

## SCHEDULE

### Friday, October 6

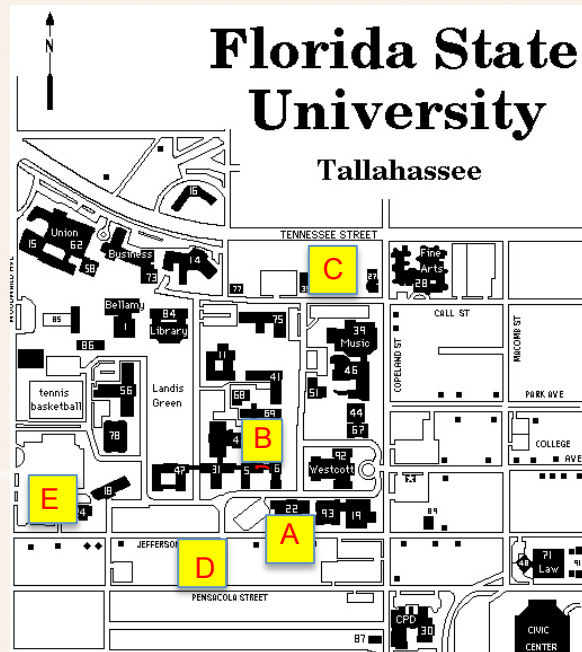
- 3:00pm Registration (Dodd Hall Auditorium)
- 3:30pm Keynote Address  
**Prof. Michael McKenna**  
University of Arizona  
"Punishment and the Value of Deserved Suffering"
- 5:30pm Reception, Dodd Hall

### Saturday, October 7

- 8:00am Light Breakfast (Dodd Hall Auditorium)
- 8:30am **Andrew Law**, UC Riverside  
"Explanations in Frankfurt Cases"  
Commenter: Matthew Jernberg, FSU
- 9:30am **Etye Steinberg**, University of Toronto  
"Reflection and Responsibility for Attitudes"  
Commenter: Rachel Amoroso, FSU
- 10:30am **Isaiah Lin**, Syracuse University  
"Absence Causation and Supervenience"  
Commenter: Andrew Christman, FSU
- 11:30am Lunch (on your own)
- 1:00pm **David Poplar**, University of Arizona  
"In Praise of Gratitude"  
Commenter: Gordon Cooper, FSU
- 2:00pm **Derek Lam**, University of Virginia  
"The Dilemma Defense and Remaining Agnostic in the Right Way"  
Commenter: Jay Spitzley, FSU
- 3:00pm **Phoebe H. Y. Chan**, University of Arizona  
"Two Myths of Free Agency"  
Commenter: Nick Sparks, FSU
- 4:00pm Keynote Address  
**Prof. David Shoemaker**  
Tulane University  
"Hurt Feelings"
- 6:00pm Reception, Dodd Hall

## Structure of Graduate Student Sessions:

- Presentation: 25 minutes  
Comment and Response: 10 and 5 minutes  
Q&A: 10 minutes  
Break: 10 minutes



A: Dodd Hall Auditorium

B: Suwannee Room

Campus dining hall (several buffet-style options, including vegetarian and vegan options)

C: Pitaria

Mediterranean sandwiches and more

D: Sweet Shop

Great coffee, wraps, and more

E: 1851

Collection of options including burgers, Asian fusion, and pizza

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6<sup>th</sup> Annual

## Free Will, Moral Responsibility, and Agency Conference



**Dodd Hall Auditorium**

**Friday and Saturday,  
October 6-7, 2017**

Sponsored by the  
Congress of Graduate Students (COGS)  
and the Department of Philosophy



Organized by the Florida State University  
Philosophy Graduate Student Association (PGSA)

### **“Explanations in Frankfurt Cases”**

Andrew Law, University of California, Riverside

In some cases, an agent appears morally responsible for an outcome despite the fact that the outcome was inevitable. In other cases, the agent does not appear morally responsible for an outcome precisely because the outcome was inevitable. It is quite a puzzle giving a principled difference between the two types of cases. In my view, the most promising solution to this puzzle involves pointing out a causal asymmetry: that an agent is responsible for an outcome only if the agent caused the outcome. I offer a new development of the causal solution and argue that it is superior to previous developments.

**Commenter:** Matthew Jernberg, FSU

### **“In Praise of Gratitude”**

David Poplar, University of Arizona

The prominent approach to explaining Strawsonian reactive attitudes put forth by R. Jay Wallace posits that their unique propositional content comes from their connection with normative expectations – they reflect the violation of those expectations. Consequently, only negative attitudes such as resentment, indignation, and guilt have moral significance because they are the only ones associated with violations of expectations; positive attitudes, such as gratitude, admiration, and pride, can have no place in this account of moral responsibility. I suggest that this view is too pessimistic and argue that positive reactive attitudes do have moral significance. These attitudes have been treated asymmetrically because of an assumption that views moral responsibility only in terms of blameworthiness, which contrasts acts that violate expectations against acts that meet expectations and acts that exceed them. I argue that grouping these latter two types of acts together is inappropriate, because acts that exceed expectations – supererogatory acts – should be viewed separately. When they are considered on their own, it is evident that supererogatory acts are connected with positive reactive attitudes just as acts that violate expectations are connected with negative attitudes. Thus, in terms of holding someone morally responsible, reactive attitudes can indicate not only when someone acts morally wrong, but also when they act morally exemplary. Wallace’s reactive account can therefore be amended; rather than applying to acts that violate normative expectations, it can apply to acts that do not accord with normative expectations.

**Commenter:** Gordon Cooper, FSU

### **“Reflection and Responsibility for Attitudes”**

Eyete Steinberg, University of Toronto

According to a common, ‘reflectionist’ view, the capacity for higher-order reflection on our lower-order attitudes and mental states is necessary for being responsible for these attitudes, and for the actions that these ensue from these attitudes. Recently, several authors have argued that such reflection is not necessary for responsibility, whether for attitudes or for actions. In this paper, I argue for the more radical claim that, if reflection is necessary for awareness of an attitude, then one cannot be responsible for this attitude. If reflection is necessary for awareness of an attitude, then the kind of knowledge one would have of this attitude will be merely observational, or theoretical. If so, then this attitude is not sensitive to the right kind of reasons. This implies that one cannot be answerable, and therefore responsible, for having this attitude. It also implies that one cannot be answerable for one’s implicit attitudes. This, in turn, raises a challenge regarding whether one can be responsible for actions that are motivated by such implicit attitudes, for which one is not answerable.

**Commenter:** Rachel Amoroso, FSU

### **“The Dilemma Defense and Remaining Agnostic in the Right Way”**

Derek Lam, University of Virginia

The Dilemma Defense is arguably one of the most persistent pushbacks against the arguments for compatibilism based on Frankfurt-style cases. The traditional argument based on the Frankfurt-style cases assumes determinism yet expects one to retain intuitive judgments about moral responsibility in particular scenarios. According to the Dilemma Defense, that’s begging the question against the incompatibilism. Fischer argues that there is a way to extract the compatibilist insight from the Frankfurt-style cases with a slightly different argument, which I call the Irrelevance Argument. In this essay, I’ll first offer a schematic presentation of the Irrelevance Argument. Then, I’ll critically examine Cohen’s recent objection, which says that one of the premises of the Irrelevance Argument is inconsistent with an agnostic condition the argument needs. I’ll argue that Cohen is wrong: they aren’t inconsistent. Nonetheless, his objection is pointing us to the right direction. I’ll argue that, in order to remain agnostic in the way required while holding on to the premises of the Irrelevance Argument, one must assume a highly objectionable dialectic position: aim to offer a convincing argument for a particular theory of the ability to do otherwise while hoping that one’s argument isn’t convincing at the same time. For that reason, I conclude that the Irrelevance Argument isn’t a good way to circumvent the Dilemma Defense.

**Commenter:** Jay Spitzley, FSU

### **“Absence Causation and Supervenience”**

Isaiah Lin, Syracuse University

Carolina Sartorio’s actual-sequence view, ACS, relies on the truth of (1) the supervenience of facts about freedom on facts about actual causal sequences and (2) the genuine possibility of absence causation. Here, I argue that simultaneously endorsing both (1) and (2) is more challenging than we might have originally thought, since the solution Sartorio adopts to resolve a metaphysical objection to (2) betrays the motivations we have for (1). The trouble, I argue, is as follows: Absence is *prima facie* implausible, since absences appear to lack the requisite physical properties which would allow them to be causes. In light of this, Sartorio notes there are two solutions available to the ACS theorist. The first solution is to concede that absences are not causes, but are instead quasi-causes (i.e. merely possible causes). The second solution is to give an analysis of the relevant absence-talk in terms of positive events. On this response, absence-talk is really just a disguised way of talking about entities which are not themselves absences at all. Both of these solutions ultimately turn out to be unavailable for Sartorio.

**Commenter:** Andrew Christman, FSU

### **“Two Myths of Free Agency”**

Phoebe H. Y. Chan, University of Arizona

There are two myths of free agency in the literature. The first myth is that freedom of agency consists of being guided by forms of reasoning that a person understands to attain her present ends. The reason why it is a myth is that free agency can be exercised through exploring new ends and new forms of reasoning, which requires a person’s active effort to act in ways that deviate from what she understands. For instance, a person who lacks the conception of equality does not understand how to reason on behalf of equality or have it as an end. However, the person can exercise freedom of agency through exploring a conception of equality. In doing so, the person necessarily goes through a stage in which her behaviors deviate from a pattern that she understands. The second myth is that freedom of agency is totally individual and does not depend on collective wisdom. The reason why it is a myth is that a person’s ability to rationally deliberate about important moral matters necessarily requires continuous social inputs. For instance, a person’s ability to rationally deliberate about equality necessarily relies on the society’s continuous effort to clarify the concept of equality.

**Commenter:** Nick Sparks, FSU