Diversity in Philosophy of Law: Undergraduate Summer Institute

Abstract
“The places where the law does not go,” Mari Matsuda tells us, “have tended to be the places where women, children, people of color, and poor people live.” Originally from her 1989 article, “Public Responses to Racist Speech,” Matsuda’s claim still finds traction today in the field of legal philosophy. As such, the tentatively titled “Diversity in Philosophy of Law: Undergraduate Summer Institute” is a summer program which expressly brings insights from legal philosophy into conversation with the lived experiences of historically marginalized groups. Beginning with an overview of historic American and Canadian decisions in minority rights, three esteemed philosophers of law, who come from underrepresented backgrounds, will discuss their current work in jurisprudence and their experiences as members of historically underrepresented groups in the profession. The second half of the USI provides participants with the opportunity to workshop their Ph.D. application materials, improving an

Basic Information
Project Coordinator(s)
Bianca Waked, Joel Sati

Steering Committee
- Chris Kutz (UCBerkeley)
- Emad Atiq (Cornell)

Funding Amount Requested
$20,000

Expected Project Completion Date
June 2020

Project Description
The "Diversity in Philosophy of Law: Undergraduate Summer Institute" is open to advanced undergraduates and Master's students from historically underrepresented groups interested in pursuing doctoral study in the philosophy of law. There are two goals the USI aims to accomplish:

i. Informed and sophisticated discussion concerning a number of historic American and Canadian legal decisions (and/or dissenting opinions) and their continued impact, and

ii. The opportunity for participants to improve their writing samples through dynamic group discussion and close reading of one another's work.

The first four days of the USI would be dedicated towards providing participants with a comprehensive background on topics such as the devaluation of Black bodies in the law, legal regulation of Arabic bodies
through the War on Terror, the undocumented migration “emergency” and border detention centres, women’s and gender minorities’ (un)equal standing in the law, and the effective erasure of disabled bodies in public and academic spheres. Participants would be provided with a set of readings which would include relevant historical decisions and/or dissenting opinions, coupled with a relevant philosophical article on the topic at hand. These discussions would be further enriched by the inclusion of three current philosophers of law from historically underrepresented groups, as we hope to invite some of the philosophers whose work we will be engaging with. These keynote speakers would provide the opportunity for participants to discuss the arguments and topic in depth as well as discuss their graduate and professional experiences in the philosophy of law. We anticipate this segment of the USI would occur approximately over the span of 4 days.

The second segment of the USI, which is dedicated to preparing participants for graduate and professional work in the philosophy of law, would round out the final three days of the USI. Approximately two months prior to the USI, participants will be asked to submit a philosophical paper of approximately 15-20 pages on any topic within the philosophy of law to be workshopped by other participants. Participants will be paired up and each participant will have one paper for which they are responsible for detailed commentary on the writing sample. Such commentary will be expected to address the structure of the paper, awkward grammar, unclear exposition, and the general strength of the argument. The graduate workshop will begin with a general overview of graduate applications and their necessary components. The first two days of the workshop segment will be dedicated entirely to writing samples. Participants will offer brief remarks of about 5-10 minutes discussing the argument they present in their submitted paper as well as any necessary background information, and the designated commentator will follow with a 5 minute overview of their thoughts. Other participants will then be invited to offer comments, ask questions, or suggest resources or new literature which might prove helpful for approximately 15 minutes. Insofar as the USI will be capped at a maximum of 20 participants, each participant will benefit from both general and detailed feedback on their proposed writing sample. The third day will be dedicated to academic statements and diversity statements, clarifying general expectations of the content of such statements and providing time for participants to begin drafting such statements.

**Project Impact**

While the workshop segment of the USI might seem ill-fitted to the more traditional, opening segment, we take it to be an integral step to diversifying philosophy, and more specifically, the sub-discipline of legal philosophy. Firstly, it is a privilege to have undisturbed time dedicated entirely to graduate applications, free from the extracurricular demands of work, health, financial obligations, social obligations to family members, and physical and mental health impediments. These are merely a some of the difficulties that undergraduates from underrepresented groups might face, and a financially accessible USI which would provide students the opportunity to compose such applications would facilitate successful application cycles.

Furthermore, students from underrepresented groups often face an additional challenge in both the graduate school process as well as graduate school tout court—namely, the knowledge of how institutions operate. Such knowledge rewards those with institutional knowledge and freezing out those who lack such knowledge. A significant structural barrier to graduate admissions and higher education stems from the knowledge and ability to frame one’s knowledge and capacities according to institutional structures. Elena
Ruiz, in her recent talk at the 2019 "Feminist Summer Reading School: Philosophy and Bodies," described the know-how to apply and participate in institutional structures as an epistemic wealth often overlooked. Part of the difficulty of historically underrepresented groups to access and thrive in philosophy graduate programs is reduced knowledge/know-how, and this USI aims to both introduce participants to new and relevant topics in legal philosophy while also providing undisturbed opportunities to compose successful graduate applications.

Having ourselves been undergraduates from underrepresented economic backgrounds, we understand that institutional privilege is cumulative. Whether students from underrepresented groups can even get into graduate school, let alone succeed, inheres in the opportunities they are able to get in their undergraduate career. Many students attend schools that have underfunded humanities programs, and attend large schools that make it difficult to set oneself apart as someone with potential in the discipline. Having as strong a funding position as possible allows students from a wide range of backgrounds to apply to our institute because they will not self-select out of applying because of prohibitive costs. Students who support themselves, or otherwise do not have much funding, will be able to not only attend but fully participate because they have not poured in hundreds of dollars and thereby risked their financial position. We want the focus to be on philosophical discussion as well as personal and professional enrichment.

**Project Goals**

- Informed and sophisticated discussion concerning a number of historic American and Canadian legal decisions (and/or dissenting opinions) and their continued impact.
- The opportunity for participants to improve their writing samples through dynamic group discussion and close reading of one another’s work.
- Opportunity to foster network and community among philosophers of law from historically underrepresented groups.

**Project Timeline**

July 14th, 2019 - August 31st, 2019: Invitations are sent to keynotes and finalized by August 31st.

September 1st, 2019: Advertisements are distributed to philosophy programs across United States and Canada, CPA and APA listservs, PHILOS-Listserv, and PhilEvents page created.

September 1st, 2019-November 30th, 2019: Applications for additional funding.


February 16th, 2020 - March 6th, 2020: Applications are evaluated by the organizing committee.

March 7th, 2020: Participants are notified of their status (accepted, waitlisted, rejected).

May 1st, 2020: Deadline for participants to send their draft writing samples to the DPLUSI organizing team.

June 3rd, 2020: Deadline for participants to send their commentary to the DPLUSI organizing team.

June 20th, 2020: Participants arrive in Ithaca and check-in.

June 28th, 2020: Participants check out and return home.

**Project Outreach**
This project is specifically for advanced undergraduates in philosophy, with a particular emphasis on Canada and United States (as the organizing team consists of a Quebecoise Canadian philosopher and a Kenyan American philosopher). Advertisements will be distributed to philosophy programs across United States and Canada, CPA and APA listservs, PHILOS-Listserv, and a PhilEvents page will be created.

**Accessibility Plan**
We hope to reserve the USI will be meeting in Stimson Hall, room 206 at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. The building has an elevator which is wheelchair accessible, and the elevator opens four feet away from room 206. One of the organizers is a member of the oral Deaf community and she has confirmed that the acoustics of the room are friendly to hearing aids and the desks and chairs can be reformulated into a circle in order to facilitate speech reading and gestural/bodily communication. Any video shown will have proper closed captioning, and a hardcopy of each reading will be available in the course pack. (Large-font printing of the readings will be offered for any participant who is visually impaired.) A quiet room will be available nearby for participants who require silence and/or are sensitive to light and sound. A lactation room is available in the building, and we will be confirming any food allergies and/or dietary preferences with participants in advance.

Participants will be asked to write their names and gender pronouns on name tags. When presenting their writing samples and/or commentaries, participants will be asked to ensure that they speak slowly and clearly, but also remain timely as the schedule will include frequent breaks between sessions. There will be no powerpoint presentations, in order to avoid flashing images and small font, and participants will be asked not to wear strong scents to the sessions. Participants will also be advised to prioritize self-care and not to overwork themselves. They are welcome to leave the room at any point, should a break be needed, and the working assumption in the room will be that the individual is stepping out to the restroom. Additionally, content notices will be an active part of the sessions, as much of the material is of a sensitive and/or traumatic nature. Finally, we will encourage students to remain in contact and reaffirm our commitment to accessibility throughout the week.

**Evaluation Plan**
- We will take into account certain demographic information that will provide us information on where these students are from, what schools they attend, and the life experiences that render them members of underrepresented groups.
- We will be in touch with the applicants who are applying in the cycle directly following the USI. This includes editing application materials. Further, our objective is to have the USI participants build a network that extends to future cohorts.
- We have begun to think about methodologies that allow us to accurately measure our success with regard to our objectives. To wit, Benchmarks to determine success both during and after the USI are: number of participants that are offered admission to graduate programs, the number of USI
alumni that return (the exact capacity is to be determined) to take part in future iterations of the USI, and the number of alumni that help with future applicants.

• We will be asking both participants and invited faculty to fill out surveys that will give us insight into their experience at the USI, with respect to both the content of the USI and its accessibility.

• We will also pay attention to yield rate. To the extent that those admitted are unable to attend, we will pay attention to the number of economic reasons provided. A high positive yield will indicate the success of the USI to fun its admitted students.

• Both the number of institutions and the amount they provide will be integral in our measuring of the support we receive.

**Online Presence**
We plan to create a website and utilize the social media presence of Joel Sati, especially his twitter account which has approximately 1000 followers. Most of said followers are involved in philosophy, legal activism, or law students.

**Budget Narrative**
Honorarium of $500.00 (x3 Keynote) $1,500 (As thanks for the labour of our Keynotes)

Hilton Ithaca (1 night per Keynote Speaker @ $250.00/3 nights total) $750 (Necessary for Keynotes)

Keynote Transportation/Travel Costs (x3) $2,000 (Necessary for Keynotes)

Reading Booklets for Participants $150 (Necessary for Participants)

Advertisement (Posters & Flyers) $50 (Helpful in reaching a broad range of students across universities)

Coffee, Tea, Fruit, Vegetable & Dip, Refreshments, etc. $400 (Participants need to be hydrated and comfortable)

Participant Transportation/Travel Costs (High estimate of $400.00 per participant) $8,000 (Insofar as we would like this USI to be financially accessible and ensure that the cost of attendance is not prohibitive, we feel it is necessary to provide transportation.)

Participant Lodgings (Best Western Ithaca/ 10 double rooms for 20 participants @ $160.00 per night/ Breakfast and accessible transportation included ) $12,800 (Insofar as we would like this USI to be financially accessible and ensure that the cost of attendance is not prohibitive, we feel it is necessary to provide lodgings.)

Meals for Participants (Approximately $40.00 each day per participant) $5,600 (Insofar as we would like this USI to be financially accessible and ensure that the cost of attendance is not prohibitive, we feel it is necessary to provide meals for our participants.)

Total: $31,250.00
Other Funding Sources

Cornell Sage School of Philosophy: $6000.00

UCBerkeley Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program: $1000.00

Yale Law School: $3000.00

MAP: $500

Cornell Women's Center: $750

Cornell LGBT Center: $750

Total: $12,000.00

*The Cornell numbers have been approximated on account of the financial resources provided to Bianca Waked when she organized the 2019 Feminist Summer Reading School: Philosophy and the Body.*