

# DREW CHASTAIN

Visiting Assistant Professor  
Department of Philosophy  
Loyola University New Orleans  
6363 St. Charles Ave. Box 107  
New Orleans, LA 70118

chastain@loyno.edu  
drew\_chastain@hotmail.com  
504.491.8673

---

## EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Philosophy, 2003  
Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana  
Dissertation: "Interpreting Metaphor" (Award of Degree: August 13, 2003;  
Committee: Forbes, Brower, Lodge)
- M.A. Philosophy, 1999  
Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana
- B.A. Philosophy, with minor in Anthropology, 1996  
University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida  
Thesis: "A Challenge for Instrumental Theories of Human Ends"

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

**Loyola University**, New Orleans, Louisiana (2011-present), Visiting Assistant Professor

**Xavier University**, New Orleans, Louisiana (2007-2010), Assistant Professor

**Tulane University**, New Orleans, Louisiana (2004-2007), Visiting Assistant Professor, Adjunct

## AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Philosophy of Spirituality, Meaning in Life, Humor Theory, Value Theory

## AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Philosophy of Religion	Indigenous Philosophies	Applied Ethics
Biomedical Ethics	Race & Identity Politics	Aesthetics
Epistemology	History of Modern Philosophy	Political Philosophy
Philosophy of Language	Continental Philosophy	Metaphysics
Cognitive Science	Analytic Philosophy	Ancient Philosophy

## PUBLICATIONS

2025. "Faith, Meaning, and Spirituality without Religion." In *Mind Over Matter: Philosophical Essays on Faith, Self-Confidence, and Achievement*, eds. Rod Nicholls & Heather Salazar (Leiden: Brill | Rodopi). 46-73.

2025. "Rebelling or Revelling?: Humor as a Sisyphean Task in *Mystery Science Theater 3000*." *Philosophy of Film: Blog of the American Philosophical Association*, ed. Sara Bizarro. <https://blog.apaonline.org/2025/02/27/rebelling-or-revelling-humor-as-a-sisyphean-task-in-mystery-science-theater-3000-part-1/>

2024. "'I'm Only Human': A Self-Referential Sense of Humor and Meaningful Living." *The Philosophy of Humor Yearbook*. 5(1). 193-213.

2022. "Meaning" (co-authored with Michael Hauskeller). *The Things That Really Matter: Philosophical Conversations on the Cornerstones of Life*, ed. Michael Hauskeller. London: UCL Press. 7-26.

2022. "Sacredness" (co-authored with Michael Hauskeller). *The Things That Really Matter: Philosophical Conversations on the Cornerstones of Life*, ed. Michael Hauskeller. London: UCL Press. 269-289.

2022. "Sisko's Conversion Experience and the Secularism of William James: Exploring Faith, Religion, and the Visions of the Prophets." *To Boldly Stay: Essays on Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. Eds. Sherry Ginn and Michael G. Cornelius. McFarland & Company, Inc. 151-164.

2021. "Desirability without Desire: Life Extension, Boredom & Spiritual Experience." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement*. 90. 167-191.

2021. "Deep Personal Meaning: A Subjective Approach to Meaning in Life." *The Journal of Philosophy of Life*. 11 (1). 1-23.

2019. "Can Life be Meaningful without Free Will?" *Philosophia*. 47 (4). 1069-1086.

2018. "Liberating Spirit from Santayana's Spectatorial Spirituality." *Overheard in Seville: Bulletin of the Santayana Society*. No. 36. Fall. 99-114.

2018. "Becoming a Hollow Bone: Lakota Respect for the Sacred." *The Philosophy of Spirituality: Analytic, Continental and Multicultural Approaches to a New Field of Philosophy*. Eds. Rod Nicholls & Heather Salazar. Netherlands: Brill | Rodopi. 164-188.

2017. "Gifts Without Givers: Secular Spirituality and Metaphorical Cognition." *Sophia*. 56 (4): 631-647.

### **PUBLISHED BOOK REVIEWS**

2018. "Leaving Well Enough Alone: A Review of Michael Hauskeller's *Better Humans?, Sex and the Posthuman Condition*, and *Mythologies of Transhumanism*." *Ethical Perspectives*. 25 (4). 795-806. (6,000 word book review, with author's reply)

2014. *Money for Everyone: Why We Need a Citizen's Income*. *Basic Income Studies*. 9 (1-2): 137-140.

### **IN PREPARATION**

"Sacred Clowns, Humor and Secular Society" (Under Review)

"Are some things more sacred than others?" (Under Review)

"Performing Absurdity"

"Mysticism, Positive Absurdity, and Meaning in Life"

"Existential Dilemmas and Existential Residue"

"Absurd Art and Meaningful Living"

### **UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS**

2025 "Absurd Art and Meaningful Living," 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Philosophy and Meaning in Life, Ottawa, Canada, Jun 25-27

### **PREVIOUS PRESENTATIONS**

2025 "Existential Dilemmas and Existential Residue," American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, International Association for Philosophy of Meaning in Life, online, Feb 20-22, Feb 27-Mar 1 (Invited)

2025 “Mystical Experience, Positive Absurdity and Meaning in Life,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, Society for the Phenomenology of Religious Experience (SoPHeRE), online, Feb 20-22, Feb 27-Mar 1

2024 “Performing Absurdity, and Play and Humor,” 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Lighthearted Philosophers’ Society, Melbourne, FL, Nov 8-9

2024 “Performing Absurdity,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, International Association for Philosophy of Meaning in Life, New Orleans, LA, Feb 21-24 (Invited)

2024 “Self-Referential Humor, Perfectionism, and Meaningful Living,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, International Association of the Philosophy of Humor, New Orleans, LA, Feb 21-24

2023 “‘I’m Only Human’: A Self-Referential Sense of Humor and Meaningful Living,” 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Lighthearted Philosophers’ Society, Whitefish, MT, Nov 10-11

2023 “Humor, Absurdity and Meaningful Living,” 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Philosophy and the Meaning of Life, Tohoku University, Japan, Jun 28-30

2023 “Humor and the Good-Enough Life,” The Good-Enough Life: Mississippi Philosophical Association Annual Meeting, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, Mar 24-25

2022 “Sacred Clowns and the Lighter Side of the Sacred,” 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lighthearted Philosophers’ Conference, Greensboro, NC, Oct 7-8

2022 “Destiny Frees the Will: Divination, Free Will, & Spirituality,” Beyond Free Will: Variety in Understanding of Choice, Luck, and Necessity, Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania, Jun 21

2022 “What’s Sacred to a Sacred Clown?: Distinguishing the Moral Sacred and the Mystic Sacred,” Princeton Project in Philosophy and Religion: Second Philosophy of Religion Incubator, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, May 27

2022 “Wholeheartedness within Ambivalence toward Life,” Fourth Annual Conference on Philosophy and Meaning in Life, University of Pretoria, South Africa, Jan 18

2022 “Just As I Am: The Spiritual Significance of Being Forgiven,” Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Towards an Exit From Shared Suffering, a panel hosted by the Society for the Phenomenology of Religious Experience (SoPHeRE) at the

Eastern Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Baltimore, MD, Jan 14

2021 "Desirability without Desire: Life Extension, Boredom & Spiritual Experience," Meaning in Life and the Knowledge of Death, The Royal Institute of Philosophy Annual Conference. University of Liverpool. July 13-15 (invited)

2021 "Faith, Meaning and Spirituality without Religion: Critiquing Robert Solomon and Leo Tolstoy," Society for the Phenomenology of Religious Experience Spirituality and Religion. 2021 APA Central Division Meeting. Feb 25

2020 "Deep Personal Meaning: A Subjective Approach to Meaning in Life," The Third International Conference on Philosophy and Meaning in Life, Birmingham, UK, July 21-23 (online owing to pandemic)

2020 "Making Room for Personal Meaning," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Memphis, TN, Mar 20-21 (canceled owing to pandemic)

2019 "Learning from Indigenous Peoples: Why Indigenous Studies?" *The Loyola Office of Diversity and Inclusion Seminar Series: "Encountering Heritage and History,"* New Orleans, LA, Nov 15 (invited)

2019 "The Normativity of Spiritual Experience", The Religious Experience & Description Conference, Valparaiso, IN, Oct 10-12

2019 "The Nonreligious Normativity of the Sacred", Philosophy, Politics, Anthropology and Allied Disciplines, Amsterdam, Netherlands, May 15-17

2019 "The Sacred & Morality: Human Life & the Earth," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Memphis, TN, Mar 22-23

2018 "This Magic Moment: The Experiential Source of Spiritual Normativity." 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society, Pensacola, FL, Sep 28-29

2018 "Spiritual Reasons as Public Reasons," Anthrosophia Conference; & Philosophy, Politics & Economics Society, both conferences in New Orleans, LA, March

2018 "Liberating Santayana's Spirit: Naturalized Spirituality without Santayana's Intellectualism," Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, 2018 APA Eastern Division Meeting, Savannah, GA, January 3

2017 "Repetition, Boredom and the Sacred," Alabama Philosophical Society, Pensacola, FL, September 29-30

2017 “Becoming a Hollow Bone: How Lakota Respect for the Sacred Fosters Morality and Meaning in Life,” Anthrosophia, Loyola University, New Orleans, LA, March 8-11

2017 “The Meaningfulness of Attachment,” Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, March 31–April 1.

2016 “Can Trivial or Immoral Activities Make Life More Meaningful?: What’s Missing in Susan Wolf’s Approach to Life Meaning,” Long Island Philosophical Society, Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY, April 9; and Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, February 19-20

2015 “Internal Meaning and Social Theory,” Articulating Political Philosophy and Anthropological Theory, Method, and Evidence, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, December

2015 “Gifts without Givers: Metaphorical Gift Language and Secular Spirituality,” Mississippi Philosophical Association, Millsaps College, Jackson, MS, March; and Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, March

2008 “Using a Course Portfolio to Measure and Improve Student Learning,” Defining and Promoting Student Success Conference, hosted by the Faculty Resource Network, San Francisco, November, co-presented with Dr. Paul Schafer

2006 “‘Thought Work’ as Philosophical Practice in the Classroom,” The 8th International Conference of Philosophical Practice, Seville, Spain, April

2004 “The New Orleans Lyceum,” International Conference of Philosophical Practice, Copenhagen, Denmark, August, co-presented with David O’Donaghue, Director of The Lyceum

### **COMMENTARY**

2024 Reply to George Kassimis’ “Trust and Comedy: Unguarded Encounters,” Lighthearted Philosophers’ Society, Melbourne, FL, November

2019 Reply to Daniel Miller’s “Can Morally Ignorant Agents Care Enough?”, Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, March

2017 Reply to Jack Kwong’s “What is Hope?”, Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, March-April

2016 Reply to Douglas Henry’s “The Real Euthyphro Problem,” Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, February

2015 Reply to Heather Wilburn's "Experience and Contradiction: Thinking the Other of Damaged Life," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, March

### **CONFERENCE/SEMINAR PARTICIPATION**

2022 Book Launch: *The Things That Really Matter: Philosophical Conversations on the Cornerstones of Life*, University of Liverpool, UK, Jun 1

2018 "The Nature of Spirituality: Santayana and Beyond," George Santayana Society, Online Seminar, Feb 16

### **PEER REVIEWS FOR JOURNALS & PUBLISHERS**

2024 For *Philosophical Quarterly*

2024 For *Journal of Ethics*

2024 For *Routledge*

2023 For *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*

2023 For *The Philosophical Forum*

2023 For *The Journal of Human Values*

2022 For *The European Journal of Political Theory*

2022 For *Ethical Perspectives*

### **OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

2021 Organized Philosophy Department Research Group, Loyola University, 2015-2021

2019 Co-organizer of the 2019 Philosophy, Politics & Anthropology Conference, Amsterdam

2018 Co-organizer of the 2018 Anthrosophia Conference, New Orleans, LA

2017 Co-organizer of the 2018 Anthrosophia Conference, New Orleans, LA

2016 A member of the steering committee for the 2017 Anthrosophia Conference, New Orleans, LA

### **GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS**

2024 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "Performing Absurdity, and Play and Humor," 2024-2025, \$1.4K awarded for conference travel

2024 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "Performing Absurdity," 2023-2024, \$372 awarded for conference participation

2023 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "I'm Only Human: A Self-Referential Sense of Humor and Meaningful Living," 2023-2024, \$1.5K awarded for conference travel

2023 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "Humor and the Good-Enough Life," 2022-2023, \$1.04K awarded for conference travel

2022 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "Sacred Clowns and the Lighter Side of the Sacred," 2022-2023, \$1.2K awarded for conference travel

2022 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "Just as I am: The Spiritual Significance of Being Forgiven," 2021-2022, \$100 awarded for online conference registration

2021 Nominated for Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award, 2020-2021

2020 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "Deep Personal Meaning," 2019-2020, \$400 awarded for conference travel (not used owing to the pandemic)

2019 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "The Normativity of Spiritual Experience," 2019-2020, \$1.2K awarded for conference travel

2019 Loyola Carter Fellowship, "Morality & the Sacred: Human Life & the Earth," 2018-2019, \$1K awarded for conference travel

2010 Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars (FaCTS) grant funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (for infusion of internationalization themes and service-learning in Health Ethics), Xavier University, New Orleans, LA 2009-2010

### **RECENTLY DEVELOPED COURSES**

2024 (Fall) Meaning in Life (honors)  
2023 (Fall) Philosophy of Humor (honors)  
2019 (Fall) Indigenous Philosophies  
2018 (Fall) The Meaning of Life  
2017 (Fall) Aesthetics  
2017 (Spr) The Self & the Sacred

### **COURSES TAUGHT**

**Loyola University**, New Orleans, Louisiana (2011-present)

Meaning in Life (Honors), 2 sections (2024)  
Philosophy of Humor (Honors), 2 sections (2023)  
Indigenous Philosophies, 2 sections (2019)  
The Meaning of Life, 2 sections (2018)  
Aesthetics, 10 sections (2017, 2020–2022, 2024)  
Self & the Sacred, 6 sections (2017, 2022, 2023)



Making Moral Decisions, 33 sections (2012–2016, 2018–2022, 2024)  
Philosophy of the Human Person, 36 sections (2013–2024)  
Introduction to Philosophy, 4 sections (2011, 2012, 2013)

**Xavier University**, New Orleans, Louisiana (2007-2010)

Health Ethics, 19 sections (2007, 2008, 2010)  
Problems in Philosophy, 7 sections (2007, 2008, 2010)  
African-American Philosophy, 1 section (2009)  
Great Books: Philosophy of Spirituality, 1 section (2009)

**Tulane University**, New Orleans, Louisiana (2004-2007)

Modern Philosophy, 4 sections (2004, 2005)  
Philosophies of Self, 7 sections (1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007)  
Introduction to Philosophy, 5 sections (2000, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2012)  
Ethics, 3 sections (2006)  
Philosophy of Art, 1 section (2007)  
Philosophy of Film, 1 section (2007)

**The New Orleans Lyceum**, New Orleans, Louisiana

Baseball Ethics: You Make the Call!, 1 section (2005)  
Introduction to Metaphor in Language, Art, and Culture, 1 section (2004)

**Rollins College**, Winter Park, Florida

Philosophy of Art, 1 section (2006)

**FELLOWSHIPS**

2018 Carter Fellowship, Loyola University, 2018-2024  
2001 Freie Universität Exchange Fellowship, Berlin, 2000-2001  
2000 Tulane Graduate Fellowship, 1997-2000

**GRADUATE QUALIFYING PAPERS**

“Hidden Truths: Interpreting Metaphorical Statements Truth-Conditionally,” 1999  
(Committee: Forbes, Brower)

“Describing Music Metaphorically,” 1998 (Committee: Zimmerman, Glenn)

**GRADUATE LEVEL CLASSES TAKEN**

Philosophy of Language (Forbes)	Plato (Burger)
Philosophy and Gender (Zimmerman)	Heidegger (Zimmerman)

Advanced Symbolic Logic (Lee)  
Mathematical Logic (Forbes)  
Metaphysics of Modality (Forbes)  
Philosophy of Language (Brower)  
Cognitive Science (Bogdan)  
Philosophy of Law (Mack)

Aristotle (Burger)  
Kant (Glenn)  
Kierkegaard (Glenn)  
Epistemology (Brower)  
Rationalism (Lodge)

### **NEW ORLEANS COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**The New Orleans Lyceum**, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2003-2005  
Administrator and Facilitator. A leader in local initiative for "Building Communities of Inquiry."

**ERACE**, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2004-2005  
Facilitator for discussion groups, which are free and open to the public.

### **REFERENCES**

Karl Widerquist  
Georgetown University  
School of Foreign Service  
Education City  
PO Box 23689  
Doha, Qatar  
Karl@Widerquist.com  
+974 44578384

Jason Berntsen  
Xavier University  
1 Drexel Drive  
New Orleans, LA 70125  
jberntse@xula.edu  
504.520.7624

Bruce Brower  
Tulane University  
Chairperson  
6823 St. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
bbrower@tulane.edu  
504.862.3383

### **PLACEMENT CREDENTIALS**

Available from  
Department of Philosophy  
105 Newcomb Hall, Tulane University  
6823 St. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70118-5698