

Calum McNamara

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PhilPeople

Scholar

ORCID

LinkedIn

Research Interests

Primary	Decision Theory, Epistemology, Philosophy of AI
Secondary	Ethics, Logic and Formal Methods, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Science

Employment

2025–	Indiana University, Bloomington Assistant Professor of Philosophy
2024–25	Yale University Postdoctoral Associate

Education

2024	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor PhD in Philosophy
2018	King's College London BA in Philosophy (First Class Honours)

Papers¹

ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN JOURNALS AND CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Forthcoming	"Only Causal Decision Theory Defers to Experts" <i>Journal of Philosophy</i>
	"Desire-as-Belief in Context" <i>Mind</i>
2026	"A Behavioural and Representational Evaluation of Goal-Directedness in Language Model Agents" (Raghu Arghal,* Phoebe Chen,* Niall Dalton,* Evgenii Kortukov,* Calum McNamara,* Angelos Nalmpantis,* Moksh Nirvaan,* Gabriele Sarti,* and Mario Giulianelli*) <i>Proceedings of the 43rd International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML)</i>

^{1,*} indicates first authorship.

2025	“Dutch Books, Indicative Conditionals, and Rational Updating” (Calum McNamara* and Snow Zhang*) <i>Proceedings of the 24th Amsterdam Colloquium</i>
2024	“Causal Decision Theory, Context, and Determinism” <i>Philosophy and Phenomenological Research</i>, vol. 109, no. 1, pp. 226–260
2022	“The Punctuated Equilibrium of Scientific Change: A Bayesian Network Model” (Patrick Grim,* Frank Seidl, Calum McNamara, Isabell N. Astor, and Caroline Diaso) <i>Synthese</i>, vol. 200, no. 4, no. 297 “Scientific Theories as Bayesian Nets: Structure and Evidence Sensitivity” (Patrick Grim,* Frank Seidl, Hinton Rago, Isabel Astor, Caroline Diaso, and Peter Ryner) <i>Philosophy of Science</i>, vol. 89, no. 1, pp. 42–69
	SELECTED WORK-IN-PROGRESS
Under Review	“Bringing About the Good, from Behind the Veil of Ignorance”, R&R, <i>Ethics</i> “Why (Not) Conditionalize?” (Calum McNamara* and Snow Zhang*) “Suppositional Decision Theories are Self-undermining” “Corrigibility Requires Causal Belief Revision” “Learning ‘If’”
In Preparation	“Accuracy and Epistemic Modalities” (Mikayla Kelley,* Calum McNamara,* Richard Roth,* and Snow Zhang*) “The Differences We Make” “Emergent Alignment and the Projectability of Ethical Personas” (Guillermo Del Pinal,* Youngchan Lee,* Calum McNamara, and Alejandro Pérez Carballo) “Everett Meets Jeffrey; Or: A New Proof of the Born Rule from Decision-theoretic Assumptions” (Conor Landon Sponsler,* Calum McNamara,* and Alexander Meehan*) “Deference, Decision, and Supposition” (Calum McNamara* and Snow Zhang*) “Representations of Goals in Language Model Agents” (Nial Dalton* and Calum McNamara*) “Dynamic Deliberation and Game-theoretic Solution Concepts” (Clara Bradley* and Calum McNamara*)

Selected Presentations²

TALKS

	“Why (Not) Conditionalize?” (Calum McNamara* and Snow Zhang*)
July 2026	Australian National University
Apr 2025	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (presented by Snow Zhang)
Dec 2024	The 24th Amsterdam Colloquium , University of Amsterdam*
Mar 2024	University of Maryland, College Park (presented by Snow Zhang)
Feb 2023	University of Texas at Austin [†]
	“A Behavioural and Representational Evaluation of Goal-Directedness in Language Model Agents” (Raghu Arghall, Phoebe Chen, Niall Dalton, Evgenii Kortukov, Calum McNamara, Angelos Nalmpantis, Moksh Nirvaan, Gabriele Sarti, and Mario Giulianelli)
Jul 2026	43rd International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML) *
Apr 2026	Agents in the Wild Workshop , International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR)*
Apr 2026	World Models Workshop , International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR)*
Mar 2026	Algorithmic Alignment Group, MIT (presented by Gabriele Sarti)
	“Bringing About the Good, from Behind the Veil of Ignorance”
Jun 2026	Formal Epistemology Workshop , University of Colorado, Boulder*
Nov 2025	University of Texas at Austin [†]
Oct 2025	Formal Approaches to Rationality and Meaning , University of Maryland, College Park*
	“Accuracy and Epistemic Modalities” (Mikayla Kelley,* Calum McNamara,* Richard Roth,* and Snow Zhang*)
May 2026	Epistemic Utility for Imprecise Probability Conference , University of Bristol [†]
Feb 2026	APA Central Division Meeting , Invited Symposium (presented by Snow Zhang) [†]
May 2025	Formal Epistemology Workshop , University of Iceland*
Apr 2025	Princeton University [†]
Dec 2023	Accuracy Workshop, University of Chicago [†]
	“What Can AI Teach Us About Natural Properties?”
Feb 2026	London School of Economics [†]
	“Suppositional Decision Theories are Self-undermining”
Jan 2026	APA Eastern Division Meeting , Colloquium*
Apr 2025	Richard Pettigrew’s Locke Lectures Tailgate, Northeastern University [†]
	“Causal Decision Theory and the Off-switch”
Oct 2025	Indiana Logic Seminar, Indiana University, Bloomington [†]
	“Only Causal Decision Theory Defers to Experts”
May 2025	Method, Theory, and Reality Workshop , University of Massachusetts, Amherst [†]
Apr 2025	APA Pacific Division Meeting , Symposium*
Jun 2024	Workshop on Decision, Desire, and Diffusion , University of California, Berkeley [†]

²★ indicates refereed; † indicates invited

Jan 2025	“Learning ‘If’” University of Toronto [†]
Dec 2024	Chicago Area Philosophical Exchange, University of Chicago [†]
Nov 2024	Duke-UNC Epistemology Conference [*]
May 2024	World Sequences Day Conference, University of Connecticut, Storrs [†]
May 2024	Workshop on Matthew Mandelkern’s <i>Bounded Meaning</i> , University of Massachusetts, Amherst [†]
Nov 2024	“Most Counterfactuals are Indeterminate” New York Philosophy of Language Workshop, New York University [†]
Mar 2024	Rationality and Reality Workshop, University of California, Berkeley [†]
Oct 2024	“Desire-as-Belief in Context” Columbia University [†]
Jan 2024	Indiana University, Bloomington [†]
Feb 2024	“Is Polarization Really Rational?” (Eduardo J. Martinez [*] and Calum McNamara [*]) APA Central Division Meeting, Colloquium [*]
Jun 2021	Michigan-MIT Social Philosophy Workshop, University of Michigan [*]
Jan 2023	“Counterfactuals in the Image of Chance” APA Eastern Division Meeting, Colloquium [*]
Apr 2022	“Humean Causation” UT Austin Graduate Philosophy Conference, University of Texas at Austin [*]
Feb 2022	“Causation, Determinism, and Decision-making” APA Central Division Meeting, Colloquium [*]
CONFERENCE COMMENTS	
Jan 2026	Branden Fitelson, “A Two-Dimensional Theory of Argument Strength—with Applications” Ranch Metaphysics Workshop
Mar 2025	Caleb Fawell, “Cautious Monotonicity: Not Cautious Enough?” APA Pacific Division Meeting, Colloquium
Jan 2025	Ginger Schultheis, “‘Might’ Counterfactuals” APA Eastern Division Meeting, Invited Symposium
Apr 2024	Commentator at Large Northeastern Epistemology Workshop
Mar 2024	Shamik Dasgupta, “Practical Nihilism” Michigan Spring Colloquium
Apr 2023	Jim Hutchison, “Moral Principles and Normative Generality” APA Pacific Division Meeting, Colloquium
	Jason Konek, “Aggregating Imprecise Probabilities Using Epistemic Utilities” with Elise Woodard

May 2019	Michigan Philosophy Alumni Conference
Jan 2019	Jennifer Carr, “Epistemic Observation, Pragmatic Intervention” Michigan Spring Colloquium

Grants, Honors, Awards, and Fellowships

2026-27	Coefficient Giving, AI Upskilling Grant (\$43,000 for partial teaching relief)
Summer 2026	Jesse Fine Fellowship (\$5,000 award to develop an AI ethics course at IU, Bloomington)
Summer 2026	IU Global Primary Partner Faculty Grant (to visit the Australian National University for one month; \$4,000)
2023-24	Cornwell Prize , University of Michigan (full year fellowship)
2022	Rackham One-term Dissertation Fellowships, University of Michigan, Fall and Spring semesters
Summer 2022	Rackham Research Grant , University of Michigan
2022	Faculty Prize for Excellence in Teaching, University of Michigan
Summer 2021	Weinberg Pre-doctoral Fellowship , University of Michigan
2018	Jelf Medal Nomination, King’s College London
2018	Arts and Humanities Research Council Studentship, for graduate study at Oxford (declined)
2018	King’s College London MPhilStud Bursary, for graduate study at King’s College London (declined)
2016	Bob Meyer Memorial Scholarship, for study at the Australian National University

Teaching

INDIANA

Spring 2027	Phil 262: The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (planned)
Fall 2026	Phil 562: Introduction to Bayesian Epistemology (graduate seminar, planned)
Spring 2026	Phil 105: Critical Reasoning
Spring 2026	Phil 360: Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind
Fall 2025	Phil 105: Critical Reasoning
Fall 2025	Phil 352: Logic and Philosophy

YALE

Spring 2025	Phil 210/Phil 510: Formal Philosophical Methods
Fall 2024	Phil 115: First-order Logic

MICHIGAN (LEAD INSTRUCTOR)

Summer 2023	Phil 303: Introduction to Symbolic Logic
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MICHIGAN (TEACHING ASSISTANT)

Spring 2023	Phil 345: Mind and Language, for James M. Joyce
Fall 2021	Phil 303: Introduction to Symbolic Logic, for Gordon Belot
Spring 2021	Phil 444: Groups and Choices, for Brian Weatherson (online due to COVID)
Fall 2020	Phil 340: Minds and Machines, for Eric Swanson (online due to COVID)
Spring 2020	Phil 250: Changing the World , for David Manley
Fall 2019	Phil 305: Introduction to Formal Philosophical Methods, for Brian Weatherson

SUPERVISION

Alexander Fiander, PhD Qualifying Committee

Daniel Gaines, PhD Qualifying Committee

EXTRAMURAL TEACHING

Summer 2026

Conditionals and Decision Theory, [European Summer School in Logic, Language, and Information](#), with Paolo Santorio

Service

OUTREACH AND PUBLIC FACING WORK

- 2026 Panel discussion on AI, Indiana University, Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Society
- 2025-26 [Introducing: Project Telos](#), blog post series outlining results from an AI project (co-authored with Mario Giulianelli and 7 others)
- 2026 [Invited public talk](#) on the theme of AI and human flourishing, Indiana University

REFEREING OF JOURNAL SUBMISSIONS

Acta Analytica; *Analysis*; *American Philosophical Quarterly* (4); *Asian Journal of Philosophy*; *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* (3); *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*; *Ergo* (2); *Erkenntnis*; *European Journal of Philosophy*; *Inquiry* (2); *Journal of Philosophy*; *Mind* (2); *Minds and Machines*; *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* (2); *Philosophical Studies* (4); *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (2); *Review of Symbolic Logic*; *Synthese* (3); *Theory and Decision*

REFEREING OF CONFERENCE SUBMISSIONS

Formal Approaches to Rationality and Meaning (FARM) Conference, 2025

REFEREING OF GRANT PROPOSALS, ETC.

Swiss National Science Foundation

ORGANIZING

- 2020-24 Michigan Philosophy Weekly Tea
- 2018-24 Michigan Epistemology Working Group
- 2018-19 [Michigan Philosophy Spring Colloquium](#)
- 2016-18 King's College London Formal Philosophy Reading Group

MENTORSHIP

- 2020-22 COMPASS Mentor
- 2022-24 Graduate Student Mentor (GSM), University of Michigan

OTHER SERVICE

- 2021-24 APA Session Chair: [Eastern](#), [Central](#), [Pacific](#)
- 2019 Editor, *Philosopher's Annual*
- 2018-19 Graduate Member, Admissions Committee, University of Michigan

2016–17 Co-author and tutor of a training course, “Reflexive strategies for better judgment and decision-making”, for the British Civil Service, with Julien Dutant and Alexandru Marcoci

Other Skills and Experience

ACADEMIC VISITS

Summer 2026 Visiting Researcher, Australian National University

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

Fall 2025 [Supervised Program in Alignment Research](#) (SPAR). Research Fellow on the Project “Towards a Science of AI Agency: Modeling, Measuring, and Intervening on Goal-Directed Behaviour in AI Systems”, led by Mario Giulianelli. Team leader for the Reverse Engineering Sub-team.

Aug 2022 European Summer School in Logic, Language, and Information (ESSLLI), National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland

Fall 2022 Visiting Graduate Student, New York University

Dec 2016 Logic Summer School, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia

PROGRAMMING

Python (PyTorch, NumPy, einops); TransformerLens