

Fritz J. McDonald

Current Position:

2013-present: Associate Professor of Philosophy, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, USA

Prior Full-Time Positions:

2007-2013: Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, USA

2006-2007: Visiting Assistant Professor, SUNY-New Paltz, New Paltz, New York, USA

Area of Specialization:

Ethics of Artificial Intelligence

Metaethics

Philosophy of Language

Areas of Competence:

Logic

Metaphysics

Normative Ethics

Education:

PhD in Philosophy, CUNY Graduate Center, 2006

B.A. in Philosophy, Rutgers University, 1998

Journal and Book Articles:

“AI, Alignment, and the Categorical Imperative,” *AI and Ethics* 3 (2023): 337-344.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s43681-022-00160-w>

“Rawls, Truth, and Minimalism,” *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 79 *A Natureza da Verdade: Teorias e Reflexões; The Nature of Truth: Theories and Reflections* (2023): 1131-1142.

https://doi.org/10.17990/RPF/2023_79_3_1131

“Kantian Responsibility and the Self,” *Existenz* 15 *Kant, Hegel, and Werner Herzog* (2020): 16-21.

“Synchronous Online Philosophy Courses: An Experiment in Progress,” *American Philosophical Association Newsletter on Philosophy and Computers* 18 (2018): 37-40.

“Beyond Objectivism and Subjectivism” in *Praxiologies and Reasons for Action*, edited by Piotr Makowski, Mateusz Bonecki, and Krzysztof Nowak-Pozadzy, with Wojciech W. Gasparski, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2016.

“Wittgenstein and the Methodology of Semantics” in *Language, Mind and Reality: A Reflection on Philosophical Thoughts of R.C. Pradhan*, edited by Ranjan Kumar Panda. New Delhi: Overseas Press, 2015.

“Minimalism and Expressivism,” *Ethics in Progress Quarterly* 3 (2012): 9-30.

“Why Language Exists: Stating the Obvious,” *Croatian Journal of Philosophy* 12 (2012): 1-12.

“Metaphysical Minimalism,” *Prolegomena: Journal of Philosophy* 10 (2011): 39-52.

“A Deflationary Metaphysics of Morality,” *Acta Analytica* 25 (2010): 285-98.

“Agency and Responsibility,” *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 44 (2010): 199-207.

“Linguistics, Psychology, and the Ontology of Language,” *Croatian Journal of Philosophy* 9 (2009): 291-301.

“Does Moral Discourse Require Robust Truth?” *Logos Architekton* 3 (2009): 271-90.

“The Epimenidean Dilemma and the Definition of Truth,” *The Philosophical Forum* 36 (2003): pp. 477-86.

Encyclopedia Entries:

“Analytic: Truth,” “Antinomies,” “Brain-in-vat,” “Indeterminacy of Translation,” “Inscrutability of Reference,” “Logic: Informal,” “Quine, W.V.O,” “Semantics,” “Truth value,” “Universals,” in John Lachs and Robert Talisse eds., *American Philosophy: An Encyclopedia*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Book Reviews:

“*The Ethics of Virtual and Augmented Reality: Building Worlds*,” written by Erick Jose Ramirez, *The Journal of Moral Philosophy* 20 (2023): 592-595. <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455243-20050014>

“*Does Anything Really Matter? Essays on Parfit on Objectivity*, edited by Peter Singer,” *Philosophy in Review* 38 (2018): 80-82.

“*Rightness as Fairness: A Moral and Political Theory*, by Marcus Arvan,” *Philosophy in Review* 37 (2017): 44-46.

“*Cooperation and its Evolution*, edited by Kim Sterelny, Richard Joyce, Brett Calcott, and Ben Fraser,” *Philosophical Psychology* 28 (2015): 1253-1255.

“*The Self Beyond Itself: An Alternative History of Ethics, the New Brain Sciences, and the Myth of Free Will*, by Heidi M. Ravven,” *Neuroethics* 7 (2014): 251-252.

“*New Waves in Metaethics*, edited by Michael Brady, and *New Waves in Truth*, edited by Cory Wright and Nikolaj J.L.L. Pedersen,” *Analysis* 73 (2013): 400-402.

“On *What Matters*, by Derek Parfit,” *Metapsychology Online Reviews* 16 (2012).

“*The Constitution of Agency*, by Christine Korsgaard,” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 13 (2010): 235-36.

“*Worlds of Truth*, by Israel Scheffler,” *Analysis* 70 (2010): 383-85.

“*Truth and Realism*, Patrick Greenough and Michael Lynch, eds.,” *The Philosophical Quarterly* 58 (2008): 178-80.

“*The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*, David Copp, ed.,” *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 40 (2006): 485-88.

Blog Posts:

“Syllabus Showcase: Philosophy of AI,” The Blog of the APA (2021),
<https://blog.apaonline.org/2021/06/16/syllabus-showcase-philosophy-of-ai-fritz-mcdonald/>

“New series: How to teach online -- Fritz McDonald on the basics of teaching online,”
Philosopher’s Cocoon (2020), <https://philosopherscocoon.com/2020/03/12/new-series-how-to-teach-online-fritz-mcdonald-on-the-basics-of-teaching-online/>

Talks:

Comments on Jordan Myers, “An Indirect Response to Skepticism about Epistemic Blame,”
American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, Online, April 2026.

“Artificial Intelligence and the Kingdom of Ends,” Three Centuries of Kant: Knowledge, Science,
and Values. The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and Department of Philosophy, Faculty of
Philosophy, University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia, December 2025.

“AI: Reasons for Concern,” Next, Birmingham, Michigan, June 2024

“AI: Reasons for Concern,” AI and Education: Questions, Answers, and More Questions. Seaholm
High School, Birmingham, Michigan, March 2024

“APA Committee Session: The State of Philosophy—Challenges, Threats, Strategies,” with Sally
Haslanger, Eric Schwitzgebel, and Justin Weinberg, APA Committee on the Status and Future of the
Profession session, American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting, New York, New
York, January 2024

“Center for Civic Engagement Office Hours: Ethics in Artificial Intelligence,” with Graeme Harper
and Dave Dulio, Oakland University, November 2023.

Comments on Elizabeth Southgate, “Rethinking Anonymous Grading,” American Philosophical
Association, Central Division Meeting, Denver, Colorado, February 2023

“APA Committee Session: We’re Asking: How’s It Going? Current Concerns and Future Prospects,” with Peter Graham, Lynne Tirrell, and Naomi Scheman, APA Committee on the Status and Future of the Profession session, American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting, Montreal, Canada, January 2023

“The Teaching Hub: A Model for Scholarship on Teaching,” ITLC Lilly Conference, Traverse City, Michigan, October 2022

“Nietzsche and his Antagonists,” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, Teaching Hub, Vancouver, Canada, April 2022

Comments on Chris Tucker, “The Weight of Altruistic Reasons,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, Chicago, Illinois, February 2022

“Teaching Philosophy Online” Webinar, with James Genone, Jon Rosenberg, Cat Saint-Croix, Lindsay Whittaker, and Audrey Yap, March 2020

“Teaching Philosophy Online: Advice and Tips from Experienced Instructors,” with Kristina Grob and Merritt Rehn-Debraal, American Philosophical Association Webinar, March 2020:
<https://www.apaonline.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1354186>

“Kantian Responsibility and the Self,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, Karl Jaspers Society of North America Session, Chicago, Illinois, February 2020

“Kantian Autonomy and Responsibility,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, Conference of Philosophical Societies Session, St. Louis, Missouri, February 2015

“Moving Pictures: Using Video in Courses,” with Grant Yocom, E-Cornucopia 2014: Teaching with Technology, Oakland University, June 2014

“Wittgenstein and the Methodology of Semantics,” Society for Indian Philosophy and Religion, International and Interdisciplinary Conference: Culture, Values and Justice, University of Vaasa, Finland, May 2014

Comments on Alex Silk, “Deontic Conditionals: Weak and Strong,” American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting, December 2013

“Beyond Objectivism and Subjectivism,” European Conference for the Theory of Action, Poznan, Poland, June 2013.

“Why Language Exists: Stating the Obvious,” CUNY Cognitive Science Symposium, The Graduate Center, The City University of New York, May 2012

Comments on Nathan Hanna, “Moral Luck Defended,” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, April 2012

“Wittgenstein and the Methodology of Semantics,” Language, Mind, and Reality: Reflections on the Philosophical Thought of R.C. Pradhan, Indian Institute of Technology—Bombay, March 2012

“Reading within a Discipline—Philosophy” as part of “Creating Savvy Readers: Understanding Students’ Reading Problems and Strategies for Solving Them,” panel with Alice Horning, William Byrne, and Marilyn Borner, Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching, Traverse City, Michigan, September 2011

“Why Language Exists: Stating the Obvious,” Philosophy of Linguistics Conference, Interuniversity Center, Dubrovnik, Croatia, September 2011

Comments on Patrick Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, April 2011

“Metaphysical Minimalism,” Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, Saginaw Valley State University, March 2011

“Metaphysical Minimalism,” International Philosophical Symposium: Metaphysics, Language, Morality. Society for the Advancement of Philosophy and University of Zagreb Center for Croatian Studies, Zagreb, Croatia, December 2010

Comments on Matt Flummer, “If I Were in the Shoes of a Non-cognitivist, I Would Plan on Being a Classical Expressivist: An Evaluation of Gibbard’s Plans,” Central States Philosophical Association Meeting, Wayne State University, September 2010

“Agency and Responsibility,” Fourth Annual Felician Ethics Conference, Felician College, April 2010

Comments on Kurt Liebegott, “On the Prior Probability of Ethical Positions,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, February 2009

“Minimalism and Expressivism,” American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting, December 2009

“Linguistics, Psychology, and the Ontology of Language,” Philosophy of Linguistics Conference, Interuniversity Center, Dubrovnik, Croatia, September 2009

Comments on George Boger, “Promoting a Culture of Justice,” Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation Conference, University of Windsor, June 2009

“Agency and Responsibility,” University of Windsor, Colloquium, March 2009

“Prolegomena to a Deflationary Metaphysics of Morality,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, February 2009

“Can Deflationism Provide an Adequate Account of the Value of Truth?” Midsouth Philosophy Conference, The University of Memphis, February 2008

Comments on Jesse W. Butler, "The Epistemic Irreducibility of Phenomenal Knowledge," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, The University of Memphis, February 2008

"What We Talk About When We Talk About 'Ought,'" Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Colloquium, May 2006

"What We Talk About When We Talk About 'Ought,'" Long Island Philosophical Society Conference, Fall 2005 Meeting, October 2005

"Does Moral Discourse Require Robust Truth?" New Jersey Regional Philosophy Association Conference, April 2005

"Kant on Possession, Property, and Distributive Justice," Sixth Annual International University of Pittsburgh/Carnegie Mellon University Graduate Philosophy Conference, March 2004

"Linguistics, Psychology, and the Ontology of Language," University of California, San Diego Graduate Philosophy Conference, April 2003

"What is Frege's Theory of Demonstratives?" American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, March 2003

"Is the Essential Indexical a Problem?" First Annual Fordham Philosophical Society Graduate Philosophy Conference, April 2002

"Linguistics, Psychology, and the Ontology of Language," Third Annual Rutgers-Princeton Graduate Philosophy Conference, April 2002

"Use, Meaning, and the Priority of Thought," New Jersey Regional Philosophy Association Conference, April 2001

Courses Taught

Ancient Greek Philosophy

Apprentice College Teaching

Bioethics

Early Modern Philosophy

Ethics, Language, and Reality

Fact, Value, and Knowledge

Freedom, Agency, and Responsibility

Introduction to Ethics

Introduction to Logic

Introduction to Philosophy

Introduction to Symbolic Logic

Liberal Studies Senior Thesis I and II

The Logical Structure of Language

Metaphysics

Moral Truth

Nietzsche and his Antagonists

Philosophy and Technology

Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence

Philosophy of Language

Philosophy of Mind

Realism and Antirealism

Realism and Truth

Study of a Major Philosopher: Kant

Theories of Knowledge

Theories of Truth

Significant Service Roles

Awards Committee Member, American Association of Philosophy Teachers, 2025-2027

Vice Chair, Oakland University AAUP Advisory Forum, 2025-present

Oakland University AAUP Advisory Forum Representative, 2024-present

Oakland University College of Arts and Sciences Assembly Executive Committee 2023-2025

Oakland University College of Arts and Sciences Assembly 2007-2009, 2011, 2021, 2023-2025

Editorial Board, *AAPT Studies in Pedagogy*, 2021-2025

Chair, American Philosophical Association Committee on Teaching of Philosophy, 2021-2024

Oakland University Senate Intercollegiate Athletics Committee, 2021-2024

Board of Officers, American Philosophical Association, 2021-2024

Committee on the Status and Future of the Profession, American Philosophical Association, 2021-2024

Committee on Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges, American Philosophical Association, 2021-2024

Board Member, American Association of Philosophy Teachers, 2021-2024

Chair, APA/AAPT Teaching Hub Committee, 2021-2024

Virtual Programming Committee, American Association of Philosophy Teachers, 2023-2024

Associate Chair, American Philosophical Association Committee on Teaching of Philosophy, 2020-2021

Oakland University Honors College Council, 2018-2021

Oakland University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction, 2019

Chair, Interdisciplinary/Integrative Review Committee, Oakland University Bachelor of Integrative Studies Program, 2016-2019

American Philosophical Association Committee on Philosophy and Computers, 2015-2018

Chair, Oakland University General Education Committee, 2014-2017

Oakland University College of Arts and Sciences Committee on Appointment and Promotion, 2015-2016

Oakland University Senate, 2015

Oakland University Teaching and Learning Committee, 2009-2011

Oakland University College of Arts and Sciences Committee on Instruction, 2008-2010

Refereeing

Acta Analytica

AI and Ethics

AI and Society

The American Journal of Undergraduate Research

Bloomsbury Publishing

Cengage/Wadsworth

Discover Artificial Intelligence

Erkenntnis

Ethical Theory and Moral Practice

Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy

Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy

Journal of Law and Religion

Michigan Academician

Oxford University Press

Philosophia

Springer

Synthese

Teaching Ethics

Awards and Grants

Oakland University, University Research Committee, Faculty Research Fellowship, 2026

Inspiration Award, Oakland University Honors College, 2026

Faculty Recognition for Service, 28th Annual Oakland University Faculty Recognition event, 2023

Oakland University E-Learning and Instructional Support Quality Online Teaching Certification Course Award, 2017

Oakland University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Travel Grant, 2014

Oakland University E-Learning and Instructional Support Faculty Advisory Committee Award, 2012 and 2013

Oakland University, Authors at Oakland: A Celebration of the Book, March 24, 2010.

Oakland University, University Research Committee, Faculty Research Fellowship, 2009

SUNY—New Paltz, Liberal Arts and Sciences Research and Professional Development Fund, 2006-2007

Graduate Student Outstanding Paper Award, American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, 2003

CUNY Graduate Center, Sue Rosenberg Zalk Student Travel and Research Fund Award, 2000-2006

Rutgers University, Phi Beta Kappa, 1998