

Yasha Sapir

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Research Areas

Epistemology · Philosophy of Language · Philosophical Logic · Ethics

Education

PhD in Philosophy, University of Southern California	2021–2027
Dissertation: <i>Vague and Non-Transparent Evidence</i>	
Committee: Jeffrey Russell (chair), Andrew Bacon, Dmitri Gallow, John Hawthorne, Deniz Rudin	
MA in Philosophy, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee	2019–2021
BA in Philosophy, Reed College	2015–2018

Fellowships & Awards

General Education Graduate Assistant Teaching Award	2026
Graduate School Summer Research and Writing Grant	2026
Center for Excellence in Teaching Mentored Teaching Fellowship	2026
Flewelling Fellowship	2025
Richard Peltz Award for Excellence in Philosophy	2021
Graduate Student Excellence Fellowship	2020
Ruby–Lankford Grant for Faculty Student Research	2017

Publications

Hedging and the ignorance norm on inquiry (with Peter van Elswyk)
Synthese 199 (2021): 5837–5859.

Inquiry and deception (with Brian Haas)
Analysis (forthcoming).

In Progress

How to build a pyramid with vague propositions	<i>under review</i>
Ignorant complicity	<i>under review</i>
Silent complicity and the influence constraint	<i>under review</i>
Rational inquiry amidst uncertain priors	<i>in preparation</i>
The value of awareness (with June Lee-Rogers)	<i>in preparation</i>

Selected Presentations

Presentations marked with an asterisk () were invited. Unmarked presentations were refereed.*

Inquiry and deception (with Brian Haas)

Central APA (Colloquium)	February 2026
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Silent complicity

Eastern APA (Symposium)	January 2026
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How to build a pyramid with vague propositions

South by Semantics Workshop*	October 2025
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Ignorant complicity

Philosophy and Legal Theory Collaborative Workshop	May 2025
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Vague assertion

Society for Exact Philosophy	June 2025
Central APA (Symposium)	February 2024

Slurring and complicity

Dortmund Conference on Philosophy and Society	October 2024
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Words, background understandings, and slurs

The Semantics of Hidden Meanings	September 2023
Berkeley Stanford Davis Graduate Conference	April 2023

How to understand a question

Inquiry work in progress workshop	November 2022
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Deliberative inquiry

Eastern APA (Poster)	January 2023
Uppsala Epistemology Workshop	June 2022
Utrecht Graduate Philosophy Conference	May 2022
Notre Dame Northwestern Graduate Epistemology Conference	April 2022

On precisifiers (with Adam Woodnutt)

NASSLLI Student Session	June 2022
California Universities Semantics and Pragmatics Conference	May 2022

Hedging and settled inquiry (with Peter van Elswyk)

Nature of Inquiry Conference	March 2020
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Comments

Jingzhi Chen, "The Epistemic Rationality of Grit" USC-UCLA Graduate Conference	April 2026
Haley Schilling Anderson, "Knowledge and Options" Pacific APA	April 2025
Donald Soles, "Don't Believe and Inquire" Eastern APA	January 2025
Tomasz Zygliczewicz, "What Belief Reports are For?" Pacific APA	March 2024
Scott Dixon, "Metaphysical Foundherentism" Central APA	February 2023
Jaakko Hirvelä, "The Structure of Moral Encroachment" Uppsala Epistemology Workshop	June 2022
Madeleine Levac, "Gaslighting and Fragile Knowledge" Pacific APA	April 2022
Elise Woodard, "The Ignorance Norm and Paradoxical Assertions" Eastern APA	January 2022

Teaching Experience

As primary instructor

Science and Rationality	Spring 2027
Reasoning and Argument I: Propositional Logic	Fall 2024
Reasoning and Argument II: Probability and Decision Theory	Fall 2024

Philosophy of Money, Markets, and Property	Summer 2024
Philosophy of Money, Markets, and Property	Summer 2023

As recitation instructor

Law, Society, and Politics	Fall 2026
Ethics, Technology, and Value	Spring 2025
Philosophy of Law	Spring 2023
Early Modern Philosophy, Politics, and Economics	Fall 2022
Introduction to Logic	Spring 2021
Introduction to Logic	Fall 2020
Introduction to Logic	Spring 2020
Introduction to Logic	Fall 2019

Pedagogical training

Teaching Seminar (Mark Schroeder)	
Future Faculty Teaching Institute (USC Center for Excellence in Teaching)	
Advanced Teaching Seminar (Mark Schroeder)	

Service*Leadership*

Conference organizer, USC-UCLA graduate conference	2024-2025
Philosophy area leader, USC graduate student union	2023-2024
President, USC speculative society	2022-2023
Committee member, USC Open house committee	2022

Mentoring

MAP undergraduate mentor, Conor Sattiraju	2025-
Graduate student mentor, George Wade	2025-2026
Graduate student mentor, Nurit Matuk Blaustein	2024-2025
Graduate student mentor, Yuanye Hu	2023-2024

Conceptual Foundations of Conflict Project

CFCP Senior Graduate Fellow	2025-
Czar Ringleader	2025-2026
Editor, CFCP blog	2024-2025
CFCP Graduate Fellow	2023-2025

Chairing

Eastern APA chair for Melissa Fusco's "Conditionals of Deliberation and Update"	2025
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Refereeing

Conference referee, USC-UCLA graduate conference	2022, 2023, 2024, 2026
Conference referee, Canadian Philosophical Association meeting	2023
Journal referee, <i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i> , <i>Erkenntnis</i> , <i>Ergo</i> , <i>Inquiry</i> , <i>Synthese</i>	

Graduate Coursework

Courses marked with an asterisk () were audited.*

Value Theory

- Blame: A Beginner's Guide (Zoë Johnson King)
- Contemporary Philosophical Literature on Value (Ralph Wedgwood)
- Mental Ethics (Mark Schroeder)
- Value in a Vast and Uncertain World* (Jeffrey Russell)

Social and Political Philosophy

- Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Love (Robin Jeshion)
- Critical Theory* (Karen Ng)
- Feminist Epistemology and Identity Politics* (Emily Tilton)
- Public Reason and the Pursuit of Justice* (Blain Neufeld)

Metaphysics & Mind

- Composition and Metaphysical Explanation (Joshua Spencer)
- Intentionality (James Van Cleve)
- The Passage of Time (Joshua Spencer)
- Bounds of Possibility* (John Hawthorne)
- The Metaphysical Toolkit* (Joshua Spencer)

Logic

- Modal Logic (Gabriel Uzquaino)
- Fundamentals of Formal Logic (Joshua Spencer)

Linguistics

- Semantics (Deniz Rudin)
- Syntax (Travis Major)

Language

- Compositional Degree Semantics (Alexis Wellwood and Roumyana Pancheva)
- Language and Meaning (Peter van Elswyk)
- Language Proseminar (Scott Soames)
- Semantics, Vagueness, and Paradox (Andrew Bacon)
- Speech Act Theory (Peter van Elswyk)
- Conditionals* (Andrew Bacon and John Hawthorne)
- Epistemic Modals* (Deniz Rudin)
- Semantics and Pragmatics of Epistemic Vocabulary* (Peter van Elswyk)
- Slurs* (Robin Jeshion)
- Speech Acts* (Robin Jeshion)

History of Philosophy

- Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit (William Bristow)
- Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: Self and World (Nataliya Palatnik)
- Kant's and Kantian Practical Thought (Nataliya Palatnik)
- Schopenhauer and Nietzsche (William Bristow)

Epistemology

- The Social Epistemology of Inquiry (Peter van Elswyk)
- Epistemic Normativity* (Ralph Wedgwood, John Hawthorne, Maria Lasonen-Aarnio)
- Formal Epistemology* (Dmitri Gallow)
- Topics in Epistemology* (John Hawthorne)
- Uses and Abuses of Truth in Society* (Eleanor Gordon-Smith)

Area Exam

Conditionals (Andrew Bacon)

Formal Epistemology (Jeffrey Russell)

Pragmatics (John Hawthorne)

Vagueness (Andrew Bacon)

References

Jeffrey Russell

Professor of Philosophy
University of Southern California
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John Hawthorne

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University of Southern California
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Dmitri Gallow

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Jon Quong

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Andrew Bacon

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