

Curriculum Vitae

David Cook Kemper Curry

Department of Philosophy
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Education:

- Ph.D. in Philosophy, 1990, University of Virginia
Dissertation: *Flux and the Forms: An Investigation of Plato's Notion of Change in the Middle Dialogues.*
- M.A. in Philosophy, 1985, University of Virginia
Thesis: *Plato's Middle-Period Theory of Forms: The Nature of Participation and the Range of Forms.*
- B.A., Majors in Philosophy and History, 1981, Wofford College

Areas of Specialization:

History of Philosophy, Ancient: Plato; Pre-Socratics; Aristotle

Areas of Competence:

History of Philosophy, Modern; Hellenistic Philosophy/Neo-Platonism; Medieval Philosophy; Existentialism; Kierkegaard; Historiography of philosophy; Metaphysics; Epistemology; Philosophy of Religion; Philosophy of Mind; Logic; Normative Ethics; Metaethics.

Languages:

Classical Greek, some Latin, some Spanish.

Employment/Teaching Experience:

- SUNY Potsdam, 2013-present, Professor of Philosophy.
- SUNY Potsdam, 2010-2021, Philosophy Department Chair.
- University of Virginia Study Abroad Program in Peru, Lecturer, Summer 2008.
- SUNY Potsdam, 1996-2013, Associate Professor of Philosophy.
- SUNY Potsdam, 1998-2004, Philosophy Department Chair.
- University of Virginia, 1997-1998, Visiting Associate Professor of Philosophy.
- SUNY Potsdam, 1992-1997, Philosophy Department Chair.
- SUNY Potsdam, 1990-1996, Assistant Professor of Philosophy.
- Hampden-Sydney College, Fall 1989, Lecturer.
- University of Virginia, 1984-1990, Teaching Assistant & Lecturer.
- Wofford College, Fall 1983, Lecturer.

Courses Taught: (course evaluations and syllabi available upon request)

Ancient and Medieval Philosophy:

Philosophy 162 - God and the Forms: Platonism from Plato to Augustine - U.Va.

Philosophy 311 - Plato - U.Va.

Philosophy 322 - History of Ancient Philosophy - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 323 - History of Medieval Philosophy - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 475 - Seminar on Plato's *Theaetetus* - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 475 - Seminar on Plato's Middle Period Metaphysics and Epistemology - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 475 - Aristotle: Metaphysics as a guide to the Ethics - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 475 - Seminar on Aristotle - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 785 - Graduate Tutorial: Platonic Ethics - U.Va.

Modern Philosophy:

Philosophy 112 - History of Modern Philosophy - U.Va.

Philosophy 315 - Descartes, Spinoza, & Leibniz - U.Va.

Philosophy 324 - History of Modern Philosophy - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 325 - History of 19th Century Continental Philosophy - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 395 - Special Topics in Philosophy: The Roots of Existential Thought - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 397 - Selected Philosophers: Spinoza, Leibniz and Kant - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 485 - Directed Reading: Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 895 - Graduate Tutorial: Nietzsche - U.Va.

Contemporary Philosophy:

Philosophy 161 - Existentialism - U.Va.

Philosophy 328 - Issues in Ethical Theory - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 346 - Existentialism & Phenomenology - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 352 - Contemporary Ethics - U.Va. Study Abroad Program in Peru

Philosophy 354 - Theory of Knowledge - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 361 - Aesthetics - U.Va.

Philosophy 362 - Philosophy of Religion - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 365/465 - Metaphysics - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 380 - Philosophy of Mind - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 395 - Tutorial: On the Notion of Incommensurability - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 395 - Does God Exist? (Winterim Short Course) - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 475 - Seminar on Universals (w/ Dr. Philip Tartaglia) - SUNY Potsdam

Philosophy 485 - Contemporary Epistemology - Hampden-Sydney

Philosophy 495 - Tutorial: Feminism and Philosophy - SUNY Potsdam

Introductions to Philosophy:

Humanities 202 - Values and Issues in the Humanities - Wofford

Philosophy 100 - Honors Introduction to Philosophy: Threshold of Democracy:

403 BCE - SUNY Potsdam
Philosophy 100 - Honors Introduction to Philosophy: Darwin's Dangerous Idea;
Darwin and the Copley Medal, 1862-64 - SUNY Potsdam
Philosophy 100 - Introduction to Philosophy - SUNY Potsdam, Hampden-Sydney,
Wofford
Philosophy 100 - Introduction to Philosophy: Freshman Writing & Critical
Thinking - SUNY Potsdam
Philosophy 105 - Human Nature - SUNY Potsdam
Philosophy 110 - Introduction to Logic - SUNY Potsdam
Philosophy 195 - Honors Philosophy: The Role of Truth and Persuasion in a
Democratic Society - SUNY Potsdam
INTD 195/WAYS 101 - First Year Critical Thinking Seminar: Darwin's Dangerous
Idea
Philosophy 201 - Critical Thinking (Informal Logic) - Hampden-Sydney

Interdisciplinary: (all taught at SUNY Potsdam)

First Year Critical Thinking Seminar: Darwin's Dangerous Idea; Darwin and the
Copley Medal, 1862-64 - SUNY Potsdam
The Classical World: Art, Architecture, History, Literature and Philosophy of
the Ancient World - A learning community with three or four professors
for 10-13 credits (multiple offerings) - SUNY Potsdam
The Role of Truth & Persuasion in a Democracy - paired with Communications
department Public Speaking class which fulfilled both Freshman Writing
and Freshman Speaking requirements - SUNY Potsdam
Introduction to Classical Greek I & II - SUNY Potsdam
Multiple Freshman Interest Group (FIG) sections, and other Learning
Communities - SUNY Potsdam

Awards & Grants:

Most Creative and Most Interesting Faculty Awards, as elected by SUNY Potsdam
Emerging Leaders Program, Fall 2009
Favorite Professor of the Department of Philosophy, as elected by SUNY
Potsdam Emerging Leaders Program, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2019, 2020
Outstanding Teacher of the Year, by Phi Eta Sigma, Freshman Honor Society,
2003 & 2009
President's Award for Excellence in Teaching, 2008
Nominated for Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Service, 2019
Inducted Phi Kappa Phi, 2003
NEH Summer Seminar, "Central Themes in Descartes, Spinoza & Leibniz",
Jonathan Bennett, Syracuse University, Summer, 1996 .
NEH Summer Seminar on "Postmodernism", Potsdam College, Summer, 1991,
William V. Spanos, SUNY Binghamton.
Organizing member of team selected for AAC&U Institute on General Education
and Assessment, May, 2017
Organizing member of team selected for the Asheville Institute on General
Education, Summer, 1996.
Faculty Student Research Grant, Summer 1993.

Publications:

- “Of Games and Confrontations”, (invited submission) in *Philosophers in the Classroom*, Hackett Publishing, September 2018.
- “Uselessness: A Panegyric”, *The Good Society*, Penn State University Press, 2013.
- “Blinded by the Light: A Reflection on the Teaching of Introductory Courses in Philosophy”, in *Ideas That Work In College Teaching: The SUNY Potsdam Perspective*, SUNY Press, 2007.
- Review of *Basic Issues in Medieval Philosophy*, Ed., Bosley & Tweedale (Broadview Press), *Philosophical Reviews*, 1996.
- Review of Graeme Hunter, ed., *Spinoza: The Enduring Questions* (University of Toronto Press), *Canadian Philosophical Reviews*. August, 1995.
- “La angustia de Abraham: un análisis del argumento central de *Temor y Temblo*” (“Abraham’s Anguish: A Treatment of some Difficulties in *Fear & Trembling*”), with William Vann, *Areté*, August, 1995.
- Review of Charles E. Winquist’s *Desiring Theology* (University of Chicago Press), *Canadian Philosophical Reviews*, April, 1995.
- “Owen’s Proof in the *Peri Ideôn* and the Indeterminacy of Sensibles in Plato”, *Ancient Philosophy*, Fall, 1992

Presentations:

- “Socrates and the Established Political Order”, presented to Philosophy Forum and Classical Studies Minor Program, SUNY Potsdam, April 2010
- “Socrates and the Established Political Order”, presented to Department of Philosophy, Wofford College, October 2009
- “Artificial Intelligence”, Campus Festival, Spring 2007
- “Were the Romans Innovators?”, Joint Classical Studies Cluster/Philosophy Forum Event, Fall 2006
- “What do Physics and Philosophy have in Common?” presented to the LTEC with Dr. Larry Brehm, Spring 2006
- “Academic Freedom: How much is too much?” presented to Philosophy Forum, Spring 2003
- “Was Socrates a Democrat?” presented to Philosophy Forum and Classical World Cluster, Spring 2003
- “A Life Worth Living”, Keynote Address, Phi Eta Sigma, Freshman Honors Society Induction, SUNY Potsdam, Spring 2003
- “Blinded By The Light”, College Honors Society Award Banquet, Spring 2002
- “If God knows what I am going to do, am I not responsible for not having my paper to turn in tomorrow?”, The Bible in Art and Literature Learning Community and the Philosophy Forum, April 2001
- “Why do we need Platonic Forms?”, Vince Knapp Faculty Lecture Series, SUNY Potsdam, April 2000
- “On the Very Idea of Service”, Celebration of Service, SUNY Potsdam, 1999
- “Compresence of Opposites and Platonic Forms”, University of Virginia, February 1998.
- “Commentary on Lawrence Levine’s *The Opening of the American Mind*”, Provost’s Book Discussion, SUNY Potsdam, 1997
- “Commentary on Glenn Rawson’s ‘Knowledge and Desire of the Good in the *Republic*’” Central Division Meeting of the APA, Chicago IL,

- April 27th, 1996.
- “Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into Existing Classes”, Faculty Development Seminar, Potsdam College, May, 1995
 - “El Teeteto de Platon”, 5 day seminar on Plato's *Theaetetus* for faculty and students at the Universidad de Lima, Instituto de Investigaciones Filosóficas, Lima, Peru, 1993
 - “Plato's Heracliteanism”, Public lecture at the Universidad Católica de Peru, Lima, Peru, 1993
 - “Abraham's Anguish: A Treatment of some Difficulties in Fear & Trembling”, Public lecture at the Universidad Católica de Peru, Lima, Peru, 1993
 - Organizer/Participant, Symposium on “The End of History: A Historical and Philosophical Assessment of the Ramifications of the Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe & The Soviet Union” - March, 1992, Potsdam College
 - “Imperfection As Approximation: A Reassessment”, Potsdam College Philosophy Colloquium series, Fall, 1991
 - “Essentialism in the *Phaedo*”, U.Va. Faculty Colloquium series, 1989

Work in Progress:

I have been working for a number of years on a book manuscript concerned with elucidating Plato's Middle-Period metaphysics and epistemology. The sense of strangeness most students experience when first presented with what is known as Plato's theory of Forms doesn't abate significantly with greater immersion into Plato's works. To the modern mind Plato appears to make an extraordinary metaphysical move on apparently rather weak grounds. What is the philosophical difficulty or difficulties which make the phenomena puzzling or intellectually disturbing enough to justify the radical metaphysical and epistemological moves embodied in the theory of Forms?

My investigation begins with an examination of the more important pre-Socratic conceptions of change. Then, after extracting some basic principles from the early, Socratic, dialogues I work my way more slowly through the *Meno*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*, following the development of the family of positions having to do with the positing of a world of perfect exemplars, the Forms. I criticize the standard orthodoxy concerning the roles and properties Plato attributes to the Forms and argue that underlying all his talk about Forms is a concern to make sense of change in the sensible world. This leads to an examination of the standard explanations of Plato's motivation for positing Forms and I argue that each falls short of supplying a sufficient motivation.

Finally, I argue that we need to resurrect an old thesis which holds that Plato thinks of knowing as a kind of perception of objects of a very particular and somewhat peculiar sort. Bruno Snell, Jaakko Hintikka and others have explored some of the background, rationale and consequences of this conception of knowing, but no systematic attempt has been made to apply these insights to a reading of Plato's middle period epistemology and metaphysics. The rest of the text supplies such a reading, placing Plato's thinking squarely in the tradition of which he is the consummate heir.

The text is written to be accessible to undergraduates, but will also be, I hope, of some worth to scholars in the field.

Various papers in progress include, most notably, a paper examining Socrates' attitude towards the Athenian democracy in which he lived.

Professional Memberships:

Member of the American Philosophical Association
Member of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy
Member of the International Plato Society

Other Professional Activities:

Participant NEH Summer Seminar, "Animal Minds and Animal Ethics" with Kristin Andrews, York University, at Potsdam College, Summer 2018
Visiting Faculty, University of Virginia Study Abroad Program in Peru, Summer 2008
Co-Leader, Study Abroad program to Ancient sites in Greece, with Dr. Caroline Downing, Spring 2008
External Examiner, Philosophy Honors Program Thesis and Comprehensive Examinations, University of Virginia Honors Program, Spring 1998
Participant 1996 NEH Summer Seminar, "Central Themes in Descartes, Spinoza & Leibniz" with Jonathan Bennett, Syracuse University
Participant, NEH Summer Seminar, "Postmodernism" with William V. Spanos, SUNY Binghamton, at Potsdam College, Summer, 1991
External Examiner, SUNY Fredonia Philosophy Department Program Review, Spring 2002

Service:

Community Service:

Potsdam Central School District Planning Team Member - 1999-2001
Potsdam Central School District Board of Education - 2002-2008

SUNY Potsdam:

Departmental:

Chair, Philosophy Department, Potsdam College - 1992-97, 1998-2004, 2010-2021
Chair, Departmental Assessment Committee - 2003-present
Faculty Advisor, Philosophy Forum - 1990-present
Faculty Advisor, Philosophy Honors Society, Potsdam College - 1991-94, 2010-2014
Chair, Departmental Search Committee, Potsdam College - (searches conducted Fall 1991, 1993, 2007, 2011, 2013)
Primary Author, Department Self-Study Report 2006-2007

School of Arts & Sciences:

Arts & Sciences Council - 1991-1997, 1999-present
Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee - 1990-1991, 2005-2014
Arts & Sciences Ad-Hoc Four-Credit Hour Committee - 2004-2006
Arts & Sciences Nominating Committee - 2002-2004
SIIM Committee - 2001-2003
Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on the Evaluation of the Dean of Arts & Sciences -

1999-2000, 2001-2002

College:

Interim Director Potsdam Pathways Core Curriculum/Acting Director General Education, 2019-2021

PPCC Thinking Foundationally Liaison, 2021-present

WAYS 101 Faculty Working Group

General Education Reform Steering Committee - 2017-2020

General Education Task Force - 2016-2020

General Education Committee - 1991-1995, 1999-2020

Chair, Task Force on General Education - 1999-2000

Chair, General Education Committee, 1995-1997

Gen Ed Subcommittees:

WC/CC/XC Subcommittee - 2001-2006

Freshman Experience Committee - 2001-2005

FC Subcommittee- 2005-2006

Chair, WC & XC Subcommittee - 2007-2020

PI & FC Subcommittee - 2006-2010,

Chair-2010-present

General Education Director Search Committee - 2006-2007, 2012

Faculty Assembly Delegate -1999-present

Faculty Senate Executive Committee - 2018-present

Faculty Assembly Subcommittees:

APCC Committee - 2000-2001

Goals & Planning Committee - 2016-Present

Co-Chair Goals and Planning Committee - 2018-present

Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on the Evaluation of the Deans - 2003-2004

Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluation of the Deans -2010-2012

President's Debate Series Committee - 2003-2004

President's Student Debate Committee - 2004-2005

Council of Chairs and Program Directors - 2017-present

Council of Chairs - 2001-2004, 2010-2016

Provost's Advisory Committee for Reappointment Review - 2002-2003, 2014-15

Provost's Informal Workload Task Force - 2005-2008

Classical Studies Minor Program Committee - 2003-present

Co-Director Classical Studies Minor Program - 2005-2006

Director, Classical Studies Minor Program - 2010-present

Middle-States Steering Committee and associated subcommittees - 2010-2012

Middle-States Follow-Up Committee - 2012-2017

Programs Subcommittee, Middle States Review - 2001-2002

Internal Reviewer, SUNY Potsdam Department of Psychology Major Program - 2002-2003

External Reviewer, SUNY Fredonia Department of Philosophy, 2000-2001

Dean of Arts and Sciences Search Committee - 2018-present

Provost Search Committee - 2014-2015

Presidential Search Committee - 2013-2014

Presidential Search Committee - 2004-2006

Provost Search Committee - 2001-2002

Presidential Search Committee - 1996-1997

Interim Associate Provost Search Committee - 1996-1997

English Department Search Committee - 1996-1997

Dean of Liberal Studies Search Committee - 1993-1994

NEH Faculty Development Program Committee - 1991-1997, 2003-2004

Director NEH Faculty Development Program - 1999-2003

Co-Director NEH Faculty Development Program - 1998-1999

Athletic Advisor Program, Men's Soccer - 2001-2003

Scheduling Committee - 2001-2002

Internship Seed Grants Committee - 1995-1997

Teaching & Learning Committee - 1994-1997, 1999-2000

Freshman Advising Program - 1996

Presidential Scholars Committee - 1993-1997

Student Affairs Committee - 1991-1992

Research & Creative Endeavors Committee - 1990-1992

University of Virginia: 1997-98

History of Philosophy Preliminary Examination Committee

Senior Thesis Tutorial and Supervision, "A Sartrean Ethic"

Master's Thesis Supervision, Elizabeth Killebrew, "Kierkegaard on Love and Marriage"

References:

Dr. Alan Hersker
Assistant Vice President
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