

The Moral University

Higher Education in an Age of Uncertainty



Program

Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum

27th Annual Conference on Ethics Across the Curriculum

James Madison University

Harrisonburg, Virginia

October 8 - 10, 2026

Conference at a Glance

Thursday, October 8

Time	Highlands
5:00 PM	Welcome Reception
6:30 PM	Opening Plenary: Liz Jackson <i>Freedom to Teach and Freedom to Learn: Navigating Moral and Political Issues in Higher Education</i>

Friday, October 9

Time	Track A Allegheny	Track B Highlands	Track C Conf. 4	Track D Conf. 6	Track E Conf. 7
8:30	Panel: Graduate Students Taking the Lead in Ethics Education	Panel: The Pressure for Certainty: A Dialogue About AI	No-Platforming as a Collective Action Problem / "Palestine," "Jewish Genocide"	Who Defines Student Success? / Moral Significance to Moral Rules	Cognitive Debt and AI in the Ethics Classroom / Empathetic AI and Emoting Machines
10:00	Panel: Safeguarding Learners' Resilience in the Era of AI	Civil Discourse at Scale / Can We Still Talk Across Difference?	Hanging Together: Ethics, Purpose, and Values / Teaching Ethics in System Dynamics	Cheating in the Age of AI / Authorless Papers and Empty Assessments	Obligations to Adjunct Faculty / Teaching the Johnson & Johnson Case
11:30	Harry Brighouse Luncheon Keynote: <i>The Civic Aims of a College Education</i> Highlands Room				
1:30	Panel: AI Ethics Pedagogy		Civic Pluralism and the Challenges of DEI / Ethics and Individual Differences	Revisions to <i>On Being a Scientist</i> / Fruit Fly Experimentation	Engineering through Intellectual Trading Zones / Claude's Constitution
3:00	Panel: Ethics Bowl Pedagogy	Workshop: Expanding Character Across the Curriculum	Morals vs. Ethics? / In Pursuit of Reasonableness	Libraries, AI, and Ethical Engagement / The Ethics of Classroom Design	Frankenstein's Professors / Student Art Exhibitions as Moral Formation

Saturday at a Glance

Time	Track A Allegheny	Track B Highlands	Track C Conf. 4	Track D Conf. 6	Track E Conf. 7
8:30	Panel: Philosophy as Essential to Ethics and the University	Can There Be a Science of Ethics? / The Puzzle of Socrates' First Speech	The Moral University as a Judgment Ecology / Obligation to Incite Moral Motivation	Algorithmic Scoring of K-12 Assessments / An (Almost) Unrestricted Right to Die	AI as Pedagogical Partner / Ethical Reasoning in Everyday AI Learning
10:00	Panel: Making Ethics Accessible for Undergraduate Engineers	Panel: Integrity in Theory & Practice	Ethical Administrator / Academic Obligations	Relationships with Indigenous Communities / Intergenerational Climate Justice	From Omelas to The Good Place / Applied Ethics, Learning Outcomes, and Well-Being
11:30	Jennifer Ruth Luncheon Keynote: <i>What Is Academic Freedom For?</i> Highlands Room				
1:30	Panel: Moral University in the Age of AI	Ethics Education for Future Technology Leaders / From Requirements to Release	Panel: Project- Based Learning	LLM Analysis of STEM Ethics / STEM Identity: Quantitative Assessment	Deliberative Disruption / Product- Oriented University
3:00	SEAC Business Meeting Highlands Room				

Welcome!

Welcome to the 2026 Annual Conference on Ethics Across the Curriculum at James Madison University. This year's conference brings together scholars, educators, students, and practitioners from a wide range of disciplines to explore the theme of The Moral University and the complex relationship of ethics and higher education.

Over the next three days, participants will engage in conversations about academic freedom, artificial intelligence, teaching and learning, professional ethics, moral development, and the future of higher education. We hope the conference provides opportunities not only to share scholarship and pedagogical innovation, but also to strengthen professional relationships, build new collaborations, and reflect together on the purposes and responsibilities of colleges and universities.

Thank you for joining us in Harrisonburg. We wish you a stimulating, productive, and enjoyable conference.

Conference Directors:

- David McGraw, James Madison University
- Brian Birch, Utah Valley University

Gratitude:

Many thanks to the others who helped out in many ways, from reviewing abstracts, to wrangling budgets, to helping with logistics. The conference could not have succeeded without their help.

I am especially grateful to Sonia Barzanji, Chelsea Sampson, Kayla Wang, and Tara Jabeur, whose administrative support, patience, and good judgment made every stage of conference planning run more smoothly. Their assistance with countless details behind the scenes was invaluable to the success of this conference.

SEAC Officers, Executive Committee, and Editors:

- Alan A. Preti - President (Rosemont College)
- Glen Miller – Secretary/Treasurer (Texas A&M University)
- Mark Doorley – Executive Committee Member (Villanova University)
- Ruth Washington – Executive Committee Member (Le Moyne-Owen College)
- Cliff Guthrie – Executive Committee Member (Husson University)
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- Ethan Davis – Executive Committee Member (University of Mississippi)
- Mark Vopat – Executive Committee Member (Youngstown State University)
- Edyta Kuzian - Teaching Ethics Editor (Clemson University)
- Daniel E. Wueste - Teaching Ethics Editor (Clemson University)
- Sandra Woodson - Teaching Ethics Book Editor (Colorado School of Mines)

Thursday, October 8

5:00 – 6:30 pm Welcome Reception with hors d'oeuvres

6:30 pm Opening Plenary Session

Highlands Room

Liz Jackson (Presenting by Zoom)

Liz Jackson is a philosopher of education whose research addresses ethics, moral formation, and higher education as an institutional and cultural practice. She is Karen Lo Eugene Chuang Professor in Diversity and Equity in the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong.

Jackson's work explores how universities shape moral agency, emotions, and ethical reasoning in increasingly pluralistic and global contexts. She is the author of *Beyond Virtue: The Politics of Educating Emotions* (2020), which examines the ethical and political dimensions of moral education, and a co-editor of *The Ethical Academy: The University as an Ethical System* (2022), an edited volume that conceptualizes universities as complex moral institutions rather than value-neutral knowledge factories. She also wrote "Beyond Western Ideals: Academic freedom, capabilities, and social knowledge," published in *Academic Freedom in Higher Education: Core Value or Elite Privilege?* (2024). Her scholarship brings together ethical theory, philosophy of education, and international perspectives on higher education, making her work especially relevant to questions about the moral purposes and responsibilities of universities today.

Freedom to Teach and Freedom to Learn: Navigating Moral and Political Issues in Higher Education

Academic freedom is often understood in the United States as a professor's right. However, this political orientation can obscure the moral dimensions of our roles and responsibilities. In today's highly globalized academic environment, not everyone subscribes to a single rights-based framework. Relatedly, views about the purposes of the university, and their implications for research, teaching, and learning, vary across contexts. Failure to recognize these differences can lead to misunderstandings and harms, particularly when scholars are expected to assimilate into systems that emphasize political rights while treating moral questions as taboo.

Because academic freedom is always limited by the possibility of harm, it is a moral as well as a political issue. This presentation examines academic freedom from both perspectives, highlighting features of the U.S. system that may not be shared by diverse international stakeholders. It considers universities as moral institutions and explores the challenges this presents in contexts characterized by diverse moral values and forms of expression.

The Welcome Reception is brought to you courtesy of The Graduate School at JMU.



The Graduate School at JMU offers more than 60 programs in the area of Arts; Business; Communication, Humanities and Social Sciences; Education; Health and Behavioral Studies; and Science, Technology and Math. A combination of rigorous curriculum taught by expert faculty with hands-on experiences and collaboration ensures a rich educational experience students benefit from years after graduation.



Friday, October 9

8AM Continental breakfast available near Highlands Room

8:30 – 9:45am Session One

Track 1A - Room: Allegheny Room

Panel Discussion: Graduate Students Taking the Lead in Ethics Education

What happens when graduate students take the lead in ethics education within their own disciplines? This panel examines a University of Virginia pilot program in which graduate students organized Responsible Conduct of Research workshops within their academic units. Panelists will discuss lessons learned from student-led ethics programming, including the importance of disciplinary culture, peer-to-peer engagement, faculty participation, and practical considerations such as format, timing, and setting. The discussion explores how leadership, community context, and local educational practices shape the effectiveness of ethics education initiatives.

Lise Dobrin is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Virginia, where she is also affiliated with the Program in Linguistics. She conducts linguistic, ethnographic, and ethnohistorical research with Arapesh people in Papua New Guinea, focusing especially on the cultural aspects of language documentation. She is a longtime member of the University of Virginia Social and Behavioral Sciences IRB, and she serves as coordinator of her department's Responsible Conduct of Research program, the Fieldwork, Ethics, and Ethnographic Writing workshop.

Panelists: Aida Abdi, Lise Dobrin, Caroline Gihlström, Alireza Jafari, Chengbao Jin, Jaran Rudd, Pranshuta Shukla, Trevor Stone

Track 1B - Room: Highlands Room

Panel Discussion: The Pressure for Certainty: A Dialogue about AI

Public discussion of artificial intelligence often divides into sharply opposed camps, with strong claims about both its promise and its dangers. This session takes a different approach by exploring the role of uncertainty in evaluating emerging technologies. Through a dialogue between an ethicist and a software engineer, the discussion examines competing perspectives on AI, the challenges of forming judgments about rapidly changing technologies, and the importance of epistemic humility when confronting questions about technology, education, and the future.

Cliff Guthrie is Professor of Ethics, Philosophy, and Religion at Husson University. He previously taught in theological education and now teaches and writes in ethics, philosophy, and religion, with particular interests in moral psychology and the ethical effects of emerging technologies.

Brian Hamilton is a software engineer at Pinterest and a former professor of religion and philosophy at Florida Southern College. He earned a Ph.D. in theological ethics from the University of Notre Dame and has written on moral reasoning, virtue, and the ethical challenges posed by emerging technologies.

Track 1C - Room: Conference Room 4

1. No-Platforming as a Collective Action Problem

When should universities deny a platform to speakers whose views fall outside disciplinary standards? This presentation examines the ethics of no-platforming by framing it as a collective action problem. While a single invitation to a controversial or unqualified speaker may not harm academic standards, repeated instances could gradually erode disciplinary norms and academic integrity. At the same time, excluding dissenting voices may also carry intellectual costs. Attendees will gain a nuanced framework for thinking about academic freedom, disciplinary expertise, and the potential benefits and risks of both platforming and no-platforming decisions.

David Wong is Visiting Assistant Professor at University of West Georgia, in the Department of Philosophy.

Jacob Ebbs is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, Law, and Behavioral Science at Russell Sage College.

2. "Palestine," "Jewish genocide"

How much authority should institutions have over what faculty teach and discuss in their courses? This presentation examines tensions between academic freedom and institutional oversight, drawing on cases in which professors faced sanctions or restrictions related to course content, classroom materials, or language used in academic settings. The paper explores how conflicts can arise when faculty members occupy multiple roles within universities and considers different ways of understanding and resolving those conflicts when institutional requirements and professional judgment appear to be at odds.

Wade L. Robison is the Ezra A. Hale Professor of Applied Ethics at the Rochester Institute of Technology. The founding president of the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum, he has published extensively in applied and professional ethics, philosophy of law, and Hume studies, and is the author of *Ethics Within Engineering*.

Track 1D – Room: Conference Room 6

1. Who Defines Student Success? Ethics, Technology, and the Professionalization of Academic Advising

This presentation traces the evolution of academic advising from its historical roots to its current role as a professionalized, outcomes-driven function within higher education. It examines how technologies such as predictive analytics, early alert systems, and advising platforms are reshaping advising practice and advancing institutional goals related to student success. The paper explores ethical questions concerning the definition of student success, the use of student data, and the distribution of power in advising relationships, and considers the implications of these issues for technology use more broadly in higher education.

Danielle Maxham is a doctoral student in the College of Education at James Madison University (JMU) and has 10 years of experience in academic advising and academic program administration. She currently serves as the Graduate Programs Coordinator in the Department of Learning, Technology, and Leadership Education at JMU.

2. From Moral Significance to Moral Rules: Why K–12 Protections against Harm to Self-Esteem Do Not Automatically Extend to Higher Education

This presentation examines whether harm to self-esteem can justify moral rules that restrict conduct and whether moral protections against such harm in K–12 education should extend to higher education. The paper argues that while damage to self-esteem may constitute a morally significant harm, this alone does not determine the scope of moral rules. It considers why protections may be justified in K–12 settings due to developmental and institutional factors, and why those same justifications do not automatically extend to colleges and universities.

Chen Wang is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Philosophy at Tulane University. Wang previously earned an M.Ed. in Counselor Education and an M.A. in Philosophy from Texas Tech University.

Track 1E - Room: Conference Room 7

1. Cognitive Debt and Other Concerns Around the Use of AI in the Ethics Classroom

As calls grow to incorporate AI throughout education, this presentation examines several ethical concerns surrounding its use in higher education classrooms. In addition to widely discussed issues such as environmental impact, intellectual property, and labor displacement, the paper focuses on potential psychological effects on students and the possibility that reliance on AI may diminish autonomy while increasing dependence on those who control large language models. The presentation argues that these concerns warrant caution regarding the unconstrained use of AI in educational settings.

Mark Vopat is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Dr. James Dale Ethics Center at Youngstown State University. His research interests include social and political philosophy, children's rights, business ethics, and AI ethics. He is the author of *Children's Rights and Moral Parenting* (2015).

2. Empathetic AI and Emoting Machines: Transforming Educator Roles and Responsibilities

As AI systems increasingly incorporate tools designed to detect sentiment, emulate empathy, and respond to users in more human-like ways, new ethical and educational questions emerge. This presentation examines the implications of affective technologies, including their reliance on highly personalized data and their growing presence across fields such as education, healthcare, customer service, and public administration. The paper considers how these developments may reshape curricula, disciplinary boundaries, and educator responsibilities, and offers recommendations for the ethical use of empathetic AI technologies.

Angelo Ferraro is affiliated with the Department of Electrical Engineering at the University of South Carolina.

10 – 11:15am Session Two

Track 2A - Room: Allegheny Room

Panel Discussion: Meeting the Moral Imperative to Safeguard Learners' Resilience: Protection of Critical Skills Development in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

In our AI-infused world, educators need to balance the potential benefits with concerns about student learning and development. This roundtable of academic leaders from James Madison University recognizes that (1) we must make space for diverging perspectives on AI's utility and ethical implications and (2) we must develop guidelines around AI use or non-use that support discipline-specific learning and skills-building. Panelists will explore questions surrounding the ethical use of AI, the development of critical cognitive and interpersonal skills, and the responsibility of faculty and institutions to create learning environments that promote critical thinking, writing, collaboration, persistence, and intellectual growth.

Organizer: Kerry Crawford, Professor and Academic Unit Head of Political Science, James Madison University.

Panelists:

Lori Britt, Professor and Academic Unit Head, Communication Studies, James Madison University.

Becky Childs, Professor of English and Associate Dean, College of Arts and Letters, James Madison University.

Sarah Hagelin, Professor and Academic Unit Head of English, James Madison University.

Paul Mabrey, Associate Vice Provost for Student Success and Director of Student Success Analytics, James Madison University.

Peggy Plass, Professor and Academic Unit Head of Justice Studies, James Madison University.

Michael Smith, Professor and Academic Unit Head of the School of Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication, James Madison University.

Abby Wightman, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Academic Unit Head, Sociology and Anthropology, James Madison University.

Track 2B - Room: Highlands Room

1. A Model for Developing the Skills and Habits of Civil Discourse at Scale

This presentation introduces Integrating Civil Discourse into the Curriculum (ICDC), a model designed to help students develop both the analytical and interpersonal skills needed for constructive disagreement. Combining two instructional tools, Thinker and Sway, the model engages students in argument analysis, evaluation of competing viewpoints, and guided conversations with those who hold different perspectives. The presentation also discusses a multi-year study examining whether these skills transfer beyond the classroom and contribute to sustained practices of civil discourse and moral inquiry.

Todd DeRose is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Edward Waters University and the Assistant Director for Integrating Civil Discourse into the Curriculum (ICDC), a 4-year FIPSE-funded initiative promoting critical thinking and civil discourse in higher education. His research specializations include Early Modern Philosophy and Philosophy of Religion.

2. Can We Still Talk Across Difference? Practicing Durable Skills Through Civic Dialogue

Civic dialogue builds durable skills such as active listening, navigating disagreement, and engaging constructively across perspectives, but these skills are increasingly hard to practice amid polarization, AI, and shrinking spaces for real disagreement. This session introduces Unify America's CivicGym, a technology enabled intercollegiate dialogue program connecting students from diverse backgrounds through structured, repeated one on one conversations. Since 2021, over 41,000 students across 46 states and 277 institutions have participated. Attendees will learn the program's design, experience a live activity, and hear from an educator on classroom implementation.

Arielle Mizrahi is Director of Partnerships at Unify America. She has worked with students, educators, and community leaders across multiple states to develop nonpartisan initiatives that foster dialogue and civic participation. In her current role, she collaborates with colleges and universities nationwide to embed dialogue programming into curricula.

Track 2C - Room: Conference Room 4

1. Hanging Together: Ethics, Purpose, and Values

What values should guide higher education in an era of rapid technological change? Drawing on philosophical perspectives on ethics and human-technology relationships, this presentation examines the role of ethics across the curriculum in helping students navigate an increasingly automated world. The paper considers the values that academic communities share, the challenges posed by emerging technologies, and the question of what principles should unite educators and students in the pursuit of knowledge and the good life.

William Davis is Assistant Professor of Engineering and Society in the School of Engineering and Applied Science at the University of Virginia. His teaching and research focus on ethics, technology, engineering education, and the relationships between human and technological systems.

2. Teaching Ethics in System Dynamics Through the Case Method

This presentation introduces a structured case-method approach for teaching ethics in system dynamics. Students analyze cases through four stages, from historical context to long-term consequences, while applying virtue, deontological, and consequentialist ethical frameworks. The paper discusses implementation of the method in a graduate system dynamics course and examines evidence regarding its effectiveness in strengthening ethical awareness, ethical reasoning, and students' ability to evaluate modeling assumptions, boundaries, and responsibilities. Reflections on instructional design, assessment, and broader adoption of ethics - focused pedagogy are also presented.

Co-authors: Timothy Clancy, Associate Research Scientist, Applied Research Lab for Intelligence & Security (ARLIS), University of Maryland, **Asmeret Naugle**, Computational Social Scientist, Sandia National Labs **Saeed Langerudi**, Associate Professor, University of Bergen, Norway.

Raafat Zaini is Assistant Professor of Integrated Science and Technology at James Madison University. His teaching and research focus on systems thinking, system dynamics modeling, engineering and technology education, and the application of systems approaches to complex social and technical challenges.

Track 2D – Room: Conference Room 6

1. Cheating in the Age of AI: Wrongs, Blame, and Responsibility

As AI tools become increasingly available to students, questions about academic dishonesty extend beyond whether cheating is wrong. This presentation examines who is wronged when students use AI inappropriately, who bears responsibility for those wrongs, and what obligations instructors have in response. The paper argues that both students and instructors may be affected by acts of cheating and considers how responsibility for prevention should be shared. Particular attention is given to pedagogical approaches, institutional policies, and broader social expectations surrounding AI use in education.

Christa Johnson is Associate Professor of Teaching in the Department of Philosophy and Associate Director of Leadership Studies at The Ohio State University.

2. Authorless Papers and Empty Assessments: Understanding Written Assessments in an Age of Automated Writing

This presentation examines how the widespread availability of large language models affects the use of essays as tools for assessing student learning. The paper argues that when students outsource significant portions of the writing process to AI systems, essays may no longer provide reliable evidence of student understanding. It explores the implications of automated writing for learning, assessment, and student development, and considers how process-oriented pedagogy and greater transparency about the purpose of writing assignments might help preserve the educational value of written work.

Priya Ghotane is a Presidential Scholar and undergraduate student studying Philosophy and Psychology at Eastern Michigan University.

Track 2E - Room: Conference Room 7

1. The Moral Obligation that Department Chairs Owe to Their Adjunct Faculty

This presentation examines the responsibilities that department chairs have toward adjunct faculty members. Drawing on both scholarship and administrative experience, the paper argues that chairs can promote inclusion, professional recognition, and opportunities for flourishing even when they have little control over compensation. Topics include longer-term staffing decisions, access to office space, support for student engagement, and other practical steps that can strengthen the working environment for adjunct instructors. The presentation argues that such efforts are not merely desirable but may constitute moral obligations of academic leadership.

Mark Doorley is Director of the Ethics Program at Villanova University. His teaching and research interests include engineering and environmental ethics, ethical theory, and the thought of Bernard Lonergan.

2. From Ethical Icon to Ethical Inquiry: Teaching the Johnson & Johnson Case

For decades, the Johnson & Johnson response to the 1982 Tylenol crisis has been presented as a model of ethical leadership and corporate responsibility. This presentation revisits that familiar case in light of more recent scholarship and criticism of the company's broader history and practices. Using the Johnson & Johnson case as an example, the paper explores how ethics educators can help students reexamine accepted narratives, assess new evidence, and grapple with the complexities that emerge when widely celebrated cases are subjected to renewed scrutiny.

Elaine E. Englehardt is Distinguished Professor of Philosophy Emerita at Utah Valley University. A past and current leader in the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum, she has authored ten books, led numerous national grants in ethics education, and spent more than four decades advancing ethics across the curriculum and interdisciplinary ethics initiatives.

11:30 Luncheon Keynote

Highlands Room

Harry Brighouse (Professor of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin-Madison) (Presenting in person)

Harry Brighouse is a philosopher whose work focuses on justice, education, and the ethical purposes of social institutions. He is currently Professor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and a leading figure in contemporary philosophy of education.

Brighouse is the author or co-author of numerous influential books on education and justice, including *On Education* (2006), *Educational Equality* (2006, with Adam Swift), *School Choice and Social Justice* (2000), and *Family Values* (2014, with Adam Swift). He co-edited *The Aims of Higher Education: Problems of Morality and Justice* (University of Chicago Press, 2015) with Michael McPherson, which won the 2017 Federic W Ness Award for the book contributing to our understanding of liberal education from the Association of American Colleges and Universities. His work examines the moral aims of education, the responsibilities of educational institutions, and the balance between individual freedom, equality, and the public good. Across his scholarship, Brighouse argues that questions about schooling and higher education cannot be separated from broader ethical questions about justice, citizenship, and human flourishing.

The Civic Aims of a College Education

It is widely assumed that college does, and should, make students better citizens, but there is less agreement about how it should do so. I argue that colleges are especially well positioned to improve students' citizenship by cultivating what I call *deliberative responsibility*. I also argue that doing so effectively requires significant changes in pedagogical practice.

The Friday luncheon is brought to you courtesy of Ethical Reasoning in Action at JMU.



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1:30 – 2:45pm Session Three

Track 3A - Room: Allegheny Room

Panel Discussion: AI Ethics Pedagogy

Designing an effective AI ethics course requires considering a range of factors, such as the disciplines, level, and technical knowledge of students, modality of delivery, and how the course contributes to program and institution goals. This panel consists of instructors from three large public research universities who teach dedicated courses on AI ethics to either undergraduate or graduate students. They will discuss course design, learning objectives, pedagogical strategies, assessment methods, and lessons learned from teaching their various iterations.

Deborah Mower is Director of the Center for Practical Ethics and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Mississippi. Her research focuses on moral psychology, moral education, civil discourse, and intellectual virtues. She will discuss the development of an online AI ethics course designed for broad undergraduate audiences, including the use of expert interviews, podcasts, and interdisciplinary learning resources.

Mitchell Roberts is a doctoral student in Philosophy at Texas A&M University whose interests include philosophy of technology, metaphysics, and applied ethics. He will discuss revisions to an existing AI ethics course, including efforts to strengthen students' understanding of AI technologies and engagement with contemporary AI ethics scholarship.

Glen Miller is Director of Undergraduate Studies and Instructional Professor of Philosophy at Texas A&M University. His research focuses on engineering ethics, technology ethics, and artificial intelligence. He will discuss an upper-level AI ethics course that combines foundational philosophical questions with student research on the ethical and social implications of AI.

Qin Zhu is an engineering education and information studies scholar at the University of Alabama. He will discuss a graduate-level AI ethics course for engineering and informatics students that uses empirical research and engaged pedagogies to explore ethical issues arising from engineering practice and emerging technologies.

Track 3C - Room: Conference Room 4

1. Diversity Education in a New Key: Civic Pluralism and the Challenges of DEI

How should diversity education respond to growing political and institutional challenges surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives? This presentation examines the concept of civic pluralism as an alternative framework for engaging questions of identity, difference, and the common good. The paper contrasts civic pluralism with other approaches to diversity education, discusses efforts to implement this model within public institutions in Utah, and considers how it may create space for dialogue and cooperation across differing perspectives while continuing to engage questions of equity and social justice.

Brian Birch is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Religious Studies Program at Utah Valley University. He specializes in philosophy of religion, ethics, and interreligious studies. A past president of the Society for Philosophy of Religion, he is the founding editor of *Teaching Ethics: The Journal of the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum* and has written extensively on religious diversity, pluralism, and ethics.

2. Ethics and Individual Differences: Extending the Cultural Differences Argument

This presentation revisits James Rachels' well-known discussion of the Cultural Differences Argument and explores how a parallel line of reasoning can be used to examine ethical subjectivism. Building on classroom discussions, the paper introduces an "Individual Differences Argument" that shifts attention from differences among cultures to differences among individuals. The presentation considers how this approach can help students engage with questions of relativism, subjectivism, validity, and soundness while developing skills in ethical reasoning that can be applied across academic and professional contexts.

Gerald J. Erion is Instructor of Philosophy and Ethics at Daemen University. He holds a Ph.D. from the University at Buffalo. His research interests include ethics, applied ethics, philosophy of the city, and the teaching and learning of philosophy.

Track 3D – Room: Conference Room 6

1. Revisions to *On Being a Scientist: A Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Research*

This presentation provides an overview of the newly revised and expanded online edition of *On Being a Scientist: A Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Research*. The resource addresses contemporary issues in research ethics, including conflicts of interest, intellectual property, data stewardship, mentoring, open science, research security, team science, and emerging technologies. The presentation examines how the guide reflects current practices and challenges within the research community and highlights its use as a practical resource for ethics education and professional development.

Elizabeth T. Cady is Senior Program Officer at the National Academy of Engineering, where she works on initiatives related to engineering education, ethics, diversity, and professional development. She holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Cognitive and Human Factors Psychology from Kansas State University.

2. Reconsidering Fruit Fly Experimentation in Undergraduate Genetics Laboratory Courses

This presentation examines the ethical implications of using *Drosophila melanogaster* (fruit flies) in undergraduate genetics laboratories. While fruit flies have long played an important role in genetics research and education, recent discussions about the possibility of insect sentience raise questions about their use as teaching tools. The paper argues that the benefits of fruit fly experimentation may differ significantly between research settings and undergraduate instruction, and considers whether educational uses of *Drosophila* can be justified in light of concerns about potential insect suffering and pedagogical value.

Madhav Maniraj is a recent graduate of George Mason University, where he earned a B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Philosophy. His interests include bioethics and the philosophy of medicine.

Track 3E - Room: Conference Room 7

1. Engineering Through Intellectual Trading Zones: Ethics Integration for Professional Skill Development

How can engineering programs more effectively develop the professional skills needed for ethical and socially responsible practice? This presentation examines an embedded Science, Technology, and Society (STS) model designed to integrate ethics and professional competencies throughout an engineering curriculum. The paper discusses the rationale, curricular structure, instructional strategies, and assessment practices behind the program, while also considering challenges associated with cross-curricular collaboration and long-term implementation. The presentation offers insights for educators seeking scalable approaches to integrating ethics and professional skill development into engineering degree programs.

Bryn E. Seabrook is an Associate Professor at the University of Virginia. Trained in Science and Technology Studies, she holds B.A., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Her research examines AI pedagogy in engineering education and explores the sociotechnical implications for ethical practice and undergraduate learning.

2. “Claude’s Constitution” and the Problem of Personal Identity for Value Alignment of Large Language Models

Can a large language model develop a virtuous character? Anthropic’s “Claude’s Constitution” describes its virtue ethics approach for the moral training of Claude, its flagship large language model. Commentators have argued that models’ lack of embodiment and affective capacity limits their moral agency; in this presentation I suggest their virtuous development is further complicated by their lack of a stable personal identity. I also explore tensions between the values endorsed in the document and Anthropic’s profit motive, which may further compromise Claude’s moral development. I conclude with a discussion on how the constitution can be used in AI ethics courses.

Elisa Warford is Professor of Technical Communication Practice in the Engineering in Society Program at the University of Southern California, where she teaches and writes about AI ethics, technology ethics, and climate ethics.

3:00 – 4:15pm Session Four

Track 4A - Room: Allegheny Room

Panel Discussion: Ethics Bowl Pedagogy, Ethical Argumentation, and the Moral University

Ethics Bowl is an accessible and effective tool for teaching ethical reasoning across disciplines. This panel brings together experienced educators, organizers, and coaches to examine Ethics Bowl's pedagogical value, its role in fostering civil discourse, and its potential contribution to broader educational goals. Panelists will discuss ethical argumentation, the use of Ethics Bowl cases across the curriculum, faculty development initiatives, and strategies for cultivating authentic dialogue and intellectual engagement.

Matt Deaton is Professor of Philosophy at Pellissippi State Community College and author of *Ethics Bowl to the Rescue!*. He will discuss how Ethics Bowl cases can be used across disciplines to introduce contemporary ethical issues, facilitate discussion of difficult topics, and provide instructors with accessible teaching materials that promote ethical reasoning and civil discourse.

Greg Wright is Professor of English and Philosophy at Snow College and a longtime Ethics Bowl coach. He will present findings from a faculty-development initiative that uses Ethics Bowl materials to help instructors incorporate ethical reasoning into their courses and strengthen durable skills across the curriculum.

Michael Andersen, MAT, MALS, is a former high school philosophy educator, longtime Ethics Bowl coach, and current volunteer Philosophy Club adviser at the Vancouver School of Arts & Academics in Vancouver, WA. He writes curriculum materials, contributes articles to EthicsBowl.org, and serves as an online trainer and judge for the Australia-based Ethics Olympiad. He will examine how coaches, judges, and educators can better foster authentic civil dialogue, active listening, and good-faith engagement, while exploring ways to improve Ethics Bowl pedagogy, assessment, and competition practices.

Track 4B - Room: Highlands Room

Expanding Character Across the Curriculum (Workshop)

How can institutions effectively integrate character development across the curriculum? This interactive workshop examines approaches for embedding character education into academic programs and courses. Facilitated by a panel of faculty members, the session combines presentations, roundtable discussion, and small-group activities focused on successes, challenges, and practical implementation strategies. Participants will have opportunities to exchange ideas, reflect on their own experiences, and consider approaches for developing scalable frameworks that support character development and student well-being across disciplines.

Mary Nwanua is an Assistant Instructional Professor at the Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Florida. Her research focuses on engineering education, character development, artificial intelligence, and human-technology interaction, with particular attention to preparing future engineering and construction professionals for an increasingly technology-enabled workplace.

Dr. Rachel Frazier is a Gene Fraser Teaching Professor in the University of Florida's Engineering Leadership Institute. She connects ethics and leadership education with engineering practice, helping engineers integrate ethical thinking into problem solving, decision-making, innovation, and leadership.

Dr. Curtis R. Taylor is Associate Chair for Research and Associate Professor in the Department of Engineering Education at the University of Florida, where he provides leadership at the intersection of engineering practice, research, and engineering education.

Dr. Jeremy A. Magruder Waisome is the Thomas O. Hunter Rising Star Assistant Professor in the Department of Engineering Education and an Inaugural Fellow of the Engineering Leadership Institute at the University of Florida. Her research focuses on mentorship and self-efficacy in engineering and computing.

Prof. Melissa Mastrogiovanni focuses on leadership development through experiential learning, reflection, and collaboration. She works across disciplines to cultivate student leaders, strengthen teams, and empower individuals to lead with authenticity and purpose.

Prof. William "Bill" McElroy, P.E. is the William H. Wadsworth Acting Director and Gene Fraser Teaching Professor in the Engineering Leadership Institute at the University of Florida. He led the institute's development beginning in 2010 and has taught its curriculum to more than 4,000 students.

Track 4C - Room: Conference Room 4

1. **Morals vs. Ethics? A Method of Making Right Choices in the Franciscan and University Traditions**

This presentation examines two approaches to moral formation in higher education: traditions emphasizing faith, conscience, and spiritual practice, and approaches grounded in ethical reasoning and professional ethics. Drawing on the work of John Duns Scotus and John Henry Newman, the paper explores their understandings of the individual as a moral decision-maker and considers how their ideas may help bridge chaplaincy-based student formation and ethics education in the classroom.

Joel Warden, Ph.D., HEC-C, has served in pastoral and academic roles in Brooklyn for more than twenty years. He holds a Ph.D. in Moral Theology from Fordham University, serves as a Clinical Ethics Consultant at The Brooklyn Hospital Center, and teaches courses in medical ethics, professional ethics, and death and dying.

2. **In Pursuit of Reasonableness**

This presentation reflects on a lifelong pursuit of reasonableness and considers what it means to engage in that pursuit as an ongoing rather than completed endeavor. The paper emphasizes the importance of dialogue, disagreement, reflection, and openness to revising one's judgments, arguing that reasonableness is best pursued in conversation with others rather than in isolation. It also explores the implications of this understanding for ethics education and the role of classrooms as communities of shared inquiry.

Michael S. Pritchard is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Western Michigan University. A longtime contributor to ethics education, he has written extensively on moral development, ethical theory, engineering ethics, and philosophy for children. He has played a significant role in the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum and served for eight years as co-editor of *Teaching Ethics*, the Society's journal.

Track 4D – Room: Conference Room 6

1. **Libraries, AI, and Ethical Engagement Across the Curriculum**

As AI becomes increasingly integrated into higher education, what role should libraries play in fostering critical and ethical engagement with these technologies? This presentation examines how library workers are responding to growing pressure to adopt AI tools while remaining committed to values such as intellectual freedom, privacy, equity, and sustainability. Drawing on survey findings, professional experiences, and practical resources, this presentation explores how libraries can support informed conversations about AI and help students, faculty, and staff critically evaluate the promises and challenges of emerging technologies.

Liana Bayne-Lin is a Science & Math Librarian and Assistant Professor at James Madison University. She supports teaching, learning, and research in the College of Science & Math. Her research interests include reflective and inclusive pedagogy, critical librarianship, intellectual freedom and privacy, and STEM education.

Tess Wilson is Membership and Outreach Director for the Library Freedom Project in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her work focuses on privacy, intellectual freedom, digital rights, and supporting library workers as they navigate the ethical implications of emerging technologies.

2. **The Ethics of Classroom Design: How Leadership Can Advance Equity Through Universal Design for Learning**

This presentation examines the ethical implications of classroom design within higher education. Although instructional practices have evolved, many classrooms continue to reflect traditional, instructor-centered designs that may create barriers to accessibility, visibility, and meaningful participation for today's diverse student population. While legislation such as the ADA and IDEA has expanded access through accommodations, access alone does not necessarily ensure an equitable or meaningful educational experience. Institutions should move beyond minimum compliance by incorporating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles into classroom design and rethinking learning environments to proactively support accessibility, inclusion, and meaningful participation for all students.

Trevor Cockburn is an Instructional Technologist for Classroom Technology Services at James Madison University Libraries. He holds an M.Ed. in Educational Technology from James Madison University and is currently pursuing an Ed.D. in Leadership, Equity, Innovations, and Learning in the College of Education at James Madison University.

Jared R. Tschohl, MAT, MEd has been an Educational Consultant at the Shenandoah Valley Child Development Clinic at James Madison University since 2014. Prior to his current position, he was an elementary special education teacher. He holds Virginia state licensure in Administration/Supervision, Reading Specialist, Special Education General Curriculum, English as a Second Language, and History/Social Sciences.

Track 4E - Room: Conference Room 7

1. **Frankenstein's Professors: A Story of Failed Care in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein***

This presentation uses care ethics to examine the role of university professors in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. While discussions of the novel often focus on Victor Frankenstein's neglect of the creature he creates, this paper argues that Victor himself experienced significant failures of care as a student. Drawing on the work of Berenice Fisher and Joan Tronto, the presentation explores how the actions and omissions of Victor's professors contributed to the events that followed and considers what the novel suggests about the responsibilities educators have toward their students, particularly in STEM fields.

Benjamin J. Laugelli is Associate Professor of Engineering and Society at the University of Virginia. His teaching and research focus on engineering ethics, engineering education, science and technology studies, sustainable design, and the relationship between technology and science fiction.

2. **Attention, Virtue, Care: Student Art Exhibitions as Moral Formation**

How can artistic creation and interpretation contribute to ethical development? This presentation examines a series of student art exhibitions organized around themes such as courage, integrity, justice, care, and respect. Drawing on student work, audience responses, and the writings of Iris Murdoch and Jacqueline Millner, the paper explores how artistic practice and critical engagement can foster moral imagination, interdependence, solidarity, and ethical reflection. The presentation considers the role of the arts in character formation and ethics education within the liberal arts.

Diane Lipsett is Professor of Religion at Salem College, where she directs the Engaging Ethics program and serves as Program Director for Religious Studies and Co-Director of Health Humanities. Her scholarship and teaching examine religion, ethics, health, disability, embodiment, and character formation.

3:00pm - 5:00pm

SEAC Pedagogy Fellows Workshop – Conference Room 5

This session is part of the SEAC Pedagogy Fellows Program and is open only to participants accepted into the program.

Reception, Banquet & Presidential Address

Festival Ballroom

5:30pm Reception

6:30pm Banquet & Presidential Address

Saturday, October 10

8AM Continental breakfast available near Highlands Room

8:30 – 9:45am Session Six

Track 6A - Room: Allegheny Room

Panel Discussion: Philosophy as Essential to Both Ethics and the Mission of the University Itself

This panel examines the place of philosophy and ethics within the contemporary university. Panelists argue that philosophical inquiry, liberal education, and first-principles ethical reflection are essential to higher education's mission and should not be eclipsed by vocational, professional, or market-driven priorities. Topics include educational conservatism, the limitations of professional and compliance ethics, and philosophy's role as a foundation for interdisciplinary inquiry and ethical reflection.

Phyllis (Peggy) Vandenberg is Professor Emeritus at Grand Valley State University. She will discuss "educational conservatism" as a tradition that supports liberal education, intellectual judgment, and the university's broader educational mission. Drawing on philosophical and historical perspectives, she argues that faculty play a vital role in preserving these foundational purposes of higher education.

Andrew D. Spear is a faculty member at Grand Valley State University. He will examine distinctions between first-principles normative ethics, professional ethics, and legal compliance ethics. While all have educational value, he argues that universities increasingly privilege professional and compliance frameworks while neglecting the deeper philosophical inquiry that makes ethical reflection possible.

Jeffrey Byrnes is a faculty member at Grand Valley State University. He will argue that philosophy occupies a unique place within the university because it enables disciplines to examine their own assumptions and methods. His presentation explores philosophy's role in the search for truth, interdisciplinary dialogue, and ethical orientation, and considers what this implies for the mission and future of higher education.

Track 6B - Room: Highlands Room

1. Can There Be a Science of Ethics?

Can ethical reasoning be studied empirically in ways similar to other forms of human perception and judgment? This presentation examines recent research on moral perception and ethical decision-making, including studies that apply signal detection theory to ethical reasoning. Drawing on findings related to the Eight Key Questions framework, the paper explores how moral perceptions can be measured, how ethical training may affect accuracy, and whether stable patterns in moral reasoning can be identified. The presentation considers what these findings may suggest about the possibility of developing a scientific approach to the study of ethics.

Christian Early is Professor of Philosophy and Director of Ethical Reasoning in Action at James Madison University. His research focuses on ethics and philosophy of religion, including current work on the biological roots of morality and the emergence of interpersonal care as a survival strategy.

2. The Puzzle of Socrates' First Speech in the *Phaedrus*

Why does Socrates deliver a speech in Plato's *Phaedrus* that he later criticizes as false and inappropriate? This presentation explores that longstanding interpretive puzzle and argues that the speech serves an important pedagogical purpose. Drawing on interpretations of *pistis* as trust rather than mere belief, the paper suggests that Socrates' first speech helps establish the relationship of trust necessary for genuine education and moral development. The presentation connects Plato's account of teaching to contemporary questions about the role of educators, universities, and the conditions that make meaningful learning possible.

Nanda Harish is a Ph.D. student and Teaching Assistant in the Department of Philosophy at University of Kentucky.

Track 6C - Room: Conference Room 4

1. The Moral University as a Judgment Ecology: Cultivating Judgment Across the Curriculum

What distinctive contribution should higher education make when information, recommendations, and decision-support tools are increasingly accessible? This presentation argues that the university functions as a "judgment ecology," in which curricula, pedagogy, technology, and institutional practices either strengthen or weaken students' ability to exercise sound judgment. The paper distinguishes judgment from merely producing answers or making decisions and contends that ethics across the curriculum should focus on cultivating moral and epistemic virtues such as humility, courage, fairness, practical wisdom, and intellectual responsibility. Particular attention is given to the challenges and opportunities presented by artificial intelligence and contemporary higher education.

Ken Howarth is Professor of Philosophy at Mercer County Community College, where he has taught since 2004. He holds graduate degrees from St. John's College (Maryland), St. John's College (New Mexico), and Claremont Graduate University. His work focuses on ethics, practical reasoning, virtue theory, judgment under uncertainty, and philosophy education. He is the founder of the Mercer Minds judgment cultivation program.

2. The Moral University and the Obligation to Incite Moral Motivation

Should universities aim only to teach ethical reasoning, or do they also have a responsibility to encourage students to care about acting ethically? This presentation argues that higher education has an obligation not only to develop students' ethical reasoning skills but also to strengthen their motivation to act morally. The paper examines how universities might pursue this goal, considers the role of empirical research and philosophical reflection in understanding moral motivation, and explores whether external incentives and prompts can foster more enduring forms of ethical commitment over time.

Mark Piper is Professor of Philosophy at James Madison University. His research focuses on normative ethics, well-being, autonomy, philosophy of education, and ethical reasoning. He is the author of numerous publications in ethics and ethics education and has written extensively on the challenges of motivating ethical behavior.

Track 6D – Room: Conference Room 6

1. Investigating Scores and Perceptions of K-12 Standardized Tests Spanning the Transition from Human Scoring to Algorithmic Scoring

This presentation examines the transition from human scoring to algorithmic scoring on K-12 standardized assessments that include written responses. While previous research has focused on whether algorithmic systems assign scores similar to those given by human readers, this study investigates whether overall student outcomes changed following the adoption of automated scoring. Using a mixed-method approach, we will analyze score patterns across multiple states and demographic groups while also exploring the experiences and perspectives of K-12 testing coordinators who managed the transition.

Bonam Mingole is a Ph.D. student in Informatics at Penn State University. Her research explores AI for social good, with particular interests in the sociotechnical impacts of AI technologies, and the development of AI systems that reflect human values.

Jacquelyn Huff is an Associate Teaching Professor in the School of Engineering Design and Innovation at Penn State University. She is a recovering public school teacher and often pursues research topics at the intersection of K-12 pedagogy and technology.

Sarah Rajtmajer is an Associate Professor at Penn State University and Senior Research Associate at the Rock Ethics Institute. Her work examines artificial intelligence and its social and ethical implications.

2. An (Almost) Unrestricted Right to Die

What conditions, if any, should be required before a person may seek medical aid in dying? This presentation argues that individuals have a fundamental moral right to decide what happens to their own bodies, including decisions about the timing of death. The paper examines current legal restrictions that limit medical aid in dying to certain categories of patients and contends that competent adults with a stable and well-considered desire to end their lives should have broader access to this option, alongside palliative and hospice care.

Stephen Scales is Professor of Philosophy at Towson University. He holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of California, San Diego and has published extensively on ethics and ethics education.

Track 6E - Room: Conference Room 7

1. AI as Pedagogical Partner: Active Learning for Ethics Across the Curriculum

This pedagogical demonstration presents classroom activities designed to help students practice ethical reasoning through active learning. Drawing on ethics and biomedical ethics courses, the session explores how AI-generated scenarios, role-based exercises, structured debates, and collaborative activities can support engagement with contemporary moral issues. Participants will experience selected activities and consider how they might be adapted for different disciplines, student populations, and instructional settings. The presentation also examines responsible ways AI can be used to develop and refine ethics-focused learning activities.

Kristin Borgwald is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at St. Louis Community College, Meramec.

2. Ethical Reasoning in Everyday AI Learning: Integrating JMU's Eight Key Questions into AI for Global Impact

This presentation examines how ethical reasoning can be integrated into students' everyday work with artificial intelligence rather than treated as a separate or concluding activity. Drawing on an interdisciplinary course focused on AI and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the paper describes how James Madison University's Eight Key Questions framework was incorporated into individual reflection, team-based project development, and student assessment. The presentation explores both the benefits and challenges of embedding ethical reflection into ongoing learning and design processes and offers a practical model that can be adapted across disciplines.

Co-Authors: Venkat Kolluri, Managing Director of KrossPad, a technology venture studio, and an adjunct faculty member at James Madison University; **Christian Early**, Director of Ethical Reasoning in Action at James Madison University.

Raafat Zaini is Associate Professor of Integrated Science and Technology at James Madison University. His teaching and research focus on systems thinking, system dynamics modeling, engineering and technology education, and the application of systems approaches to complex social and technical challenges.

10 – 11:15am Session Seven

Track 7A - Room: Allegheny Room

Panel Discussion: Making Ethics Accessible for Undergraduate Engineers in the Age of AI: A Participatory Action Research (PAR) Framework

How can ethics be made more accessible and relevant to engineering students in an age increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence? This panel introduces a Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework that treats students as active collaborators in identifying and addressing ethical challenges associated with AI and emerging technologies. Panelists will discuss the development of teaching modules, case studies, and assessment strategies designed to help students engage with issues such as bias, transparency, trust, intellectual ownership, and reliance on AI systems. The session will include discussion of how ethics education can be integrated into authentic engineering contexts and refined through collaboration with learners.

Bryn Seabrook is an Associate Professor at the University of Virginia. Trained in Science and Technology Studies, she holds B.A., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Her research examines AI pedagogy in engineering education and explores the sociotechnical implications for ethical practice and undergraduate learning.

Esther Tian is an Associate Professor of Engineering at the University of Virginia. She received her Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Virginia. Her research focuses on engineering design education and the ethical integration of generative AI into engineering practice and pedagogy.

Christine Toh is an Assistant Professor of Engineering at James Madison University. Her research examines the design theories and methods that form the basis of modern engineering endeavors to get us closer to fulfilling the discipline's promise of improving society.

Track 7B - Room: Highlands Room

Panel Discussion: Integrity in Theory and Practice: Panel and Participant Conversation

This interactive session explores the concept of integrity and its role in practical and professional ethics. Rather than focusing on a single disciplinary perspective, the discussion will examine what integrity is, why it matters, and how it functions across different contexts, including academic, research, professional, and personal life. Participants will be invited to contribute to a conversation about the relationship between integrity, ethical standards, professional obligations, and the norms that guide judgments about whether individuals and institutions act with integrity.

Daniel E. Wueste is the Kathryn and Calhoun Lemon Professor of Philosophy at Clemson University. His scholarship focuses on practical and professional ethics, legal philosophy, and social and political philosophy. He is a past president of the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum.

Cliff Guthrie is Professor of Ethics, Philosophy, and Religion at Husson University. He previously taught in theological education and now teaches and writes in ethics, philosophy, and religion, with particular interests in moral psychology and the ethical effects of emerging technologies.

Track 7C - Room: Conference Room 4

1. The Ethical Administrator?

What ethical responsibilities do academic administrators have when navigating tensions among institutional policies, legal requirements, emerging technologies, and the needs of faculty and students? This presentation examines the challenges faced by deans, associate deans, and department chairs as they balance ethical commitments with the practical realities of governance. The paper explores when resistance to policies may be ethically required, when compromise may be justified, and how administrators can maintain ethical integrity while remaining effective participants in institutional decision-making.

Alan Tomhave is Associate Dean of the Beeghly College of Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, and Education and Professor of Philosophy at Youngstown State University. His research focuses on applied ethics and political philosophy, particularly questions concerning the nature of the state and citizenship. He founded the university's Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl program and co-coached the team that won the 2020 national championship.

2. Academic Obligations

What obligations do academics have to share their expertise with the broader public? This presentation argues that scholars have responsibilities that extend beyond teaching and research, including the obligation to use their specialized knowledge for the public good. Drawing on examples from art history, bioethics, and public discourse, the paper examines the relationship between academic expertise, public trust, and academic freedom. It also considers the responsibilities of universities and other institutions to support scholars as they engage publicly within their areas of competence and expertise.

Wade L. Robison is the Ezra A. Hale Professor of Applied Ethics at the Rochester Institute of Technology. The founding president of the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum, he has published extensively in applied and professional ethics, philosophy of law, and Hume studies, and is the author of *Ethics Within Engineering*.

Track 7D - Room: Conference Room 6

1. Full Circle: Reciprocal Research Relationships with Virginia's Indigenous Communities

Virginia archaeologists have a long history of investigating and interpreting Indigenous archaeological sites and landscapes without the partnership or input of descendant communities. However, new approaches built on collaborative relationships are changing this extractive practice. By holding archaeologists accountable to Indigenous community partners and valuing their knowledge and oral traditions, reciprocal archaeology creates new opportunities for research and cultural revitalization. Moving beyond legally mandated consultation, mutual knowledge sharing enriches archaeological practice and supports the needs of Indigenous communities whose traditions were disrupted by colonialism.

Carole Nash is Professor of Integrated Science and Technology at James Madison University. A Registered Professional Archaeologist, she specializes in Appalachian archaeology, human ecology, citizen science, and cultural resource management. She is grateful for collaborations with citizens of Virginia's Native American communities. Her current research examines the impacts of climate change on cultural heritage resources through the integration of geospatial technologies, archaeology, and public participation in science.

2. Intergenerational Climate Justice

Why do societies often struggle to address harms that will fall most heavily on future generations? Building on work in climate ethics and intergenerational justice, this presentation examines the role of empathy in shaping concern for future people. The paper argues that climate injustice is not only a policy or economic problem but also a challenge of moral imagination and social connection. Drawing on research on empathy, loneliness, and social responsibility, it explores how ethics education may help foster greater concern for future generations and strengthen support for climate action.

Rayne Lyl Renney is an undergraduate student studying accounting and international accounting at North Seattle College and philosophy with a concentration in ethics at the University of Washington.

Track 7E - Room: Conference Room 7

1. From Omelas to *The Good Place*: Some Best Practices for Ethics Across the Curriculum Professional Development Workshops

This presentation examines effective approaches to designing, facilitating, and assessing ethics across the curriculum professional development workshops. Drawing on experience leading multi-day workshops at several institutions, the paper discusses strategies for creating intellectually engaging learning environments, developing ethics-focused learning outcomes, modeling classroom activities, and tailoring ethics instruction to different disciplines. The presentation also explores how professional development programs can support the broader mission of higher education by fostering ethical reflection, agency, and community among faculty, staff, and students.

Amy McKiernan is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Director of Ethics Across Campus & the Curriculum at Dickinson College. Her teaching and research focus on practical ethics, care ethics, moral emotions, ethics pedagogy, and the relationship between philosophy and literature. She also leads Dickinson's ethics across the curriculum initiatives and has directed the college's Core Values Project.

2. Applied Ethics, Learning Outcomes, and Well-Being

This presentation examines the use of scientifically validated contemplative practices in an applied ethics course as a means of promoting both ethical learning and student well-being. Students engaged in structured contemplative activities throughout the semester, with the goal of supporting course-specific learning outcomes as well as broader educational competencies. The paper discusses the effects of these practices on ethical reasoning, moral reflection, wellness, citizenship, and students' ability to connect philosophical ideas to contemporary issues and their own lives. It also considers lessons that may be applicable across disciplines.

Joshua Anderson is Associate Professor in the Department of History and Philosophy at Virginia State University. He holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Saint Louis University. His research interests include African American philosophy, comparative philosophy, ethics and applied ethics, Eastern philosophy, and social and political philosophy.

10:00am - 11:15am

SEAC Pedagogy Fellows Workshop – Conference Room 5

This session is part of the SEAC Pedagogy Fellows Program and is open only to participants accepted into the program.

11:30am Luncheon Keynote

Highlands Room

Jennifer Ruth (Professor of Film, Portland State University) (Presenting in person)

Jennifer Ruth is Professor of Film at Portland State University and a member of the American Association of University Professors' Committee A on Academic Freedom. In addition to her work in film studies, she writes extensively on higher education, academic freedom, and the role of universities in democratic society.

Ruth is the co-author, with Michael Bérubé, of *The Humanities, Higher Education, and Academic Freedom: Three Necessary Arguments* (2015) and *It's Not Free Speech: Race, Democracy, and the Future of Academic Freedom* (2022). She is the editor, with Valerie Johnson and Ellen Schrecker, of *The Right to Learn: Resisting the Right-Wing Attack on Academic Freedom* (2024), which won the AAC&U Frederic W. Ness Book Prize in 2025. With Jan Haaken, she directed the documentary *The Palestine Exception: What's at Stake in the Campus Protests?* (2024) Her work explores questions of academic freedom, free expression, faculty governance, and the public responsibilities of colleges and universities.

What Is Academic Freedom For?

This talk explores the meaning and purpose of academic freedom in American institutions of higher education. Focusing particularly on the McCarthy era and the present day, I examine how academic freedom becomes contested and redefined during periods of significant federal and state political interference in the governance of colleges and universities.

The Tuesday luncheon is brought to you courtesy of The School of Integrated Sciences (SIS).



The School of Integrated Sciences empowers students in Geography, Integrated Science and Technology, Intelligence Analysis, and Biotechnology to analyze and solve real-world human problems by integrating scientific, technological, and social aspects and communicating innovative solutions to a diverse audience. We emphasize hands-on learning, holistic thinking, and innovative approaches to challenging issues.



1:30 – 2:45pm Session Eight

Track 8A - Room: Allegheny Room

Panel Discussion: The Moral University in the Age of AI

How is artificial intelligence shaping student character development, and what responsibilities do educational institutions have in response? Drawing on recent work in character education and virtue development, this panel examines how generative AI may influence the habits, relationships, role models, and reflective practices that contribute to moral formation. Bringing together educators from both university and military-academy settings, the discussion explores the virtues, dispositions, and institutional responsibilities that may be most important as students learn to navigate an increasingly AI-mediated world.

Moderator:

Christina Kilby is Associate Professor of Religion and Executive Director of the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at James Madison University.

Panelists:

Graham Davidson is Policy Analyst for the College of Education at James Madison University, retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army, and former character development professor at West Point.

Christian Early is Director of Ethical Reasoning in Action at James Madison University.

Harry Jones is a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army, former Associate Fellow of the Oxford Character Project, and former professor of philosophy at West Point.

Track 8B - Room: Highlands Room

1. Let's Revolutionize Ethics Education for Future Technology Leaders: Strategic Approaches, Qualitative Evidence, and Lessons Learned from Engineering Ethics That Can Be Applied Across Colleges and Curricula

How can ethics education move beyond teaching principles and compliance requirements to cultivate lasting habits of ethical decision-making? Drawing on experience teaching engineering ethics to more than 2,100 undergraduate students, this presentation examines instructional strategies that promote ethical reflection and professional responsibility. The paper discusses qualitative evidence regarding changes in students' ethical priorities, identifies approaches that proved effective and ineffective, and considers how lessons from engineering ethics may be adapted across disciplines and curricula.

Rachel M. Frazier Rachel Frazier is a Gene Fraser Teaching Professor at the University of Florida's Engineering Leadership Institute. She brings people and ideas together to connect ethics and leadership education with engineering practice, helping engineers weave ethics into everyday engineering, from how they frame problems to how they make decisions, innovate, and lead.

2. From Requirements to Release: A Participative Demonstration

How can ethical reasoning be integrated into the technical work engineering students already perform? This pedagogical demonstration introduces a participatory activity in which participants take on the role of students reviewing a simulated automotive release packet. By annotating requirements, testing notes, and release criteria, participants identify missing stakeholders, default-user assumptions, unequal burdens, and more. The activity offers a practical approach to integrating ethical reflection into engineering design and other documentation-heavy courses.

Kennedy Stone is a final-year master's student in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Florida, with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering Technology. Their research interests include engineering ethics education, CAD-based learning, and developing curricula that prepare socially responsible engineers. They are currently applying to doctoral programs in engineering education.

Track 8C - Room: Conference Room 4

Panel Discussion: Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning is widely recognized as a high-impact educational practice that promotes collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving. This panel explores an additional benefit: its potential to strengthen trust in ethics education and higher education more broadly. Drawing on faculty and student experiences, panelists will discuss how project-based learning connects ethics education to community engagement, develops skills that cannot easily be automated or outsourced to AI, and creates meaningful opportunities for applied ethical inquiry. The session will include practical examples, assignment ideas, and strategies for building successful community partnerships.

Chris Weigel is Director of the Center for the Study of Ethics, Professor of Philosophy, and core faculty member in Integrated Studies at Utah Valley University. Her teaching and research interests include ethics of artificial intelligence, moral psychology, philosophy of disability, dementia care ethics, and questions surrounding human autonomy and interdisciplinary ethics.

Student Panelists: Noah Scott, Calvin Sudar, and Jack Cloninger from Utah Valley University

Track 8D - Room: Conference Room 6

1. Comparing Traditional Qualitative Coding and Large Language Model-Assisted Analysis of STEM Ethics Reflection Essays

This presentation examines the use of artificial intelligence in qualitative research by comparing large language model-assisted analysis with traditional human coding. Using student reflection essays from a STEM ethics education intervention, the study evaluates similarities and differences in thematic interpretation, reliability, and efficiency. The paper explores how AI-assisted analysis performs in identifying themes related to ethical reasoning, responsibility, professional identity, and decision-making, and considers the potential role of AI as a complement to established qualitative research methods.

Susan LeFrancois is Associate Professor at Florida Polytechnic University. She holds a Ph.D. in Pharmacology and Physiology from the University of Florida and has professional experience in higher education, quality assurance, regulatory affairs, and healthcare-related research.

2. Cultivating Ethical STEM Identity in an Age of Uncertainty: Quantitative Assessment of an Internship-Based Ethics Intervention

How do ethics education and workplace experiences shape the development of ethical STEM professionals? This presentation examines an NSF-supported project that combines ethics instruction, reflective activities, and professional internships. Using pre- and post-intervention survey data, the study explores changes in students' ethical awareness, confidence in addressing ethical challenges, sense of professional responsibility, and identification as ethical STEM professionals. The findings provide evidence regarding the role of experiential learning in supporting ethical development within STEM education.

Grisselle Centeno is Professor of Supply Chain and Analytics, Lyons Endowed Chair in Logistics, and Director of the M.S. in Analytics program at Florida Southern College. She conducts research in analytics, optimization, STEM education, and STEM ethics. Dr. Centeno was as Principal Investigator of a six-year, multi-institutional NSF-funded project examining the ethical identity development of STEM professionals, which concluded in 2026.

Track 8E - Room: Conference Room 7

1. Deliberative Disruption: Sustaining the Mission of Higher Education in an Era of Rapid Change

How can colleges and universities sustain their educational mission amid rapid technological, political, and social change? This presentation examines challenges facing higher education, including growing emphasis on individual return on investment and pressures that can undermine the public purposes of universities. Drawing on the experiences of academic leaders, the presentation considers the role of deliberation, shared governance, and democratic decision-making in preserving the distinctive mission of higher education while responding thoughtfully to contemporary challenges and opportunities.

Kerry Crawford is Professor and Academic Unit Head of the Department of Political Science at James Madison University.

Katie Dredger is Professor and Interim Associate Dean of the College of Education at James Madison University.

2. The Product-Oriented University: A Critique of an Increasingly Product-Oriented Approach to Higher Education in the United States

What is the purpose of a university: to cultivate educated individuals or to produce marketable outcomes? This presentation examines the increasing emphasis on employability, workforce preparation, and research productivity in American higher education. The paper argues that these developments encourage a product-oriented view of universities, one that may undervalue learning as a process. Particular attention is given to changing student expectations, institutional priorities, and tenure systems, and to the educational significance of inquiry, experimentation, and even failure.

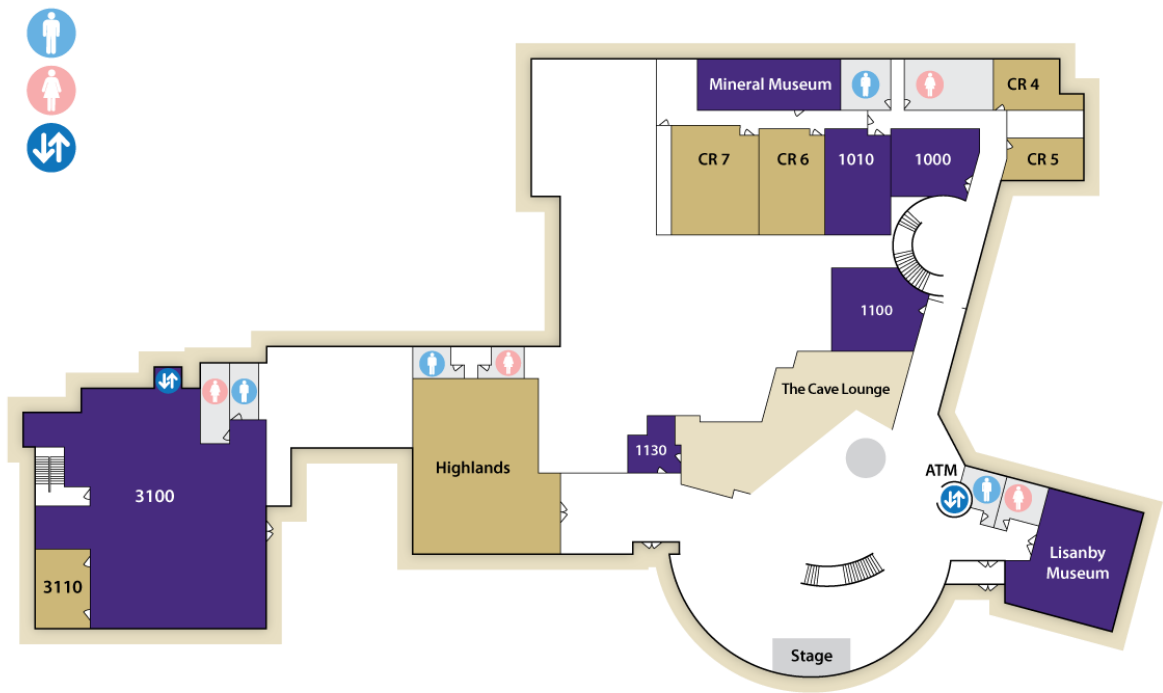
Aidan Tomhave is an undergraduate student at George Mason University studying physics and philosophy.

4:30 – 5:15pm Session Four

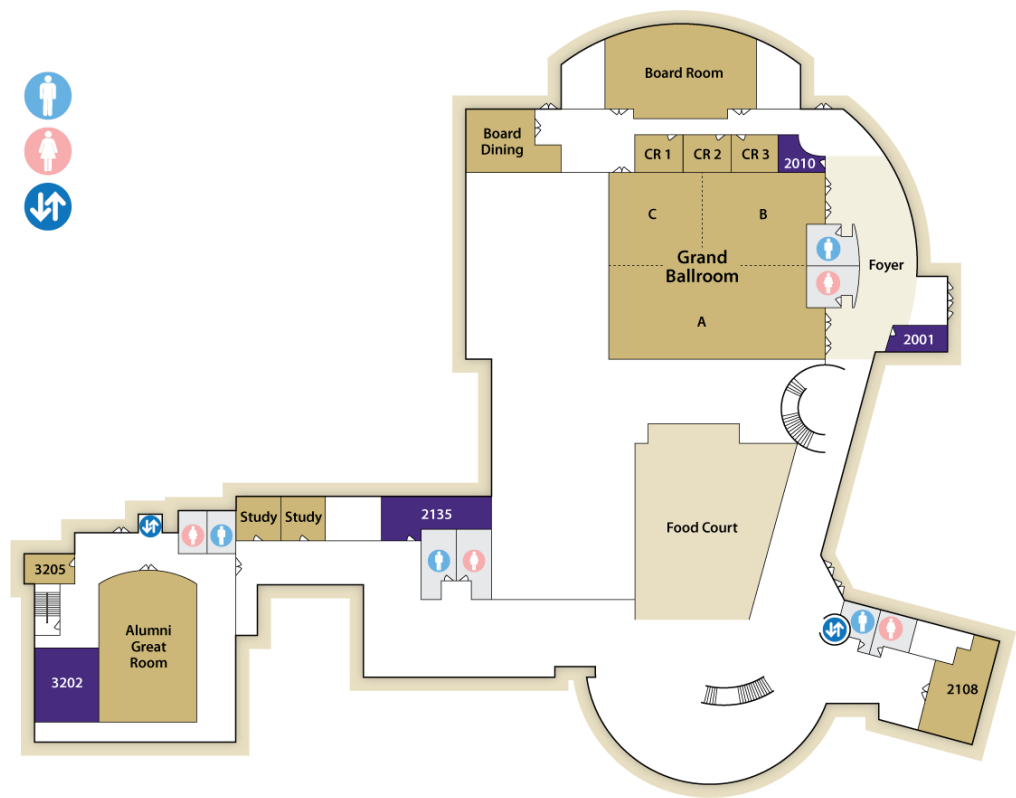
SEAC Business Meeting

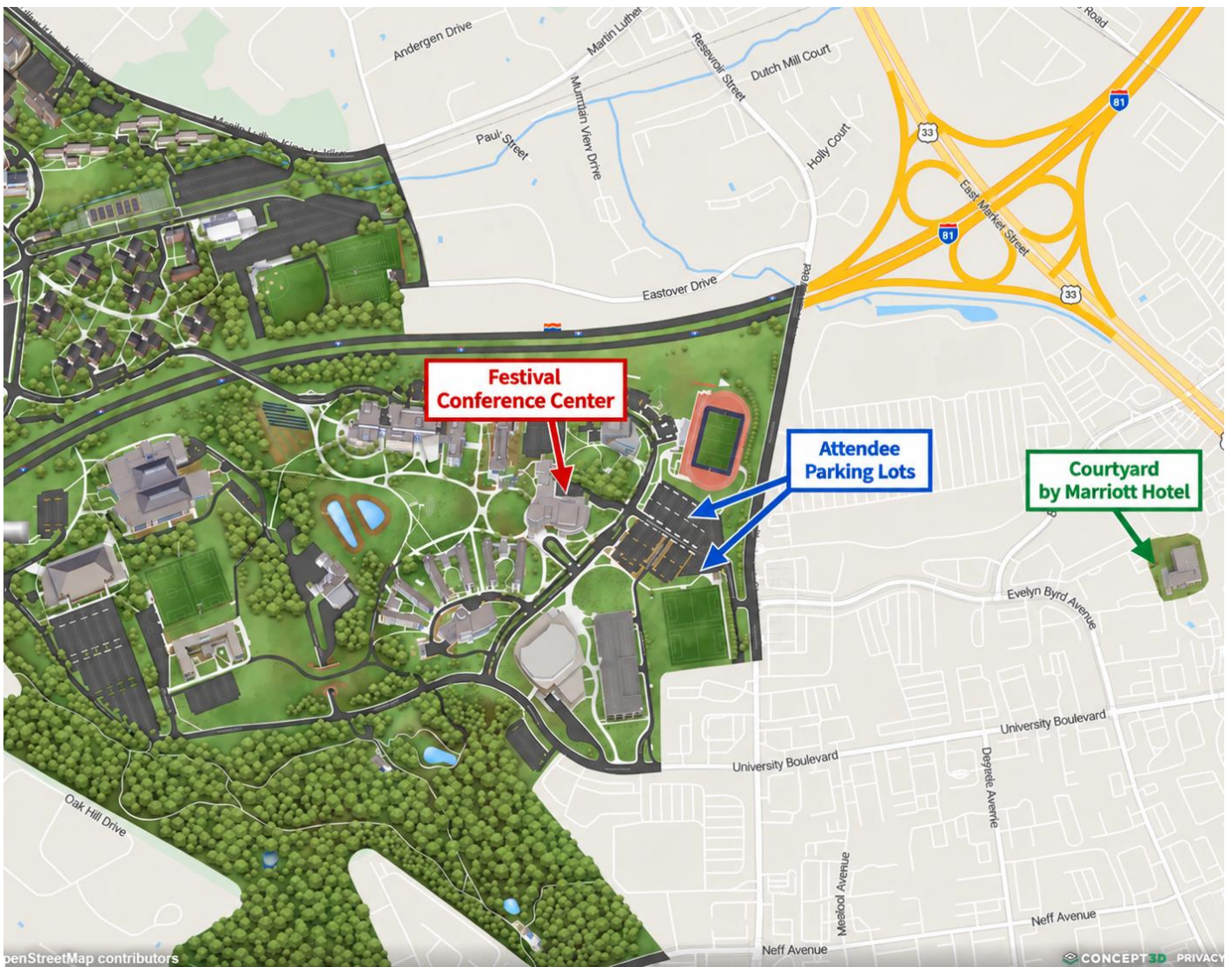
All conference participants are warmly invited to attend the annual SEAC Business Meeting. This session provides an opportunity to learn about the Society's activities, hear reports on finances and organizational planning, discuss future conferences and initiatives, and participate in ongoing conversations about maintaining a vibrant, effective, and sustainable organization. Member input and participation are welcome and encouraged.

Festival Conference Center Ground Floor



Festival Conference Center Upper Floor







This week-long institute is designed to support institutions and organizations seeking to implement the 8KQ strategy at scale. Attendees will experience hands-on, collaborative opportunities to create an improvement plan that integrates content knowledge and skills in ethical reasoning with pedagogy, assessment, and faculty development.

To learn more, scan the QR code above or visit:

<https://www.jmu.edu/assessment/learn/workshops/initi8.shtml>

The Eight Key Questions

Fairness - How can I (we) act justly, equitably, and balance legitimate interests?

Outcomes - What possible actions achieve the best short- and long-term outcomes for me and all others?

Responsibilities - What duties and/or obligations apply?

Character - What actions help me (us) become my (our) ideal self (selves)?

Liberty - How do I (we) show respect for personal freedom, autonomy, and consent?

Empathy - How would I (we) act if I (we) cared about all involved?

Authority - What do legitimate authorities (e.g. experts, law, my religion/god) expect?

Rights - What rights, if any, (e.g. innate, legal, social) apply?

