

Travis McKenna

(+1) 412-641-0996 | travis.mckenna@pitt.edu | <https://www.travismckenna.com>

AOS Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Physics, Metaphysics

AOC Philosophy of Mathematics, Philosophy of Language

Employment **Ahmanson Postdoctoral Instructor in Philosophy of Science** 2024 – 2025
California Institute of Technology
Division of Humanities and Social Sciences

Education **University of Pittsburgh** 2018 – 2024
PhD in Philosophy
Dissertation: Laws of Nature and their Supporting Casts
Committee: Bob Batterman (co-chair), Mark Wilson (co-chair), David Wallace, Erica Shumener, Gordon Belot.

University of Sydney 2014 – 2017
BSci (Honours) in Mathematics and Philosophy

University of Sydney 2008 – 2011
BA (Honours) in Ancient History and Modern Languages

Publications **Laws and their Supporting Casts**
The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science, forthcoming.

Structure and Applied Mathematics
Synthese, 200(5):1–31, 2022.

Lange on Minimal Model Explanations: A Defense of Batterman and Rice
Philosophy of Science, 88(4):731–741, 2021.

In Progress * = draft available, † = under review

The Different Explanatory Roles of Scientific Laws*†

Laws, Predictions, and Maxwell's Equations*

What is an Instance of a Law of Nature?*

Adequacy-for-Purpose in Minimal Models*

Fundamental Laws and Scientific Methodology (with Gabrielle Kerbel)*

Minimalism about Laws (with Tyler Hildebrand)*

Scale, Data, and the Application of Mathematics

Talks * = invited

The Coordinating Role of Laws in Empirical Science

– *April 2024, Workshop on Method, Theory, and Reality, UMass, Amherst.

Fundamental Law and the Methodology of Science (with Gabrielle Kerbel)

– February 2024, American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting.

– August 2023, Society for the Metaphysics of Science Conference

What is an ‘instance’ of Newton’s second law?

– September 2022, Conceptual Innovation in Classical Mechanics, University of Seville.

Laws of Nature and their Supporting Casts

– July 2022, Summer School on Laws and Chances, Central European University.

Contextualism and Kripke’s Puzzle About Belief

– July 2019, Australasian Association of Philosophy Conference, University of Adelaide.

Comments Ulrich Meyer, “Best Systems in Lawless Worlds” August 2023
Society for the Metaphysics of Science Conference, Dalhousie University

Awards Wentworth Medal (University of Sydney) 2017
Australasian Association of Philosophy Bursary 2017
Honours Scholarship (University of Sydney) 2017
Norbert Quirk Mathematical Essay Prize (University of Sydney) 2016
GS Caird Scholarship for Philosophy (University of Sydney) 2015
Faculty of Science Summer Scholarship (University of Sydney) 2014
Dr GAM Heydon Prize in the Philosophy of Science (University of Sydney) 2014
Classical Rome Summer Scholarship (University of Sydney) 2011
Australasian Society for Classical Studies Undergraduate Essay Prize 2010

Teaching PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR
Introduction to Philosophy of Science Fall 2024
California Institute of Technology
Introduction to Bioethics Fall 2023
University of Pittsburgh
Introduction to Ethics Summer 2022
University of Pittsburgh

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Philosophy of Mind Spring 2021
Rachael Driver, University of Pittsburgh.

Concepts of Human Nature Fall 2020
Greg Strom, University of Pittsburgh.

Introduction to Ethics Spring 2020
Nandi Theunissen, University of Pittsburgh.

Introduction to Logic Fall 2019
Dmitri Gallow, University of Pittsburgh.

Philosophy of Law Fall 2017
Lukas Opacic, University of Sydney.

Service Reviewer for *Philosophy of Science*, *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, *European Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, *Theoria*, and *Topoi*.

Undergraduate Philosophy Mentor 2019 – 2022

Graduate Student Representative to the Faculty 2020 – 2022

Member of the Climate and Liaison Committee 2020 – 2022

Member of the Student-Faculty Colloquium Organising Committee 2020 – 2024

Member of Metaphysics and Epistemology Search Committee 2022 – 2023

Chair of the Pitt-CMU Graduate Conference Committee 2022 – 2024

References

Robert Batterman

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy
University of Pittsburgh
rbatterm@pitt.edu

Mark Wilson

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy
University of Pittsburgh
mawilson@pitt.edu

David Wallace

W.A. Mellon Professor of Philosophy of Science
University of Pittsburgh
david.wallace@pitt.edu

Gordon Belot

Lawrence Sklar Collegiate Professor of Philosophy
University of Michigan
belot@umich.edu

Erica Shumener

Assistant Professor of Philosophy
Syracuse University
eshumene@syr.edu

Porter Williams (Teaching)

Assistant Professor of Philosophy
University of Pittsburgh
pdw27@pitt.edu

Updated April 11, 2024