

Aurora Yu (Kexin Yu)

Dept. of Philosophy, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill

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Areas of Specialization

Modern Philosophy; Ancient Greek Philosophy

Areas of Competence

Existentialist Philosophy; History of Moral Theories; Chinese Philosophy (especially Confucianism and Daoism)

Education

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Ph.D. in Philosophy, Fall 2020–Spring 2026 (Expected)

Dissertations:

1. Living Order: Aristotle's Global Teleology from *Bios* to the Cosmos (advisors: Mariska Leunissen, Patricia Marechal, and Ben Morison)
2. Descartes' Method and Its Application in the *Scientiae* of Sensation (advisors: Alan Nelson, Daniel Garber, Rosalind Chaplin, and Markus Kohl)

Princeton University, Visiting Student Research Collaborator (faculty sponsor: Daniel Garber), Fall 2024–Fall 2025

University of Chicago, M.A. Program in the Humanities (MAPH) in Philosophy, Fall 2019–Spring 2020

Thesis: Spinoza on Human Freedom (advisor: Daniel Moerner)

University of Rochester, B.A. in Philosophy with Highest Honors & Highest Distinction; B.A. in Classics with Highest Distinction, Spring 2016–Spring 2019

Philosophy thesis: Descartes on Material Falsity (advisor: Alison Peterman)

Classics thesis: Eudaimonia in Aristotle's Best Constitution (advisor: Nicholas Gresens)

Oxford University, St. Catherine's College, Visiting Student in Philosophy & Classics, Hilary & Trinity Term 2018

Advisors: Carol Atack, Ida Toth

Fellowships and Awards

1. Kristeller-Popkin Travel Fellowship, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* — USD 4,000, Spring 2026
2. Gilman Research and Travel Grant (Dorothy Ford Wiley Fund), Program in Medieval and Early Modern Studies, UNC — USD 500, Fall 2025–Spring 2026
3. Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender Travel Grant — USD 400, Fall 2025
4. Off-Campus Dissertation Research Fellowship, UNC Graduate School — USD 11,000, Fall 2025
5. Jan Wojcik Memorial Prize, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* — USD 4,000, Spring 2025
6. British Society for the History of Philosophy Student Travel Bursary — GBP 250, Spring 2025
7. APA Meeting Assistance Fund — USD 600, Fall 2023; Spring 2025
8. UNC Graduate Student Transportation Grant — USD 3,000, Summer 2024
9. Canadian Colloquium of Ancient Philosophy Speaker Grant — CAD 200, Spring 2024
10. E. Maynard Adams Fellowship for the Public Humanities — USD 2,250, Fall 2022–Spring 2023
11. William R. Kenan Jr. Fellowship, Royster Society of Fellows — USD 83,640, Fall 2020–Spring 2025
12. Joseph O'Connor Graduate Study Endowment Prize — USD 15,700, Fall 2019–Spring 2020

Honors and Memberships

1. Eta Sigma Phi, inducted 2018
2. Phi Beta Kappa, inducted 2019
3. Parr Center Graduate Fellowship, Fall 2020–Spring 2025

Publications

1. “Cartesian Deduction” (invited), in edited volume in honor of Alan Nelson (Bloomsbury, forthcoming).
2. “The Method of Hypothesis in Du Châtelet and Kant,” in *Dynamics and Reason: Du Châtelet and Kant* (Springer, forthcoming).
3. “Spinoza on Miracles and Natural Laws,” *Belgrade Philosophical Annual* 37(2), 2024, pp. 157–179.
4. “Unpacking the City–Soul Analogy,” *Res Cogitans* 8(1), 2017.
5. “Hume Against the Infinite Divisibility of Space,” *DEStech Transactions on Social Science, Education and Human Science*, 2017.

Translation

The Collection of Augustine's Letters, Vol. 2 (Latin to Chinese), China Social Sciences Press, 2023. ISBN: 9787522715292.

Book Review

Review of P. Pellegrin, *Animals in the World: Five Essays on Aristotle's Biology*, trans. Anthony Preus, SUNY Press, 2023, *The Classical Review* 74(2), 2024, 420–422.

Talks (Selected)

1. "False by Design: Material Falsity and Epistemic Error in Descartes," 25th Princeton–Nuremberg–Bucharest Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, Kloster Speinshart, July 2026.
2. "The Double Motion of Reason: Analysis, Synthesis, and Deduction in Descartes," Forum Descartes, Edition Turin, January 2026.
3. "Feeling the Union: Sensation, Primitive Notions, and Descartes' True Logic," Philosophy Department Colloquia Series, University of South Florida, January 2026.
4. "Equivalence and Sufficiency: Du Châtelet's Theory of Hypothesis and Its Compatibility with Leibnizian Simplicity," Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Leibniz Society of North America, October 2025.
5. "Cavendish on Ecology, Harmony, and the Part–Whole Relationship," Cavendish Collective Virtual Workshop, July 2025.
6. "Suntaxis and the Teleological Order of the Cosmos in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ 10," International Aristotelian Conference, July 2025.
7. "Unity in Diversity: Aristotle's Global Teleology and the Nature of the Whole," Ancient Philosophy Society Annual Meeting, April 2025.
8. "Sensation and the Innate Idea of the Mind–Body Union," APA Pacific Division Meeting (symposium paper), April 2025.
9. "Aristotle's Cosmos as a Living Animal: Global Teleology and the Integration of All Beings," British Society for the History of Philosophy Annual Conference 2025, Cambridge University, April 2025.
10. "The Hybrid Objectivist–Subjectivist View of Du Châtelet's Principle of Sufficient Reason," 'Du Châtelet's Theoretical Philosophy in Context,' University College Dublin, March 2025.
11. "Descartes' Mind–Body Union: A Robust Exploration of Mechanism, Teleology, and Boundaries," XXV World Congress of Philosophy, Rome, August 2024.

12. "Aristotle's Teleology and the Puzzle of Bios: The Role of Bios in the Natural World and the Human Species," Fifth Canadian Colloquium for Ancient Philosophy, April 2024.
13. "An Ecological Approach to Aristotle's Natural Teleology in Animal Design," APA Central Division Meeting, February 2024.
14. "Cavendish on Causa Integra," Cavendish Collective Virtual Workshop, June 2023.
15. "Animal Parts and Their Environments," Ancient Medicine and Biology Workshop, Princeton University, March 2023.
16. "Hypothesis, Moral Certainty, and Sufficiency in Du Châtelet and Kant," 'Dynamics and Reason: A Workshop on Du Châtelet and Kant,' Universität Paderborn, February 2023.
17. "Beauty and Subordination," International Berkeley Society, Eastern APA, January 2023.
18. "The Nature of Politeia," Ancient Philosophy Society, 21st Annual Independent Meeting, April 2022.
19. "White Contra Foucault: History, Scientism, and Ethics," 24th World Congress of Philosophy, August 2018.

Event Organization & Participation

1. Princeton-Yale-Bilkent Workshop on the History of Philosophy, participant, May 2026.
2. Comment on paper at Forum Descartes, Edition Utrecht, January 2025.
3. Comment on Susan James, "Representing Revelation: Philosophy and Painting," Reason and Revelation in 17th Century Philosophy, October 2024.
4. Workshop on Aristotle, Newton, and Descartes in Ephesus (organized by Daniel Garber and Ali Fatollahi), participant, October 2024.
5. Ancient Philosophy Society Graduate Panel, October 2024, Co-organizer.
6. Inaugural and 2nd Duke-UNC Graduate Conference, February 2023, Co-organizer.
7. KCL-UNC Graduate Conference, May 2022, Co-organizer.

Teaching

Instructor of Record

1. "How to Reason and Argue: An Introduction to Critical Thinking," Summer 2025.
2. "Truth and Proof: Introduction to Mathematical Logic," Spring 2024.
3. "'Says Who?' Climate Research and the Pursuit of Truth" (First-Year Seminar), co-taught, Fall 2023.
4. "Practical Ethics: Moral Reasoning and How We Live," Summer 2023.

5. “Existential Philosophy and the Meaning(lessness) of Life,” Spring 2023.
6. “Wonder, Myth, and Reason: Introduction to Ancient Greek Science and Philosophy,” Fall 2022.
7. “17th and 18th Century Western Philosophy,” Summer 2022.

Teaching Assistant

1. “How to Reason and Argue: An Introduction to Critical Thinking” (Ram Neta), Spring 2022.
2. “Virtue, Value, and Happiness: An Introduction to Ethics” (Geoff Sayre-McCord), Fall 2021.

Graduate Research Consultant

1. “Perspectives on Gender, Race, and Marginality in Ancient Greek Philosophy, Science, and Medicine” (Mariska Leunissen), Spring 2022.
2. “Philosopher Queens: World Philosophies through Women’s Texts” (Mariska Leunissen), Spring 2025.

Leadership and Outreach

1. Intergenerational Outreach Fellow, Parr Center, UNC Philosophy, 2022–2024.
2. Outreach & Assessment Coordinator, Project Vox, Duke University, 2023–2024.
3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Lead Fellow, UNC Philosophy, 2023–2024.
4. Public philosophy talks and programs (UNC–Carolina Meadows series, Galloway Ridge series, Philosophy by Mail with NC Prisons, 2020–2022).

References

1. **Mariska Leunissen**, Professor and Associate Chair, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, mleunissen@unc.edu
2. **Alan Nelson**, Emeritus Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, anelson@unc.edu
3. **Daniel Garber**, A. Watson J. Armour III University Professor of Philosophy, Princeton University, dgarber@princeton.edu
4. **Ben Morison**, Professor and Department Chair, Princeton University, bmorison@princeton.edu

5. **Rosalind Chaplin**, Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
rchaplin@unc.edu
6. **Patricia Marechal**, Assistant Professor, University of California, San Diego, pmarechal@ucsd.edu
7. *Project Vox Reference:* **Andrew Janiak**, Professor of Philosophy and Bass Fellow, Duke University,
janiak@duke.edu
8. *Teaching Reference:* **Ram Neta**, Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
neta@email.unc.edu