

MATTHEW MATHERNE
Curriculum Vitae

Department of Philosophy
University of Texas at Austin
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EDUCATION

PhD Philosophy, University of Texas at Austin	December 2023
Post-baccalaureate in Classics, Columbia University	2011
BA Philosophy (Honors), University of Texas at Austin	2007
BBA Finance (Honors), University of Texas at Austin	2007

AREA OF SPECIALIZATION

Ancient Philosophy

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Ethics, Epistemology

PUBLICATIONS

“The Value of Socratic Inquiry in the <i>Apology</i> ,” <i>Ancient Philosophy</i> .	Fall 2023
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FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND HONORS

Summer Dissertation Fellowship University of Texas at Austin, The Graduate School	Summer 2022
Graduate Continuing Fellowship University of Texas at Austin, The Graduate School	Fall 2020
Recruiting Fellowship University of Texas at Austin, Department of Philosophy	Fall 2016

PRESENTATIONS

“Do the wise always succeed? A split-level reading of <i>Euthydemus</i> 278-282,” 18 th Annual Conference on Philosophy, Athens Institute for Education and Research	May 2023
“The Attitudes of Socratic Inquiry,” Early Career Inquiry Network, organized by David Thorstad (Oxford) and Arianna Falbo (Brown)	December 2020
“The Value of Socratic Inquiry in the <i>Apology</i> ,” Conference 2020: Nature of Inquiry, Agnes Scott College	March 2020
<i>Commentary on</i>	
Joe Bullock, “Equal-Strength in Pyrrhonian Skepticism,” 46 th Annual Ancient Philosophy Conference, University of Texas at Austin	April 2023
Derek Van Zoonen, “The ontological argument against hedonism in Plato’s <i>Philebus</i> ,” 41 st Annual Ancient Philosophy Conference, The University of Florida	February 2018
Edgar González, “The ‘Razor’ Argument of <i>Metaphysics</i> A 9” XII Encuentro de Filosofía, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	October 2017

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Do the wise always succeed? A Split-Level Reading of <i>Euthydemus</i> 278-82” (under review)
“The Attitudes of Socratic Inquiry”

TEACHING

Main Instructor

Early Modern Philosophy	Fall 2023
Introduction to Philosophy	Spring, Fall 2021; Spring 2023
Ancient Philosophy	Fall 2022
Contemporary Moral Problems	Spring 2022

Teaching Assistant

Early Modern Philosophy (Katherine Dunlop)	Spring 2020
History of Ancient Philosophy (Jeff Leon)	Fall 2019
Early Modern Philosophy (A.P. Martinich)	Fall 2018
History of Ancient Philosophy (Matt Evans)	Fall 2017

Existentialism (Kathleen Higgins)	Spring 2017
Intro to Philosophy (Jeff Leon)	Fall 2016

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

Aristotle's <i>Metaphysics</i> (Jim Hankinson)	Fall 2020
Conference Course: Epistemic Value and Inquiry (Sinan Dogramaci)	Fall 2019
Socrates (Matt Evans, Paul Woodruff)	Spring 2019
Plato: <i>Symposium</i> (Leslie Dean Jones)	Spring 2019
Hellenistic Philosophy (Jim Hankinson)	Fall 2018
Homer: <i>Iliad</i> (Deborah Beck)	Fall 2018
Plato on Knowledge and the Good (Matt Evans)	Spring 2018
Conference Course: <i>Posterior Analytics</i> (Jim Hankinson)	Spring 2018
<i>Telos</i> , Function and Explanation (Sinan Dogramaci and Ray Buchanan)	Spring 2018
Metaphysics of Modality (Jon Erling Litland)	Fall 2017
Kant's <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> (Ian Proops and Katherine Dunlop)	Fall 2017
Virtue Ethics (Matt Evans and Paul Woodruff)	Spring 2017
Aristotle's Philosophy of Mind (Jim Hankinson)	Spring 2017
Core Logic (Josh Dever)	Spring 2017
Classical Indian Epistemology (Stephen Phillips)	Fall 2016
Neo-Aristotelianism (Rob Koons)	Fall 2016
First-year Seminar (Galen Strawson and Michelle Montague)	Fall 2016

PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING AND TEACHING CERTIFICATES

Inclusive Classrooms Leadership Certificate University of Texas at Austin, Diversity Division	Fall 2022
Teaching Philosophy University of Texas at Austin, Department of Philosophy	Fall 2018

SERVICE

Co-organizer

Graduate Colloquium Series, University of Texas at Austin	2017-18
UT Austin Philosophy Graduate Conference, University of Texas at Austin	2017-18

LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

Ancient Greek, Latin

REFERENCES

Matt Evans (chair)
Associate Professor of Philosophy
University of Texas at Austin
 evansmatt@utexas.edu

Stephen White
Professor of Philosophy and Classics
University of Texas at Austin
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Rachel Barney
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Daniel Drucker
Assistant Professor
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Katherine Dunlop (teaching reference)
Associate Professor of Philosophy
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THE VALUE OF SOCRATIC INQUIRY (Dissertation Abstract)

In the *Apology*, Socrates claims that his characteristic activity, Socratic inquiry (SI), is the greatest good for a human and that to practice it is happiness. My project attempts to make sense of these extravagant claims. First, I examine Socratic value theory by navigating what I term the ‘Socratic Happiness Paradox.’ Socrates appears to be both happy and unhappy. He appears to be happy because he practices SI – the greatest good for a human that *is* happiness; yet he appears to be unhappy because he is unwise and having wisdom is necessary for happiness (WNH). Via a close reading of the *locus classicus* for WNH, *Euthydemus* 278-282, I argue that Socrates is not committed to WNH, but instead argues that wisdom by nature is the *cause* of correct use of assets and of happiness. Ignorance, conversely is the cause of incorrect use and of unhappiness. I argue that since the unwise can correctly use assets and be happy when *led by wisdom*, Socrates is not committed to WNH. Next, I turn to the nature of Socratic inquiry. Most interpreters emphasize Socrates’ inquisitive *procedure* (i.e. the elenchus) as they characterize SI. I argue that a set of distinctive *evaluative attitudes* are required to practice SI. These attitudes are required to practice SI and make SI an activity of care for one’s soul. Finally, having analyzed Socratic value theory and the nature of SI, I address the evaluative question - *What makes Socratic inquiry valuable?* - directly. Any interpreter who accounts for the value of SI must navigate the following choice point: either SI is merely instrumentally valuable or it is not. Many interpreters engage in an what I term the instrumentalist project, which attempts to account for the value of SI solely in terms of its results. I pose two puzzles for such interpreters and argue that these puzzles are best resolved by denying the assumption that guides the instrumentalist project - that SI is merely instrumentally valuable. I argue that since Socrates claims *care for one’s soul* is superlatively valuable and is happiness in the *Apology*, it is an excellent candidate for what makes Socratic inquiry non-instrumentally valuable. Finally, after addressing potential resistance to this proposal, I place it within the context of the Socratic value theory developed in the *Euthydemus*, *Meno* and *Apology* and argue that these texts support such a non-instrumental interpretation.