

# Philosophy Department Newsletter

*This is the second year of publication for the Philosophy Department Newsletter. We will be publishing periodically concerning items of interest to students of philosophy at Lakehead*

## Welcome Back from the Department of Philosophy!

The Department of Philosophy wishes everyone an enlightening and challenging academic new year for 2016/17.

We have timetabled an interesting array of courses for you including a brand new one:

Dr. Larivière's **Philosophy Research Methods**, scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 am to 11:30 am, this Fall.

A major change affecting everyone this year will be the *new Fall semester break* following Thanksgiving, October 10- 4. The University has introduced it on a trial basis, so let the powers that be know whether or not you find it worthwhile.



Fall leaves photo

### Special points of interest:

- New Fall Break in October
- Your Degree Audit - make it work for you
- Upcoming Morris Lecture of interest to all: *dogs can learn the names of hundreds of objects!*
- What Can You do with a Philosophy Degree

### Inside this issue:

Academic Counselling	2
Degree Audits	2
The Morris Lecture: looking at the moral behavior of Animals	2
Film and Contemporary Philosophy 3330 FA	3
Meet our Contract Lecturers	3
Philosophy Student Club - Join In!	4
Bursaries and financial aid - You may be eligible!!	4

## What Can You Do With a Philosophy Degree?



J. Scully photo

How about a career in medicine? Jon Scully graduated from Lakehead University with an HBA in Philosophy in 2006. Following graduation he worked for four and half years in brain injury rehabilitation/casework for Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario (BISNO). From there he moved to the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, where he has served as Research Ethics Officer for the past five and a half years. Jon will begin his study of medicine with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine this September. Congratulations, Jon!

... Or a career in university administration? Heather Murchison graduated from Lakehead University with an HBA in Philosophy in 1997. She went on to complete both a Masters in Public Administration at the University of Exeter and a PhD in Government Policy at the London School of Economics. She accepted the position of Vice-Provost (Institutional Planning and Analysis) at Lakehead University effective July 18. Best of luck in your new endeavor, Dr. Murchison!



H. Murchison photo



Dr. Jason Blahuta photo

## Academic Counselling

Dr. Blahuta will be your Academic Advisor for the Fall semester. It is a good idea to meet with him before classes start to review your course selection and postgraduate options.

Dr. Blahuta has his office on the third floor of the Ryan Building, Office 3009.



## Degree Audits **Important Notice!**

Returning students will have received a degree audit in June. These audits are generated by a software program that highlights the credits you obtained toward your degree and those that are still outstanding. The program works well for the most part, but you should know that it *does not work perfectly*. We suggest that you review your transcript, comparing it carefully with the requirements for your degree as set out in the University's Calendar.

If you think the audit did not count your credits accurately, see Dr. Blahuta and, if necessary, he can contact Enrolment Services to review the automated audit and confirm your credits.

*In particular, we have had some difficulty this year with students trying to register for Senior Seminar courses (PHIL 4811). The Senior Seminar is offered in a variety of sections with varying content and different instructors. Three sections of 4811 are required for the Honours Degree, but we encourage students to take as many as their interests and timetables allow. The University, however, has a regulation which prevents students from registering in the same course more than three times. The system has been reading different sections of 4811 as one and the same course, thus blocking registration for students who already have three 4811 courses on their transcript. If this happens to you, ... let us know and we will get you registered manually in the section of your choice.*

## Upcoming Philosophy Department Event and Past Spring Event

**Tuesday, November 15**, the Department will be hosting speaker Kristin Andrews from the Department of Philosophy, York University. She will be delivering this year's *Morris Lecture* on the moral behaviour of animals. For more information about our speaker, visit the link:

<http://kristin-andrews.weebly.com/>

On March 17, 2016 the Department hosted the **2016 Morris Lecture**. Our speaker was Professor Paul Colilli of Laurentian University. The title of his talk, "Giorgio Agamben and the Legitimacy of Angelology" enticed a sizable crowd (despite a snow storm) who came out to hear Professor Colilli's presentation. Agamben is a contemporary Italian philosopher whose work relates elements of early and late Christian mythology and symbology to contemporary global politics.

## The Morris Lecture: A History

Guest speakers are an important part of the life of a university and a vital source of intellectual enrichment for students and faculty alike. However, a guest lecture is a treat we enjoy all too rarely at Lakehead simply because Thunder Bay's geographical isolation makes it prohibitively expensive to bring in visiting lecturers. That is why we, in the Philosophy Department, have made every effort to maintain the **Morris Lecture Series**, which has brought distinguished speakers to our campus for over three decades.

The **Morris Lectures** are named for William S. Morris (1916-1983), a member of the Philosophy Department at Lakehead University who served from the founding years of philosophy at Lakehead until his retirement in 1982. He died the following year, and the Department established a speaker series in his honour, initially with contributions from members of the Department and the Morris family. In recent years, the **Morris Lecture** has been supported with financial help from the Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities, with our thanks. While Professor Morris is long gone, his scholarly work lives on. The PhD dissertation that he completed at the University of Chicago in 1955, *The Young Jonathan Edwards: A Reconstruction*, was published in 2005 (Eugene: Wipf & Stock).

## Philosophy Welcomes Our Contact Lecturers for Fall 2016

We would like to welcome back Christopher Wood, doctoral candidate at the University of Guelph. He has provided the Philosophy Department with quality online instruction since 2008.

This Fall he will be teaching online Philosophy 3514 Cyberethics, a course of interest to many disciplines.



Prof. Chris Wood photo

Miranda Niittynen is a doctoral candidate at the University of Western Ontario, Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research. Her dissertation, entitled "*Un/Dead Animal Art: Ethical Encounters with Rogue Taxidermy Sculpture*," focuses on the contemporary pop-surrealist art movement known as "*rogue taxidermy*" founded along the Minnesota border. Interested in topics such as alterity, ethics, and 'the animal question' in contemporary philosophy, her dissertation considers the ways in which alternative forms of taxidermy sculpture have the potential to produce ontological interruptions and disrupt normalized forms of violence inflicted on nonhuman animal bodies. Her research and publications examine unconventional and experimental style found in the arts, as she has written on topics such as animals in performance art, rogue taxidermy sculpture and drag performance in Canadian-Italian dance (co-authored with Dr. Clara Sacchetti-Dufresne). She is currently writing on an experimental film that reinterprets the footage of Thomas Edison's electrocution of circus elephant '*Topsy*' at Coney Island in 1903.



Prof. Miranda Niittynen photo

Yuri Forbes-Petrovich is a doctoral candidate at the University of Western Ontario, Center for the Study of Theory and Criticism. His dissertation entitled "*Given Nothing: The Problem of Religious Contingency in Post-Natural Philosophy*" enhances his current research interests. He has taught, published or presented on the areas and topics of: Continental Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion/Christianity, Greek Philosophy (Plato, Stoicism, Cynicism, Neoplatonism), Patristics, Love, Literature, Contemporary Political Theory and Application, Marxism, Ethics, Ecology, LGBTQ+ Issues, Psychoanalysis, Occult and Paranormal, and Existentialism.

He is a returning instructor to the Department, and will be teaching Philosophy 1118 Philosophy of the Occult and Paranormal, and Philosophy 2013 Environmental Philosophy.



Prof. Yuri Forbes-Petrovich photo

## Film and Contemporary Philosophy

This course will provide students a space to analyze and interpret traditional and experimental styles in film that can be used to further philosophical discussion. Course topics and themes include (but are not limited to) affect, existential angst, alienation, (inter-)subjectivity and the abject.

Coupled with the philosophical writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Gilles Deleuze, Julia Kristeva and Frantz Fanon (to name only a few), students will be asked to bridge the connection between film and philosophical thought

and to consider the possibility and limits of film to encapsulate questions concerning personal identity, recognition and difference.

*This course  
is being  
offered  
on campus  
by Professor  
Niittynen*

*Monday  
Evenings  
7:00 pm*





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### **What is Philosophy?**

**Philosophy is concerned with the most fundamental questions: "What is truth? What is knowledge? What is the good? What is justice? How should we live?" However, philosophy is not just a subject of study but a discipline involving the practical skills of thinking.**

### **Philosophy will Include:**

**study of assumptions and concepts in science and society  
examination and criticism of fundamental ideas  
critical and practical thinking**

**If you have news or information that you would like us to share in the newsletter or on our website, forward to [rmaundre@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:rmaundre@lakeheadu.ca)**

### **Visit our website**

**<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/philosophy>**

## **Lakehead University Philosophy Student Club**



The Philosophy Students' Club became active again with a renewed beginning in 2015 with 26 members – so look to get involved!

For information go to their Facebook page "Lakehead University Philosophy Society."



**... Bursaries are just another way that Lakehead University helps to support its students. All students are encouraged to apply for the 2016-17 Fall/Winter Bursary. The short, online application is available through your myInfo account (Student Tab > Financial Aid > Fall/Winter Bursary Application).**

**Successful applicants will receive funding in January to help with the cost of second term tuition. For more information and eligibility criteria, [please click here](#).**

**The deadline to apply is Saturday, Oct. 15, don't delay or you will miss out on this great opportunity.**

**If you have any questions, please contact Student Awards and Financial Aid at (807) 343-8206 or via email at [finaid@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:finaid@lakeheadu.ca). Please check out Lakehead's undergraduate in-course scholarships and awards, you can apply until Thursday, October 15; for more information, please contact Student Awards and Financial Aid at 807 343-8206.**