

10-2011

## 2011- 2012 Philosophy Colloquium

Department of Philosophy

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**CULTURAL AFFAIRS/DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES**  
**GRANT APPLICATION**

I. Applicant/Organization: Department of Philosophy

II. a. Responsible Organization Officer: Kirsten Jacobson

b. Title: Assistant Professor of Philosophy

c. Campus Address (include Email and Telephone): kirsten.jacobson@maine.edu; 581-3848

III. Summary of program requiring funding (title; featured artist(s); speaker(s); scheduled date (s):

The Department of Philosophy is seeking funding support from the Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series Fund for its 2011-2012 Philosophy Colloquium Series. This series of public talks will provide the opportunity for students, faculty, and community members both within and beyond the Department of Philosophy to hear and discuss stimulating lectures on a wide range of topics that are relevant both to the core themes of the department's philosophy curriculum as well as to current issues of ethical, political, social, and philosophic import.

1. "Transindividuality: A Concept for Critical Theory" October 27, 2011  
Jason Read, Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Southern Maine

Professor Read specializes in social and political philosophy, continental philosophy, philosophy of history, feminist philosophy, and philosophical anthropology. He will speak on the concept of transindividuality, drawn from the work of Gilbert Simondon, and will consider how this notion may be a useful way for looking at the intersection of politics, economics, and subjectivity. This talk will appeal to those interested in critical theory and social and political philosophy.

2. "Eros and Nostos in Plato's *Phaedo*" November 3, 2011  
Jill Gordon, Charles A. Dana Professor of Philosophy, Colby College

Professor Gordon specializes in ancient philosophy (with an emphasis on Plato), social and political philosophy, and African-American philosophy. In her forthcoming book Plato's Erotic World, Professor Gordon argues that our understanding of metaphysical, epistemological, and cosmological issues is greatly enriched by seeing their rootedness in Plato's view of eros. In this talk, she will consider the role that eros plays in one of Plato's most important dialogues—"Phaedo"—in which we hear about Socrates' death. This talk will be relevant to students and professors not only of philosophy, but also of political science, classics, history, and English, and those interested in the role of eros in our lives as a whole.

3. "It's All Relative: A Defense of Relativity Theory in Ethics" December 1, 2011  
John Stuhr, Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and American Studies, Emory University; Visiting Scholar, Cornell University

Professor Stuhr specializes in social theory and political philosophy, ethics, pragmatism and American philosophy. This presentation clarifies the meaning of a pragmatic version of ethical relativism, compares relativity in ethics and physics, argues against absolutism about values, and lays out the practical consequences and challenges of relativism for globally pluralistic cultures. This talk will be relevant to those interested in issues of ethics (whether theoretical or applied) and also to those curious to discover connections between philosophy and the sciences and the social sciences.

4. "Dialectical Logic and German Idealism"

January 2012

Edward A. Beach, Professor of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire; Visiting Professor, University of Maine

Professor Beach specializes in 19th and 20th century continental philosophy with an emphasis on German Idealism. He is currently pursuing a sabbatical project on dialectical logic, and this presentation will focus on his current work in this arena. This talk will appeal to those interested in the roots of critical theory, in the study of rhetoric, as well as in the history and theory of German thought.

5. "Materialism in Medicine"

March 2012

Drew Leder, Professor of Philosophy, Loyola University Maryland

Professor Leder specializes in philosophy of the body, philosophy of medicine, cross-cultural spirituality, and has a special interest in service learning. He has been chosen to be this year's Department of Philosophy Visiting Scholar. Professor Leder's visit will coordinate with this year's philosophy capstone seminar—"Phenomenological Practice and Existential Health." Professor Leder will discuss the need to move beyond a reductive sense of medicine and disease, and to look instead at the health of a person at a holistic level. Professor Leder will This talk will be of interest to those interested in issues related to mental and physical health, community and community health, and philosophical perspectives and contributions to these issues.

6. "The Destruction of Reality: A Phenomenological Study of the Implications of Solitary Confinement in U.S. Prisons and Detention Centers"

April 2012

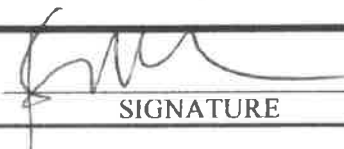
Lisa Guenther, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Vanderbilt University

Professor Guenther specializes in phenomenology and feminist philosophy; she is particularly interested in issues of embodiment, temporal experience, intersubjectivity, and biopower. This talk will provide a phenomenological critique of solitary confinement drawing on the work of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas, as well as legal and historical documents in the history of the US penitentiary system, supermax prisons and detention camps such as Guantanamo Bay. Professor Guenther argues that, deprived of regular contact with concrete others in a shared space, many prisoners come unhinged from reality; they experience perceptual distortions and hallucinations, they lose track of time, and they even become unable to identify the boundaries of their own bodies. Professor Guenther will consider what subjectivity must be like in order for these effects to be possible. This talk will be of interest to those concerned with issues of social justice, legal studies, social and political philosophy, and contemporary political issues.

IV. Budget Proposal Form must be attached.

**Funding for current application is contingent upon submission of reports for any previous grant awards, including final budget and attendance figures.**

Signature of responsible organization officer/date:

  
SIGNATURE

Sep 29, 2011  
DATE

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION VIA EMAIL TO:

wcarr@maine.edu

For questions regarding the Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series, please contact Wanda Madden-Carr at 581-1516

# Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series Fund Budget Proposal Form

Applicant/Organization: Department of Philosophy  
 Responsible Officer: Professor Kirsten Jacobson  
 Event Title: 2011-2012 Philosophy Colloquium Series  
 Event Date: 6 Colloquia over the Fall 2011 & Spring 2012 Semesters

Total Program Budget: \$3600  
 Amount Committed by Applicant Organization: \$1800  
 Total Amount Requested from Other Funding Sources: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please List Sources & Amounts below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Requested from CA/DLS Committee: \$1800 \*  
 Revenues, if any, expected (fees, ticket sales): \$0

Budget Breakdown of Expenses and funds to be used:	CADLS	Other
1. Jason Read (October 27, 2011)		
Honoraria/Services (explain below)	\$ <u>75</u>	\$ _____
<u>Honorarium for one talk</u>		
_____		
_____		
Travel	\$ <u>120</u>	\$ _____
<u>by car</u>		
_____		
_____		
Lodging/Meals	\$ <u>25</u>	\$ _____
2. Jill Gordon (November 3, 2011)		
Honoraria/Services (explain below)	\$ <u>75</u>	\$ _____
<u>Honorarium for one talk</u>		
_____		
_____		
Travel	\$ <u>60</u>	\$ _____
_____		
_____		
Lodging/Meals	\$ <u>25</u>	\$ _____

## Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series Fund Budget Proposal Form

3. John Stuhr (December 1, 2011)		
Honoraria/Services (explain below)	\$ <u>160</u>	\$ _____
<u>Honorarium for one talk</u>		
_____		
_____		
Travel	\$ <u>250</u>	\$ _____
<u>Airfare</u>		
_____		
Lodging/Meals	\$ <u>310</u>	\$ _____
4. Edward Beach (January 2012)		
Honoraria/Services (explain below)	\$ <u>n/a</u>	\$ _____
_____		
_____		
Travel	\$ <u>n/a</u>	\$ _____
_____		
_____		
Lodging/Meals	\$ <u>50</u>	\$ _____
5. Drew Leder (March 2012)		
Honoraria/Services (explain below)	\$ _____	\$ <u>900</u>
<u>Honorarium for delivery of two talks and</u>		
<u>work as short-term visiting scholar</u>		
_____		
_____		
Travel	\$ _____	\$ <u>400</u>
<u>Airfare</u>		
_____		
Lodging/Meals	\$ _____	\$ <u>500</u>
6. Lisa Guenther (April 2012)		
Honoraria/Services (explain below)	\$ <u>100</u>	\$ _____
<u>Honorarium for one talk</u>		
_____		
_____		

**Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series Fund  
Budget Proposal Form**

Travel	\$ <u>400</u>	\$ <u>          </u>
_____		
_____		
Lodging/Meals	\$ <u>150</u>	\$ <u>          </u>
 Advertising	 \$ <u>          </u>	 \$ <u> **</u>
Printing	\$ <u>          </u>	\$ <u> **</u>
Supplies and Materials	\$ <u>          </u>	\$ <u> **</u>
Other (must specify below)	\$ <u>          </u>	\$ <u> **</u>

\*\* The Department of Philosophy will provide in kind support for all printing and supply costs for the series.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Total Expenses from CA/DLS funds:       \$ 1800 \*  
Total Expenses from other funds:         \$ 1800  
(These two totals should equal the "Total Program Budget" listed above)

\*These amounts should be identical and should not exceed 50% of the total program/event budget. Please note that CA/DLS funds may not be used for receptions and do not normally fund UM employee wages. If an award is granted based on this proposal, reimbursement of expenses will not exceed the total CA/DLS request and will be limited to the types of expenditures outlined above.

***Cultural Affairs Committee***  
***and***  
***Distinguished Lecture Series***  
***c/o Wanda Madden-Carr***  
***201 Alumni Hall***  
***University of Maine***

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October 18, 2011

To: Kirsten Jacobson

From: Melissa Mayard & Dan Sandweiss, Co-Chairs

On behalf of the Cultural Affairs Committee and Distinguished Lecture Series, it gives us great pleasure to inform you that your proposal, Philosophy Department's Colloquium Series, has been awarded \$1800.00.

Please contact Wanda Madden-Carr at 1-1516 to discuss the procedures in place for the submission of financial expenses related to this award at your earliest convenience.

The following acknowledgement is required on ALL promotional material: ***This event was supported in part by a grant from the Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series.***

Attached is a form for your use to summarize the benefits derived from this grant. This form should be submitted within 30 days after the conclusion of the event. Timely submission of your summary will be considered as part of any future funding requests.

The Cultural Affairs Committee members congratulate you and wish you much success on this project.

cc: Margaret Forbes

# 2011-2012 Philosophy Colloquium Series Final Report

Applicant Organization: Philosophy Department  
Contact Name: Kirsten Jacobson  
Campus Address: The Maples, Room 9  
Phone: 581-3848  
E-mail: kirsten.jacobson@maine.edu

## ***SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS AND ATTENDANCE:***

### **Event 1**

Date and Time: Thursday, October 27th at 4:00 p.m.

Location: The Weisz Room (1st Floor), The Maples

Event: Jason Read presenting and discussing his essay "Transindividuality: A Concept for Critical Theory"

Attendance: 16 (philosophy faculty and students, additional UMaine faculty interested in critical theory)

### **SPEAKER BIO**

Jason Read is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern Maine. He specializes in social and political philosophy, philosophy of history, and philosophical anthropology.

### **TALK ABSTRACT**

Etienne Balibar has argued that the classical problem of the relationship between individual and society is generally split between two antithetical perspectives: an individualist conception of society that takes as its starting point the self-interested individual, and understands society to be nothing more than the sum total of individual actions; and, a conception of society that starts from some organic or functional totality, and posits the individual as nothing more than an effect of this totality. It is Read's thesis that any understanding of politics, society, or the economy needs to break out of this false binary between the individual and society. He argues that a way out is offered by Gilbert Simondon, who dedicated much of his work to the study of the ontological, physical, and psychic idea of the individual, ultimately positing that the individual needs to be examined as a process. Read will discuss how Simondon's concept of transindividuality makes possible a new understanding of politics, based not on individuals or collectives, but rather on the practices and relations that constitute both.

### **Event 2**

Date and Time: Thursday, November 3rd at 4:00 p.m.

Location: The Weisz Room (1st Floor), The Maples, University of Maine

Event: Jill Gordon presenting and discussing her essay "Eros and Homecoming in Plato's Phaedo"

Attendance: 28 (philosophy faculty and students, additional UMaine faculty interested in ancient philosophy, Bangor area community members)

### **SPEAKER BIO**



Jill Gordon is the Charles A. Dana Professor of Philosophy at Colby College. Professor Gordon specializes in ancient philosophy (with an emphasis on Plato), social and political philosophy, and African-American philosophy.

#### TALK ABSTRACT

In her forthcoming book *Plato's Erotic World*, Professor Gordon argues that our understanding of metaphysical, epistemological, and cosmological issues is greatly enriched by seeing their rootedness in Plato's view of eros. In this talk, she will argue that Plato's *Phaedo* has surprising connections to the erotics of *Phaedrus*, and *Phaedo*'s eschatology can be read, as well, as a nostos, or homecoming story, with strong links to the *Odyssey*. She will discuss how *Phaedo* shows that the erotic soul is the soul best suited for remembering its connection to the forms, and so is best suited for the journey home to its noetic origins.

#### Event 3

Date and Time: Thursday, December 1st at 4:00 p.m.

Location: Deering Hall, Room 113 (Please note that this location is different than our typical location.)

Event: John Russon presenting and discussing his essay "Beyond the Limits of Perception"

Attendance: 38 (philosophy faculty and students, additional UMaine faculty interested in psychology and perception, Bangor area community members)

#### SPEAKER BIO

John Russon is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Guelph (Guelph, Ontario). His research focuses on Continental Philosophy (with a significant focus on Hegel) and Ancient Philosophy. He is also the author of two original works of philosophy--*Human Experience: Philosophy, Neurosis and the Elements of Everyday Life* and *Bearing Witness to Epiphany*. He also maintains an active blog pertaining to philosophy, music, and community life at [www.johnrusson.com](http://www.johnrusson.com).

#### ABSTRACT

Drawing on ideas from Kant, Merleau-Ponty, Levinas, and Derrida, Professor Russon will discuss the ways in which perception always opens us onto a reality that exceeds the limits of perception, with an ultimate goal of understanding better the ethical demands that confront us in our engagements

#### Events 4 and 5

Event 4 Date and Time: Thursday, March 15th from 12:30-1:45 p.m.

Location: Bangor Lounge, Memorial Union, University of Maine

Event: Drew Leder presenting and discussing his talk "Plato's Cave? Teaching Philosophy in Prison" (Sponsored also by Marxist-Socialist Studies Interdisciplinary Minor, Maine Peace Action Committee (MPAC), Campus Activities and Student Engagement, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)

Attendance: 70 (philosophy faculty and students, additional UMaine faculty and students interested in social justice issues and issues related to prison, Bangor area community members)

Event 5 Date and Time: Thursday, March 15th from 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Location: Room 140, Little Hall, University of Maine

Event: Drew Leder presenting and discussing his talk "Modern Medicine "Too Materialistic?"

Attendance: 55 (philosophy faculty and students, additional UMaine faculty and students interested in issues pertaining to health, medicine and medical ethics, Bangor area community members)

#### SPEAKER BIO

Drew Leder, M.D., Ph.D., is a professor of philosophy at Loyola University Maryland. Leder has published extensively on bodily experience in health and illness. He is the author of *The Absent Body* (U. of Chicago Press, 1990), editor of *The Body in Medical Thought and Practice* (Kluwer, 1992), and assistant editor of the *Encyclopedia of Bioethics* (Macmillan, 1995). He has also worked extensively with prisoners in a maximum security environment. Using philosophical and spiritual tools, he has explored with them the nature of violence, incarceration, and self-transformation. The results of this work are found in *The Soul Knows No Bars: Inmates Reflect on Life, Death, and Hope* (preface by Cornel West; Rowman and Littlefield, 2000). Features on Dr. Leder's work have appeared in such places as the *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Family Circle*, and other magazines and newspapers around the country.

#### TALK ABSTRACTS

Event 4:

Leder will discuss the American criminal justice system—is it just, or is it criminal?—and his work with prisoners, the subject of his book *The Soul Knows No Bars*. He will discuss how colleges can interface with "correctional" facilities, to the benefit of professors, students, and those most disenfranchised.

Event 5: Modern medicine is often accused of being too "materialistic"--overly focused on money, and treating the patient like a body-machine. True enough. We will discuss this, but also ways in which medicine is not "materialist" enough--not paying enough attention to its physical objects and environments, and how these influence healing. We will "visit" a sacred hospital in India, a radically redesigned nursing home, and re-think the future of medical technologies.

#### **Event 6**

Date and Time: Thursday, March 29th at 4:00 p.m.

Event: Edward Beach presenting and discussing his essay "Logical Lapses versus Deliberate Circularity: Two Perspectives on Hegel's Logic"

Location: The Weisz Room (1st Floor), The Maples, University of Maine

Attendance: 33 (philosophy faculty and students, additional UMaine faculty interested in Hegel and critical thought, Bangor area community members)

#### SPEAKER BIO

Edward A. Beach is Professor of Philosophy at University of Wisconsin--Eau Claire. Professor Beach specializes in 19th and 20th century Continental Philosophy, focusing on German Idealism and modern religious thought.

## TALK ABSTRACT

In this presentation, Professor Beach will explore a central problem in Hegel's logic--namely, whether the holistic vision required by Hegel's conception of dialectic requires a kind of circular thinking; and if so, whether such circularity vitiates his philosophical method and undermines his system as a whole. To lend focus to the inquiry, Beach examines the criticisms of Dieter Henrich, a prominent German Hegel scholar, who charges Hegel with confusing the properly sequential development of his logical categories. Beach exonerates Hegel of most of Henrich's criticisms, but at the same time recognizes that his defense brings other difficulties of a still more challenging nature into view. At the end of the talk, Professor Beach intends to open the discussion to those present by asking the broader question of whether circular reasoning is necessarily fallacious, or whether it can sometimes lead to genuine insights.

### *PROMOTION:*

The above descriptions were sent verbatim via email, posted throughout university FirstClass folders, and printed with a simple image for display in The Maples. Each of these promotional materials also included the following :

“This event is sponsored by the University of Maine's Department of Philosophy and is supported in part by a grant from the Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series.

If you have a disability that may require accommodation for this event, please contact Ann Smith in the office of Disability Support Service, 121 East Annex, 581-2319 (Voice) or 581-2311 (TDD).”

### *BUDGET MODIFICATIONS:*

Our series proposal differs slightly from the events we hosted owing to the cancellation of two speakers (John Stuhr and Lisa Guenther) due to timing conflicts that arose on their end, and the substitution of a speaker (John Russon) to fill in the space opened by one of these speakers. These changes resulted in a decrease of our budgetary needs. Our original request for funds from CA/DLS was \$1800; our final costs submitted to CA/DLS totaled \$1080.81.

### *ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:*

Overall, this year's philosophy department colloquium series was extremely successful. Our speakers all mentioned being particularly impressed by the level of engagement shown by students in the question and answer periods following their formal presentations. As a department, we were also impressed by the very strong turnout at the events. We are grateful for the support of the CA/DLS funds, and the talks that they enabled us to host this year.

\*\*Please see attached final budget.

## 2011-2012 Philosophy Colloquium Series Final Budget

1. Jason Read (October 27, 2011)	
Honorarium	\$ <u>75</u>
Travel (reimbursement for mileage)	\$ <u>120</u>
2. Jill Gordon (November 3, 2011)	
Honorarium	\$ <u>80</u>
Travel (reimbursement for mileage)	\$ <u>54.56</u>
3. John Russon (December 1, 2011)	
Honorarium	\$ <u>150</u>
Travel (reimbursement for mileage)	\$ <u>550</u>
4 and 5. Drew Leder (March 15, 2012)	
Honorarium	\$ <u>1679.31 (Phil. Dept.)</u>
Travel	\$ <u>240.80 (Phil. Dept.)</u>
<u>Round-trip Airfare</u>	
Lodging/Meals	\$ <u>579.89 (Phil. Dept.)</u>
6. Edward Beach (March 29, 2012)	No Charge
7. Kirsten Jacobson	
Lodging/Meals (reimbursement for dinners purchased for Read, Gordon, Russon, and Beach following colloquium talks)	\$ <u>51.25</u>
CA/DLS SUBTOTAL	\$ <u>1080.81</u>
PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT SUBTOTAL	\$ <u>2500</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>3580.81</u>

\* Unless source is identified in parenthetical note following sum, expenses above were paid using funds provided by CA/DLS.