

Michael Joseph Lara, Ph.D.

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Departments of Philosophy and Sociology
California State University, Long Beach
1250 Bellflower Boulevard
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Michael.Lara@csulb.edu

Education

Ph.D. in Philosophy

June 2026

University of California, Irvine

Graduate GPA: 4.00

Dissertation: *Knowing-How Together: A Rylean Account of Collective Performance*

Committee: Dr. Aaron James (Chair), Dr. Anna Boncompagni, Dr. Jeff Helmrich

- Our current theories of collective action, intentionality, belief-desire psychology, emotion, and so forth all diverge on the nature of togetherness, but they all take for granted that there is something like *collective action* at all. I argue that, for any theory of collective action, the nature of acting in common – knowing-how *together* – must be properly explored and explained. This dissertation is a clear step towards filling in the gaps left by these assumptions, moving the literature on collective action forward by relying on a Rylean worldview.

M.A. in Philosophy

August 2021

California State University, Long Beach

Graduate GPA: 4.00

Thesis: *On Multidimensional Gradability: The False Dichotomy in Knowing How*

Committee: Dr. Charles Wallis (Chair), Dr. Cory Wright, Dr. Max Rosenkrantz

- My exegesis of the philosophical literature regarding knowledge-how—the kind of knowledge that is responsible for intelligent performances—reveals a false dichotomy of theoretical positions available to theorists about the topic according to gradable comparative instances of know-how. To meet the challenges of gradation, I introduce a third theoretical possibility and rely on a decision-theoretic model of multi-dimensional gradability which naturally explains and predicts comparative instances of know-how.

B.A. in Philosophy with Honors

May 2019

California State University, Long Beach

Major GPA: 4.00

Honors Thesis: *What Mary Might Have Known*

Advisor: Dr. Wayne Wright

- Through a careful exposition of Frank Jackson's knowledge argument against physicalism, I argue that the burden is on the anti-physicalist to show that physicalism is false (and not on the physicalist to show that physicalism is true).

Areas of Expertise

Collective Know-How, Classical & Modern Sociological Theory, Sociology of Popular Culture, Philosophy of Music, Aesthetics

Areas of Interest

Group Performance, Social Philosophy, Social Epistemology, Postmodernity

Awards

School of Humanities Fellowship

Academic Year 2021–2022

University of California, Irvine

Graduate Research Fellowship Award

Academic Year 2020–2021

California State University, Long Beach

- One per academic college per year.

Outstanding Officer of the Year

Academic Year 2019–2020

California State University, Long Beach

- President, Student Philosophy Association.
- Awarded by Associated Students Incorporated.

President's List

Spring 2018, Fall 2019, Spring 2019

California State University, Long Beach

Teaching Experience

University of California, Irvine:

Fall 2025–Spring 2026

Philosophy 2 – Puzzles and Paradox

-Teaching Assistant for Undergraduates

-Lead discussions, grade midterm and final essays

Summer 2025

Philosophy 2 – Puzzles and Paradox

-Instructor of Record

-Generate and oversee the Summer Session

Fall 2023-Spring 2024

Writing 60 – Argument & Research

-Guide undergraduates in researching for an argumentative paper on a social topic

-Offer rhetorical, argumentative, and research methodology oversight

Spring 2023

Philosophy 12 – History of Modern Western Philosophy

- Teaching Assistant for Undergraduates
- Lead discussions, grade midterm and final essays

Fall 2022–Winter 2023

Philosophy 2 – Puzzles and Paradox

- Teaching Assistant for Undergraduates
- Lead discussions, grade midterm and final essays

California State University, Long Beach:

Spring 2026

Sociology 356 – Classical Sociological Theory

- Lectures focused on Marx, Durkheim, and Weber
- Construct, conduct, and proctor Midterm and Final exams
- Guide students through composition of Term Papers
- Prepare students for SOC357 – Modern Sociological Theory

Sociology 357 – Modern Sociological Theory

- Lectures focused on Modern Sociologists such as Foucault, Adorno, Butler, and so on.
- Construct, conduct, and proctor Midterm and Final exams
- Guide students through composition of Term Papers
- Prepare students for SOC400+ courses

Sociology 447 – Sociology of Popular Culture

- Lectures focused on thinkers from Arnold through Baudrillard and Lyotard
- Construct, conduct, and proctor novel-styled Midterm and Final exams
- Guide students through composition of Term Papers
- Rely heavily on non-traditional media to uncover the theoretical core of popular culture

Sociology 475 – Religion and Social Change

- Lectures focused on the effects of religion on the social
- Construct, conduct, and proctor novel-style Midterm and Final exams
- Guide students through composition of Term Papers
- Rely heavily on both primary religious texts and articles from prominent thinkers about religion

Fall 2025

Philosophy 156 – Philosophy and Music

- Lectures that couple with an introduction to Philosophy course with music as the primary target
- Construct, conduct, and proctor novel-styled Midterm and Final exams
- Guide students through composition of a 100-level Term Paper
- Rely heavily on music to expose and explore a series of philosophical themes

Sociology 356 – Classical Sociological Theory

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Spring 2025

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Fall 2024

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Spring 2024

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Summer 2023

Sociology 427 – Social Movements and Activism

- Lectures focused on a multiplicity of Social Movements and Activists
- Construct, conduct, and proctor Midterm and Final exams
- Guide students through composition of Term Papers
- Introduce Sociology students to Social Ontology

Spring 2023

Sociology 356 – Classical Sociological Theory

- Lectures focused on Marx, Durkheim, and Weber
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Fall 2022

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Sociology 356 – Classical Sociological Theory

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Sociology 447 – Sociology of Popular Culture (2 Sections)

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Summer 2022

Sociology 447- Sociology of Popular Culture

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- Construct, conduct, and proctor novel-styled Midterm and Final exams
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Spring 2022

Sociology 447 – Sociology of Popular Culture (2 Sections)

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- Rely heavily on non-traditional media to uncover the theoretical core of popular culture

Fall 2021

Philosophy 156 – Philosophy and Music

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- Rely heavily on music to expose and explore a series of philosophical themes

Publications

Lara, Michael. "Once More, With Feeling...!" in Jansen, L., & Petersen, T., eds. *The Ontology of Music Groups: Identity, Persistence, and Agency of Creative Groups*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Routledge, 2024.

Research Experience

Dissertation Research

University of California, Irvine

Graduate Research Fellowship

California State University, Long Beach

Research Project: *Intellectualists Get a Failing Grade at Gradability*

- One of the most enduring legacies of Gilbert Ryle's *Concept of Mind* consists in its propagation of a mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive dichotomy regarding the nature of know-how. I argue that this is a false dichotomy.

Textbook Review

Young, Benjamin D., and Carolyn Dicey Jennings, eds. *Mind, Cognition, and Neuroscience: A Philosophical Introduction*. 9th ed. New York, NY: Routledge, 2021.

Professional Presentations

"Knowing How to Play Guitar." Grad Slam at the Beach, CSU Long Beach, CA: April 2021.

"Intellectualists Get a Failing Grade at Gradability." 33rd Annual Associated Student Research Competition, CSU Long Beach, CA: March 2021.

"On Epistemic Agency." 3rd Annual Student Speaker Series, CSU Long Beach, CA: September 2020.

"Perceptual Attitude Mindreading: Non-Linguistic Behavior Prediction." 32nd Annual Associated Student Research Competition, CSU Long Beach, CA: February 2020.

"Martin Luther King Jr. to Kendrick Lamar: Conspiracies Against African American Presidencies in the United States." 3rd Annual History Graduate Student Association Conference, CSU Long Beach, CA: November 2019.

"What Mary Might Have Known: An Exposition of the Knowledge Argument Against Physicalism." 9th Annual Philosophy Day Symposium, CSU Long Beach, CA: May 2019.

Student Life and Development Experience

President, Student Philosophy Association

California State University, Long Beach

Academic Year 2019–2020

Professional Affiliations

- The American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division (APA)
- The American Sociological Association, Pacific Division (ASA)

Academic References

Dr. Aaron James

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University of California, Irvine
Humanities Instructional Building
Irvine, CA 92697
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Dr. Carole Campbell

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Dr. Georges Van Den Abbeele

Dean Emeritus and Professor of Humanities
University of California, Irvine
243 Humanities Instructional Building
Irvine, CA 92697
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Dr. Charles Wallis

Professor of Philosophy
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California State University, Long Beach
Long Beach, CA 90840
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Dr. Max Rosenkrantz

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Long Beach, CA 90840
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