

Aaron Harper
Curriculum Vitae

Academic Appointments

Fall 2023–present	Professor of Philosophy, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, West Liberty University
Fall 2018–Spring 2023	Associate Professor of Philosophy, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, West Liberty University
Fall 2013–Spring 2018	Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Department of Humanities, West Liberty University
Fall 2012–Spring 2013	Instructor of Philosophy, Department of Humanities, West Liberty University
Spring 2012	Adjunct Instructor, Department of Philosophy, Minnesota State University, Mankato
Fall 2011	Instructional Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Illinois State University

Administrative Appointments

Fall 2023–present	Director, Interdisciplinary Studies Program, West Liberty University
Fall 2019–present	Chair, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, West Liberty University

Education

Ph.D.	Philosophy, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012 Dissertation: “Nietzsche on Value Creation”
M.A.	Philosophy, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2007
B.A.	Philosophy, Creighton University, 2005 (summa cum laude) Honors Research Project: “Finding Ethics in Legal Realism”

Areas of Specialization

19th Century Philosophy, Ethics, Philosophy of Sport

Areas of Competence

Ancient Philosophy, Existentialism and Phenomenology, Social and Political Philosophy

Publications

Books

1. *Sport Realism: A Law-Inspired Theory of Sport*
Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield, 2022

Peer-Reviewed Articles

5. “Interpretivism, Sport Realism, and the Vice of Formalism”
Journal of the Philosophy of Sport 52:2 (2025): 217–228
4. “Reflections on the Presence of Play in University Arts and Athletics”
Reason Papers 38:1 (2016): 38–50
3. “‘You’re the Best Around’: An Argument for Playoffs and Tournaments”
Journal of the Philosophy of Sport 43:2 (2016): 295–309
2. “Playing, Valuing, and Living: Examining Nietzsche’s Playful Response to Nihilism”
The Journal of Value Inquiry 50:2 (2016): 305–323
1. “Nietzsche’s Thumbscrew: Honesty as Virtue and Value Standard”
The Journal of Nietzsche Studies 46:3 (2015): 367–390

Book Chapters

2. “Tournaments, Tests, and the Aims of Intercollegiate Athletic Competition”
forthcoming in *College Sport Ethics: Challenges, Questions, Opportunities*, eds. Chad Carlson and Shawn Klein. Bloomsbury, 2025
1. “Power, Resentment, and Self-Preservation: Nietzsche’s Moral Psychology as a Critique of Trump,” co-authored with Eric Schaaf
Trump and Political Philosophy: Patriotism, Cosmopolitanism, and Civic Virtue, eds. Marc Sable and Angel Jaramillo Torres. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018: 257–280

Book Reviews

1. Review of Randolph Feezell’s *Beyond the Fields*, in *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*
(forthcoming)

Conferences and Presentations

Papers Presented

20. "An Assessment of Pacing Technologies in Distance Races," co-authored with Brenden Sands
North American Society for Social Philosophy, July 2024
19. "Tournaments, Tests, and the Aims of Intercollegiate Athletic Competitions"
International Association for the Philosophy of Sport, APA Central Division, February 2023
(Invited Talk)
International Association for the Philosophy of Sport, August 2022
18. "A Realist Account of Cheating in Sport"
North American Society for Social Philosophy, July 2020 (presentation delayed until 2021 due to pandemic)
Great Lakes Philosophy Conference, April 2019
17. "Nietzsche on Trump"
Roundtable on *Trump and Political Philosophy: Leadership, Statesmanship, and Tyranny*
Northeastern Political Science Association, November 2017
16. "Virtue is Wisdom: Socrates' Unity of the Virtues in Xenophon"
Pittsburgh Area Philosophy Colloquium, September 2016
15. "Interpreting Interpretivism: A Legal Realist Account of Cheating in Sport"
Rockford University Sports Studies Symposium, April 2015
14. "'You're the Best Around': Reconsidering Athletic Excellence in Seasons and Playoffs"
International Association for the Philosophy of Sport, APA Central Division, February 2015
13. "The Politics of Nietzsche's Value Creation"
New England Political Science Association, April 2014
12. "Good Taste as the Basis for Nietzsche's Authority"
Swarthmore College, November 2013 (Invited Talk)
North American Society for Social Philosophy, July 2013
11. "The Sincerity of Valuing: Honesty as a Nietzschean Value Standard"
American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, December 2013
Indiana Philosophical Association, March 2013
10. "Playing with Nietzsche: Play, Nihilism, and Value Creation"
Rockford College Sports Studies Symposium, April 2013
International Association for the Philosophy of Sport, APA Eastern Division, December 2012
9. "The Significance of Solitude and Individuality in Nietzsche's Ideal"
Knox College, May 2012 (Invited Talk)
LSU Philosophy Conference, March 2012
8. "Value Creation, Gift-Giving, and Nietzschean Autonomy"
Princeton-Penn-Columbia Graduate Conference in the History of Philosophy, April 2012

- Illinois Philosophical Association*, November 2011
Pittsburgh Area Philosophy Colloquium, September 2011
7. "On the Obligation to Care for Strangers and Orphans"
North American Society for Social Philosophy, July 2011
 6. "Fiction and Projection in Nietzsche's Conception of Value"
American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, April 2011
 5. "The Role of Fiction in Nietzsche's Value Theory"
Iowa Philosophical Conference, November 2010
 4. "Fictions, Pretense, and Projections in Nietzsche"
Florida Philosophical Association, November 2010
 3. "Nietzsche's Tastes: Nietzsche on Values and Reasons"
University of Kentucky Graduate Student Conference, March 2010
 2. "The Deep Ecology/Ecofeminism Debate: Toward a Unified Radical Ecology"
S.W.A.P. Conference for Topics of Diversity in Philosophy, April 2006
 1. "The Search for Identity: Platonism, Heidegger, and Feminism"
Midwest Undergraduate Philosophy Conference, April 2005

Other Professional Presentations and Programs

4. "Cheating, Rule-Breaking, and the Nature of Sport"
Philosophers Discussing Art YouTube series with Brandon Polite, September 2023
3. "Alienation and Self-Alienation in *Frankenstein*"
Frankenstein at 200, West Liberty University interdisciplinary symposium on the bicentenary of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, April 2018
2. "The Value of Playoffs and Championships"
Sports Ethics Show Podcast with Shawn Klein, October 2014
1. "The Postmoral Philosophies of Nietzsche and Bernard Williams"
Guest Lecture for the Moral Philosophy Honors Seminar, Swarthmore College, March 2013

Teaching Experience

West Liberty University

COM 410 Media Law and Ethics
 ENG 101 College Composition I
 HON 150 Honors Gateway Seminar (theme: social justice)
 PHIL 201 Introduction to Philosophy
 PHIL 205 Introduction to Ethics
 PHIL 210 Logic and Critical Thinking

PHIL 278/328 Environmental Ethics
PHIL 278 Ethical Theories
PHIL 278/478 Freedom and Responsibility
PHIL 278 Philosophy of Sport
PHIL 278/328 Sport Ethics
PHIL 278 The Ethics of Life and Death
PHIL 308 Ancient Philosophy
PHIL 321 Contemporary Moral Problems
PHIL 328 Philosophy and *The Good Place*
POLS/PHIL 330 Introduction to Political Thought
PHIL 402 Philosophy of Law
PHIL 406 Existentialism
PHIL 406 Socrates and Plato
HON 378/PHIL 478 Issues in Medical and Bioethics
HON 378/PHIL 478 The Problem of Socrates
ENG 478/PHIL 400 Existentialist Literature
PHIL/PSYC/POLS 478 Responsibility and Punishment
PHIL 479 Environmental Philosophy (Independent Study)
PHIL 479 Modern and U.S. Political Thought (Independent Study)
PHIL 479 Philosophical Studies in Sport (Independent Study)
PHIL 479 Selfhood (Independent Study)
HON 498 Honors Research Project

Minnesota State University, Mankato

PHIL 120W Introduction to Ethics (online)

Illinois State University

PHIL 112 Language, Logic and Mathematics

Awards and Honors

West Liberty University College of Liberal Arts Professor of the Year, 2020–2021

West Liberty University Faculty Award for Excellence in Professional Activity, 2016–2017

West Liberty Executive Fellowship Program, 2015–2016

West Liberty University representative to the West Virginia Great Teachers Seminar, June 2015
Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities reading group funding award, co-organizer for
the reading group Virtue and Character, 2006–2007
Sophia Award for outstanding philosophy major at Creighton University, Spring 2005

West Liberty University Service

Chair, Political Science Hiring Committee (2023–2024)
Member, McMillen Fund Committee (2022–2023)
Member, Curriculum Committee (Chair’s Council Representative) (2021–present)
Member, WLU Mission Statement Task Force (2020–2021)
Member, WLU Planning Task Force (2018–2019)
Member, Committee for Faculty Excellence Award in Professional Activity (2018–2019)
Member, Faculty Senate Policies Committee (2018–2020)
Member, General Studies Assessment Committee (2016–2021)
Chair, Faculty Senate Academic Policy Committee (2016–2018)
Faculty Representative, Policy Review Committee (2015–2018)
College of Liberal Arts Promotion and Tenure Committee (2015–2016, 2016–2017, 2018–2019)
Honors College Research Coordinator (2015–present)
Chair, Faculty Senate Ethics Committee (2014–2016)
Faculty Representative, Ombudsperson Creation Committee (2014–2016)
Member, Faculty Senate (2014–2020)
New Faculty Mentor Program (2014–2015, 2016–2017, 2017–2018)
Member, Honors Council (2013–2023)
Mentor for English Capstone Projects (Ira Werner: 2012–2013, Anna Cipoletti: 2013–2014,
Emily Burgy: 2014–2015, Alli Bertozzi: 2015–2016, Michelle Morris: 2022–2023)
Faculty advisor for the West Liberty Bad Movie Club (2013–2014)

Professional Service and Organizations

Member, American Philosophical Association Committee on Academic Career Opportunities
and Placement (term July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027)
Award Judge for West Virginia Undergraduate Literary Symposium (2014)
Chair, University of Illinois Graduate Student Philosophy Conference (2008–2009)
Member American Philosophical Association

Member North American Nietzsche Society

Member North American Society for Social Philosophy

Member International Association for the Philosophy of Sport

Language Proficiency

Ancient Greek

German (reading)

References

Jeremy Larance, Professor of English
West Liberty University

Krista Thomason, Associate Professor of Philosophy
Swarthmore College

Angela Rehbein, Professor of English
West Liberty University

Chad Kuhns, former Associate Professor of Mathematics
West Liberty University

Shawn Klein, Associate Teaching Professor
Arizona State University

Kirk Sanders, Associate Professor of the Classics and Philosophy
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign