

Kelly Ann Cunningham
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Vanderbilt University, Philosophy Department
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Research Interests

AOS: Ethics, Bioethics
AOC: Pragmatism, Narrative Studies

Education

Vanderbilt University

2019-present
PhD Expected April 2024

Dissertation Chair: Diana B. Heney
Dissertation Committee: Robert B. Talisse, Matthew Congdon, Jason D’Cruz (external)

DePaul University, BA

June 2018

Graduated summa cum laude from Honors Program
Majors: Philosophy, English, Chinese Studies

Publications

“‘As thin as a sheet of light’: Jane Addams on Narrative and End-of-Life Care”
Transactions of the Charles S. Pierce Society, Volume 59, No. 1, Winter 2023

Work in Progress

An essay on trust, respect, democracy and cooperation (under review)

An essay on trust and friendship (under review)

An essay on Baier as a figure in history of moral philosophy (full paper available upon request)

Grants & Awards

Curb Center Public Scholar Grant

Fall 2021-Spring 2024

-Grant from Vanderbilt University, Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, & Public Policy for a project aiming to foster community and promote creativity among first-generation, low-income students from 2021-2023
-Additional funds awarded for 2023-24 academic year to continue project and support FGLI programming and mentorship pilot

Graduate Leadership Institute Programming Grant

Fall 2023-Spring 2024

-Grant awarded to support programming and pilot mentorship program for FGLI students
-Award from Vanderbilt University, Graduate Leadership Institute

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| Honesty Project Summer Seminar & Conference | Summer 2023 |
| -Selected as participant for summer seminar led by Dr. Christian Miller | |
| -Fully funded for travel, lodging, meals, etc. for the duration of seminar and conference from July 12 th -23 rd , 2023 at Wake Forest University | |
| Kendall Berry Ethics Dissertation Prospectus Prize | Spring 2023 |
| -Annual Award from Vanderbilt Philosophy Department for best ethics dissertation prospectus | |
| Berry Teaching Award, Vanderbilt Philosophy Dept. | Spring 2023 |
| -Annual Award from Vanderbilt Philosophy Department for excellence in teaching as graduate student | |
| Berry Student Publication Award, Vanderbilt Philosophy Dept. | Spring 2023 |
| -Annual Award from Vanderbilt Philosophy Department for graduate student academic publications | |
| Professional Development and Training Grant | Fall 2022 |
| -Award from Vanderbilt University, Graduate Leadership Institute | |
| Finalist for K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award | Fall 2022 |
| -Award from AAC&U for promising leaders in higher education and innovation in equity, community engagement and teaching | |
| Graduate Student Department Service Award | Spring 2022 |
| -Annual Award from Vanderbilt Philosophy Department for excellence in department service | |
| Summer Language Training Grant | Summer 2020 |
| -Grant from Vanderbilt University, College of Arts and Sciences for summer language training course | |
| First Year Teaching Award | Spring 2020 |
| -Annual Award from Vanderbilt Philosophy Department for excellence in teaching as a first-year | |
| Provost Graduate Fellowship | Fall 2019-present |
| -Additional funding for PhD Studies from Vanderbilt University Graduate School | |
| Trader Joe's Employee Scholarship | Fall 2019 |
| -Award from Trader Joe's for outstanding employees pursuing higher education | |
| Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship | Fall 2015 |
| -Award from U.S. State Department for undergraduates studying a critical need language abroad | |

Conferences

Presentations

- “Trust, Trauma, and Identity” (forthcoming)
Philosophy East and West, University of Hawai'i: May 24th-31st, 2024
- “Risk and Reckoning in Community-Institution Collaborations: An Exploration of Trust” (forthcoming)
Co-Panelists: Victoria Hensley, Elizabeth Meadows, Leah Lowe
Imagining America 2023 National Gathering, Providence, Rhode Island: October 20th-22nd, 2023
- “Knowing Shakespeare, Knowing the Self, Knowing Love: Murdoch on Friendship, Self-Knowledge, and Moral Development”
Iris Murdoch Transatlantic Ties Conference: June 30th, 2023, online
- “The Case Against Demoralizing Trust”
Congress of Canadian Philosophical Association 2023: May 29th-June 1st, 2023,
York University, Toronto, Canada
- “The Case Against Demoralizing Trust”
Graduate Conference On Friendship, Affection, and Other-Concern: March 18th– 19th, 2023,
Toronto Metropolitan University

“Revitalizing Baier: Trust Beyond Beliefs and Attitudes”

Tennessee Philosophical Association Annual Meeting: October 29th-30th, 2022, Vanderbilt University

“Atmospheres of Trust and Terrains of Respect: Cultivating Conditions for Cooperation”

American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting: February 23rd-26th, 2022, Chicago, IL

“‘We seem to know a great deal on the basis of very little’: Murdoch and Wittgenstein on the Acquisition of Moral Vocabulary”

Iris Murdoch Society Annual Conference: July 15th, 2021, Online

“Building Mending Walls”

Philosophy East and West, University of Hawai‘i, May 2020 (cancelled due to Covid)

“Inclined to Care: A Bioethical Application of Cavarero’s Postural Ethics”

PhiloSOPHIA, May 2020 (cancelled due to Covid)

Commentaries and Chairing

Chair for Social and Political Philosophy Session

Congress of Canadian Philosophical Association: May 29th, 2023, York University, Toronto Canada

Commented on Courtland D. Lewis’s “Always Look on the Brightside of Crisis”

Tennessee Philosophical Association: October 29th, 2022, Vanderbilt University

Commented on Timothy Miller’s “Teaching Formulations of Rule Consequentialism and the Divergence Objection”

Tennessee Philosophical Association: November 20th, 2021, Online

Commented on William Stephen’s “Stoicism and Food”

Vanderbilt Philosophy Department Colloquium Series: February 5th, 2021, Online

Commented on Daniel J. Smith’s “Schelling’s Contributions to the Kant-Reinhold Controversy”

Tennessee Philosophical Association: November 8th, 2019, Nashville, TN

Teaching Experience

Vanderbilt University, Philosophy Department

Experience is organized by role served for each course, followed by year. All courses are were taught to undergraduate students.

As Instructor of Record

Introduction to Medical Ethics: Spring 2024

Introduction to Ethics (Writing-Intensive): Fall 2023

Introduction to Ethics: Spring 2023

Introduction to Philosophy (Online, Writing-Intensive): Spring 2021

Introduction to Medical Ethics (Online, Writing-Intensive): Summer 2021

As Teaching Assistant/Discussion Section Leader

Introduction to Medical Ethics: Fall 2022

primary instructor: Diana Heney

Introduction to Philosophy (Writing-Intensive): Fall 2021

primary instructor: Julian Wuerth

Introduction to Medical Ethics (Online, Writing-Intensive): Fall 2020

primary instructor: Diana Heney

Introduction to Ethics: Spring 2020

primary instructor: Matthew Congdon

As Grading Assistant

Philosophy & Literature (Writing-Intensive): Spring 2020

primary instructor: Michael Hodges:

Philosophy of Religion (Writing Intensive): Spring 2020

primary instructor: Michael Hodges:

Vanderbilt University, Center for Teaching

Experience is organized by role served for each course, followed by year. Courses taught to Vanderbilt graduate students and post-docs.

As Instructor/Facilitator

Certificate in College Teaching Seminar: Fall 2023

Certificate in College Teaching Practicum: Spring 2024

Teaching Assistant Orientation: Summer 2023

Vanderbilt University, Alexander Heard Library

I designed this course with my co-mentors and it was offered through the Buchanan Fellowship program, which supports hands-on learning, and deepens students' understanding of library resources. Fellows earn a stipend to work on experiential learning projects.

As Mentor/Facilitator

Amplifying First-Generation College Student Voices: Fall 2023, Spring 2024

Co-Mentors/Facilitators: Erica Scarpitti and Emily Bush

Eureka LLC

Experience is organized by role served for each course, followed by year. All courses were taught to small cohorts (3-5 students) of high school students in China and served as a college-prep writing course.

As Instructor

Introduction to Medical Ethics (online, writing-intensive) Summer 2021

As Teaching Assistant

Philosophy and Paradoxes (online, writing-intensive): Summer 2020

Teaching & Research Training

Certificate in College Teaching, Vanderbilt Center for Teaching Fall 2021
Community Engaged Research Core Training, Vanderbilt Institute for Clinical
and Translational Research (VICTR) Fall 2021
Online Course Design Institute, Vanderbilt Center for Teaching, Spring 2021

Languages

Chinese (Simplified Mandarin),
intermediate reading/writing, basic speaking
Completed Language Intensive Program at Beijing Foreign Studies University in Fall 2015

German
basic reading
Completed “Reading German for Research Purposes” at University of Chicago Summer
Language Institute in Summer 2020

Reading Groups & Other Research Activities

Research Assistant for Diana Heney Fall 2022-present
Ethcetera Reading Group Member Fall 2020-present
Past topics include: Ethics of Food, 20th Century Ethics, Friendship
MAP Reading Group
Past topics include: Recognition, Prison Abolition, Critical Phenomenology
Member Fall 2019-present
Facilitator Fall 2020-present

Department, University, & Community Service

Philosophy Graduate Student Association (PGSA)
Teaching Committee Member (2019-2020), Undergraduate Education Committee
Member (2020-2021), Programming Committee Member (2020-2022), Graduate Student
Council Representative (2022-2023), Faculty Representative (2022-2023) Vice-President
(2022-2023), President (2023-present)

Vanderbilt Chapter of Minorities and Philosophy (MAP)
Co-Chair/ Internal Communication Liaison (Fall 2020-present)

AAPE Ethics Bowl
Founding Team Member, Graduate Student Coach (Fall 2022-present)

McGill Project
Invited Speaker, McGill Hour: “Snapshots: Creativity, Trust, and the ‘Academic’ Life”
February 17th, 2023, McGill Hall, Vanderbilt University

Nashville Food Project
Full Circle Community Garden Volunteer (Summer 2021-present)

Reciprocal Education and Community Healing (REACH)
Volunteer (Fall 2019-Winter 2020)

Graduate Coursework

Ethics

Spinoza's Ethics, taught by Emanuele Costa Fall 2021
History of Normative Ethics, taught by Diana Heney and Matthew Congdon, Spring 2021
Independent Study: Ethics of Narrative, taught by Diana Heney, Fall 2020
Independent Study: Art and Morality in the Work of Iris Murdoch, taught by Matthew Congdon, Fall 2020
Moral Psychology, taught by Matthew Congdon, Spring 2020
Bioethics, taught by John Lachs, Fall 2019

History of Philosophy

Marx, taught by Karen Ng, Fall 2021
Wittgenstein, taught by Michael Hodges, Fall 2020
Philosophical Anthropology, taught by Karen Ng, Fall 2020
Pragmatism and Value, taught by Diana Heney, Spring 2020
German Idealism, taught by Karen Ng, Fall 2019

Epistemology

Epistemology of Disagreement, taught by Scott Aikin, Spring 2020

Social and Political Philosophy

Democracy, taught by Robert B. Talisse, Spring 2021
Feminist Philosophy: Gaslighting, taught by Kelly Oliver, Fall 2019

English Literature

18th Century British Literature: Radical Feelings 1750-1850 taught by Scott Juengel, Spring 2021