

KELLAN D. L. HEAD

[585]737.7424

khead@odu.edu

www.KellanDLHead.com

(as of: August 2026)

Areas of Specialization

Ethics (especially axiology, well-being), **Epistemology** (especially epistemic normativity)

Areas of Competence

Philosophy of Language, Logic, Media Ethics, Business Ethics

Academic Employment

Visiting Assistant Professor Fall 2026-
Old Dominion University, Norfolk VA
Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

Education

Syracuse University 2026
Ph.D. - Philosophy
Ph.D. Dissertation: 'An Epistemic Axiology'
Adviser: Hille Paakkunainen
Committee: Richard Feldman (Rochester), Catherine Z. Elgin (Harvard), Mark Heller

Brandeis University 2018
M.A. - Philosophy
Master's Thesis: 'Kripke on Speaker's Reference and Proper Names: An Explication and Defense'
Adviser: Eli Hirsch

University of Rochester 2012
B.A. - i) English; ii) Linguistics (w/ *Honors in Research*)
Honors in Research Thesis: 'The Binding Theory as an Initial Processing Constraint and Visual World Eye-tracking Data'
Adviser: Jeff Runner

Publications

2026 - 'Resonance, Alienation, and Cognitive Subjectivism about Well-being' - *The Journal of Ethics*

Papers - in progress and/or under review

A paper about sacrificing distinctly epistemic goods

A paper developing a subjectivist view of well-being that grounds welfare goods in our commitment-based acts of will

A paper developing an internalist-friendly view of pragmatic/moral encroachment in epistemology

A paper that argues against veritism, the idea that truth is the only fundamental epistemic value

A paper developing a nonconsequentialist view of prudential normativity

A paper about epistemic axiology that argues against what I call 'performance-first epistemology'

Refereed Presentations

'Nonconsequentialism about Prudential Normativity'	
(upcoming) at APA: Eastern - Colloquium	2027
'Radical Welfare Subjectivism'	
(upcoming) at Philadelphia Normativity Conference	2026
'Etiology and Epistemic Evaluation'	
poster at APA: Central - Poster Session	2026
'Moral Praiseworthiness and Epistemic Sacrifice'	
at APA: Eastern - Symposium	2026
poster at Rocky Mountain Ethics (RoME) congress	2025
'Lucky Doxastic Justification'	
at Workshop on Luck and Achievement, Simon Fraser University	2024
'Against Veritism'	
at APA: Central - Colloquium	2024
at 168th Meeting of the Creighton Club, NYS Philosophical Society	2023
(Co-winner of the Graduate Student Presentation Award)	
at Edgington Lectures Workshop, Birkbeck, University of London	2023
'Internalist Perspectives on Moral Encroachment'	
at APA: Eastern - Colloquium	2024
at Understanding Value Conference XI, University of Sheffield	2023
at Mark L. Shapiro Graduate Philosophy Conference, Brown University	2023
'Alienation, Idealization, and Judgment Subjectivism'	
at APA: Pacific - Colloquium	2023
'Sacrificing Epistemic Goods: A New Argument Against Moral Encroachment'	

poster at APA: Eastern - Poster Session	2023
at Responsibility for Belief Conference, University of Helsinki	2022
at Central States Philosophy Association Conference	2022
at Graduate Epistemology Conference, University of Rochester	2022
at Graduate Philosophy Society Conference, University of Iowa	2022
In-house Presentations	
'Radical Welfare Subjectivism'	2026
Well-being Working Group	
'Sacrifice and Epistemic Goods'	2025
Well-being Working Group	
'A Case Against Epistemic Etiological Restrictivism'	2025
Syracuse Faculty & Grad Talk Series	
'Cognitive Representation and Epistemic Teleology'	2024
Syracuse ABD Workshop	
'Pretty to Think So: Aesthetic Epistemic Norms'	2023
Syracuse Graduate Working Papers Conference	
'Vividness Dualism: A Dualist Account of Epistemic Value'	2023
Syracuse ABD Workshop	
'Alienation, Idealization, and Judgment Subjectivism'	2022
Well-being Working Group	
'Internalist Perspectives on Moral Encroachment'	2022
Syracuse ABD Workshop	
'The (In)Significance of Singular Thought'	2021
Syracuse Graduate Working Papers Conference	
'Understanding and Epistemic Value: Amending Elgin'	2020
Syracuse Graduate Working Papers Conference	
'Varieties of Speaker's Reference'	2018
Syracuse Graduate Working Papers Conference	
'Kripke and Speaker's Reference'	2017
Brandeis Graduate Philosophy Workshop	
'Personal Identity: Defending Lewis against Parfit'	2016
Brandeis Graduate Philosophy Workshop	

Papers and Presentations - Linguistics

Refereed Publications

'What Can Visual World Eye-tracking Tell Us About the Binding Theory?' (with Jeffrey T. Runner)
2014 - *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics* 10

Refereed Presentations

'What can visual world eye-tracking tell us about the binding theory?' 2013
(with Jeffrey T. Runner)
at *Colloque de Syntaxe et Sémantique à Paris*

'Assessing the on-line application of binding constraints without gender stereotype' (with Jeffrey T. Runner) poster at <i>CUNY Conference for Human Sentence Processing 26</i>	2013
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Awards

Syracuse University Humanities Dissertation Fellowship (highly selective, two-semester fellowship with full funding + additional research grant)	2025-26
Mary Hatch Marshall Essay Award (funded award from Syracuse University, <i>for 'Alienation and Cognitive Subjectivism about Well-being'</i>)	2025
Syracuse University Graduate Dean's Award for Excellence in Research	2024
Syracuse University Outstanding T.A. Award (<i>as instructor of record</i>)	2024
APA: Central Graduate Funding Award	2024, '26
APA: Eastern Graduate Funding Award	2023, '24, '26
Graduate Student Presentation Award (Creighton Club, NYS Philosophical Association, <i>for 'Against Veritism'</i>)	2023
Syracuse University Dissertation Summer Funding Fellowship	2023
Birkbeck, University of London Travel Grant	2023
APA: Pacific Graduate Funding Award	2023
University of Helsinki Travel Grant	2022
Syracuse University Pre-Dissertation Summer Funding Fellowship	2022
Syracuse University Philosophy Department Travel Grant	2022, '23, '24, '25, '26
Syracuse University Graduate Student Organization Travel Grant	2021, '22, '23, '24, '25, '26
Syracuse University Philosophy Department Summer Research Grant	2021
Brandeis University Graduate Merit Scholarship	2016, '17

Comments

<i>on</i> Dan Pallies and James Fanciullo's 'The Heterogeneity of Pleasure' <i>The Dorsey Workshop on Well-being: Rome</i>	2026
<i>selected to serve as</i> 'Commentator-at-large' <i>Inquiry Workshop at Brown University</i>	2024
<i>on</i> Cristina Ballarini's 'Uncertainty in Credence and Belief' <i>APA: Pacific - Colloquium</i>	2024
<i>on</i> Seungtaek Lee's 'Varieties of Referential Intentions' <i>Syracuse Graduate Philosophy Conference</i>	2024
<i>on</i> Brandon Williams' 'Choose Error Theory or Realism' <i>Central States Philosophy Association Conference</i>	2022
<i>on</i> Edvard Aviles Mesa's 'The Neurotic and the Dogmatist' <i>Syracuse Graduate Philosophy Conference</i>	2022
<i>on</i> Michael Sechman's 'Attitudes: States Not Traits' <i>APA: Central - Colloquium</i>	2022
<i>on</i> Huzeyfe Demirtas' 'Wrong, but Praiseworthy, Right, but Blameworthy'	2022

Syracuse Graduate ABD Workshop

Academic Service

President, Syracuse University Philosophy Graduate Student Organization	2023-24
Organizer, Syracuse University Graduate Working Papers Conference	2021-22, '22-23
Member, Excellence in Graduate Education Faculty Award Selection Committee, Syracuse University	2022
Instructor, Philosophy Lab <i>Philosophy Lab is an organization made up of members of the SU philosophy department that engages in instructional philosophy outreach to the local K-12 community in Syracuse, NY</i>	2021-22
Teaching Mentor, Syracuse University TA Orientation Program <i>The Teaching Mentor position is a selective, paid position that helps to facilitate, run, and organize the week-long summer All-University TA Orientation Program. Duties include: curriculum development, small-group mentoring, and instructional coaching</i>	2020, '21
Co-organizer, Syracuse University Graduate Philosophy Conference	2019-20
Chair 'The Epistemology of Attention: Norms, Modes, and Virtues' <i>APA Eastern</i> Anna Binkerhoof's 'Moral Testimony, Moral Understanding, and Prejudiced Beliefs' <i>Philadelphia Normativity Conference</i>	2025 2025

Collegiate Teaching Experience

as **Primary Instructor of Record**

at Old Dominion University

P303E Business Ethics	Summer 2026
P230E Introduction to Ethics	Fall 2026

at Syracuse University

P197 Human Nature	Summer '26
P192 Introduction to Moral Theory	Spring 2023, '24, '25
P251 Logic	Fall 2022, '23, '24
P293 Ethics and the Media Professions	Summer 2021, '24, '25
P107 Theories of Knowledge and Reality	Spring 2022
P109 (Honors) Introduction to Philosophy	Fall 2021

as **Teaching Assistant**

at Syracuse University

Ethics and the Media Professions	2018-21
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Theories of Knowledge and Reality	
Logic	
Human Nature	
Introduction to Moral Theory	
<i>at Brandeis University</i>	2016-17
Philosophy of Religion	
Critical Reading in the Humanities and Social Sciences	
<i>part of the Gateway Scholars Program designed for international, non-native speakers of English</i>	
Introduction to Philosophy	
Business Ethics	
<i>at Harvard University</i>	2017
Introduction to Philosophy	

Other Professional Experience

Phoenix House of New England RISE - Burlington, VT	2015-16
<i>Interim Supervisor, Lead Substance-abuse Counselor</i>	
<i>RISE is a full-residency substance-abuse recovery program for men supervised by the Vermont Department of Corrections</i>	
Teach For America - Henry Ford High School, Detroit, MI	2012-14
<i>Chemistry Teacher, Varsity Golf Coach (boys, girls), 12th Grade Teacher Leader</i>	
<i>Teach For America is a highly-selective, non-profit organization which recruits college graduates to serve as public high school teachers in severely disadvantaged communities</i>	

Graduate Coursework in Philosophy (* denotes audited course)

at the University of Rochester

Epistemology
 Epistemic Value* (Richard Feldman)

at Syracuse University

Ethics &c.
 Moral and Political Proseminar (David Sobel and Ben Bradley)
 The Metaphysics of Ethics (Ben Bradley and Kris McDaniel)
 Prudence (Ben Bradley)
 Society, Language, and Interpretation (*independent study with* Luvell Anderson)
 German Political Philosophy 1780-1830 (Frederick Beiser)

Epistemology
 Epistemology, Mind, and Metaphysics Proseminar (Kevan Edwards)
 Reasons For Belief (*independent study with* Hille Paakkunainen)
 Epistemic Consequentialism, Virtue Theory, and Deontology (Hille Paakkunainen)

Language

Logic and Language Proseminar (Michael Rieppel)
Opacity (Michael Rieppel)
Social Philosophy of Language (Luvell Anderson)
Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein* (Michael Rieppel)

Misc

History of Philosophy Proseminar (Kara Richardson)
Ontology: Ordinary Objects (Kris McDaniel)
Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (Frederick Beiser)
Methodology* (Janice Dowell)

at Brandeis University

Graduate Proseminar (Beri Marušić)
Graduate Seminar in Epistemology: Epistemology of Modality (Jennifer Marušić)
Graduate Seminar in Mind/CogSci: Origins of Objectivity (Jerry Samet)
Master's Project - Kripke: An Explication and Defense (Eli Hirsch)
Mathematical Logic (Jennifer Marušić)

References

Hille Paakkunainen

Professor, Syracuse University
hpaakkun {at} syr {dot} edu

Richard Feldman

Professor Emeritus, University of Rochester
richard {dot} feldman {at} rochester {dot} edu

Mark Heller

Professor, Syracuse University
heller {at} syr {dot} edu

Catherine Elgin

Professor, Harvard University
catherine {underscore} elgin {at} harvard {dot} edu