

# STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Scholarship Recipients 2024

Philosophy Senior Scholarships were awarded to Sarah Gonce and Finn Shirley. The senior scholarship was created in 2021 by the faculty in our department, to support rising seniors in the major. Sarah and Finn are two of our outstanding current crop of philosophy majors. Sarah serves as President of Women in Political and Social Sciences, and Secretary for the Pre-Law Society. In Fall, she'll be completing research for her senior thesis on an issue in the philosophy of law.



*Sarah Gonce*

Finn is a Changemaker Scholar and the Executive Vice President of the Student Government Association. Finn is also planning on writing his senior thesis on an issue in the philosophy of law, although Finn will be supervised by Dr. Michael Allen.



*Finn Shirley*

The Neil Shanks Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Andy Cole. The scholarship was created in memory of former department faculty member, Dr. Neil Shanks. It is merit-based scholarship, awarded to an Honors student who's entering their senior year.



*Andy Cole*



EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Philosophy and Humanities

## FALL & WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

### Notes from the Chair



*Dr. David Harker*

In October 2022, I was asked by Provost McCorkle to co-chair a task force that would be charged with redesigning the general education curriculum at ETSU. General education is critical to higher education, at least as higher education is conceived in the U.S. General education is intended to prepare students for life, careers, and responsible citizenship, by developing core competencies, and a deeper and broader understanding across all branches of the arts, humanities, and sciences. Unfortunately, general education courses are too often regarded by students, parents, and community members at large, as obstacles to graduation, rather than

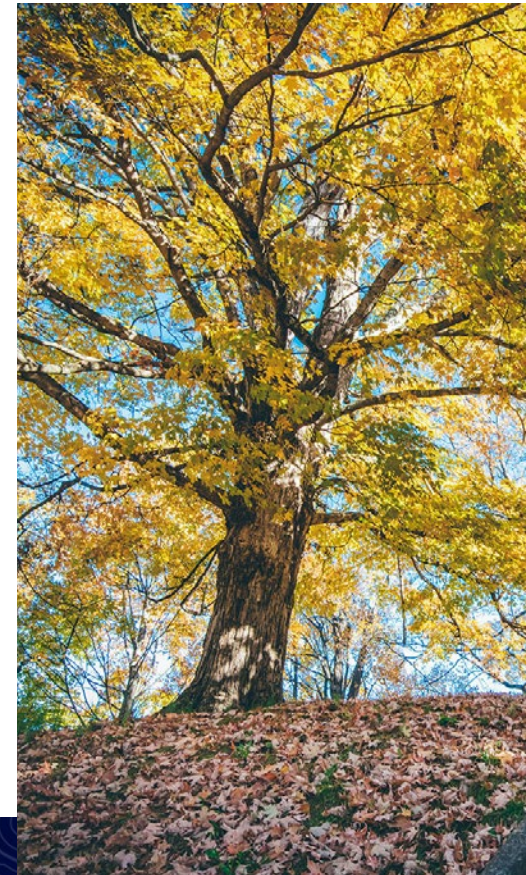
opportunities for personal growth. In response, many universities across the country have undergone significant revisions of their general education curricula.

ETSU's newly designed Compass Core Curriculum launches in Fall 2024.

The new curriculum is more flexible, giving students more freedom to choose courses that they judge will be either more interesting or relevant to them and their programs of study. If students are enrolled in the courses that they actively choose, we think those students will be more engaged. The Compass Core Curriculum is designed to help students understand the purpose and objectives of the curriculum and the specific courses. If students understand how they'll benefit from taking a particular course, we think those students will be more engaged. Another key element of the redesign was the requirement that all general education courses utilize high-impact teaching practices, which improve student learning, and can promote equity in higher education. As I hope these highlights reveal, the launch of the new curriculum is an exciting time for ETSU.

My involvement in the process impressed upon me the vital role that philosophy plays in higher education. Two of the six core competencies emphasized by Compass are Critical Thinking and Effective Communication. As anyone who has studied philosophy knows, these competencies are central to everything we do in the discipline. As I learned more about high-impact teaching practices, and their emphasis on reflection, active learning, building connections, and sharing ideas,

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The Department of Philosophy & Humanities offers three concentrations within the philosophy major: Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Justice, Ethics, and Law. Students may pursue either a B.A. or B.S. degree. Minors are also offered in Philosophy, Ethics, Religious Studies, and Humanities.

### Honors Theses 2024

"An Examination of the Effects of Stoic Practice and Well-Being" by Lukas Christensen, supervised by Dr. Ian Hensley.

### Alumni

Are you a department alumnus? We'd love to hear from you! Stay up to date on department news by visiting our website [www.etsu.edu/cas/philosophy](http://www.etsu.edu/cas/philosophy), or following us on Facebook and Instagram.

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*"Note from Chair" continues from previous page.*

I realized that our instructors have been utilizing such practices regularly, even if we weren't previously familiar with that particular nomenclature.

The redesigned general education curriculum is a wonderful opportunity for our department. The new curriculum requires all students to take a course that focusses explicitly on critical thinking. What is critical thinking? Why is it important? How can we become better critical thinkers? What does work on cognitive biases have to teach us about our limitations as critical thinkers? When is it sensible to rely on experts, and how can we justify our dependence on others? Of the three courses currently being offered to fulfill the critical thinking requirement, two are philosophy courses.

We've already added three of our existing department courses to the general education core, and have begun discussions about adding more and developing some new courses specifically for general education. Students can now satisfy a general education requirement with a course in Practical Reasoning, Environmental Philosophy, or Chinese Philosophy. In the future, we hope that we'll be able to say the same about courses in Bioethics, Philosophy of Life and Death, Philosophy of War and Peace, among others.

By expanding our course offerings in general education, I'm hopeful that we'll draw more students to pursue either a major or minor in our department. Courses in the humanities are as vital as ever and we remain committed to exposing students to their many values.

Our work in general education is just a part of department activity of the last 12 months. I hope you'll read on to learn a little more of what we've been up to.

*Best,*

*David Harker*



**Dr. Austin Due**

## New Lecturer to Join the Department

*Science and the Modern World* has been a staple of our lower-level offerings for over 25 years. The course satisfies the Critical Thinking category for ETSU's Compass Core curriculum and is always in high demand. Starting in the Fall, we will have a new lecturer joining the

department who will be teaching several sections of *Science and the Modern World*, per semester, in addition to some upper-level courses within his area of expertise.

Dr. Austin Due completed his Ph.D. at the University of Toronto in the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology. His dissertation concerned the concept of a medical side-effect. Dr. Due identifies foremost as a philosopher of science, but he has taken graduate courses in history, public health, and health services research. He describes himself as "committed to a practice-informed, problem-centric approach to social, ethical and epistemic issues in contemporary medical practice." Given ETSU's focus on healthcare and the health sciences, we're excited to welcome Dr. Due to campus and are confident that our students will benefit from his instruction.



## FACULTY RESEARCH

### DEPARTMENT FACULTY

Department faculty continue with active research programs, presenting their work at national and international conference and workshops, and publishing their work in with prestigious journals and book publishers. Here are a few of the highlights from the last couple of years.

**Michael Allen** continues to publish at a phenomenal rate. In the last two years alone, he's published (1) "A Spectrum of Solidarities: Human Solidarity with Wild Animal Co-Predators" (with Erica von Essen) in *Solidarity with Animals*, eds. A. Cochrane and D-M. Cojocar (Oxford: Oxford University Press); (2) "Don't Liberate the Animals; Let them Resist!" in *Animal Rights: Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Nova Main, 2023); (3) "Looking Backwards and Forwards to the Rights of All Animals: Analogical Natural Law and Total Liberation" in *Animal Rights: Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Nova Main, 2023); (4) "Skill or Slaughter in 'Fair Chase:' What does Animal Resistance Tell us about Modern Sports Hunting?" (with Erica von Essen), *Between the Species*, 25: 1 (2022), 149-167.

**Dr. Keith Green** published "Spinoza on Hatred and Power and the Challenge of Reconciliation," in Paula Satne and Krissanna Scheiter, eds. *Conflict and Resolution: The Ethics of Forgiveness, Revenge, and Punishment*, (Springer International Publishing AG, 2022). This spring, Dr. Green had a non-instructional assignment. He used that time, among other scholarly pursuits, to give presentations in Milan, Italy, and Liverpool, England. In Milan, Dr. Green gave a lecture on "Sentiments which in no way belong to us: Self-Hared and Moral Normativity in Spinoza and Hume". In Liverpool is gave a presentation at the British Society for the History of Philosophy Conference on "Sophie du Grouchy and Adam Smith on Sympathy with Hatred".

**Dr. David Harker** gave the Leading Voices in Public Health lecture, in February 2023, which was co-sponsored by our department and ETSU's College of Public Health. The lecture was titled "What to do about Misinformation". He published a review of Peter Vickers book *Identifying Future-Proof Science* (Oxford University Press), entitled "Stability, growth, and the problem of thresholds", and co-authored an editorial on misinformation for the *American Journal of Public Health*, with Dr. Randy Wykoff, Dean of ETSU's College of Public Health, and an ETSU student, Leah Loveday.

**Dr. Ian Hensley** has several articles and chapters that have either been published over the last couple of years, or are forthcoming. These include: "The Stoics' Divine Cosmology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Stoicism*, edited by Dominic Bailey; "The Stoics and Anaximenes on Basic Corporeal Change," in *Stoic Presocratics – Presocratic Stoics: Studies in the Stoic*

*Reception of Early Greek Philosophy*, edited by Christian Vassallo, Michele Alessandrelli, and Stavros Kouloumentas; "Elements and Matter in Diogenes Laertius 7.137." *Classical Philology* 118, no. 2 (2023): 273– 281. He also gave his lecture "Chrysippus on Matter and Substance" at the 46th Annual Ancient Philosophy Workshop, in University of Texas-Austin and at the Symposium Hellenisticum, in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Dr. Leslie MacAvoy** published a lengthy review of Katherine Withy's book *Heidegger on Being Self-Concealing* (Oxford University Press) in *Mind*. She also gave a lecture to the International Society for Phenomenological Studies, in July 2023, entitled "Toward Discursive Intuition: Shifting the Locus of Logos from Judgment to Seeing", and continues to make progress on her book manuscript.

### GUEST SPEAKERS

This year the department was pleased to sponsor or co-sponsor the following lectures:

"What is Reasonable in Stoic Ethics?", Dr. Peter Osorio, University of Maryland at College Park, October 2023.

"Seeing the Phenomenon: IVG and the Radical Disembodiment of Human Reproduction," Dr. Dana Belu, California State University, Dominguez Hills, November, 2023.

"Why Read Wilhem Reich?", Dr. Shannon Sullivan, UNC Charlotte, March 2024.

"In the Beginning was TikTok: Religion in the Age of Social Media," Dr. Dan McClellan, Public Scholar, March 2024.

"How Dehumanization Works", Dr. David Livingstone Smith, University of New England, April 2024.

The department was also pleased to co-sponsor the visit of Jeff VanderMeer, an acclaimed author of science fiction and horror. While at ETSU, VanderMeer led a roundtable Q&A, gave a reading and led a workshop on creative writing. VanderMeer's visit was part of the department's interdisciplinary project, along with the Departments of Literature and Language, History, Sociology and Anthropology, Appalachian Studies, Art and Design, and Cross-Disciplinary Studies, to explore the themes of horror and the monstrous.