

*Curriculum Vitae*  
**KIMBERLY ANN BLESSING**

Department of Philosophy  
SUNY Buffalo State  
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**Higher Education**

Ph.D. in Philosophy, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1996.

Doctoral Dissertation: “The Missing Cartesian Ethic: An Examination of Descartes’ Provisional” Morality.”

Directors: Richard T. Hull and Kenneth Barber; Outside Reader: Vance Morgan.

Awarded William T. Perry Prize for Outstanding Ph.D. Scholarship in Philosophy.

M.A. in Philosophy, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1992.

Master’s Thesis: “An Examination of Mary Midgley’s *Wisdom, Information, and Wonder: What is Knowledge For?*” Director: Newton Garver.

B.A. *Cum Laude* in Philosophy and Modern Languages, State College at Buffalo, 1990.

*Diplôme: Certificat Pratique de Langue Française*, Université de Nancy: Faculté Des Lettres, Nancy, France, 1988.

**Academic Positions**

Professor of Philosophy. SUNY Buffalo State, formerly Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. 2013-present.

Chair, Department of Philosophy and Humanities. Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. 2008-2014 (two terms).

Associate Professor of Philosophy. Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. 2008-2013.

Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. 2004-2008.

Assistant Professor of Philosophy. King’s College. Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. 2003-2004.

Associate Professor of Philosophy. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. 2002-2003.

Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. 1997-2002.

Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Canisius College. Buffalo, New York. 1996-1997.

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Canisius College. Fall 1994-Spring 1996.

Instructor. Niagara County Community College. Sandborn, New York. Summers 1994-1999.

Adjunct Assistant Professor. State University College of New York at Fredonia. Fall 1995-Spring 1996.

Adjunct Assistant Professor. Wyoming Correctional Facility. New York State Prison System. Fall 1995.

Adjunct Assistant Professor. Attica Correctional Facility. New York State Prison System. Spring 1995.

Instructor. State University of New York at Buffalo. Buffalo, New York. Fall 1992-Summer 1994.

**Areas of Specialization**

Meaning of Life, Descartes, Early Modern Philosophy, Philosophy and Popular Culture

**Areas of Competence**

Philosophy of Religion, Existentialism

**Languages**

French. Some German

## **Publications**

- Movies And The Meaning of Life: Philosophers Take on Hollywood*, co-edited with Paul J. Tudico (Open Court, 2005).
- “Optimism in *Ted Lasso*: Kansas City Candide Meets Albert Camus” in *Ted Lasso and Philosophy*, edited by David and Mary Baggett (Wiley-Blackwell), forthcoming.
- “*Little Women*: Death or Marriage and The Meaning of Life.” *The Palgrave Handbook of Popular Culture as Philosophy*, edited by David Kyle Johnson, 2020.
- “*Groundhog Day* as Philosophy: Phil Says No To Eternal Return,” *The Palgrave Handbook of Popular Culture as Philosophy*, edited by David Kyle Johnson, 2020.
- “Thinking About the Meaning of Life: The Virtues of a Virtue Approach” in *Cultivating the Virtues: Moral Education in Light of Virtue Ethics* (translated to Chinese), edited by Miwan Wang (forthcoming).
- “Cosmic Justice in *Breaking Bad*: Can Sociopaths and Antiheroes Lead Meaningful Lives?” in *Philosophy and Breaking Bad*, edited by Kevin Decker (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
- “The Meaning of Life and Work in *Downton Abbey*,” in *Downton Abbey and Philosophy*, edited by Robert Arp (Open Court, 2015).
- “What HBO’s *Girls* Has to Say About Meaning in Life for Millennials,” principal author with Samantha Wezowicz in *Girls and Philosophy: The Book Isn’t A Metaphor for Anything*, edited by Richard Greene (Open Court, 2015).
- “Atheism and Meaningfulness in Life,” *The Oxford Handbook of Atheism*, edited by Stephen Bullivant and Michael Ruse (Oxford University Press: 2013).
- “What’s Done, is Done: Descartes on Resoluteness and Regret.” *Essays in Philosophy: Cartesian Virtue and Freedom*. Vol. 14, No. 2, July 2013, pp. 141-161.
- “Is the PR-ization of Media Bullshit?,” co-authored with Joe Marren. *Media Ethics*, Vol. 24. No. 2, Spring 2013.
- “More Bullshit: Political Spin and the PR-ization of Media,” with Joseph Marren, in *The Ultimate Daily Show and Philosophy* edited by Jason Holt (Wiley-Blackwell: 2013).
- “I Re-Read, Therefore I Understand: Kimberly Blessing Tells Us René Descartes’ Advice on Reading Philosophy,” *Philosophy Now*, January-February 2013.
- “Mal-Placed Regret” in *Inception and Philosophy*, edited by David Johnson (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).
- “One Monk’s Message: Establishing An Enlightened Ethic for the Media,” co-authored with Joe Marren. *Media Ethics*, Vol. 21, No. 9, Spring 2010.
- A review of Christopher Grau’s, ed., *Philosophers Explore the Matrix* (Oxford University Press, 2005), in *Journal of Value Inquiry* (2007) 41: 403-407.
- “Bullshit and Political Spin: Is The Medium The Massage?,” with Joseph Marren, in *The Daily Show and Philosophy*, edited by Jason Holt (Blackwell Philosophy and Popular Culture Series, 2007).
- “The Beer-Truck Hypothesis and *Groundhog Day*: What Time Can Tell Us about The Meaning of Life.” *Dialogue: A Journal of Religion and Philosophy*, November 2007.
- “*Fade to Black*: Absurdity, Suicide, and the Downward Spiral,” co-authored with Justin Donhauser, in *Metallica and Philosophy*, edited by William T. Irwin (Open Court, 2007).
- “The Cartesian Meditator and his Moral Muse: Ethics of the *Discourse on Method* and Correspondence with Elizabeth,” *The Modern Schoolman*, November 2005.
- “Deceit and Doubt: The Search For Truth in *The Truman Show* and Descartes’ *Meditations*,” in *Movies And The Meaning of Life: Philosophers Take on Hollywood* (Open Court, 2005).
- A review of Vance Morgan’s *Foundations of Cartesian Ethics* (Humanities Press, 1994), in *Canadian Philosophical Review*, May 1995.

### **Conference Presentations**

- “Atheism, Theism, and the Meaning of Life,” *Atheism The Contemporary Debate: A Symposium Inspired by the Recent Publication of *The Oxford Handbook on Atheism**. Florida State University. Tallahassee, Florida, 2013.
- “Theism, Atheism, and Meaningfulness in Life,” American Philosophical Association. New Orleans, Louisiana. 2013.
- “Atheism and Meaningfulness in Life,” Western New York-Western Pennsylvania Regional Meeting, American Catholic Philosophical Association, Saint John Fisher College, Rochester, NY, 21 April 2012.
- Commentator, “Descartes and the Danger of Irresolution” by Shoshana Brassfield. Upstate New York Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy (UNYWEMP): Descartes Day a.k.a. ‘A Cartesian Colloquium,’ Syracuse University, 2010.
- “Acting With Cartesian Resolve.” Creighton Club New York State Philosophical Association. Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY. 18 October 2008.
- “One Monk’s Message: Establishing An Enlightened Ethic for the Media,” co-authored with Joe Marren. Colloquia 2000 Series in Applied Media Ethics. University of Hawai’i at Manoa. Honolulu, Hawai’i. October 14-18, 2007.
- “Resoluteness and Reasonable Regret in Descartes’ Thinking about Morality.” Eastern Division American Philosophical Association. Washington, DC, December 2006.
- “Beer-Truck Hypothesis and *Groundhog Day*: What Time Can Tell Us about The Meaning of Life.” Popular Culture Association / American Culture Association National Conference, Atlanta, Georgia. April 2006.
- “Understanding Cartesian Moral Theory.” Midwest Seminar on Early Modern Philosophy. University of Chicago. Chicago, Illinois. April 2001.
- “Maxims of Morality, Not Methodology.” NEH Summer Seminar: “Descartes and His Contemporaries: Scholastics and *Novatores*.” Virginia Tech. Blacksburg, VA. Summer 2000.

### **Other Professional and General Audience Presentations**

- “*Little Women*: Death or Marriage and The Meaning of Life.” Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. Spring 2023.
- “Optimism in *Ted Lasso*: Kansas City Candide Meets Camus.” Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. Fall 2022.
- “Critiquing Popular Theories of Meaning of Life,” Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. March 2020.
- “Reading the Classics: Dostoevsky’s *Brothers Karamosov*.” Series of three lectures. Buffalo Literary Reading Circle. Buffalo, New York. Spring 2019.
- “Helping Patients Think about the Meaning of Life: A Philosophical Perspective,” Academic Rounds Series, Children’s Psychiatry Clinic of Oishei Children’s Hospital. Buffalo, New York. October 2018
- “Beyond Character Formation: What Can Aristotle Tell Us About The Meaning of Life?” Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. April 2018.
- “Educating For Humanity.” Address delivered for Buffalo State College Honors Convocation. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. April 2017
- “Cosmic Justice in *Breaking Bad*: Can Sociopaths and Antiheroes Lead Meaningful Lives? Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. Spring 2016.
- “Reading the Classics: Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*,” Series of three lectures. Buffalo Literary Reading Circle. Buffalo, New York. Spring 2016.
- “Faith and Reason,” Religious Studies Panel Discussion. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. November 2016.
- “The Meaning of Life and Work in Downton Abbey.” Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. Fall 2015.
- “Reading the Classics: Plato’s Allegory of the Cave.” Buffalo Literary Reading Circle. Series of two lectures. Buffalo, New York. Fall 2015.

**Other Professional and General Audience Presentations (continued)**

- “Thinking About The Meaning of Life with Philosopher Kimberly Blessing.” Center for Inquiry. Buffalo, NY, 2015.
- “A Review: Lawrence Wright’s *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, And the Prison of Belief* (2013).” Bistro Bookers, the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library’s Book Review and Discussion Group. Chef’s Restaurant, Buffalo, New York. September 2014.
- “What HBO’s *Girls* Has To Say About Meaning in Life for Millennials” with Samantha Wezowicz. Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York, Spring 2014.
- “Women and Philosophy,” with Sarah Caputi, Carissa Handiman, Rachael Saathoff, Samantha Wezowicz, and Leigh Duffy. Philosophy Department Faculty Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York, Spring 2013.
- “Theistic and Atheistic Theories about the Meaning of Life,” Conversations In and Out of the Disciplines Lecture Series. Buffalo State English Department. 15 March 2013.
- “Inception and Philosophy: Mal-Placed Regret. Philosophical Society. Gwynedd-Mercy College, PA, March 2011.
- “Meaning of Life” (invited), GM Common Hour. Gwynedd Mercy College, PA, 30 March 2011.
- “Atheism and Meaningfulness in Life,” Philosophy Faculty Colloquia. Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York, October 2011
- “What’s Done is Done: Descartes on Resoluteness and Regret,” Philosophy Faculty-Student Colloquia. Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York, October 2011.
- “Acting With Cartesian Resolve.” Philosophy and Humanities Faculty-Student Colloquia. Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. October 2008.
- “Bullshit and Political Spin: Is the Medium The Massage?,” with Joseph Marren. Philosophy and Humanities Faculty Lecture Series. Buffalo State College. November 2006.
- “Serendipity: How I Landed At Buffalo State,” Keynote Address, President Howard’s All College Honors Program. Buffalo State College. November 2006.
- “*Fade to Black*: Absurdity, Suicide, and the Downward Spiral” with Justin Donhauser. Philosophy and Humanities Student Colloquia. Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York. September 2005.
- Book Talk: *Movies and The Meaning of Life*. Arts and Humanities Month: Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. October 2005.
- “Isn’t It Ironic? Not Really: Oprah Winfrey Introduces Madonna, “New and Improved”.” Socrates Society. King’s College. Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Fall 2003.
- “On the Nature of Friendship,” Siena Heights University Torch Night Ceremony. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. May 2003.
- “Popular Culture and Higher Education: What the Reporters Failed to Report,” American Studies Series. University of Toledo. Toledo, OH. April 2002.
- “Truth Matters: Academic, Skeptics and Dead-End Dogmatism,” Opening Address, “Dialogue Day: *Veritas*.” Siena Heights University. March 2002.
- “Is the Genome the Secular Equivalent of the Soul?,” “Common Dialogue Day: Technology and the Human Spirit.” Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. Spring 2001.
- “Cognitive and Passionate Uncertainty: Getting Cartesian Morality Right.” Humanities Division Colloquia. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. Fall 2000.
- “A New Reading of Descartes’ *Discourse on Method*.” Philosophy Department Colloquia Series, Canisius College. Buffalo, New York. April 1997.
- “*Une Morale Par Provision* from Descartes’ *Discourse on Method*.” Philosophy Department Symposium, State University College at Fredonia. Fredonia, New York. April 1996.

**Select Media Coverage** (list available upon request)

Pursuant to Animated Philosophy and Religion course. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. 2001- 2002.

**Awards and Grants**

President's Award for Excellence in Academic Advisement 2015. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York.

Certificate of Recognition, President's Council on Equity and Diversity 2008-2009. Buffalo State College, 2009.

Outstanding Faculty Member, nominated by Residence Life. Buffalo State College, 2007.

Honorary Member. Pi Delta Phi. French National Honor Society, inducted 2006.

SUNY Individual Development Award, 2006.

NEH Summer Seminar: "Descartes and His Contemporaries: Scholastics and *Novatores*," Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber, Directors. Virginia Tech. Blacksburg, VA. 18 June-14 July 2000.

Liberty Fund Seminar: "Liberty and the Nature of Law." Park City, Utah. 16-21 July 2001.

Liberty Fund Socratic Seminar: "William Paley and the Origins of Liberalism." Indianapolis, Indiana. Spring 2001.

Liberty Fund Colloquium: "Beauty as the Moral Education of the Passions in Aristotle and Hume." North Carolina, 1999.

Siena Heights Faculty Scholarship, Summer Seminar on Dominican Order and History, Fanjeaux, France, 2002.

William T. Parry Prize for Outstanding Ph.D. Scholarship in Philosophy. State University of New York at Buffalo, 1996.

Dean's Award for Excellence in Philosophy and Religious Studies. State University College at Buffalo, 1990.

**Professional Activities**

Program Review, SUNY Brockport.

Anonymous Referee Southern Journal of Philosophy.

Anonymous Referee SUNY Press.

Anonymous Referee Wiley Blackwell.

Anonymous Referee Canadian Philosophical Association.

Anonymous Referee University Press of Kentucky.

Anonymous Referee: Continuum Books.

Session Chair, Philosophy and Popular Culture Conference. State University of New York at Buffalo, 2004.

Liberty Fund Seminar: "Liberty and the Nature of Law." Park City, Utah, 2001.

Liberty Fund Socratic Seminar: "William Paley and the Origins of Liberalism." Indianapolis, Indiana, 2001.

Liberty Fund Colloquium: "Beauty as the Moral Education of the Passions in Aristotle and Hume," 1999.

**Administrative Service**

Chair, Philosophy Personnel Committee. SUNY Buffalo State. 2015 to present.

By-Laws Committee, School of Arts and Humanities. 2020- 2022

Philosophy Personnel Committee. SUNY Buffalo State. 2012 – 2015.

Chair, Department of Philosophy and Humanities. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. 2008-2014.

Founding Member (2013) and Mentor, WIP: Women in Philosophy. SUNY Buffalo State.

Founder and Coordinator, Faculty-Student Philosophy Department Colloquia. SUNY Buffalo State. 2006-present.

Co-Founding Member (2014), Buffalo Women in Philosophy (B-WIP). Buffalo, New York.

Chair, Theater Full Professor Promotion Committee. SUNY Buffalo State. 2019.

Arts and Humanities Faculty Welfare Committee. SUNY Buffalo State. 2017.

EURO (Early Undergraduate Research Opportunity) mentor. SUNY Buffalo State. Spring 2017 to 2020.

Supplemental Teaching Mentor. SUNY Buffalo State. Fall 2015 to 2017.

McNair Mentor. SUNY Buffalo State. Fall 2015 to Summer 2017.

Advisor, Student Feminist Club. SUNY Buffalo State. Fall 2016-Spring 2017.

Arts and Humanities By-Laws Committee. SUNY Buffalo State. Fall 2015 to 2018.

**Administrative Service (continued)**

Chancellor's Award Committee. SUNY Buffalo State. Fall 2015.

Search Committee for SUNY Buffalo State Provost. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York, Fall 2014-Spring 2015.

Director of Advising: Philosophy and Religious Studies. SUNY Buffalo State. Fall 2008-2014.

Program Array Committee. Appointed by Dean, School of Arts and Humanities. SUNY Buffalo State. 2013-2014.

College Planning Council. SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. 2008- 2014.

Arts and Letters Steering Committee. Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. Fall 2010-2012.

Philosophy and Humanities Department Student Activities Coordinator. Buffalo State College. 2007 – 2014.

Chair, Search Committee for Associate Dean, School of Arts and Humanities. Buffalo State College. Fall 2012.

Advisor, BSC Freethinkers Student Club, Buffalo State College. Fall 2010–Fall 2013.

Advisory Committee International Studies Minor. Buffalo State College. 2007-2010.

SUNY Department Chair Institute. SUNY Center for Professional Development. Syracuse, New York. September 2007.

Chair, Search Committee for Department of Philosophy and Humanities. Buffalo State College. 2007-2008.

Chair, Search Committee for Department of Philosophy and Humanities (Search #1). Buffalo State College. 2006-2007.

Search Committee for Department of Philosophy and Humanities (Search #2). Buffalo State College. 2006-2007.

Search Committee for Dean, School of Arts and Humanities. Buffalo State College. Summer 2005-Spring 2007.

Chair, Search Committee for Department of Philosophy and Humanities. Buffalo State College. 2005-2006.

Arts and Humanities Curriculum Committee. Buffalo State College. 2005-2006.

Academic Plan Committee. Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. 2004-2008.

New Faculty Committee. Buffalo State College. Buffalo, New York. 2004-5.

Co-Chair. King's College Undergraduate Philosophy Conference. Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. April 2004.

Department Chair. Philosophy Department. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. Fall 1999-2003.

Vice Chair. Teaching Faculty Assembly Executive Committee. Siena Height University. Adrian, Michigan. 2001-2003.

Social Committee. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. 2001-2002.

Coordinator, Humanities Division Colloquia. Siena Heights University. Fall 2000-2003.

Campus Ministry Assessment Committee. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. 2001.

Faculty Welfare Committee. Siena Heights University, Adrian, Michigan. 1999- 2001.

Faculty Handbook Committee. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. Fall 2000.

Academic Standards Committee. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. 1998-2002.

New Faculty Committee. Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. Fall 1997-Spring 1999.

**Courses Taught (Teaching Portfolio Available Upon Request)**

SUNY Buffalo State. Buffalo, New York. Department of Philosophy and Humanities.

- Honors Humanities Seminar (over six sections)
- Introduction to Philosophy (over 40 sections, including mass lecture, Freshman-only)
- Introduction to Social and Moral Philosophy (2 sections)
- Introduction to Humanities (team-taught)
- Foundations of Inquiry
- Meaning of Life (over five sections)
- Modern Philosophy (over ten sections)
- Philosophy of Religion (over eight sections)
- Existentialism (over six sections)
- Honors Professional Ethics
- Special Topics: Skepticism
- Senior Seminars: Happiness: An Ancient Conception; Atheism and the Meaning of Life; Descartes
- Moral Issues (3 sections)

**Courses Taught (continued)**

Independent Study: Modern Philosophy Tutorial (5); Tools of the Trade (2); Feminism; Schopenhauer and The Meaning of Life; Women and Philosophy (team-taught)

Philosophy Honor's Thesis: Julian D'Offray

Philosophy Honor's Thesis: Merleau-Ponty

Learning Community: Philosophy and Theater

King's College. Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Department of Philosophy.

Fundamentals of Philosophy (7 sections)

Philosophy and Popular Culture: Movies and The Meaning of Life (3 sections)

Bioethics

Feminist Philosophy (team taught)

Siena Heights University. Adrian, Michigan. Department of Philosophy.

Introduction to Philosophy (28 sections)

Introduction to Logic

Introduction to Intellectual Inquiry

Introduction to Ethics (2 sections)

Philosophy of Person (4 sections)

Practical Wisdom

Animated Philosophy and Religion

Business Ethics (team taught)

Social Ethics (3 sections)

Ancient Philosophy (2 sections)

Modern Philosophy (2 sections)

Philosophy of Religion (2 sections)

Skepticism

Senior Thesis (2 sections)

Directed Study: History of Philosophy (6 sections); Ancient Philosophy

Senior Thesis: "Divine Attributes: Towards an Understanding of the Conflict Between Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom"; "Creation Story: Inferiority or Equality of Women?,"

Canisius College. Buffalo, New York. Department of Philosophy.

Topics in the History of Philosophy II: Descartes

Introduction to Philosophy (5 sections)

Honors Philosophy I (4 sections)

Modern Philosophy I

State University of New York College at Fredonia. Fredonia, New York. Department of Philosophy.

The Age of Reason; Philosophical Ideas

Wyoming Correctional Facility. New York State Prison System. Consortium of the Niagara Frontier.

Modern Philosophy

Attica Correctional Facility. New York State Prison System. Consortium of the Niagara Frontier.

Introduction to Philosophy

Niagara County Community College. Sandborn, New York. Department of Humanities.

Philosophical Thinking (7)

State University of New York at Buffalo. Buffalo, New York. Department of Philosophy.

Knowledge and Reality (2)

Introduction to Philosophy