

# BRENNAN MCDAVID

Curriculum Vitae

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Chapman University  
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## EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor (2020 – )

Chapman University, Philosophy Department and Smith Institute for Political Economy and Philosophy

Visiting Assistant Professor (2018 – 2020)

Chapman University, Philosophy Department and Smith Institute for Political Economy and Philosophy

Seymour Reader in Ancient History and Philosophy (2015 – 2018)

Ormond College, a residential college at the University of Melbourne

Fellow (2015 – 2018)

University of Melbourne, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies

Research Fellow (2015 – 2018)

Centre for Ethical Leadership at Ormond College

Visiting Research Fellow (January 2017)

Chapman University

## EDUCATION

Princeton University (2010 – 2015)

Ph.D. Classical Philosophy

Dissertation: “Aristotle on Ethical Epistemology”

Advisers: Benjamin Morison (primary), John Cooper

University of Arizona (2008 – 2010)

M.A. Classical Philology

Thesis: “Looking for Eudaimonia: An Examination of Plato’s Conception of Happiness in the *Republic*”

Committee: Rachana Kamtekar (adviser), Julia Annas, David Christenson

Vanderbilt University (2003 – 2007)

B.A. Philosophy and Political Science, minor in History

## AREA OF SPECIALIZATION

Classical Philosophy

Aristotle’s epistemology and ethics, Plato’s ethics and moral psychology, Lucretius’s Epicureanism, ancient political economy

## AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Late Antique and Medieval Philosophy  
Philosophy of Literature  
Epistemology

## PUBLICATIONS

(Forthcoming.) “Prison-Breaking from the Cave.” *Classical Quarterly*.

2024. “Φύσις in Plato’s Republic.” *Ancient Philosophy* 44 (2): 1-16.

2023. With Keith Hankins. “Adam Smith and the Creative Role of Imagination” in ed. Alberto Burgio, *Adam Smith and Modernity*. Routledge.

2022. “Plato’s Market Optimism.” *Polis: The Journal for Ancient Greek and Roman Political Thought* 39 (3): 456-465.

2022. “Meddling in the Work of Another.” *Plato Journal* 23: 95 – 107.

2021. “Aristotle” in the *Encyclopedia of Business and Professional Ethics*, eds. Deborah Poff and Alex Michalos.

2019. “On Why the City of Pigs and Clocks are Not Just.” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 57 (4): 571 – 594.

## PUBLISHED BOOK REVIEWS

(Forthcoming) For *British Journal of the History of Philosophy*: Merrick Anderson, *Just Prospering? Plato and the Sophistic Debate about Justice*, Oxford University Press, 2024.

(Forthcoming) For *Journal of the History of Philosophy*: Lloyd Gerson, *Plato’s Moral Realism*, Cambridge University Press, 2023.

(Forthcoming) For *Journal of the History of Philosophy*: Melissa Lane, *Of Rule and Office: Plato’s Ideas of the Political*, Princeton University Press, 2023.

For *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 18.4: Katherine Hawley, *How to be Truthworthy*, Oxford University Press, 2019.

For *Notre Dame Philosophical Review*: Devin Henry and Karen Margrethe Nielson (eds.), *Bridging the Gap between Aristotle’s Science and Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

## PRESENTATIONS

(Upcoming) Critic in Author Meets Critics on boomer trujillo’s *The Virtue of Playfulness: Why Happy People are Playful*. Pacific APA. 2025.

“The Dangers of Craft Wisdom.”

-West Coast Plato Workshop. Seattle University. May 2024

-(upcoming) Central APA. Virtual. February 2025.

“The Economic Expertise of the Philosopher Rulers.” Economic Epistemologies in the Graeco-Roman World. Leiden. 24-27 August 2023.

“Aspiration in Adam Smith’s Virtue Ethics.” International Adam Smith Society, St. Andrews Conference. July 2023.

“The Psychology of Money in Plato’s *Republic*.”

-Stanford Ethics and Politics, Ancient and Modern workshop. Stanford, CA. 1 December 2022.

-Central APA. Denver, CO. March 2023.

“Adam Smith on Imagination.” Co-authored with Keith Hankins. Mid-West Political Science Association meeting. Chicago, IL. April 2022.

“Plato’s Market Optimism.” Mid-West Political Science Association meeting. Chicago, IL. April 2022.

“Plato’s Market Pessimism.”

- Chapman University. Orange, CA. February 2020.

- UCR Ancient Philosophy Workshop. 31 May – 1 June 2019.

Comments on Ryan Hanley’s *Adam Smith on Living a Life*. Meeting of the International Adam Smith Society, Chapman University. 18 – 20 January 2019.

“Aristotle’s Empiricism.” Classics in the City, Australian Club. Melbourne. 14 May 2018.

“Meddling in the work of another.”

- Symposium at American Philosophical Association, Pacific Meeting. San Diego, CA. 28 March – 1 April 2018.

- Cambridge B Club. Cambridge, UK. 14 November 2017.

“Adam Smith’s Theory of Soul.” International Adam Smith Society annual meeting, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez. Viña del Mar, Chile. 12 – 13 January 2018.

“Peer Disagreement and Aristotle’s Ethics.” Australasian Association of Philosophy annual conference, University of Adelaide. Adelaide. 2 – 6 July 2017

Comments on M. Cashen “Pleasure, Pain, and Emotional Responsiveness in Aristotle’s Ethics.” Pacific APA. Seattle. 12 – 16 April 2017.

“Aristotle and the Uniqueness Thesis.”

- Princeton Classical Colloquium. 2 – 4 December 2016.

- University of Queensland philosophy colloquium series. 16 September 2016.

“Moral Habituation: a prerequisite for Aristotle’s Ethics Class.”

- Connecting Virtues: Theoretical and Intellectual Insights. Genoa, Italy. 27 – 30 September 2016.

- W.H. Allen Memorial Lecture for the Classical Association of Victoria. Melbourne. 14 September 2016.

“Knowledge in Aristotle’s Best Life.”

- Aristotle World Congress: 2400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Aristotle’s birth. Thessaloniki. 23 – 28 May 2016.

- Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne, Victoria. 7 April 2016.

- Keynote at Victoria Postgraduate Philosophy Workshop. Melbourne. 13 November 2015.

- University of Sydney philosophy colloquium series. 7 October 2015.

“Does Knowledge of Medicine Depend on Knowledge of Biology?” University of Melbourne philosophy colloquium series. 14 April 2016.

“What’s Scientific about Aristotle’s Ethics?”

- Monash University philosophy colloquium series. 8 April 2016.

- Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy panel at the American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division meeting. Philadelphia. 28 December 2014.

- Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference. 7 – 10 August 2014.

Commentary, *Eudemian Ethics* 2. Princeton-University of São Paulo Workshop on Ancient Philosophy. São Paulo. 22 – 24 January 2016.

“Ancient Conceptions of Happiness.” Victoria Association for Philosophy in Schools. Melbourne. 13 September 2015.

“The Virtue of Fine Deportment.” Neglected Virtues: a conference in honor of Rosalind Hursthouse. Auckland, New Zealand. 15 August 2015.

“Aristotle on Knowing the Starting Points of Ethical Knowledge.”

-Australasian Association of Philosophy, Macquarie University. Sydney, Australia. 5 – 10 July 2015.

-Boston University. 23 January 2015.

“Aristotle on the Structure of Knowledge.” Lawrence University. 27 January 2015.

Translation and commentary, Plato’s *Republic* 439b2-e2. Princeton-University of São Paulo Workshop on Ancient Philosophy. Princeton. 16 – 18 January 2015.

Translation and commentary, Aristotle’s *De Partibus Animalium* I. Princeton Classical Philosophy Summer Workshop. Spetses, Greece. 21 – 25 July 2014.

“Two Forms of Psychic Rule in Plato’s *Republic*.” Princeton Philosophical Society. 10 April 2014.

Commentary, Aristotle’s *Physics* 1.6 and 1.8. Princeton-University of São Paulo Workshop on Ancient Philosophy. São Paulo. 16 – 19 January 2014.

Translation and commentary, Aristotle’s *Physics* 204a8-204b4. Princeton Classical Philosophy Summer Workshop. Athens, 8 – 12 July 2013.

“Understanding Aristotle’s Category Theory Through *Topics* 1.9.” Catholic University of America’s graduate conference in philosophy. March 2013.

Translation and commentary, Aristotle’s *De Sensu et Sensibilibus* 436b8-437a18. Princeton Classical Philosophy Summer Workshop. Athens. 10 – 14 July 2012.

Translation and commentary, Aristotle’s *On Dreams* 461b7-462a8. Princeton Classical Philosophy Summer Workshop. Crete. 11 – 15 July 2011.

“Contentless Consciousness: The Dreamless Sleep Analogy in Indian Philosophy.” Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy conference. New York. October 2010.

“The Happiness of the Virtuous Person.” University of Arizona Classics Department Graduate Student Colloquium. Tucson. April 2010.

## MISCELLANEOUS

“*Republic* Book 3, The Noble Lie.” *The Philosophy Teaching Library* at Notre Dame University.

“On Knowing Good Character: A Comparison of Adam Smith and Confucius.” *Adam Smith Works* website: <https://www.adamsmithworks.org/speakings/mcdavid-comparison-smith-confucius>. 2 March 2023.

Podcast appearance. *The Good Omen*, hosted by Joshua Oommen. Discussing Socrates and intellectual humility. 1 June 2022.

## FELLOWSHIPS/AWARDS

Pedagogical Innovation Grant, Chapman University (2024-2025; \$5,000 for “Dangerous Ideas”)

*Competitive grant awarded to professors developing new courses that advance the University’s mission to provide a personal education*

Laurance S. Rockefeller Graduate Prize Fellowship, Center for Human Values, Princeton University (2014 – 15)  
*Competitive fellowship awarded to students working on issues concerning human values*

Stanley J. Seeger Fellowship, Program in Hellenic Studies, Princeton University (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014)  
*Summer travel grant for studies pertaining to the ancient world; utilized for the Princeton Classical Philosophy annual Greek philosophy reading group in Greece*

P.E. More Fellowship, Princeton University (2010 – 2015)  
*Graduate fellowship awarded to students working on ancient philosophy*

## COURSES TAUGHT

### Chapman University

FFC 100: Dangerous Ideas (Fall 2024)

*Co-Instructor with Erik Kimbrough. Rigorous introduction to methods in argumentation and evidence evaluation, with focus on learning to engage rationally with controversial viewpoints.*

PHIL 399: Independent Study – Aesthetics

*Primary Instructor. Survey of ancient (Plato/Aristotle) to modern (Kant/Nehamas/Riggle) theories of beauty and art.*

PHIL 310: From Socrates to Aquinas (x∞)

*Primary Instructor. Survey of major intellectual developments in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of science, and ethics.*

PHIL 329: Bootcamp in Aristotle Metaphysics (x2)

*Primary Instructor. Intensive concept- and skill-building in Aristotle's theories of logic, epistemology, and metaphysics.*

ECON/ENG/PHIL 357: Topics in Humanomics, What is Progress? (Interterm 2024)

*Co-Instructor with Dillon Tauzin.*

ECON/ENG/PHIL 357: Topics in Humanomics, What is Progress? (Interterm 2023)

*Co-Instructor with Erik Kimbrough. Survey of multiple dimensions of progress (material, moral, and artistic) in context of great societies (Classical Greece, Roman Empire, and Industrial Revolution).*

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy (Fall 2022)

*Primary Instructor. Survey of significant contemporary problems in philosophy with attention to their historical roots and modern methodologies.*

ECON/ENG/PHIL 357: Topics in Humanomics, Shame: The Civilizing Emotion (Fall 2021)

*Co-Instructor with Erin Crockett. Exploration of the personal and collective practices and consequences of shame through literature and case studies depicting shame and shamelessness in widely different contexts (e.g. the partition of India and 1980s Wall Street).*

ECON/ENG/PHIL 357: Topics in Humanomics, Trust in Troubling Times (Spring 2020)

*Co-Instructor with Jan Osborn. Conceptual and practical investigation of trust and trustworthiness from philosophical, economic, and literary perspectives. Coincided with first Covid 19 shut down.*

PHIL 398: Senior Seminar in Philosophy: Virtue Ethics (Spring 2019)

*Primary Instructor. Examination of major contributions to philosophical literature on Virtue Ethics.*

FFC 100: The Tragedy in Morality (Fall 2018)

*Co-Instructor with John Thrasher. Introduction to Greek tragedy through philosophy of Dodds, Nietzsche, and Williams.*

### University of Melbourne

PHIL20040: Greek Philosophy (Sem 2 2015, Sem 1 2016, Sem 2 2017, Sem 1 2018)

*Lecturer and Tutor. Introduction to major philosophical thinkers of ancient Greece, pre-Socratics to Aristotle.*

CLAS10014/CLAS20031: Latin 4 (Sem 2 2016, Sem 2 2017)

*Lecturer, Tutor, and Grammar instructor: Introduction to Latin poetry through Lucretius' De Rerum Natura.*

### Rutgers University, New Brunswick

730:208:01: Philosophy of the Greeks (Spring 2015)

*Primary instructor. Introduction to major philosophical thinkers of ancient Greece, pre-Socratics to Aristotle.*

Mercer County Community College

Phi 102: Introduction to Philosophy (Summer 2013)  
*Co-Instructor with Anthony Cross. Introductory survey course, pre-Socratics to Pragmatists.*

Princeton University

Cla/Phi 301: Aristotle and His Successors (Spring 2012)  
*Teaching Assistant to Benjamin Morison. Upper-level undergraduate course.*

Cla/Phi 205: Introduction to Ancient Philosophy (Fall 2011)  
*Teaching Assistant to Hendrik Lorenz. Introductory survey course, pre-Socratics to Stoics.*

University of Arizona

Lat 202: Intermediate Latin (Spring 2010)  
*Primary Instructor. Introduction to Virgil's Aeneid.*

Lat 201: Intermediate Latin (Fall 2009)  
*Primary Instructor.*

Lat 102: Introductory Latin (Spring 2009)  
*Primary Instructor.*

Lat 101: Introductory Latin (Fall 2008)  
*Primary Instructor.*

**TEACHING SERVICE**

Summer Scholars Research Faculty, Smith Institute (2022 – )  
*Adviser for a group of 2-3 undergraduate students developing research skills both as assistants to my project and in their independent study.*

Resident Scholar, Ormond College (2015 – 2018)  
*Staff mentor and tutor in residence for the largest of University of Melbourne's residential colleges.*

Graduate Fellow, McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning (2014 – 2015)  
*Orientation leader for new teaching assistants; trainee in various pedagogy instruction modules.*

Resident Graduate Student, Forbes College, Princeton University (2014 – 2015)  
*Graduate student mentor in residence for one of Princeton's six residential colleges. Forbes houses freshman and sophomores, so I advised students prior to their declaration of major.*

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

Faculty Senator, Schmid College of Science, Chapman University (2024-2026)

Reviewer/Panelist, National Endowment of the Humanities (2024)

Interim Director, Law and Liberal Arts Major, Chapman University (Spring 2024)

Organizer, Faculty Research Working Group, Smith Institute (2020-2021)

Member, Values and Ethics Inquiry Assessment Committee, Chapman University (2020)

Member, General Education Committee, Chapman University (2020-2021)

Judge, Southern California High School Ethics Bowl (2020-2021)

Human Ethics Advisory Group reviewer, University of Melbourne (2017 – 2018)

Ormond College Reconciliation Action Plan Workgroup (2017)

President, Senior Common Room, Ormond College (2016 – 2017)

Interviewer, Undergraduate Admissions, Ormond College (2015 – 2017)

Co-Organizer, Princeton-Rutgers Graduate Conference in Philosophy (2014)

Climate for Graduate Students Committee Member, Princeton Philosophy Department (2013)

Referee, Princeton-Rutgers Graduate Conference in Philosophy (2013)

Classical Philosophy Committee Member, Princeton Philosophy Department (2012 – 2013)

Referee, Princeton Classical Philosophy Graduate Conference (2012)

Graduate Student Representative, Princeton Philosophy Department (2011 – 2012)

Reception Committee, Princeton Philosophy Department (2010 – 2011)

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Australasian Association of Philosophy (2015, 2017)

American Philosophical Association (2014 – 2025)

Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy (2010, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018)