

CURRICULUM VITAE

Brandon Smith

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Appointments

2025-Current: FRQSC Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute for Research in the Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2023-2024: Research Assistant, Philosophy Department, McGill University

Project: The Good Life

Supervisor: Carlos Fraenkel

Education

2018-2024: Ph.D. (concentration in Teaching Philosophy), Philosophy, McGill University

Dissertation: *Spinoza's Eudaimonism*

Defended: 18 March 2024

Committee: Hasana Sharp (Primary Supervisor), Carlos Fraenkel (Co-Supervisor), Chris Howard (Internal Examiner), Sanem Soyarslan (External Examiner, NC State University), Elsbeth Heaman (Prodean)

2016-2018: M.A., Philosophy, Carleton University

Thesis - *The Un-Stoic Spinoza: An Analysis of Spinoza, Aristotle, and Epicurus's Accounts of Pleasure*

Supervisors: Annie Larivée, Melissa Frankel

2012-2016: B.A. Honours, English and Philosophy, Carleton University

Dean's List (2012-2016)

Passed with High Distinction

Areas of Specialization

Spinoza, 17th Century Philosophy, Ancient Greek Philosophy, Philosophy of Happiness

Areas of Competence

18th Century Philosophy, The Meaning of Life, Ethics, Philosophy of Mind

Publications

Books

Spinoza on the Good Life (co-authored with Carlos Fraenkel; under contract with Cambridge)

The Search for Mind-Body Flourishing in Spinoza's Eudaimonism, Brill (forthcoming)

Journal Articles

"Spinoza's Dual Pleasure Problem." *Journal of Spinoza Studies* (forthcoming)

"Weak Democritean Eudaimonism," *Arché*, vol. 8, pp. 80–101.

<https://www.bu.edu/arche/issues/pdfs/no8-digital.pdf>

"Healthy and Happy Natural Being: Spinoza and Epicurus Contra the Stoics." *Ergo an Open Access Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 11, no. 16, 2024, pp. 412-441. doi:

<https://doi.org/10.3998/ergo.6156>

"Spinoza's Early Modern Eudaimonism: Corporeal and Intellectual Flourishing," *Dialogue: Canadian Philosophical Review*, 2023, pp. 1-26. doi:

<http://doi.org/10.1017/S0012217323000409>

"Spinoza's Strong Eudaimonism," *Journal of Modern Philosophy*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2023, pp. 1-21.

doi: <http://doi.org/10.32881/jomp.247>

"Spinoza's Metaethical Synthesis of Nature and Affect." *Ithaque*, no. 30, 2022, pp. 89-112. doi:

<https://doi.org/1866/26672>

Popular Philosophy

"Healthy and Happy Natural Being: Spinoza and Epicurus Contra the Stoics," *Ergo Blog*, 23 January 2025. <https://ergoblog.org/brandon-smith-healthy-and-happy-natural-being-spinoza-and-epicurus-contra-the-stoics/>

"Consequence, Duty, and Character: An Exploration of Traditional Ethical Paradigms in the *Ethics*," *Undercurrent Philosophy*, 27 August 2023.

<http://undercurrentphilosophy.com/longer/consequence-duty-and-character-an-exploration-of-traditional-ethical-paradigms-in-the-ethics/>

"How Important is Philosophy to Happiness? Weak vs. Strong Eudaimonism." *TheCollector*, 19 August 2023. <https://www.thecollector.com/philosophy-happiness-eudaimonism-strong-weak/>

Works-in-Progress

Early Modern Eudaimonism

“The Multifaceted Nature of Eudaimonism”

“The Journey from Love of God to Love *in* God: Spinoza’s Triadic Account of Happiness”

Awards/Grants

Fonds de Recherche du Québec Société et Culture Postdoctoral Fellowship (\$110 000 CAD), 2025-2026

Project: Early Modern Eudaimonism

Raymond Klibansky Prize in Philosophy, McGill University (\$1000 CAD), 2024

Awarded by the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, to the graduate student who defends the best doctoral thesis in the field of history of philosophy.

Graduate Teaching Excellence Award, Department of Philosophy, McGill University, 2024

Awarded for outstanding pedagogical work in PHIL 355: Aristotle (Winter 2024) and PHIL 360: 17th Century Philosophy (Fall 2021)

David Fate Norton Fellowship In Philosophy, McGill University (\$9285 CAD), 2023

Awarded on the basis of academic merit by the Department of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts.

Guy Desautels Memorial Prize, McGill University, 2022

Awarded by the Department of Philosophy to a graduate student who has done outstanding work in the history of philosophy.

Senate Medal for Outstanding Academic Achievement, Carleton University, 2018

Awarded with Master of Arts in Philosophy

Senate Medal for Outstanding Academic Achievement, Carleton University, 2016

Awarded with Bachelor of Arts Honours in English and Philosophy

FASS Summer Undergraduate Research Internship, Carleton University (\$6000 CAD), 2016

Project: Aristotle and Spinoza's Views on Pleasure

Conferences (* = Refereed; ** = Invited; * = Commentary)**

** “The Search for Mind-Body Flourishing in Spinoza’s Eudaimonism,” Spinoza’s Intellectual Love of God: Interpretations of *Ethics* Part V, University of Aberdeen, June 2025.

* “Spinoza’s Pleasure Problem,” Canadian Philosophical Association, McGill University, June 2024.

*** Evelyn Maude, "Spinoza's Monistic Defence of Republican Liberty," Canadian Philosophical Association, McGill University, June 2024.

**"Spinoza's Eudaimonism," Junior Scholar Event, North American Spinoza Society, May 2024.

**"Aristotle and Spinoza on the Virtuous and Happy Life," Work in Progress Seminar Series, McGill University, March 2024.

**"Is God Dead, and Did Spinoza Kill Him? Spinoza on Divinity," Thinker Talks, McGill University, October 2023.

**"Spinoza's Early Modern Eudaimonism: Corporeal and Intellectual Flourishing," Quebec Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, July 2023

***James Mackey, "A Cleanthean Theodicy? The Contribution of Justus Lipsius to the Stoic Doctrines of Providence and Fate," Canadian Philosophical Association, York University, May 2023.

**"Spinoza's Strong Eudaimonism." Work in Progress Seminar Series, McGill University, February 2023.

**"Spinoza and Epicurus on Pleasure: Healthy and Happy Natural Being," The Traveling Early Modern Philosophy Organization, May 2022.

**"Healthy and Happy Natural Being: Spinoza and Epicurus Contra the Stoics," McGill Philosophy Association, McGill University, April 2022.

**"The Un-Stoic Spinoza: Spinoza vs. the Stoics on the Passions," Symposium "The Passions in Early Modern Rationalism," Canadian Philosophical Association, University of Alberta, June 2021.

***Carlos Fraenkel, "How should we live? Can philosophers help us (and is it even a good question to ask)?" McGill Philosophy Student Association, McGill University, February 2021.

**"Consequence, Duty, and Character: Traditional Ethical Paradigms in the *Ethics*," Symposium "Spinoza Today," Dominican University College, December 2017.

**"Aristotle and Spinoza's Views on Pleasure," FASS Summer Undergraduate Research Internship Event, Carleton University, September 2016.

***"Spinoza: Theist or Atheist?," Carleton University Philosophy Society, Carleton University, September 2016.

***"Spinoza on Love," Carleton University Philosophy Society, Carleton University, Ottawa, February 2016.

Teaching Experience

Instructor

PHIL355: Aristotle (Intermediate)

McGill University, Winter 2024

PHIL360: 17th Century Philosophy (Intermediate)

McGill University, Fall 2021

Recognized under the Thank a Prof Initiative

Nominated by the Department of Philosophy for the Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Teaching Award

Teaching Assistant

PHIL237: Contemporary Moral Issues (Introductory)

McGill University, Winter 2023

PHIL306: Philosophy of Mind (Introductory)

McGill University, Fall 2022

PHIL201: Introduction to Philosophy 2 (Introductory)

McGill University, Winter 2019/2020/2022

PHIL200: Introduction to Philosophy 1 (Introductory)

McGill University, Fall 2020

PHIL454: Ancient Moral Theory (Intermediate)

McGill University, Fall 2019/Winter 2021

PHIL1200A – The Meaning of Life (Introductory)

Carleton University, Winter 2018

PHIL1000A – Introductory Philosophy: Fields, Figures, and Problems (Introductory)

Carleton University, Fall 2017

PHIL2005A – Greek Philosophy and the Western Tradition (Introductory)

Carleton University, Fall 2016-Winter 2017

Guest Lectures

“TTP 1-2 (Prophecy and Prophets)”

JWST 261: History of Jewish Philosophy and Thought, McGill University, Fall 2024

“Steven Nadler, *A Book Forged in Hell*, chapter 8 ‘Faith, Reason, and the State’”

JWST 337: Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise*: "A Book Forged in Hell"?, McGill University, Winter 2024

“*TTP* Chapter 15 (Reason and Theology)”

JWST 337: Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise*: "A Book Forged in Hell"?, McGill University, Winter 2024

“Epicurean Eudaimonism”

PHIL 202: The Good Life, McGill University, Winter 2023

“Maimonides’s *Eight Chapters*, Ch. 5-8”

JWST 337: Aristotle and Maimonides on Happiness and Virtue, McGill University, Winter 2023

“Aristotle on Friendship: NE VIII”

PHIL 454: Ancient Moral Theory, McGill University, Fall 2022

“Spinoza’s Necessitarianism”

PHIL 360: 17th Century Philosophy, McGill University, Fall 2022

“Descartes’s *Meditations*”

PHIL 201: Introduction to Philosophy 2, McGill University, Winter 2022

“Epicurean Happiness”

PHIL 201: Introduction to Philosophy 2, McGill University, Fall 2020

“Stoic Metaphysics”

PHIL454: Ancient Moral Theory, McGill University, Fall 2019

Academic Service, Membership, and Outreach

Conference Chair

Canadian Philosophical Association, McGill University, June 2024

Session 24: History of Philosophy

Zoom Conference Host

Canadian Philosophical Association, McGill University, June 2024

Session 7: Applied Ethics

Session 15: Metaphysics, Philosophy of Religion

CJP Distinguished Lecture: Joe Heath

Reading Groups

The Meaning of Life, 2024

Spinoza, 2024-Current

Coordinator

Graduate Workshop Series, Philosophy Department, McGill University, Fall 2023/Winter 2024

Baruch Spinoza Study Group (co-organized with Shawn Saul), July 2017-January 2018

Guest Speaker

“Metaphysics,” Thornhill Secondary School, York, Ontario, Canada, 21 November 2023

“Unraveling Spinoza: Exploring the Intersections Between Mind, Body, and Happiness,”
The Enlightened Exchange Podcast, 23 December 2023.

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/759NwfJA0qUXoUI1o0PXte>

Graduate Mentor

Directed Reading Program, McGill University, Winter 2023/Winter 2024

Topics: Eudaimonism, Spinoza, Spinoza’s engagement with ancient Greek eudaimonism

Philosophy Graduate School Guidance Panel, McGill University, 21 September 2023

Copyeditor

Journal of Spinoza Studies, September 2022-December 2023

Moderator

Spinoza Research Network Facebook Group, September 2022 - Current

Administrators: Beth Lord and Jon Rubin

Reviewer

Bloomsbury

History of Philosophy & Logical Analysis

Journal of Value Inquiry

Journal of Modern Philosophy

McGill Journal of Human Behaviour

Theology and Science

Member

North American Spinoza Society (NASS), 2018-Current

Mini-Course Instructor

Enrichment Mini-Courses Program (EMCP), Carleton University

“Philosophy as Happiness: Spinoza’s Path to a Self-Empowered Life,” May 2018

“The Pursuit of Happiness: An Introduction to the Good Life in Ancient Greece,” May 2017 (Co-Taught with Courteney Crump)

Languages

English (fluent)

French (research)

Latin (research)

References

Upon request