

Jeffrey Sanford Russell

University of Southern California
Mudd Hall of Philosophy
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Metaphysics, Epistemology, Decision Theory, Ethics, Logic,
Philosophy of Religion, Philosophy of Mathematics, Philosophy of Science

Career

University of Southern California

Professor of Philosophy	2022–present
Associate Professor of Philosophy	2017–2022
Assistant Professor of Philosophy	2014–2017

Magdalen College, Oxford University

Tutorial Fellow and CUF Lecturer	2011–2014
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Education

New York University

PhD in Philosophy	2007–2011
Dissertation	<i>Possible Worlds and the Objective World</i>
Committee	Ted Sider (supervisor), Hartry Field, Kit Fine, Michael Strevens

Rutgers University

PhD candidate in Philosophy	2006–2007
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Stanford University

Bachelor of Arts with Distinction in Philosophy	2001–2005
Bachelor of Science with Distinction in Mathematics	
Minor in Symbolic Systems	

Stanford-in-Oxford Programme	Fall 2004
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Awards and Grants

<i>The Philosopher's Annual</i> vol. 43, "On Two Arguments for Fanaticism"	2024
<i>The Philosopher's Annual</i> vol. 42, "Multiple Universes and Self-Locating Evidence"	2023
Global Priorities Research Prize	2022
Honorable mention, Alvin Plantinga Prize	2022
Longview grant, <i>Big Decisions: Infinite and Unbounded Values</i>	2021–2023
Marc Sanders Prize in Philosophy of Religion	2021
<i>The Philosopher's Annual</i> vol. 35, "Groupthink"	2015
Oxford Studies in Metaphysics Younger Scholars Prize	2008
MacCracken Fellow, New York University	2007
Rhodes finalist	2005
Barry M. Goldwater Scholar	2004
Phi Beta Kappa, early induction	2003
President's Award for Excellence in the Freshman Year, Stanford University	2001
President's Scholar, Stanford University	2001

Publications

- [1] "Fixing Stochastic Dominance". Forthcoming in *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*.
- [2] "On Two Arguments for Fanaticism". In: *Noûs* 58 (3 2024). Selected for *The Philosopher's Annual* vol. 43. Winner of the 2021 Global Priorities Research Prize. GPI Working Paper No. 17–2021., pp. 565–595. DOI: [10.1111/nous.12461](https://doi.org/10.1111/nous.12461).
- [3] With Yoaav Isaacs and Adam Lerner. "Counting Your Chickens". Forthcoming in *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy*.
- [4] "The Value of Normative Information". Forthcoming in *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy*.
- [5] With Yoaav Isaacs. "Updating Without Evidence". Forthcoming in *Noûs*.
- [6] With Charity Anderson. "Divine Hiddenness and Other Evidence". Winner of the Marc Sanders Prize in Philosophy of Religion. Forthcoming in *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion*.
- [7] With Yoaav Isaacs and John Hawthorne. "Multiple Universes and Self-Locating Probabilities". In: *Philosophical Review* 131.3 (2022). Selected for *The Philosopher's Annual* vol. 42. Honorable mention, Alvin Plantinga Prize, pp. 241–294. DOI: [10.1215/00318108-9743809](https://doi.org/10.1215/00318108-9743809).
- [8] With Yoaav Isaacs. "Infinite Prospects". In: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 103.1 (2021), pp. 178–198. DOI: [10.1111/phpr.12704](https://doi.org/10.1111/phpr.12704).
- [9] "On the Probability of Plenitude". In: *Journal of Philosophy* 117 (5 2020), pp. 267–292. DOI: [10.5840/jphil2020117517](https://doi.org/10.5840/jphil2020117517).
- [10] "Non-Archimedean Preferences Over Countable Lotteries". In: *Journal of Mathematical Economics* 88 (May 2020), pp. 180–186. DOI: [10.1016/j.jmateco.2020.03.011](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmateco.2020.03.011).
- [11] "Sleeping Beauty's Evidence". In: *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Evidence*. Ed. by Maria Lasonen-Aarnio and Clayton Littlejohn. Forthcoming.
- [12] "How Much is at Stake for the Pragmatic Encroacher". In: *Oxford Studies in Epistemology* 6 (2019). DOI: [10.1093/oso/9780198833314.003.0013](https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198833314.003.0013).
- [13] "Quality and Quantifiers". In: *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 96.3 (2018), pp. 562–577. DOI: [10.1080/00048402.2017.1363259](https://doi.org/10.1080/00048402.2017.1363259).

- [14] With John Hawthorne. “Possible Patterns”. In: *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics* 11 (2018). DOI: [10.1093/oso/9780198828198.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198828198.001.0001).
- [15] With Andrew Bacon. “The Logic of Opacity”. In: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (2017). DOI: [10.1111/phpr.12454](https://doi.org/10.1111/phpr.12454).
- [16] “Composition as Abstraction”. In: *Journal of Philosophy* 114 (9 2017), pp. 453–470. DOI: [10.5840/jphil12017114931](https://doi.org/10.5840/jphil12017114931).
- [17] With John Hawthorne. “General Dynamic Triviality Theorems”. In: *Philosophical Review* 125 (3 2016), pp. 307–339. DOI: [10.1215/00318108-3516936](https://doi.org/10.1215/00318108-3516936).
- [18] “Qualitative Grounds”. In: *Philosophical Perspectives* 30 (1 2016), pp. 309–348. DOI: [10.1111/phpe.12078](https://doi.org/10.1111/phpe.12078).
- [19] “Temporary Safety Hazards”. In: *Noûs* 50 (3 2015). DOI: [10.1111/nous.12104](https://doi.org/10.1111/nous.12104).
- [20] “Indefinite Divisibility”. In: *Inquiry* 59 (3 2015), pp. 239–263. DOI: [10.1080/0020174X.2015.1033006](https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2015.1033006).
- [21] With John Hawthorne and Lara Buchak. “Groupthink”. In: *Philosophical Studies* 172 (5 2015). Selected for *The Philosopher’s Annual*, vol. 35, pp. 1287–1309. DOI: [10.1007/s11098-014-0350-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-014-0350-8).
- [22] “On Where Things Could Be”. In: *Philosophy of Science* 81 (1 Jan. 2014), pp. 60–80. DOI: [10.1086/674344](https://doi.org/10.1086/674344).
- [23] “Possible Worlds and the Objective World”. In: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (2013). DOI: [10.1111/phpr.12052](https://doi.org/10.1111/phpr.12052).
- [24] “Actuality for Counterpart Theorists”. In: *Mind* (2013). DOI: [10.1093/mind/fzt037](https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/fzt037).
- [25] “The Structure of Gunk: Adventures in the Ontology of Space”. In: *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics*. Ed. by Dean Zimmerman. Vol. 4. Winner of the 2008 Oxford Studies in Metaphysics Younger Scholars Prize. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 248–274.

Working Papers (available on request)

- [26] “Planning for Pascal’s Mugging”. Under review.
- [27] With Frank Hong. “Paradoxes of Infinite Aggregation”. Under review.
- [28] “The Epistemic A-Theory”.
- [29] With John Hawthorne. “Metaphysical Constraints on Objective Priors”.
- [30] *The Limits of Logic*. Textbook, draft available online. URL: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/5vj31iuo149plh5/limits.of.logic.pdf>.
- [31] *Extreme Risks: Value in a Vast and Uncertain World*. Book manuscript in preparation.

Presentations

- [1] The Long Term and Eternity. Population-Level Bioethics Consultation. Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, Seattle, Washington, July 24, 2024.
- [2] With Yoaav Isaacs. “Updating Without Evidence”. Invited talk, APA Central Division Meeting. New Orleans, Feb. 23, 2024.

- [3] “The Moral Argument for Infinitesimal Probabilities”. Invited talk. Rutgers, Feb. 8, 2024.
- [4] “Infinite Futility”. Plenary session, 13th Oxford Workshop on Global Priorities. Oxford, Dec. 4, 2022.
- [5] “Problems for Impartiality”. Invited talk. MIT, Mar. 3, 2023.
- [6] “Problems for Impartiality”. Mind and Language seminar. New York University, Feb. 28, 2023.
- [7] “Pascal’s Revenge”. Unbounded Utility in Ethics and Decision Theory. UT Austin, Nov. 17, 2022.
- [8] “Problems for Impartiality”. Derek Parfit Memorial Lecture. Global Priorities Institute, University of Oxford, June 16, 2022. URL: <https://globalprioritiesinstitute.org/parfit-memorial-lecture-jeffrey-sanford-russell-problems-for-impartiality/>.
- [9] “Shots in the Dark”. Invited talk. Baylor University, Mar. 25, 2022.
- [10] “Divine Hiddenness and Other Evidence”. Hiddenness Workshop. Baylor University, Nov. 5, 2021.
- [11] “Pascalian Wagers”. 6th Oxford Workshop on Global Priorities Research. University of Oxford (online), Mar. 18, 2021.
- [12] “Infinite Values and Large Finite Values”. 5th Oxford Workshop on Global Priorities Research. University of Oxford (online), Dec. 8, 2020.
- [13] “Teaching the Limits of Logic”. Math Education Seminar. University of Southern California, Mar. 18, 2019.
- [14] “Vague Existence”. NYIP Workshop on Metaphysics in Higher-Order Languages. New York, May 21, 2017.
- [15] “Vague Existence”. Invited talk, Hans Kamp Seminar in Language and Logic. University of Texas, Austin, Mar. 2, 2017.
- [16] “Testimonial Evidence”. Invited talk, Sawyer Seminar in Social Epistemology. Northwestern University, Aug. 27, 2016.
- [17] “The Logic of Opacity”. Workshop on Higher-Order Metaphysics. with Andrew Bacon. Oslo, June 5, 2016.
- [18] “Possible Patterns”. Invited talk, Structure in Metaphysics Workshop. Ertegun House, Oxford, May 30, 2016.
- [19] “Possible Patterns”. Invited talk, Working Group in the History and Philosophy of Logic, Mathematics, and Science. University of California, Berkeley, Oct. 21, 2015.
- [20] “Sleeping Beauty and the Dogmatist”. Invited talk. Baylor University, Apr. 24, 2015.
- [21] “Temporary Safety Hazards”. Ranch Metaphysics Workshop. Tucson, Arizona, Jan. 30, 2015.
- [22] “Indefinite Divisibility”. California Metaphysics Conference on the Relationship Between Logic and Metaphysics. University of Southern California, Jan. 25, 2015.
- [23] “Trivialities”. Invited talk, CRNAP Philosophy of Language Workshop. University of Oxford, June 22, 2014.
- [24] “Quality and Quantifiers”. Invited talk. University of Leeds, Mar. 28, 2014.
- [25] “Monadic Foundations for Probability”. Theoretical Work in Progress Seminar. University of Oxford, Feb. 28, 2014.
- [26] “Quality and Quantifiers”. Stanford University, Mar. 17, 2014.
- [27] “Quality and Quantifiers”. University of Notre Dame, Feb. 14, 2014.

- [28] “On Where Things Could Be”. University of Michigan, Jan. 31, 2014.
- [29] “Quality and Quantifiers”. Columbia University, Jan. 28, 2014.
- [30] “On Where Things Could Be”. Invited talk. University of Southern California, Sept. 27, 2013.
- [31] “Temporary Safety Hazards”. Birmingham Time Workshop. Birmingham, May 1, 2013.
- [32] “How Much is at Stake for the Pragmatic Encroacher”. Epistemology Workshop. Innsbruck, Apr. 11, 2013.
- [33] “Conceptual Revision”. Philosophical Society. University of Oxford, Feb. 1, 2013.
- [34] “On Where Things Could Be”. Invited talk, CRNAP Modality Conference. Princeton University, Nov. 18, 2012.
- [35] “Possible Worlds and the Objective World”. Invited talk, PERSP Metaphysics Seminar. Universitat de Barcelona, Mar. 9, 2012.
- [36] “On Where Things Could Be”. Philosophy of Physics Seminar. University of Oxford, Mar. 1, 2012.
- [37] “Possible Worlds and the Objective World”. Theoretical Works in Progress Seminar. University of Oxford, Feb. 23, 2012.
- [38] “Possible Worlds and the Objective World”. Invited talk. University of Michigan, Jan. 27, 2012.
- [39] “Possible Worlds and the Objective World”. Invited talk. Magdalen College, Oxford, Mar. 2, 2011.
- [40] “The Future in Context”. Oxford Graduate Conference. University of Oxford, Nov. 21, 2010.
- [41] “Indefinite Divisibility”. Arché/CSMN Graduate Conference. St. Andrews University, Nov. 8, 2009.
- [42] “Actuality for Counterpart Theorists”. Phloxshop II: Modality. Humboldt University, Berlin, Sept. 11, 2009.
- [43] “Indefinite Divisibility”. Washington Square Circle. New York University, Jan. 27, 2009.
- [44] “‘Probably If’ and Conditional Probability”. Yale/UConn Graduate Philosophy Conference. University of Connecticut, Nov. 10, 2007.
- [45] “A Domain-Specific Statistical Surface Realizer”. In: *Proceedings of the Student Research Workshop at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics*. University of Michigan, June 27, 2005.
- [46] “Statistical Natural Language Generation for Navigation Instructions”. CSLI Talk. Stanford University, Aug. 27, 2004.

Comments, Etc.

- [1] Invited participant. 14th Global Priorities Workshop. Oxford, June 14, 2024.
- [2] Invited participant. Philosophy and Engineering Retreat on AI Ethics and Safety. University of Southern California, Apr. 26, 2024.
- [3] Academic consultant. Philosophy Fellowship Program. Center for AI Safety, 2023.
- [4] Visiting Researcher. Trinity Term. Global Priorities Institute, University of Oxford, 2022.
- [5] Invited Participant. Ranch Metaphysics Workshop. Jan. 28, 2022.

- [6] Remote Visitor. Trinity Term. Global Priorities Institute, University of Oxford, June 2021.
- [7] William MacAskill, Krister Bykvist, and Toby Ord. “Moral Uncertainty”. Book symposium. Institute for Future Studies, Stockholm, and Australian National University (online), Feb. 4, 2021.
- [8] Jack Spencer. “Is Non-Fundamental Existence Relative?” Metaphysics on the Mountain Workshop (online). July 3, 2020.
- [9] Invited Participant. Ranch Metaphysics Workshop. Jan. 28, 2019.
- [10] Martin Glazier. “What Time is it in Other Possible Worlds?” APA Eastern Division Meeting. Savannah, Jan. 4, 2018.
- [11] Olla Solomyak. “The Meta-Metaphysics of Distant Entities: Unifying the Temporal and Modal Domains”. APA Eastern Division Meeting. Savannah, Jan. 4, 2018.
- [12] Michael Bergmann. “Skeptical Theism, Representativeness, and Radical Uncertainty”. APA Central Division Meeting. Kansas City, Mar. 3, 2017.
- [13] Invited Participant. Ranch Metaphysics Workshop. Jan. 25, 2017.
- [14] Peter van Inwagen. “The Rev’d Mr. Bayes and the Life Everlasting”. International Conference on New Insights and Directions for Religious Epistemology. St Anne’s College, University of Oxford, June 23, 2015.
- [15] Visiting Fellow. Princeton University, fall semester, 2013.
- [16] Eli Hirsch. “Talmudic Destiny”. Association for the Philosophy of Judaism. online symposium, July 28, 2013. URL: <http://www.theapj.com/symposium-on-eli-hirschs-talmudic-destiny-28-august-04-july/>.
- [17] Tim Pickavance and Daniel Eaton. “Wagering on Pragmatic Encroachment”. Religious Epistemology, Contextualism, and Pragmatic Encroachment Workshop. University of Oxford, Mar. 14, 2013.
- [18] Internal visitor. New Insights and Directions for Religious Epistemology. University of Oxford, 2013.
- [19] Huiming Ren. “Inverted Earth Revisited”. Meiguo Metaphysical Mayhem. Peking University, June 2012.
- [20] Lara Buchak. “Risk and Tradeoffs”. Meiguo Metaphysical Mayhem. Peking University, June 2012.
- [21] Commentator-at-large. California Metaphysics Conference. University of Southern California, Jan. 21, 2012.
- [22] Timothy Williamson. “Metaphysics and Higher-Order Modal Logic”. Oxford Metaphysics Workshop. University of Oxford, Sept. 25, 2011.
- [23] Invited participant. St. Thomas Summer Seminar in Philosophy of Religion and Philosophical Theology. University of St. Thomas, June 2011.
- [24] Aaron Segal. “Identity Variance”. APA Eastern. Boston, Dec. 30, 2010.
- [25] Invited participant. St. Thomas Summer Seminar in Philosophy of Religion and Philosophical Theology. University of St. Thomas, June 2010.
- [26] Sean Aas. “Modality: Norms and Naturalism”. NYU/Columbia Graduate Philosophy Conference. New York University, Mar. 7, 2009.
- [27] Katrina Przyjemski. “A Monstrous Semantics for Anaphoric Pronouns”. NYU / Columbia Graduate Philosophy Conference. Columbia University, Mar. 1, 2008.
- [28] Joshua Rasmussen. “A Scotistic Cosmological Argument for the Existence of God”. Religion at Rutgers. Rutgers University, Jan. 13, 2007.

Graduate Supervising

Past dissertation committees

- Weng Kin San supervisor — PhD 2024
Aggregation and the Structure of Value
Bersoff Fellow, New York University
- Quyen Pham PhD 2024
The Metaphysics of Social Groups: Structure, Location, and Change
Lecturer in Philosophy, Harvard University
- Zachary Goodsell co-supervisor with Andrew Bacon — PhD 2023
Unbounded Utility
Assistant Professor, National University of Singapore
- Noah Gordon supervisor — PhD 2023
Theism and Secular Modality
Technical communications and information modelling, Outlier
- Frank Hong co-supervisor with Andrew Bacon — PhD 2023
Uncertain Knowledge
Post-doctoral research fellow, Hong Kong University
- Mahmoud Jalloh co-supervisor with Porter Williams — PhD 2023
Dimensional Analysis: Essays on the Metaphysics and Epistemology of Quantities
Post-doctoral teaching fellow, St. John's College, Santa Fe
- James Milford external examiner — Oxford, DPhil 2022
An Examination of Certain Counterpart Accounts
Cyber security analyst, S-RM
- Simon Blessenohl co-supervisor with Jonathan Quong — PhD 2021
Political Decision-Making in an Uncertain World
Research software engineer, DeepL
- Lu Chen University of Massachusetts, PhD 2020
Continua
Assistant Professor, University of Southern California
- Matt Leonard PhD 2019
What It Is To Be Located
Associate Professor, California Baptist University
- Maegan Fairchild PhD 2018
Unlimited Ontology and Its Limits
Assistant Professor, University of Michigan
- Thomas Møller-Nielsen co-supervisor with Oliver Pooley — Oxford, DPhil 2016
Symmetry and the Generalist Picture
Journalist

Current committees

Jaime Castillo Gamboa	metaphysics, language
Antonio Cleani	logic, metaphysics
Philip Li	ethics, epistemology
Yasha Sapir	epistemology, language
Levy Wang	epistemology
Matthew Wiseman	political philosophy

Teaching

Graduate

Dissertation Seminar	(Phil 700) 2023–2024
Epistemology	(Phil 570) with John Hawthorne, Spring 2020
Identity Confusion	(Phil 551) with Andrew Bacon, Fall 2016
Metaphysics	(Phil 560) with Shieva Kleinschmidt, Spring 2016
Epistemology and Metaphysics of Time and Space	(Phil 570) Fall 2014
Philosophy of Logic and Language	BPhil Seminar, with Cian Dorr, Michaelmas 2011
Metaphysics	BPhil Tutorials, various terms 2011–2014
Philosophy of Language	BPhil Tutorials, various terms 2011–2014

Undergraduate

The Limits of Logic	(Phil 450) F 2014, F 2015, S 2017, F 2018, F 2019, F 2022, F 2023
Probability and Rational Choice	(Phil 258g) S 2019, F 2019, S 2021, F 2021
Philosophy of Religion	(Phil 361) S 2015, S 2019
The End of the World	(GESM 120) S 2021
Minds and Machines: Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence	(GESM 120) S 2017
Frege's <i>Foundations of Arithmetic</i>	Lectures, Trinity 2013 and 2014
Undergraduate Tutorials	various terms 2011–2014
Introduction to Logic, Elements of Deductive Logic, Formal Logic, General Philosophy, The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, Ethics, Knowledge and Reality, Philosophy of Logic and Language, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Mathematics	

Professional Service

Director of Graduate Studies	2023–present
Graduate Studies Committee	2015–2016, 2018–2019, 2022–present
Placement Director	2021–2023
Placement Committee	2014–present; co-chair 2019–2020
Climate Committee	2021–2023
Diversity Liaison	2017–2020

Culture & Outreach Committee	2016–2017
GPS California workshop organizing committee	2018
Graduate Admissions Committee	2014–2015, 2019–2021
Faculty Search Committee	2017–2018, 2022, 2023
Promotion Committee	2023
Tenure Review Committee	2018, 2024
Fifth Year Review Committee	chair 2021
Third Year Review Committee	2019–2020
Faculty Mentor	2019–2022, 2024–present
USC Society of Fellows Admissions	2018, 2019
Metaphysics Subject Co-Editor, <i>Pacific Philosophical Quarterly</i>	2016–2019
Co-convener, Philosophical Society, Oxford	2014
Magdalen College Governing Body	2011–2014
Magdalen College Tutorial Board	2011–2014
Magdalen College Library and Archives Committee	2012–2014

Referee

American Philosophical Quarterly, Dialectica, Economics and Philosophy, Ergo, Journal of Philosophical Logic, Journal of Philosophy, Mind, Oxford University Press, Pacific Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophers' Imprint, Philosophia, Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophical Review, Philosophical Studies, Synthese

NYU Philosophy computer & website maintenance	2008–2011
Co-organizer, NYU/Columbia Graduate Conference	2008

Research Experience Outside Philosophy

Robert Bosch Corp. Research and Technology Center Computational linguistics & artificial intelligence Supervisor: Fuliang Weng	2005–2006
Center for the Study of Language and Information, Semantics Lab Computational linguistics Supervisor: Stanley Peters	2004–2005
U. Washington, Research Experiences for Undergraduates Mathematics Supervisor: James Morrow	Summer 2003
Philips/Heartstream Applied mathematics, signal processing Supervisor: Stacy Gehman	Summer 2002

Last updated: September 4, 2024