosophy program. These skills have allowed me to craft better arguments in my profession using data to drive my decisions and creativity to solve big problems. Ultimately, completing my Philosophy degree gave me the confidence in life to go out and do hard things.

What part or parts of the SIUE Philosophy Program do you appreciate most?

The willingness of the Philosophy faculty to mentor/help their students was great. This type of access was made possible by the smaller class sizes which led to a more intimate academic environment. This allowed me to build more confidence in my studies and ultimately find success.

Hellos and Farewells



We are delighted to be welcoming Dr. Babak M. Khoshroo as our newest faculty member. Babak joins us as a full-time Instructor. Babak recently earned his PhD in philosophy from the University of Oklahoma. His dissertation was on the philosophy of music, specifically issues concerning music, emotion, perception, and expression. He also holds both undergraduate and graduate degrees in computer science, and, by extension, has interests in computer and data ethics. Babak's knowledge and interests will be exceptionally beneficial to our students.



As part of SIUE's new Post-Doctoral Fellowship program, we have had the opportunity and good fortune to welcome to our department Dr. Vivian Feldblyum. Vivian recently finished her PhD in philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh. She specializes in Ancient Philosophy and Ethics, though her philosophical interests span an impressive range of areas and topics. We look forward to Vivian having a productive 2 years of research and to her developing courses in areas we've not in the past been able to offer.

Supporting SIUE Philosophy

Whether used to fund student scholarships, the annual Fritz Marti lecture, or foundation funds used for hosting events such as Ethics Bowl, the department relies on financial support from its faculty, emeriti, alumni, and the broader community to continue to provide the resources necessary for SIUE to be a great place for philosophy.

Visit the Department's website to give:

<https://www.siue.edu/artsandsciences/philosophy/Donation.shtml>

The Philosophy Development Fund (3525) is the most general and flexible option.

Social Media

Find out what is going on in the philosophy department now by visiting

www.siue.edu/philosophy

And be sure to follow the department on

Facebook and Instagram

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