

Marvin Backes

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Department of Philosophy
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Nationality: German

Areas of Specialization

Epistemology (traditional and social), Metaethics, Metaphysics

Areas of Competence

Ethics, Aesthetics, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind

Employment

- 2020 - present **Uppsala University**, *Department of Philosophy*
Wenner-Gren Research Fellow
- 2020 (Spring) **University of St Andrews**, *Department of Philosophy*
Associate Lecturer

Education

- 2015 - 2019 **University of St Andrews/Stirling**
PhD Philosophy
Dissertation: *What Justifies Belief? Probability, Normalcy, and the Functional Theory*
Supervisors: Patrick Greenough and Crispin Wright
- 2014 - 2015 **University of St Andrews/Stirling**
MLitt Philosophy (with distinction in the dissertation), 2015
Dissertation: *Epistemic Justification: A Case for a Plurality of Concepts*
Supervisor: Jessica Brown
- 2009 - 2013 **Westminster College**, *Salt Lake City, USA*
BA Philosophy and Economics (with honours), 2013

Publications

- Forthcoming “Can Groups be Genuine Believers? The Argument From Interpretationism”, *Synthese*.
- 2020 “Epistemology and the Law: Why There is No Epistemic Mileage in Legal Cases”, *Philosophical Studies* 177: 2759-2778
- 2019 “Normalcy, Justification, and the Easy-Defeat Problem”, *Philosophical Studies* 176: 2877-2895.
- 2019 “A Bitter Pill for Closure”, *Synthese* 196: 3773-3787.

In Progress

- Revisions Submitted* Epistemic Justification: Probability, Normalcy, and the Functional Theory
- Under Review* Moderate Moral Intuitionism and Arguments From Reliability

Selected Talks

Moderate Moral Intuitionism and Arguments From Reliability

April 2021 Stockholm/Uppsala Joint Seminar in Theoretical Philosophy, *Stockholm University*

Epistemic Justification: Monism, Pluralism, and the Functional Theory

June 2020 Higher Seminar for Theoretical Philosophy, *Uppsala University*

Epistemology and the Law: Why There is No Epistemic Mileage in Legal Cases

November 2019 Epistemology Research Group, *University of Edinburgh*

April 2019 Evidence in Law and Ethics, *Jagiellonian University (Kraków)*

Normalcy Views of Justification and the Easy-Defeat Problem

September 2018 GAP.10 (German Society for Analytic Philosophy), *University of Cologne*

June 2018 European Epistemology Network, *University of Amsterdam*

April 2018 XIX Taller d'Investigació en Filosofia, *University of Barcelona*

Justification from Statistical Evidence: A Defense

May 2018 Arché Epistemology Group, *University of St Andrews*

Justification as Multiply Realizable (invited talk)

December 2017 The Metaphysics of Knowledge Workshop II, *University of St Andrews*

A Dilemma for Non-Probabilistic Accounts of Justification

May 2016 Flash Epistemology Workshop, *University of St Andrews*

Finding Value in Verbal Disputes

July 2015 Understanding Value IV, *University of Sheffield*

Awards & Grants

2020 - present **Wenner-Gren Postdoctoral Research Fellowship**

Competitive stipend for postdoctoral research

2020 **University of St Andrews Outstanding Teacher Award Nomination**

Nominated by students for the annual Outstanding Teacher Award

2015 - 2018 **AD Links Foundation Postgraduate Scholarship**

Competitive three-year scholarship for doctoral studies, awarded by the *University of St Andrews*

2014 - 2015 **Formula Santander Postgraduate Scholarship**

Competitive scholarship for graduate studies, awarded by the *University of St Andrews*

2013 **Westminster College Outstanding Student Award (Philosophy)**

Awarded annually to final-year philosophy students in recognition of outstanding academic achievement

2009 - 2013 **Westminster College Merit Scholarship**

Merit based four-year scholarship for undergraduate studies

Teaching

Lecturing, *University of St Andrews*

Spring 2020 PY4606 Contemporary Epistemology (Social and Political Epistemology)

PY1901 Morality and Human Nature (Moral Theory)

Spring 2019 PY2903 Matters of Life and Death (Ethics)

Tutoring, *University of St Andrews*

Spring 2020 PY2012 Meaning and Knowing (Epistemology and Philosophy of Language)

Spring 2019 PY1013 The Enlightenment (History of Philosophy/Political Philosophy)

Autumn 2018 PY2011 Foundations of Western Philosophy (Ancient Philosophy)

Spring 2018 PY1012 Reasoning (Elementary Propositional and Predicate Logic)

Spring 2017 PY2013 Moral and Aesthetic Values (Metaethics and Aesthetics)

Autumn 2016 PY1010 Mind and World (Metaphysics and Philosophy of Mind)
Spring 2016 PY2012 Meaning and Knowing (Epistemology and Philosophy of Language)
Autumn 2015 PY1010 Mind and World (Metaphysics and Philosophy of Mind)

Instructor on the Philosophy Academic Skills Project, *University of St Andrews*

I designed and delivered two workshops aimed at making analytic philosophy more accessible to undergraduate students new to the subject and to help students develop some of the key skills required to succeed in philosophy.

Spring 2016 Philosophy Academic Skills Workshop, 'Essay Writing in Philosophy'
Autumn 2015 Philosophy Academic Skills Workshop, 'Thinking Like a Philosopher'

Professional Experience & Service

Collaborative Research

As an active member of the *Arché Philosophical Research Centre for Logic, Language, Metaphysics and Epistemology* at the *University of St Andrews*, I was affiliated with the following research groups.

2015 - 2019 **Epistemology: Current Themes**
Principal investigator: Jessica Brown
2017 - 2019 **Conceptual Engineering**
Principal investigator: Kevin Sharp
2016 - 2017 **Metaphysics: Identity, Existence & Structure**
Principal investigator: Aaron Cotnoir
2015 - 2016 **Language and Mind**
Principal investigator: Derek Ball & Simon Prosser

Conference Organising

2021 Organiser of two international workshops on Epistemic Pluralism (together with Nikolaj Pedersen and Ylwa Wirling)
2017 Organiser of the 10th Arché Graduate Conference
External funding won from the *Scots Philosophical Association* and *Analysis*.
2016 Organiser of the 9th Arché Graduate Conference
External funding won from the *Mind Association*, the *Scots Philosophical Association*, and through the *CAPOD Innovation Grant*.

Refereeing

Invited Referee: *Analysis*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Inquiry*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*

Referee for the Arché Graduate Conference 2016, 2017 & 2018

Student Welfare Support

2015 - 2018 Assistant Warden at University Hall, *St Andrews*
As a member of a diverse hall community, one of my central responsibilities was to offer pastoral care to residents of the Hall and to mentor students in their transition into university life.
2015 To better support students, I completed a Mental Health First Aid training

References

Patrick Greenough

Senior Lecturer in Logic and
Metaphysics
University of St Andrews
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Crispin Wright

Professor of Philosophy
NYU/University of Stirling
c.j.wright@stir.ac.uk

Jessica Brown

Arché Professor of Philosophy
University of St Andrews
jab30@st-andrews.ac.uk

Matt McGrath

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy
Rutgers University
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Martin Smith

Reader in Philosophy
University of Edinburgh
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Matti Eklund

Professor of Philosophy
Uppsala University
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