

# Calum McNamara

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## Research Interests

Primary      Decision Theory, Epistemology, Philosophy of AI

Secondary      Ethics, Logic and Formal Methods, Metaphysics, Philosophies of Language and Science

## Employment

2025–      **Indiana University, Bloomington**  
Assistant Professor of Philosophy  
Associate Faculty in the Cognitive Science Program

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)

## Papers

### PUBLISHED ARTICLES

2025      “[Dutch Books, Indicative Conditionals, and Rational Updating](#)”  
with Snow Zhang  
*Proceedings of the 24th Annual Amsterdam Colloquium*

2024      “[Causal Decision Theory, Context, and Determinism](#)”  
*Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 109, no. 1, pp. 226–260

2022

“The Punctuated Equilibrium of Scientific Change: A Bayesian Network Model”  
with Patrick Grim and 4 others  
*Synthese*, vol. 200, no. 4, no. 297

“Scientific Theories as Bayesian Nets: Structure and Evidence Sensitivity”  
with Patrick Grim and 5 others  
*Philosophy of Science*, vol. 89, no. 1, pp. 42-69

#### SELECTED WORK-IN-PROGRESS

Under Review

“Desire-as-Belief in Context”, R&R, *Mind*  
“Only Causal Decision Theory Defers to Experts”, R&R, *Journal of Philosophy*  
“Why (Not) Conditionalize?”  
with Snow Zhang  
“Suppositional Decision Theories are Self-undermining”  
“Causal Decision Theory and the Off-switch”  
“Learning ‘If’”

“Towards a Science of AI Agency: Modeling, Measuring, and Intervening on Goal-directed Behavior in AI Systems”  
with Mario Julianelli and 7 others

In Preparation

“Accuracy and Epistemic Modalities”  
with Mikayla Kelley, Richard Roth, and Snow Zhang  
“Bringing About the Good, from Behind the Veil of Ignorance”  
“Everett Meets Jeffrey; Or: A New Proof of the Born Rule from Decision-theoretic Assumptions”  
with Alexander Meehan  
“What Can AI Teach Us About Natural Properties?”

## Selected Presentations<sup>1</sup>

### TALKS

Feb 2026  
May 2025  
Apr 2025

“Accuracy and Epistemic Modalities”  
with Mikayla Kelley, Richard Roth, and Snow Zhang  
APA Central Division Meeting, Invited Symposium<sup>†</sup>  
[Formal Epistemology Workshop](#), University of Iceland, Reykjavik<sup>★</sup>  
Princeton University<sup>†</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>‘★’ indicates refereed; ‘†’ indicates invited

Dec 2023 Accuracy Workshop, University of Chicago<sup>†</sup>

Feb 2026 "What Can AI Teach Us About Natural Properties?"  
London School of Economics<sup>†</sup>

Nov 2025 "Bringing About the Good, from Behind the Veil of Ignorance"  
University of Texas at Austin<sup>†</sup>

Oct 2025 [Formal Approaches to Rationality and Meaning](#), University of Maryland, College Park<sup>\*</sup>

Jan 2026 "Suppositional Decision Theories are Self-undermining"  
APA Eastern Division Meeting, Baltimore<sup>\*</sup>

Apr 2025 Richard Pettigrew's Locke Lectures Tailgate, Northeastern University<sup>†</sup>

Oct 2025 "Causal Decision Theory and the Off-switch"  
Indiana Logic Seminar, Indiana University, Bloomington<sup>†</sup>

May 2025 "Only Causal Decision Theory Defers to Experts"  
[Method, Theory, and Reality Workshop](#), University of Massachusetts, Amherst<sup>†</sup>

Apr 2025 [APA Pacific Division Meeting, Symposium](#)<sup>\*</sup>

Jun 2024 [Workshop on Decision, Desire, and Diffusion](#), University of California, Berkeley<sup>†</sup>

Apr 2025 "Why (Not) Conditionalize?"  
with Snow Zhang  
MIT (presented by Snow Zhang)

Dec 2024 [The 24th Annual Amsterdam Colloquium](#), University of Amsterdam<sup>\*</sup>

Mar 2024 [University of Maryland, College Park](#) (presented by Snow Zhang)

Feb 2023 University of Texas at Austin<sup>†</sup>

Jan 2025 "Learning 'If'"  
University of Toronto<sup>†</sup>

Dec 2024 [Chicago Area Philosophical Exchange](#), University of Chicago<sup>†</sup>

Nov 2024 [Duke-UNC Epistemology Conference](#)<sup>\*</sup>

May 2024 [World Sequences Day Conference](#), University of Connecticut, Storrs<sup>†</sup>

May 2024 [Workshop on Matthew Mandelkern's \*Bounded Meaning\*](#), University of Massachusetts, Amherst<sup>†</sup>

Nov 2024 "Most Counterfactuals are Indeterminate"  
[New York Philosophy of Language Workshop](#), New York University<sup>†</sup>

Mar 2024 [Rationality and Reality Workshop](#), University of California, Berkeley<sup>†</sup>

Oct 2024 "Desire-as-Belief in Context"  
Columbia University<sup>†</sup>

Jan 2024 Indiana University, Bloomington<sup>†</sup>

Feb 2024 "Is Polarization Really Rational?"  
with Eduardo J. Martinez  
[APA Central Division Meeting, Colloquium](#)<sup>\*</sup>

Jun 2021 Michigan-MIT Social Philosophy Workshop, University of Michigan<sup>\*</sup>

Feb 2024 "Counterfactuals in the Image of Chance"

Jan 2023	<a href="#">APA Eastern Division Meeting, Colloquium*</a>
Apr 2022	“Humean Causation” <a href="#">UT Austin Graduate Philosophy Conference</a> , University of Texas at Austin*
Feb 2022	“Causation, Determinism, and Decision-making” <a href="#">APA Central Division Meeting, Colloquium*</a>

#### CONFERENCE COMMENTS

Jan 2026	Branden Fitelson, “A Two-Dimensional Theory of Argument Strength—with Applications” <a href="#">Ranch Metaphysics Workshop</a>
Mar 2025	Caleb Fawell, “Cautious Monotonicity: Not Cautious Enough?” <a href="#">APA Pacific Division Meeting, Colloquium</a>
Jan 2025	Ginger Schultheis, “‘Might’ Counterfactuals” <a href="#">APA Eastern Division Meeting, Invited Symposium</a>
Apr 2024	Commentator at Large <a href="#">Northeastern Epistemology Workshop</a>
Mar 2024	Shamik Dasgupta, “Practical Nihilism” <a href="#">Michigan Spring Colloquium</a>
Apr 2023	Jim Hutchison, “Moral Principles and Normative Generality” <a href="#">APA Pacific Division Meeting, Colloquium</a>
May 2019	Jason Konek, “Aggregating Imprecise Probabilities Using Epistemic Utilities” with Elise Woodard <a href="#">Michigan Philosophy Alumni Conference</a>
Jan 2019	Jennifer Carr, “Epistemic Observation, Pragmatic Intervention” <a href="#">Michigan Spring Colloquium</a>

## Awards and Fellowships

2023–24	<a href="#">Cornwell Prize</a> , University of Michigan (full year fellowship)
2022	Rackham One-term Dissertation Fellowships, University of Michigan, Fall and Spring semesters
Summer 2022	<a href="#">Rackham Research Grant</a> , University of Michigan
2022	Faculty Prize for Excellence in Teaching, University of Michigan
Summer 2021	<a href="#">Weinberg Pre-doctoral Fellowship</a> , 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 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

### 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

### EXTRAMURAL TEACHING

Summer 2026

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

## Service

### OUTREACH AND PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY

2026

Invited public talk on the theme of AI and human flourishing, Indiana University

#### REFEREEING OF JOURNAL SUBMISSIONS

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

#### REFEREEING OF CONFERENCE SUBMISSIONS

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

#### 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

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

PROGRAMMING

Python

Last updated: January 28, 2026