

Rachel K. Cooper

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Department of Philosophy
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EMPLOYMENT

California State University, San Marcos, Lecturer, Fall 2025 – present
University of Utah, Visiting Associate Instructor, Spring 2025
California State University, San Marcos, Lecturer, Fall 2024
University of California, Irvine, Mellon Faculty Fellow, 2023-2024

EDUCATION

University of California, Irvine—Ph.D., Philosophy, 2023

Dissertation: Social Kind*: Joint Intentional Mechanistic Kind
Committee: Annalisa Coliva (Chair), Katherine Ritchie, Margaret Gilbert

San Francisco State University—M.A., Philosophy, 2015

Thesis: On the Distinction Between Natural and Social Kinds
Committee: Ásta (Chair), Carlos Montemayor, David Landy

San Francisco State University—B.A., Philosophy, 2012

RESEARCH AREAS

Specialization—Metaphysics, Social Philosophy, Epistemology (especially Social Epistemology)
Competence—Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind, Ethics (especially Bioethics)

PUBLICATIONS

Cooper, R.K. (2024). Explaining Social Kinds: The Role of Covert Normativity. *Philosophical Studies*.

PRESENTATIONS (*Invited talks are indicated by starting with an asterisk)

Negative Social Kinds

Social Ontology, Jagiellonian University, July 2026

Reconciling Ideal and Nonideal Social Ontology

Social Ontology, Duke University, July 2024

***Reconciling Ideal and Nonideal Social Ontology**

Life in Groups, UCI, Winter 2024

Social Construction as Mechanistic Explanation

Social Ontology, Stockholm University, August 2023

***Social Kind*: Joint Intentional Mechanistic Kind**

Topics in the Philosophy of Rights Seminar, UCI, Spring 2023

Social Kind*: Joint Intentional Mechanistic Kind

Social Ontology, University of Vienna, August 2022

An Explanatory Critique of Positional Accounts of the Metaphysics of Social Categories

Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, April 2022

Plural Subjects and Social Kinds

Social Ontology, UC San Diego, August 2021

Social Kinds* and Social Groups

Re-evaluating Social Essences, Annual Meeting of the Canadian Metaphysics Collaborative, May 2021

Social Kinds and Social Groups

Social Ontology, University of Neuchâtel, July 2020

Why Individualism/Why Holism? (with Franz Altner)

OZSW Summer School on Public Philosophy and Social Ontology, University of Groningen, August 2019

On Grounding Social Phenomena

Social Ontology, Tampere University, August 2019

On the Distinction between Natural and Social Kinds

Social Ontology, Tufts University, August 2018

Thinking About Social Mechanisms

Formal Social Epistemology Workshop, Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science, UCI, Spring 2018

Social Kinds and Mimicked Dispositions

Berkeley Social Ontology Group, UC Berkeley, Fall 2015

COMMENTARIES

Commentator, Social and Emotional Perception, Denver, Central Division APA, Spring 2023

Commentator, Self and Knowledge, Vancouver, Pacific Division APA, Spring 2022

PROFESSIONAL AND EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE

Co-organizer, Life in Groups Conference, UCI, Winter 2024

DEI Committee, Philosophy Department, UCI, Fall 2023 – Spring 2024

Co-organizer, Identities and Epistemic Injustice Conference, UCI, Winter 2021

Assistant Editor, Feminist Philosophy, Phil Papers, Spring 2016 – present

Chair, Feminist Metaphysics and Epistemology, Vancouver, Pacific Division APA, Spring 2015

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Introduction to Teaching Online Using QLT (Quality Learning & Teaching) – Fall 2025

- Pedagogical Humanities Certificate Program, UCI, Fall 2021—an eight-workshop series co-sponsored by UCI's School of Humanities and the Division for Teaching Excellence and Innovation (DTEI).
- Professional Development Funding, Department of Philosophy, UCI, Fall 2021
- Travel Award, Department of Philosophy, UCI, Summer 2018
- Diversity Recruitment Fellowship Award, UCI, Fall 2017—The UC Irvine Diversity Recruitment Fellowship program is designed to supplement financial support packages of admitted doctoral and M.F.A. diversity students.
- Distinguished Achievement Award for Academic Excellence, SFSU, Spring 2015—Each year the university's six colleges select graduate students to receive the Graduate Award for Distinguished Achievement. The recipients are honored for their outstanding academic performance and service to the profession, department, and community.
- Master's Thesis Defense—Pass with Distinction, SFSU, Spring 2015

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer at California State University, San Marcos

- Critical Thinking, Spring 2026
- Critical Thinking, Spring 2026
- Critical Thinking, Spring 2026
- Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2026
- Bioethics, Spring 2026
- Critical Thinking, Fall 2025
- Critical Thinking, Fall 2025
- Critical Thinking, Fall 2025
- Bioethics, Fall 2025
- Bioethics, Fall 2025
- Critical Thinking, Fall 2024
- Critical Thinking, Fall 2024

Visiting Associate Instructor, University of Utah

- Ethics, Spring 2025
- Bioethics, Spring 2025
- Medical Humanities, Spring 2025

Mellon Faculty Fellow in the Humanities at UCI

- Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2024
- Argument & Research, Spring 2024
- Medical Humanities, Winter 2024
- Medical Ethics, Fall 2023

Instructor of Record at UCI

- Argument & Research, Spring 2023
- Argument & Research, Winter 2023
- Medical Ethics, Summer 2022
- Introduction to Philosophy (with Matt Dean), Summer 2020

Teaching Assistant at UCI

- Zina Giannopoulou, *The Gods*, Fall 2022
- Sven Bernecker, *Puzzles and Paradoxes*, Summer 2021
- Katherine Ritchie, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Spring 2021
- Sven Bernecker, *Technology and Society*, Winter 2021
- Marcello Fiocco, *Puzzles and Paradoxes*, Fall 2020
- Duncan Pritchard, *Introduction to Ethics*, Summer 2020
- Zina Giannopoulou, *Classical Mythology*, Spring 2020
- Andromache Karanika, *The Heroes*, Winter 2020
- Zina Giannopoulou, *The Gods*, Fall 2019
- Duncan Pritchard, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Summer 2019
- Sven Bernecker, *Puzzles and Paradoxes*, Summer 2019
- Duncan Pritchard, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Spring 2019
- Sven Bernecker, *Technology and Society*, Winter 2019
- Marcello Fiocco, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Fall 2018

Graduate Teaching Associate at San Francisco State University

- *Introduction to Philosophy*, Spring 2015
- *Introduction to Critical Thinking*, Fall 2014

Teaching Assistant at San Francisco State University

- Ásta, *Theory of Knowledge*, Spring 2015
- Ásta, *Metaphysics*, Fall 2014
- Justin Tiwald, *Chinese Philosophy and Religion*, Spring 2014

GRAD COURSES (*Audited courses are indicated by ending with an asterisk)

Graduate Courses taken at UCI

- *First Year Seminar*, Duncan Pritchard
- *Plato's Theaetetus*, Casey Perin
- *Rights and Demands*, Margaret Gilbert
- *Medical Epistemology*, Annalisa Coliva and Sven Bernecker*
- *Ethics of Technology and Climate Change*, Aaron James*
- *Scientific Explanation*, Lauren Ross
- *Modal Dispositionalism*, Marcello Fiocco
- *Binding Words*, Jeff Helmreich*
- *Ethics Naturalized*, Kyle Stanford
- *Set Theory*, Toby Meadows*
- *What is Thinking For*, Kyle Stanford*
- *Reduction, Emergence, and Fundamentality*, Marcello Fiocco*
- *Biology, Behavior, and Genes*, Lauren Ross*
- *Modal Logic*, Ermanno Bencivenga
- *Philosophy of Social Phenomena*, Margaret Gilbert*
- *Money*, Aaron James*
- *Evolution of the Signal*, Brian Skyrms
- *Social Hinge Epistemology*, Annalisa Coliva and Anna Boncompagni*
- *Plato's Gorgias*, Casey Perin*
- *Descartes, Malebranche and Leibniz*, Sean Greenberg*

- Nature of Social Kinds, Katherine Ritchie*
- Analytic Feminism, Allison Koslow*
- Kantian Aesthetics, Georges Van Den Abbeele

Graduate Courses taken at SFSU

- Metaphysics, Ásta
- Philosophy of Mind, Carlos Montemayor
- Seminar in Philosophical Writing, David Landy
- Teaching Philosophy, Shelley Wilcox
- Philosophy of Hegel, David Landy
- Confucianism and Buddhism, Justin Tiwald
- Essential Indexical Information, Carlos Montemayor
- Social Ontology, Ásta
- Virtue Epistemology, Carlos Montemayor
- Directed Reading of Fundamental Philosophical Texts
- Master's Thesis

MEMBERSHIP

International Social Ontology Society (2017-present)
 Mentoring Women and Marginalized Groups, UCI (2020-2024)
 SoCal Metaphysics Network (2019-2024)
 Hypatia, UCI (2017-2024)
 Bay Area Feminism and Philosophy Workshop (2013-2015)
 Berkeley Social Ontology Group (2013-2015)
 Bay Area Philosophers of Science (2013-2015)

REFERENCE LIST

Annalisa Coliva (Supervisor)
 Professor of Philosophy
 University of California, Irvine
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 Professor of Philosophy
 Duke University
 asta.asta@duke.edu

Margaret Gilbert
 Distinguished Professor of Philosophy
 University of California, Irvine
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Katherine Ritchie
 Associate Professor of Philosophy
 University of California, Irvine
 ritchiek@uci.edu

Sven Bernecker (Teaching Reference)
Professor of Philosophy
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Jessica Decker (Teaching Reference)
Professor of Philosophy
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