

# Frank Cabrera

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## **Education**

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University of Wisconsin-Madison	
Ph.D. in Philosophy	2018
M.A. in Philosophy	2014
Muhlenberg College	
B.A. in Philosophy and in Spanish	2012
Universidad Nacional de Córdoba	
<i>Study Abroad</i>	

## **Academic Appointments**

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Visiting Assistant Professor, Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Studies Department	2024-
University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, AR	
Instructor, Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Studies Department	2023-4
University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, AR	
Assistant Professor, Humanities, Social Science and Communication Department	2019-22
Milwaukee School of Engineering, Milwaukee, WI	
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy	2018-19
Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS	
Lecturer, Department of Philosophy	2015-17
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI	

## **Areas of Specialization**

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Philosophy of Science, Applied Ethics (including Tech Ethics), Epistemology (formal and traditional)

## **Areas of Competence**

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Metaphysics, Normative Ethics, Ancient Greek & Roman Philosophy

## **Dissertation**

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“Inference to the Best Explanation, Bayesianism, and the Context of Pursuit”

Committee: Elliott Sober (Chair), Dan Hausman, Mike Titelbaum

## **Publications**

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Forthcoming, “On the Synthesis of Historical Linguistics and Cognate Disciplines” in *The Bloomsbury Handbook for Philosophy of Big History*

2024. “Modeling Action: Recasting the Causal Theory” (with Megan Fritts). *Analytic Philosophy*.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/phib.12352>

2022. “A Rawlsian Solution to the New Demarcation Problem,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 52(8): 810-827.

2022. “Inference to the Best Explanation: An Overview.” In: Magnani, L. (eds) *Handbook of Abductive Cognition*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68436-5\\_77-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68436-5_77-1)

2022. “Fake News and Epistemic Vice: Combating a Uniquely Noxious Market” (with Megan Fritts). *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 8(3): 454 – 475.

2022. “Online Misinformation and ‘Phantom Patterns’: Epistemic Exploitation in the Era of Big Data” (with Megan Fritts). *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 60(1): 57-87.

2021. “AI Recruitment Algorithms and the Dehumanization Problem” (with Megan Fritts). *Ethics and Information Technology*, 23: 791–801.

2021. “Is Epistemic Anxiety an Intellectual Virtue?”

*Synthese*, 199: 13471–13495.

2021. “String Theory, Non-Empirical Theory Assessment, and the Context of Pursuit”

*Synthese*, 198: 3671–3699.

2021. “Second Philosophy and Testimonial Reliability: Philosophy of Science for STEM Students,” *European Journal for Philosophy of Science*, 11(67): 1-13.

2021. “The Fate of Explanatory Reasoning in the Age of Big Data.”

*Philosophy & Technology*, 34 (4): 645-665.

2020. “Evidence and Explanation in Cicero’s *On Divination*.”

*Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A*, 82: 34–43.

2020. “Does IBE Require a ‘Model’ of Explanation?”  
*The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 71(2): 727–750.
2020. “Critical Notice: Kevin McCain and Ted Poston’s *Best Explanations*”  
*International Journal for the Study of Skepticism*, 10(2): 157–166.
2017. “Can there be a Bayesian Explanationism? On the Prospects of a Productive Partnership.”  
*Synthese* 194(4): 1245–1272.
2017. “Cladistic Parsimony, Historical Linguistics, and Cultural Phylogenetics.”  
*Mind & Language* 32(1): 65–100.

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### **Book Reviews**

2021. “Correlation Isn’t Good Enough: Causal Explanation and Big Data.” [Review of *The Phantom Pattern Problem: The Mirage of Big Data* (Oxford University Press)] *Metascience*, 1–4

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### **Works in Progress**

“William Herschel’s Defense of Speculative Inquiry” (under revise and resubmit)

“Scientific Modeling and the Mathematization of Nature”

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### **Professional Presentations**

“Fake News and the Regulation of Speech on Social Media”

–*Hendrix College*

Conway, AR—November 2023

“The Ethical Costs and Benefits of Modifying CDA Section 230 to Combat Online Misinformation”

–*Milwaukee School of Engineering Fall Forum*

Milwaukee, WI—October 2021

“How Fake News Exploits the Pattern Recognition Instinct”

–*Southern Journal of Philosophy Workshop (The Ethics of Big Data)*

Memphis, TN—April 2021

“Fake News and Epistemic Vice: Combating a Uniquely Noxious Market”

–*American Philosophical Association Pacific Division 2020*

San Francisco, CA—April 2020 (canceled due to pandemic)

–*Meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society 2019*

Pensacola, FL—September 2019

–*Meeting of the Kansas Philosophical Society 2019*  
Wichita, KS—February 2019

“The Argument for IBE from the Surplus Value of Understanding”  
–*Meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society 2019*  
Pensacola, FL—September 2019

“Why It’s Irrelevant Whether Explanatoriness Is Evidentially Irrelevant”  
–*Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association 2018*  
Seattle, WA—November 2018

“Can Abduction be Used as a Bayesian Heuristic?”  
–*Workshop on Philosophical Methodology: Williamson on Abductive Philosophy*  
University of Vienna—October 2017

“Does IBE Require a ‘Model’ of Explanation?”  
–*Meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society 2017*  
Pensacola, FL—September 2017

### **Teaching Experience – Full Responsibility**

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*Ethics for Professional Engineers and Managers*

*Engineering & Ethics*

*The Philosophical Life*

*Ethics & Society: Professional Applications*

*Introduction to Ethics*

*Philosophy of Science*

*Informal Logic*

*Metaphysics*

*Epistemology*

*Contemporary Moral Issues*

*The Meaning of Life*

### **Teaching Experience – Teaching Assistant**

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*Ethical Issues in Healthcare* (J. Paul Kelleher)

*Introductory Ethics* (Emily Fletcher, Claudia Card)

*Introduction to Philosophy* (Tim Aylsworth)

*Bioethics* (Dan McGloin, Jason Craig) - Center for Talented Youth

*Logic* (Kent Schmor) – Center for Talented Youth

*Contemporary Moral Issues* (Lester Hunt)

## Awards

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**Summer Research Grant** 2021

\$5000 grant awarded by the Milwaukee School of Engineering to fund the research project “The Problem of Fake News on Social Media: A Philosophical Examination of the Proposal to Amend Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act”

**Course Development Grant** 2020

\$2400 grant awarded by the Milwaukee School of Engineering to develop a Philosophy of Science course for STEM majors.

**National Science Foundation Travel Grant** 2018

\$750 grant for the purposes of attending the Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting.

**Advanced Opportunity Fellowship** 2012, 2017

Competitive university fellowship awarded to highly qualified underrepresented students to increase diversity on campus.

**Singer Graduate Fellowship** 2017

A competitive dissertation fellowship awarded to one graduate student in the UW-Madison philosophy department each summer.

**Oliver Prize** 2016

Award given on an annual basis to a full time philosophy graduate student at UW-Madison who, in the opinion of the appointed faculty committee, has written the best essay in any area of Philosophy.

**Valedictorian** 2012

At Muhlenberg College.

**Shoemaker Graduate Fellowship** 2012

Award granted to a highly qualified senior at Muhlenberg College who is undertaking further graduate education.

**Phi Beta Kappa** 2012

America’s oldest and most prestigious academic honor society.

## Professional/Departmental Service

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**Peer Reviewer:** *Philosophical Psychology; Dialectica; Foundations of Science; Synthese; Revista Teorema; The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science; Philosophy of Science; British Society for Philosophy Conference 2021, Philosophia.*

**MSOE Unit of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics-University of Haifa** 2021-22  
Member of the Steering Committee and Chair of the organizing committee for World Bioethics Day 2021 at the Milwaukee School of Engineering.

**MSOE Faculty Senate** 2021-22  
Member of the faculty Senate at the Milwaukee School of Engineering

**MSOE Computer Users' Committee** 2019-22  
Member of the committee at the Milwaukee School of Engineering; responsible drafting policy related to campus software allocation and usage.

**Colloquium Committee at UW-Madison** 2013-15, 2017-18  
Organized pre-colloquium meetings with guest lecturers and post-colloquium receptions.

**Philosophy of Biology at Madison Workshop** 2015-16  
Member of the organizing committee and chair of a session.

**Research Assistant (Elliott Sober)** 2015  
Responsibilities included comments on various drafts of a paper titled "A Bayesian Critique of Hume's Treatment of the Design Argument in the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*" and summaries of philosophical and historical literature concerning: Hume's critique of design arguments and Hume's argument against miracles; the history of Thomas Bayes' famous 1763 paper; and Richard Price's and John Arbuthnot's design arguments.

## **Other Languages**

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**Spanish** (Fluent)

## **References**

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### **Elliott Sober**

Hans Reichenbach Professor and William V. Vilas Research Professor  
Dept. of Philosophy  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
608-263-3700  
ersober@wisc.edu

### **Daniel M. Hausman**

Research Professor  
Center for Population-Level Bioethics/  
Dept. of Philosophy  
Rutgers University

848-932-5874

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**Mike Titelbaum**

Professor & Department Chair

Dept. of Philosophy

University of Wisconsin, Madison

608-263-3700

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**Alan Sidelle**

Professor

Dept. of Philosophy

University of Wisconsin, Madison

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**Jesse Steinberg**

Faculty Associate and Assistant to the Chair

Dept. of Philosophy

University of Wisconsin, Madison

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## **Graduate Coursework**

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### **Philosophy of Science and Epistemology**

Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics (Forster)

Parsimony (Sober)

Bayesian Epistemology (Titelbaum)

Causation (Forster)\*

Explanation (Sober and Shapiro)\*

Adaptation, Natural Selection, and Intelligent Design (Sober)\*

### **Metaphysics**

Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (Messina)

Personal Identity (Sidelle)

Objects and Modality (Sidelle)

Naturalism, Representation, and Consciousness (Gibson)\*

Free Will (Gibson)\*

Dispositions (Steinberg)\*

Belief (Steinberg)\*

### **Ethics and Value Theory**

New Works in Meta-Ethics (Shafer-Landau)

Health, Well-being, and Cost-Effectiveness (Hausman)

Pleasure in Ancient Greek Philosophy (Fletcher)

Plato's Republic (Fletcher)\*

### **Other**

Pro-seminar: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Analytic Philosophy (Titelbaum)

Mathematical Logic (Andrews)

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\* Denotes audited course