Introducing the Department of Philosophy
MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Dear Reader,

This booklet is intended to introduce the Department of Philosophy at the University of Johannesburg to students considering postgraduate study in Philosophy in the lively and cosmopolitan city of Johannesburg, South Africa. Our department offers expert postgraduate supervision in the analytic, continental and African traditions, and we are committed to providing our postgraduates with a philosophical home in which to engage with world-class scholars and our large and vibrant cohort of existing postgraduate students.

In January 2016, UJ Philosophy celebrated the addition of four talented and dynamic young scholars to our department. Mr Chad Harris (Doctoral candidate, UJ), who works on political and economic forecasting; Ms Zinhle Mncube (Master’s candidate, UJ) who has research interests that lie generally in the philosophy of science, the philosophy of biology, and the philosophy of race; Mr Asheel Singh (Doctoral candidate, UJ), whose research interests lie mostly in the area of bioethics and the questions of meaning in life; and Dr Ben Smart whose interests lie broadly in the Philosophy of Medicine. In 2016, UJ Philosophy has also appointed four post-doctoral fellows, and one distinguished visiting professor. These appointments are in addition to our continuing members of department, all who have established reputations in the African, Continental and Analytic traditions.

We offer a diverse range of modules aimed at engaging our undergraduate students in ‘doing philosophy’. Our postgraduate offering is no different. We offer a one year BA Honours (Philosophy) degree; an MA (by coursework in Philosophy); an MA (by dissertation in Philosophy) as well as a D Litt et Phil (Philosophy). Postgraduates attend bi-monthly colloquia, where staff or invited guest speakers present their work. They can also join a postgraduate reading group, where postgraduates with like-minded interests meet and discuss texts or topics. Postgraduates are encouraged to enter the annual John Broadbent essay writing competition, and our top-achieving postgraduates receive preference for sought-after tutor and assistant positions in the department. UJ Philosophy is also home to two centres (the Centre for Phenomenology in South Africa and the African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science) both offering a variety of ways in which postgraduate students can become involved in philosophical projects related to their research. We also maintain a network of connections with other departments at UJ and with other Philosophy departments. Some of our modules are presented in collaboration with these departments.

Feel free to contact me, or our postgraduate co-ordinator, Prof Veli Mitova, with any questions you may have.

Dr Catherine Botha
DEPARTMENTAL MISSION

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) Department of Philosophy strives to be preeminent among philosophy departments in Africa and the world. We are exceedingly proud of the notable diversity of students, staff and styles, our devotion to quality teaching, and our substantial research impact. We are actively engaged in building a community of practice—committed to, and unified by, doing philosophy.

UJ Philosophy is keenly involved, with regards to both our writing and teaching, in establishing a dialogue between three of the major philosophical traditions:

- **Analytic philosophy**, especially in the following areas: applied ethics, bioethics, environmental ethics, jurisprudence, epistemology, metaethics, metaphysics, and the philosophy of science and philosophy of medicine,
- **African philosophy**, especially in the following areas: political philosophy and feminism,
- **Continental philosophy**, especially in the following areas: aesthetics, phenomenology, and the philosophy of culture

We enhance the global stature of South African philosophy by routinely publishing books with international presses and articles with leading journals. Moreover, as home to two pioneering centres – the Centre for Phenomenology in South Africa, and the African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science – UJ Philosophy regularly hosts conferences and workshops that feature contributors from around the world, and that develop fresh insights on a focused topic. Such events are part of our efforts to establish a first-rate research community, and will continue to include visiting scholars, post-doctoral fellows and colloquia speakers.

We are committed to developing our students’ potential to its full and preparing them for their chosen careers. UJ Philosophy has developed pioneering teaching methods so as to provide an inclusive, challenging, caring and enriching education to its undergraduates. Our strong cohort of postgraduate students, who come from a variety of backgrounds and countries, are instructed in African, Anglo-American and Continental perspectives. No department in South Africa does more to groom its postgraduates into becoming the next generation of professional philosophers by: providing funds to support presentation at conferences where possible; mentoring students to become responsible for lecturing their own courses; and developing them into skilled academic writers by training them to publish in accredited journals. We host regular publication and presentation skills workshops, and provide active coaching sessions to this end. A number of our postgraduates have been awarded UJ Global Excellence and Stature Senior Tutorships, have published in a variety of accredited journals, or obtained sought-after lecturing positions at national and international institutions.

Our aim is to make UJ Philosophy stand out as a world leading hub for Philosophy in Africa.

STAFF

From left to right: Prof HPP Lötter, Ms Z Mncube, Mr A Singh, Mr C Harris, Prof T Metz, Dr CF Botha, Prof V Mtova, Prof R Winkler, Mr A Erasmus, Dr B Smart.
Permanent staff

Catherine Botha is Senior Lecturer and Head of Department of Philosophy. Her research is focused on 19th and 20th Century Continental Philosophy, most especially the work of Nietzsche and Heidegger. She also focuses on aesthetics, specifically the Philosophy of Dance.

Alex Broadbent is Professor of Philosophy and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities. He remains active in research and postgraduate supervision, and delivers some undergraduate lectures. His current research concerns philosophy of epidemiology and medicine, causation, prediction, and the use of scientific evidence in law.

Chad Harris is Lecturer and Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Philosophy. His research interests include prediction in economics and the social sciences.

HPP [Hennie] Lötter is Professor in the Department of Philosophy. His research interests include theories of justice and theories of truth.

Thaddeus Metz is Distinguished Professor, affiliated with the Department of Philosophy. He has broad research interests in normative philosophy, including the meaning of life, African ethics and politics, cross-cultural comparative philosophy (African, East Asian, Western), theories of justice, and accounts of higher education.

Veli Mitova is Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy. Her research interests lie at the intersection of epistemology, metaethics, and philosophy of action.

Zinhle Mncube is Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy. Her research interests lie in Philosophy of Biology, Philosophy of Science and Philosophy of Race.

Rafael Winkler is Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy. His research interest includes 19th and 20th century European thought with a particular focus on phenomenology and German Idealism.

Ben Smart is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy. His interests include philosophy of medicine and the metaphysics of science.

Asheel Singh is an Assistant Lecturer and Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Philosophy. His research interests include applied ethics with a specific focus on bioethics.

SELECTED LIST OF PUBLICATIONS BY STAFF (2015-2016)


Smart, B., (2015). ‘The principle of least action revisited’ (with Karim Thebault) in Analysis, 75.3, pp. 386-396


STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Prof Lötter received the UJ Vice-Chancellor’s Distinguished Award: Teacher Excellence in 2012.
Dr Botha was the recipient of the UJ Vice-Chancellor’s Distinguished Award for Most Promising Young Teacher in 2014.
Prof Metz was the recipient of a Distinguished Professorship for the period of 2015-2019.
Prof Broadbent was appointed Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities for the period of 2015-2020.

OVERVIEW OF STAFF ENGAGEMENT (2015-2016)

Staff attended 18 international and 9 local conferences in 2015-2016

International conferences attended:
Agora for Interdisciplinary Debate (Helsinki)
Epidemiological Society in Finland (Helsinki)
Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences (Helsinki)
Department of Philosophy at Groningen University (Groningen)
Wenkenbach Institute, University Medical Centre (Groningen)
Pittsburgh Centre for the Philosophy of Science (Pittsburgh)
Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics (Virginia)
Tufts School of Public Health (Massachusetts)
Department of Philosophy Tufts University (Massachusetts)
General Education Salon: Ten Theses on Freedom (Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong)
Grounding the Sacred in Literature and the Arts (Australian Catholic University, Sydney)
European Conference on African Studies (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris)
5th Intercultural Interdisciplinary Colloquium: Reconciliation and Justice (Polylog: Forum for Intercultural Philosophy, Vienna)
Aesthetic Experience and Somaesthetics Conference (Budapest)
The Fact-Value Distinction in Ancient and Contemporary Thought Conference (University of Kent, Canterbury)
Philosophy Department Lecture Series (University of Aarhus, Aarhus)
European Epistemology Network Meeting (Madrid)
The Factive Turn in Epistemology Workshop (Vienna)
Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University
Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting, Atlanta
The Fact-Value Distinction in Ancient and Contemporary Thought Conference (University of Kent, Canterbury)
Philosophy Department Lecture Series (University of Aarhus, Aarhus)
European Epistemology Network Meeting (Madrid)
The Factive Turn in Epistemology Workshop (Vienna)
Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University
Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting, Atlanta

Local conferences attended:
International Network of Economic Methods (Cape Town)
The Philosophical Society of Southern Africa (University of Free State)
Institute for Economic Method (University of Cape Town)
Race and Racism Workshop (Rhodes University)
Phenomenology and Naturalism (University of Johannesburg)
Identity and Difference (University of Johannesburg)
Wild Coast Philosophy Symposium (Cintsa)
Faculty of Humanities (University of Cape Town)
Philosophy Spring Colloquium (University of Cape Town)
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS AND VISITING PROFESSORS 2016

Dominic Griffiths was a postdoctoral fellow at UJ philosophy until June 2016, after which he accepted a permanent lecturing position at the University of the Witwatersrand. Dominic received his PhD from the University of Auckland and his work focuses primarily on Heidegger and literature.

David Mitchell is a Postdoctoral Fellow working on Nietzsche and Heidegger. He received his PhD from the University of Liverpool, UK.

Nikolai Viedge is a Postdoctoral Fellow working on the relationships between truth and belief.

Pete Wolfendale is a Postdoctoral Fellow working within the fields of metaphysics, philosophy of language, philosophy of logic/mathematics, philosophy of mind/Artificial Intelligence. He received his PhD from the University of Warwick.

Uskali Maki is a Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Department of Philosophy and a member of the African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science. He is a world-renowned philosopher of economics, an Academy Professor in Finland and the Director of ‘TINT’, the largest centre for the philosophy of social science in the world.

Professor Mongane Wally Serote is a Research Associate in the Department of Philosophy and a member of the African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science. He is an acclaimed South African poet as well as an expert on Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Department of Philosophy offers two ‘flagship’ programmes at undergraduate level: Philosophy of Science and African Philosophy. In addition, the Department offers in-depth knowledge of the many traditions and fields within philosophy, such as the philosophy of language, ethics, politics, phenomenology, logic, feminism, aesthetics, and European philosophy. The philosophy degree aims to equip students with the knowledge, critical thinking skills and tools with which to join the working world and succeed at playing a positive and transformative role in the functioning of society.

Undergraduates

In 2016, the Department was home to 250 first year students, 150 second year students and over 60 third year students. Over the course of the two semesters our throughputs increased in large part due to a deeper reflection on our course content and teaching methodology and the commitment of our staff and tutors.

Tutorial Programme

Our tutorial system is an integral part of our departmental approach teaching and learning. Our departmental tutorial provision for 2016, for example, was as follows: We had 12 tutors, three funded by the Faculty of Humanities; one senior tutor allocated to us via the Faculty of Humanities; one BC15 senior tutor allocated to us; and seven tutors funded by departmental funds coincidentally available in 2016.

We employ our tutors as follows:

1. In Philosophy 1 we employ 5 tutors and a senior tutor for 206 students. The tutors attend 4 lectures per week with the students, present three tutorials of about 15 students each, mark a weekly summary for about 45 students each, and are available for one hour’s private consultation per week. Tutors appointed in 2016: Dee Cohen, Katarina Bulovic, Tony Shabangu, Dimpho Takane, Emmanouel Maninankis, Azraa Essop.

2. In Philosophy 2 we employ 4 tutors and a senior tutor for 143 students. The tutors attend 4 lectures per week with the students, present three tutorials of about 15 students each, mark tutorial assignments for about 45 students each, and are available...
for one hour’s private consultation per week. **Tutors appointed in 2016**: Devon Bailey; Clarton Mangadza; Patrick Jaki.

3. In Philosophy 3 we employ 1 tutor for about 50 students. The tutor attends 4 lectures per week with the students, presents three tutorials of about 16 students each, marks tutorial assignments for 50 students, and is available for one hour’s private consultation per week. **Tutor appointed in 2016**: David Scholtz.

We have an intensive departmental training programme that is implemented throughout the year, and includes workshops on, for example, how to run a small group tutorial, or how to help students improve their language skills.

**The contents of tutor training in 2016:**

1. Tutors and lecturers as a community of practice
2. Cultivating intellectual virtues
3. Creating a teaching portfolio and teaching philosophy
4. Criteria for marking
5. What senior tutors want new tutors to know on how to become an excellent tutor
6. Practical training: Teaching a tutorial for the other tutors for evaluation by peer review
7. Policies, roles, responsibilities, and services
8. Dealing with diversity inside and outside the classroom
9. How to improve the language skills of the students you work with
10. Special training for Philosophy 1B tutors: [a] How to write a philosophy essay; [b] How to summarise, [c] How to use Blackboard, [d] How to deal with students who have psychological problems

Our tutorial programme is specifically designed to meet two main objectives. Firstly, to grow and maintain our postgraduate cohort by providing them with a job in their field of expertise, and allow them experience in tutoring philosophy. Secondly, it is designed to improve or maintain our undergraduate throughput rates, by providing our undergraduate students with top-class tuition in a small group situation, in addition to our lectures. We very carefully integrate the content of our small group tutorials with the content of our lectures, to ensure that our students are provided with a comprehensive learning experience.

The feedback our students provide on the work of the tutors notes their excellent work and the value the tutorials have for their academic progress and success. A typical example of student feedback summarised [and anonymised] is: “X makes sure they fully understand the work by explaining concepts and engaging them. X motivates them to do their best and goes beyond what is required to help them excel. Overall, they say X is the best tutor in university, just awesome!”

### Postgraduate Programme

As a postgraduate student in this Department, our graduates have access to resources that rival those available in the top universities globally. Chief among these are the brains of their Supervisor, Lecturer, and peers in the postgraduate community. We also have more funds available to postgraduate students for travel to local and international conferences than most universities (including many top universities globally).

In 2016 the Department had 11 registered Honours students, 21 registered Masters students and 14 registered PhD students.

Our BA Honours in Philosophy offer students a wide choice of specialization modules within the field of philosophy, including African Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Art, European Philosophy, Philosophy of Language, and Environmental Ethics. Our MA and PhD students come to our Department from across South Africa and Africa, including… . Dissertation and theses topics range in diversity, however, proving popular are titles in African philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of science, and Continental philosophy.

**Placement of Graduate Students in 2015-2016**

- Keo Mbebe, Permanent Lectureship at Pretoria
- Mpho Tshivhase, Permanent Lectureship at Pretoria
- Motsamai Molefe, Permanent Lectureship at Fort Hare (now at UKZN)
- Asheel Singh, Temporary Lectureship at UJ
- Jessica Lerm (via UCT), Permanent Lectureship at UWC
- Munamato Chemhuru, Permanent Lectureship at Great Zimbabwe University
- Candess Kostopoulos, Contract Lecturer at WITS Philosophy of Education?

**Awards and Publications of Graduate Students in 2015-2016**

DEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS

Discussion and debate is integral to the field of philosophy. Not only is the presentation of research findings to students and staff necessary for extending networks and creating awareness, but it also generates thinking and learning about a broad range of topics.

The Department hosts a two weekly colloquium series throughout the year. Our speakers in 2016 includes:

2 March, 11:20-12:50: David Mitchell (UJ), “Body dysmorphia and the phenomenology of embodiment” – UJ Philosophy Department, B Ring 6, APK
8 March, 11:20-12:50: Matthias Schirn (University of Munich), “Frege’s conception of truth subjected to scrutiny” – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK
4 April, 10:50-12:25: Dr Cara Nine (University College Cork, Ireland), “Territorial rights, historical injustice, and compromise” – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK
13 April, 11:20-12:50: Prof Brian Epstein (Tufts), “Two Ways of Making the Social World” – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK POSTPONED (until 5 October)
20 April, 11:20-12:50: Chad Harris (UJ), “The material theory of induction” – UJ Philosophy Department, B Ring 6, APK
1 August, 9:00-10:30: Viv Soni (Northwestern University), [untitled] – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK
10 August, 11:20-12:50: Dr Pete Wolfendale (UJ), “An Introduction to Computational Kantianism” – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK
24 August, 11:20-12:50: Dr Ben Smart (UJ), “How evidence based medicine brings the connection between evidence and measurement into focus” – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK
21 September, 11:20-12:50: Dr Rainer Ebert (Rice/UJ), “What makes killing wrong?” – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK
5 October, 11:20-12:50: Mr Chad Harris (UJ), “Ripping the Material of Induction: A Critical Evaluation of Norton’s Theory” – UJ Philosophy Department, B Ring 6, APK
19 October, 11:20-12:50: Dr Catherine Botha (UJ), [title to be confirmed] – Humanities Common Room, C Ring 319, APK
26 October, 14:00-15:00: Prof Thad Metz (UJ): Special Networking Workshop

CENTRES AND RESEARCH

The UJ Department of Philosophy is the home of the Centre for Phenomenology in South Africa (CPSA). The CPSA planned the following for 2016:

The Steve Biko Lectures in Philosophy (jointly hosted with the French Institute of South Africa, the Centre for Indian Studies at Wits, and the Steve Biko Foundation):
- 16th of February, Robert Bernasconi (Penn State University), ‘Some Philosophical Reflections on Why the Global Fight Against Racism has Failed’
- 8th of March, Chantal Mouffe (University of Westminster), ‘Politics and Passion: the Stakes of Democracy’
- 19th of July, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Columbia University), ‘Still Hoping for a Revolution’
- 8th of November, Alain Badiou (École Normale Supérieure), title TBA

The UJ Department of Philosophy is home to the African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science. The Centre hosts three projects:
- Delivering Indigenous Knowledge Products
- The Science of Prediction in a Changing World
- Philosophy of Epidemiology and Medicine

The Centre will be launched in 2017 with a three-day international workshop dedicated to these three topics. Prospective keynote include:
- Mongane Wally Serote (acclaimed poet)
- Catherine Odora Hopper (UNISA)
- Nancy Cartwright (University of Durham)
- Christopher Boorse (University of Delaware)
Devon Bailey
Devon is appointed as a UJ Global Excellence and Stature Senior Tutor at UJ Philosophy. She is currently tutoring students in FIL 2B. Devon completed her MA (Philosophy) with a dissertation entitled “The Perception of Dance: Considering Phenomenology and Neuroscience” under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Botha.

Katarina Bulovic
Katarina is doing her MA. Her dissertation in progress under the supervision of Prof. Hennie Lotter is called, “Revising Just War Theory: Towards a More Inclusive Account of Justice.” Her current research interests are applied ethics, political philosophy and critical theory. She is a Phil 1B tutor at present.

Dee Cohen
Dee is a tutor for FIL 1B, and is also lecturing a course in Ethics & Jurisprudence for Optometry at UJ in 2016. Dee is completing her MA (Philosophy) with a dissertation dealing with a contextualist response to the problem of layperson reliance on expert testimony as a source of knowledge. Dee has been involved in educating undergraduate students at UJ, since 2012. In 2013, Dee was a consultant at the UJ Writing Centre, advising students on how to improve their academic writing skills. In the same year, she also tutored English for Law at the Academic Development Centre.

Azraa Essop
Azraa is a tutor for philosophy 1B and she is currently completing her Bachelor’s in Psychology.

Patrick Jaki
Patrick O. Jaki is an MA Philosophy student working in the area of global ethics on a thesis entitled: “The Import of Seyla Benhabib’s Cosmopolitan Theory for Alien Migrants” His research interests include Political Philosophy, Global Ethics, African Philosophy, and Migration Philosophy. His current position is PHL 2B Tutor.

Clarton Mangonda
Clarton is currently a tutor for FIL 2B. He is completing his MA (by Coursework) in Philosophy under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Botha. He is mainly interested in the Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence and the title of his dissertation is “Re-Visiting the Chinese Room: Boden’s Reply considered.”

Emmanouel Maninakis
Emmanouel is a tutor for FIL 1B. He is currently completing his MA (Philosophy) with the title “Pornography and Art: A Philosophical Investigation” under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Botha.

Ernest Nkomotje
Ernest is the incumbent departmental Student Assistant. He is completing his undergraduate degree in Politics, Philosophy & Economics. His disciplinary interests include the Philosophy of Mathematics, African Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion and Hermeneutics.

David Scholtz
David has been tutoring at UJ for many years. At present he is completing the third-year philosophy of science and philosophy of language courses, but all the other students tell him that he’s the tutor. A fresh MA graduate, David is looking forward to a well-deserved extended period in loneliness and poverty as a doctoral student. Although he is convinced that eating meat is immoral, he remains unpersuaded. Amazingly he begins all his sentences with the letter “a”.

Tony Shabangu
Tony is currently doing his MA coursework and is currently working on a research project on Ubuntu and Prison. Professor Thad Metz is his supervisor. Tony’s interests lie in African Philosophy. Tony is a PHIL 1A/1B Tutor and really enjoys working with newcomers in the field. Aside from his studies, Tony is a rapper and spends his spare time performing at and recording music.

Dimpho Takane
Dimpho is a tutor for FIL 1B. She is currently enrolled for her Honours in Philosophy at UJ, and is completing a research essay with the title “Personhood and Feminism in African Philosophy” under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Botha.

Craig Thrupp
Craig is a tutor for the Business Ethics and Citizenship module and is completing his Honours in Philosophy. His research essay has the title “Arguments for Substance Dualism as the most viable dualistic theory of mind”, and is being supervised by Professor Veli Mitova.