

Marie Jayasekera

Curriculum Vitae

California State University, Long Beach
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), 2023–present
Lecturer, CSULB, 2018–2023
Visiting Research Associate, University of California, Irvine, 2017–2018
Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Colgate University, 2010–2017
Maternity leave, 2015–2016

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, M.A. in Philosophy, 2008; Ph.D. in Philosophy, 2010
Tufts University, M.A. in Philosophy, 2004
Yale University, B.S. in Biology, 1999

AREA OF SPECIALIZATION: History of Early Modern Philosophy

AREAS OF COMPETENCE: Free Will; Moral Psychology; Normative Ethics, History of Political Philosophy

RESEARCH

Refereed Journal Articles

- “[Experience and Definitions in the Hobbes-Bramhall Debate on Liberty](#),” *Ergo*, 12, No. 29 (2025): 749–781.
“[Mary Astell on Self-Government and Custom](#),” *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 32 (2024): 452–472.
“[All in their Nature Good: Descartes on the Passions of the Soul](#),” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 58 (2020): 71–92.
“[Imitation and ‘Infinite’ Will: Descartes on the *Imago Dei*](#),” *Oxford Studies in Early Modern Philosophy*, Volume VIII, edited by Daniel Garber and Donald Rutherford, 1–38. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
“[Responsibility in Descartes’s Theory of Judgment](#),” *Ergo* 3, No. 12 (2016): 293–319.
“[Descartes on Human Freedom](#),” *Philosophy Compass* 9, Issue 8 (2014): 527–539.

RESEARCH LANGUAGES

Latin and French (reading knowledge)

RECENT AWARDS

- 2025 CSULB Student Summer Research Assistantship (SSRA) (\$6234, for student support for research on Reid on experience in arguments about moral liberty)
2024 The Office of Research and Economic Development (CSULB) Funding for Open-Access Publishing (\$1750)
2023 CSULB Summer Stipend Award (\$4650, for research on custom in early modern philosophy)
2023 CSULB SSRA (\$5490, for student support for research on Locke on experience in arguments about liberty)
2022 CSULB Summer Stipend Award (\$4650 for experience in early modern arguments about human freedom)
2022 CSULB SSRA (\$6234, for student support for research on the experimental philosophy research program on the phenomenology of agency)

RESEARCH TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS (* indicates refereed)

- * “Descartes on Experiencing Freedom,” Workshop Presentation, Pacific APA, online, April 2026

- “Mary Astell and John Stuart Mill on How Custom Constrains Liberty,” Presentation for the Student Philosophy Association, CSULB, October 2025
- * “Custom and Prejudice: Astell and Poulain on Sociocultural Constraints on Women’s Agency”
Extending New Narratives in the History of Philosophy seminar: “Women, Dignity, and Reason in the Early Modern Period (1600–1800),” Monash University, December 2024
- “Experience and Definitions in the Hobbes-Bramhall Debate”
The History of Philosophy Roundtable, University of California, San Diego (UCSD), October 2023
- * “Experience and Definitions in the Debate between Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty”
International Hobbes Association 2023 Annual Meeting, Central APA, Denver, February 2023
- “Experience in Early Modern Arguments about Free Will”
Departmental colloquium, CSULB, January 2023
- “Mary Astell on Self-Government”
Invited keynote, UCSD Modern Philosophy Graduate Workshop, June 2022 (over Zoom)
- “Autonomous Agency in Astell”
Meeting of the Friends of Mary Astell, Pacific APA, Vancouver, April 2022
- “Descartes on Divine Providence and Human Freedom”
The History of Philosophy Roundtable, UCSD, May 2020 (over Zoom)
- “Descartes on the Will”
Philosophy Day, CSULB, December 2019
- * “Astell on Custom and Liberty”
Pacific Northwest/Western Canada Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, University of Washington, Seattle, March 2018
- “‘All in their Nature Good’: Descartes on the Passions of the Soul”
Presentation in Descartes Seminar, University of California, Irvine (UCI), December 2017
- “How is God a Threat to Cartesian Freedom?”
Invited colloquium, Marist College, March 2017
- “Action and Passion in Descartes’s Philosophy of Mind”
Scientia Workshop in the History of Philosophy, UCI, June 2016
- “Descartes on Responsibility and Judgment”
Invited colloquium, Carleton University, October 2014
- * “Descartes on the Analogy between the Divine and Human Will”
South Central Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, Texas A&M University, November 2012
- * “Descartes on the Intellect, the Will, and Freedom”
Southwest Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, Cal Poly Pomona, December 2011
- “The Will and Freedom in the Fourth Meditation”
The Mentoring Project for Pre-tenure Women Faculty in Philosophy, UMass Amherst, June 2011
- “Descartes on Passionate Action”
Upstate New York Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy, Syracuse University, May 2011
- “Descartes on Human Freedom in the Fourth Meditation”
Scientia Workshop in the History of Philosophy, UCI, May 2009
- * “Error and Judgment from the *Rules* to the *Meditations*”
Fourth Biennial Margaret Dauler Wilson Philosophy Conference, Cornell University, July 2009

COMMENTS

On Lex Newman's "Descartes on Attention, Judgment, and Freedom"
Henle Conference, Saint Louis University, April 2014

On David Velleman's "Time for Action"
Philosophy Mountain Workshop, Jackson Hole, WY, January 2014

On Omri Boehm's "The *Cogito* and the Sublime: Freedom and the Foundations of Cartesian Epistemology"
Upstate New York Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy, Cornell University, December 2012

On Georges Dicker's "The Coherence of Cartesian Freedom"
Upstate New York Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy, Syracuse University, January 2012

STUDENT EVENTS

A Conversation on *Solaris* by Stanisław Lem (also with Katherine McLoone, Douglas Pace, and Galen Pickett)
Fireside Chat: Spring 2026, CSULB, April 2026

RECENT TEACHING

California State University, Long Beach

Undergraduate

History of Modern Western Philosophy: Fall 2018–Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Spring 2024, Spring 2025–Fall 2027
The Meaning of Life: Fall 2018, Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024–Fall 2027
History of Political Philosophy: Fall 2022

Courses Jointly Listed as Graduate and Undergraduate

Meaning and Life: Spring 2026
British Empiricism: Spring 2019, Fall 2025
Leibniz: Spring 2025
Continental Rationalism: Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2024
John Stuart Mill's Moral and Political Philosophy: Fall 2023
Modern Social Contract Theory: Spring 2023
Free Will in Early Modern Philosophy: Fall 2019, Fall 2021
Moral Responsibility after Strawson: Fall 2020
Hume's *Treatise*: Spring 2020

Graduate Seminar

Metaphysical Freedom in Early Modern Philosophy: Fall 2024, Fall 2027

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Supervision

John Locke on Reflection: Fall 2023–Spring 2024

Graduate Independent Study

Descartes: Spring 2024

Pedagogical Development

AI and Digital Literacy 2025: Toward an Inclusive and Empowering Teaching Practice (AIDL 2025) Institute, University of Kansas, June 2025. Opinion piece about the experience, co-authored with Helen Choi and Ja Won Lee: ["What Three Californians Learned in Kansas about AI."](#) *The Kansas City Star*, July 3, 2025.
Advancing Inclusive Mentoring Program ("Beach Mentor" Program), Faculty Center, CSULB, Spring 2023
The Center for Canon Expansion and Change (CCEC), University of Minnesota, Twin Cities: Summer Program, August 2022; Alumni CCEC session, June 2023

RECENT SERVICE

Professional Service

Referee for *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*; *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*; *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*; *Ergo*; *Journal of Modern Philosophy*; *Journal of the History of Philosophy*; *Philosophers' Imprint*; *Res Philosophica*; *Topoi*

University Service (CSULB)

College of Liberal Arts (CLA) Representative, Academic Integrity Committee: Fall 2025
CLA Faculty Council Representative: 2023–2027
CSULB Student Research Competition Juror: 2024

Departmental Service (CSULB)

Philosophy Department Hiring Committee: 2025–2026
Philosophy Department RTP Mentor: 2025–2026
Philosophy Department Curriculum Committee: 2024–2026
Philosophy Department Events Committee: 2023–2026
Search Committee for Tenure-track Position in Philosophy: 2024–2025
Applied Ethics Forum Organizer: 2023–2024
Philosophy Department Undergraduate Committee: 2023–2024

Summer Research Assistant Supervision

Rizu Sato, graduate student, Summer 2025
El Nicklin, undergraduate, Summer 2023
Chavva Olander, graduate student, Summer 2022

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Supervisor

El Nicklin, on Locke on reflection, 2023–2024

Master's Independent Study Supervisor

Travis Barnett, on Descartes on topics in philosophy of religion, Spring 2024

Master's Thesis Supervisor

Rizu Sato, "Thomas Reid on the Relationship between Reason and Moral Sense," Fall 2025–Summer 2026

Master's Portfolio Paper Supervisor

El Nicklin, "A Husserlian Account of Locke on Time," Spring 2026
Anna Rikshpun, "Du Châtelet as a Compatibilist?" Fall 2025–present
Aubrey Beller, "Bertrand Russell's Skeptical Challenge to Hume," Spring 2025–present
Victoria Cinquegrani, "Millian Principles for the Regulation of Hate Speech," Spring 2024–present
Chavva Olander, "Deciding Under the Influence: Experimental Philosophy on the Phenomenology of Agency and Addiction Remission," Spring 2024
Cody Spjut, "Lockean Akrasia and the Duty to be Rational," Fall 2023–Spring 2024

Master's Thesis Committee Member

Jason Rosencrantz, "Nominalism and the Metaphysics of Thought and Power in Locke's *Essay*," Spring 2025–Summer 2026
Christina Crain, "When Parental Rights Conflict with Children's Rights: Prioritizing the Right of Children to Be Children," Fall 2025
Angel Enriquez, "Knowledge before Harm: Solving the Repugnant Conclusion," Fall 2025
Manuel Rojas, "Nicolas Malebranche's Animal Automatism and the Argument from Divine Providence: A Response to Michel de Montaigne," Spring–Fall 2025

Travis Barnett, “All the Luster and the Light: Malebranche on the Problem of Moral Evil & The Image of God,” Fall 2024–Spring 2025. Successful thesis defense, March 2025. Pursuing a PhD in philosophy at Indiana University.

Daniel Luna, “Descartes on the Nature of Animals,” Spring 2023–Summer 2024. Successful thesis defense, May 2024. Pursuing a PhD in philosophy at University of Texas, Austin.

Peden Sager, “Nature is Instrumental to our Survival: An Expansion of Instrumental Value on Environmental Ethics,” Fall 2023–Spring 2024. Successful thesis defense, June 2024. Pursuing a non-academic career.

Keilee Bessho, “Berkeley on God’s Knowledge of Sensible Objects,” Fall 2021–Spring 2022. Successful thesis defense, June 2022. Pursuing a PhD in philosophy at University of California, Riverside.