

# David Wiens

# Curriculum Vitae

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## Academic Positions

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### Current

#### **University of California, San Diego**

Professor, Department of Political Science	since 2026
Faculty Affiliate, Department of Philosophy	2016
Faculty Affiliate, Halıcıoğlu Data Science Institute	2018
Faculty Affiliate, Computational Social Science Program	2021
Member, Institute for Practical Ethics	2018

### Past

#### **University of California, San Diego**

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science	2017–2026
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science	2013–2017

#### **Australian National University**

Academic Visitor, School of Philosophy	2018, 2023
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, School of Philosophy	2011–2013

## Education

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#### **University of Michigan**

PhD, Philosophy	2011
MA, Political Science	2011

#### **Texas A&M University**

MA, Philosophy	2006
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#### **Brock University**

BA, Philosophy & History	2004
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## Publications

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### Book

2025	<b><a href="#">From the Best to the Rest: Idealistic Thinking in a Non-Ideal World</a></b> Oxford University Press (part of the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics series)
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## Journal Articles

- Forthc.     **Pursuing Social Progress: The Question of Orientation**  
(with K. Hankins and R. Muldoon) *Economics and Philosophy* (forthcoming)
- Utilitarianism Does Not Dominate: A Response to Chung**  
(with R. Shibata) *Economics and Philosophy* (forthcoming)
- 2025     **Beyond Ideal Theory: A Framework for Methodological Debates**  
*Philosophy Compass* 20 (6): e70046
- Making Fair Comparisons in Political Theory**  
(with S. Ingham) *American Journal of Political Science* 69 (2): 594–606
- 2023     **Against Ideal Guidance, Again: A Reply to Erman and Möller**  
*Journal of Politics* 85 (2): 784–788
- 2022     **The Stability of the Just Society: Why Fixed Point Theorems Are Beside The Point**  
(with S. Ingham) *Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy* 23 (2): 312–19
- Devoting Ourselves to the Manifestly Unattainable**  
(with N. Southwood) *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 104 (3): 696–716
- 2021     **Demographic Objections to Epistocracy: A Generalization**  
(with S. Ingham) *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 49 (4): 323–349
- 2020     **Morals from Rationality Alone? Some Doubts**  
(with J.P. Messina) *Politics, Philosophy, and Economics* 19 (3): 248–273
- The General Theory of Second Best Is More General Than You Think**  
*Philosophers' Imprint* 20 (5): 1–26
- 2018     **The Tyranny of a Metaphor**  
*Cosmos + Taxis* 5 (2): 13–28  
Symposium on Gerald Gaus's *The Tyranny of the Ideal* (Princeton UP, 2016)
- 2017     **Cosmopolitanism and Competition: Probing the Limits of Egalitarian Justice**  
*Economics and Philosophy* 33 (1): 91–124
- 2016     **“Actual” Does Not Imply “Feasible”**  
(with N. Southwood) *Philosophical Studies* 173 (11): 3037–3060
- Benefiting from Wrongdoing and Sustaining Wrongful Harm**  
(with C. Barry) *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 13 (5): 530–552
- Motivational Limitations on the Demands of Justice**  
*European Journal of Political Theory* 15 (3): 333–352
- Assessing Ideal Theories: Lessons from the Theory of Second Best**  
*Politics, Philosophy, and Economics* 15 (2): 132–149
- 2015     **Political Ideals and the Feasibility Frontier**  
*Economics and Philosophy* 31 (3): 447–477
- Against Ideal Guidance**  
*Journal of Politics* 77 (2): 433–446
- Natural Resources and Government Responsiveness**  
*Politics, Philosophy, and Economics* 14 (1): 84–105
- 2014     **“Going Evaluative” to Save Justice From Feasibility — A Pyrrhic Victory**  
*The Philosophical Quarterly* 64 (255): 301–307
- The Political Resource Curse: An Empirical Re-Evaluation**  
(with P. Poast and W.R. Clark) *Political Research Quarterly* 67 (4): 783–794

## Journal articles

- 2014      **Natural Resources and Institutional Development**  
*Journal of Theoretical Politics* 26 (2): 197–221
- 2013      **Demands of Justice, Feasible Alternatives, and the Need for Causal Analysis**  
*Ethical Theory & Moral Practice* 16 (2): 325–338
- 2012      **Prescribing Institutions Without Ideal Theory**  
*The Journal of Political Philosophy* 20 (1): 45–70

## Book chapters

- 2020      **What Second-Best Scenarios Reveal About Ideals of Global Justice**  
(with C. Barry) *Oxford Handbook of Global Justice*, ed. by T. Brooks (Oxford UP)
- 2017      **Will The Real Principles of Justice Please Stand Up?**  
*Political Utopias*, ed. by K. Vallier and M. Weber (Oxford UP)
- 2015      **Achieving Global Justice: Why Failures Matter More Than Ideals**  
*Making Global Institutions Work*, ed. by K. Brennan (Routledge)

## Reviews

- 2023      **Ben Laurence, Agents of Change**  
*The Review of Politics* 85 (2): 278–280
- 2017      **Leif Wenar, Blood Oil**  
*Ethics* 127 (3): 813–817

## Presentations (incl. upcoming)

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### Invited

- 2025      International Social Ontology Society annual conference (keynote, Trinity College)  
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Colloquium in Social and Political Philosophy  
University of Oxford, Center for the Study of Social Justice seminar  
Workshop on *From the Best to the Rest* (Univ. of Amsterdam)
- 2024      Duke University, Department of Political Science  
Political Theory in/and/as Political Science (keynote, New York Univ.)  
PPE at the Frontier Workshop (Univ. at Buffalo)  
Purdue University, Department of Philosophy  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, PPE Seminar Series
- 2023      Australian National University, School of Politics and International Relations  
Manuscript workshop for *From the Best to the Rest* (Australian National Univ.)
- 2021      Michigan Philosophy Alumni Conference (virtual)
- 2020      New York University, Department of Politics (virtual, with S. Ingham)  
PPE Society, APA (Eastern) annual conference (Philadelphia, PA)
- 2018      American Philosophical Association (Pacific) annual conference (San Diego, CA)  
Political Theory in/and/as Political Science (GRIPP and RGCS, McGill Univ.)  
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Department of Political Science  
Society for Applied Philosophy, APA (Eastern) annual conference (Savannah, GA)  
UC Santa Barbara, Department of Political Science
- 2017      Stanford University, Political Theory Workshop

## Invited

- 2016 Workshop on formal methods in political theory (Univ. of Arizona)  
2015 Australian National University, School of Philosophy  
Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics (Charles Sturt Univ.)  
Texas A&M University, Department of Political Science
- 2014 Workshop on feasibility and the ethics of war (Australian National Univ.)  
Workshop on political utopias (Bowling Green State Univ.)  
UC San Diego, Department of Philosophy
- 2013 Workshop on benefiting from injustice (Carnegie Council on Ethics in International Affairs, New York)
- 2012 Workshop on feasibility (Centre for Moral, Social, and Political Theory, ANU)  
Workshop on enabling harm (Centre for the Study of Mind in Nature, Univ. of Oslo)  
Monash Politics Research Workshop (Monash Univ.)  
University of Sydney, Dept. of Philosophy

## Refereed

- 2026 American Political Science Association (Boston)
- 2025 PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)
- 2023 PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)
- 2022 PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)
- 2019 PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)
- 2018 American Political Science Association (Boston)  
PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)
- 2017 Association for Political Theory (Univ. of Michigan)  
PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)
- 2014 Association for Political Theory (Univ. of Wisconsin)  
Australasian Association of Philosophy (ANU)
- 2012 Australasian Association of Philosophy (Univ. of Wollongong)  
MANCEPT Workshop on ideal and nonideal theory (Univ. of Manchester)
- 2011 American Political Science Association (Seattle)  
Canadian Political Science Association (Waterloo)  
Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics (ANU) (×2)
- 2010 American Philosophical Association (Eastern) (Boston)  
British Society for Ethical Theory (Univ. of Nottingham)  
Canadian Political Science Association (Montreal)  
Dutch Conference on Practical Philosophy (Univ. of Groningen)
- 2008 Association for Legal and Social Philosophy (Univ. of Nottingham)  
Princeton Graduate Conference in Political Theory  
www.publicreason.net Podcast Symposium

## Miscellaneous participation (chair, discussant, etc.) (\*Invited)

- 2026 \*PPE Summer Workshop (Boulder, CO)
- 2025 \*PPE Summer Workshop (Chapman Univ.)
- 2024 PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)  
\*PPE Summer Workshop (Chapman Univ.)
- 2023 PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)  
\*PPE Summer Workshop (Chapman Univ.)

## Miscellaneous participation (chair, discussant, etc.) (\*Invited)

- 2022 PPE Society (New Orleans, LA)  
\*PPE Summer Workshop (Chapman Univ.)
- 2021 \*Liberty Fund conference on Hume's political economy (virtual)  
\*PPE Summer Workshop (Chapman Univ., virtual)
- 2019 American Political Science Association (Washington, DC)  
\*Manuscript workshop for Burke Hendrix, *Strategies of Justice* (Univ. of Oregon)  
\*New Directions in Social Justice Theorizing (UCSD)
- 2018 \*American Philosophical Association, Eastern Div. annual conference (Savannah, GA)  
\*Society for Applied Philosophy, APA (Pacific) annual conference (San Diego)
- 2017 \*Workshop on global justice (Univ. of Michigan)
- 2016 \*American Philosophical Association, Pacific Div. annual conference (San Francisco)  
\*Conference on exploitation (Univ. of San Diego)  
Western Political Science Association (San Diego, CA)
- 2015 \*American Philosophical Association, Pacific Div. annual conference (Vancouver)  
\*Conference on ideal theory (Center for Social Philosophy and Policy, Tucson, AZ)
- 2014 \*Manuscript workshop for David Estlund, *Utopophobia* (ANU)
- 2013 American Political Science Association (Chicago)

## Teaching

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UCSD

### Undergraduate

Classical political theory  
Early modern political theory  
Economic theories of political behavior  
Ethics in society  
Game theory in political science I  
International political theory  
Liberty and equality  
Senior honors thesis seminar

### Graduate

Analytical theory I  
Introduction to game theory (superseded by Analytical theory I and II)  
Democracy: Theory and measurement (with Sean Ingham)  
Formal methods in liberal and democratic theory  
Global equality, for & against  
History of political thought: Plato to Rousseau  
Ideals and reality in political theory  
Methods in contemporary liberal theory  
Social equality

## Graduate student supervision

UCSD

### Political science

Matthew Draper (MA [2020]; supervisor)  
Kevin Flanagan (PhD; committee member)  
Isabel Gotti (MA [2017]; supervisor)  
C. Tyler Sharp (MA [2022]; supervisor)  
Shelbi Swanson (PhD; chair)

### Philosophy

Travis Chamberlain (PhD [2021], committee member)  
Aaron Chipp-Miller (PhD [2026], committee member)  
Thomas Kirkpatrick (PhD [2023], committee member)  
James (J.P.) Messina (PhD [2018], committee member)  
Faron Ray (PhD, committee member)  
Emiliano Salomon (PhD, committee member)  
Daniel Weltman (PhD [2018], committee member)

## Service

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### Department

UCSD

Political Theory Field Coordinator (×7: 2015–2019; 2021–23, 2025–26)  
Co-convener, Integrated Workshop (PhD) (×7: 2016–2019; 2021–23, 2025–26)  
Faculty Recruitment Committee (×7)  
    Methods (2014–15)  
    Omnibus (2016–17; 2017–18)  
    Political Theory (2019–20, chair; 2022–23)  
    Lecturer (2024; 2026, chair)  
Graduate Admissions Committee (×7: 2016–2017; 2019; 2021; 2023–2025)  
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Task Force (2020–22, *ad hoc*)  
Graduate curriculum reform committee (2021–22, *ad hoc*)  
Appointment policy committee (2026, *ad hoc*)  
Convener, Political Theory Speaker Series (×7: 2015–2019; 2021–23, 2025–26)  
Convener, Faculty Research Seminar (2015–2020)  
    (Co-convener, 2014)

### University

UCSD

Senate Undergraduate Council (2025–27)  
    Courses Subcommittee (Apr–Jun 2026)  
Political Science Representative, Representative Assembly (2023–2025)  
Academic Integrity Review Board (2018–2021)  
Valtz Chair Selection Committee (2023, *ad hoc*, Dept. of Philosophy)

## Profession

Editorial	<i>Politics, Philosophy, and Economics</i> Co-Editor (since Sept. 2023) Associate Editor (2019–2023)
Referee	<i>American Journal of Political Science</i> (×7); <i>American Philosophical Quarterly</i> ; <i>American Political Science Review</i> (×4); <i>Analysis</i> (×3); <i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i> ; <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> ; <i>Canadian Journal of Philosophy</i> (×2); <i>Contemporary Political Theory</i> ; <i>Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy</i> (×2); <i>Economics and Philosophy</i> (×3); <i>Ergo</i> ; <i>Erkenntnis</i> ; <i>Ethical Theory and Moral Practice</i> ; <i>Ethics</i> (×2); <i>European Journal of Political Theory</i> (×3); <i>Inquiry</i> ; <i>Journal of the American Philosophical Association</i> ; <i>Journal of Applied Philosophy</i> (×3); <i>Journal of Ethics &amp; Social Philosophy</i> (×3); <i>Journal of Moral Philosophy</i> ; <i>Journal of Philosophy</i> (×2); <i>The Journal of Political Philosophy</i> (×14); <i>Journal of Politics</i> (×7); <i>Metaphilosophy</i> ; <i>Moral Philosophy and Politics</i> (×3); Oxford University Press (×2); Palgrave Macmillan; <i>Philosophy and Phenomenological Research</i> (×2); <i>Philosophy and Public Affairs</i> ; <i>Philosophical Quarterly</i> (×3); <i>Philosophical Studies</i> (×11); <i>Philosophy Compass</i> ; <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> (×3); <i>Political Studies</i> (×2); <i>Politics, Philosophy, &amp; Economics</i> (×4); PPE Society Research Consortium; <i>Public Affairs Quarterly</i> ; <i>Res Publica</i> (×2); <i>Social Philosophy and Policy</i> (×2); <i>Social Theory &amp; Practice</i> (×4); <i>Synthese</i> ; <i>The Review of Politics</i> ; <i>Utilitas</i>
Conf.	Program Committee, <i>Association for Political Theory</i> (2020, 2022) Submission referee, <i>PPE Society</i> (2021–2026)