UA Little Rock Ethics and Philosophy Summer Academy

Abstract
The UA Little Rock Ethics and Philosophy Summer Academy (EPSA) will bring up to 25 high school students to the UA Little Rock campus for five days of philosophical community, at no cost to the students. This educational camp aims to engage Arkansas High School students in sustained, collaborative philosophical study. Students will be introduced to a variety of basic philosophical and ethical concepts and develop skills in critical thinking, construction and analysis of arguments, and engagement with philosophical issues in contemporary society. The curriculum will include philosophy seminars and an Ethics Bowl workshop led by experienced UA Little Rock philosophy faculty and experienced High School Ethics Bowl coaches from Central High School in Little Rock. This is a new initiative, but it builds off of our eleven years of organizing the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl.

Basic Information
Project Coordinator(s)
Jana McAuliffe

Steering Committee
• Scott Hairston, English and Philosophy Teacher, Ethics Bowl Coach, Little Rock Central High School
• Michael Norton, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Director, School of Human Inquiry, University of Arkansas, Little Rock
• Jake Morris, Education Content Administrator, BloomBoard, Inc., Ethics Bowl Coach, Little Rock Central High School

Funding Amount Requested
$5,000.00

Expected Project Completion Date
July 2024

Project Description
The purpose of UA Little Rock Ethics and Philosophy Summer Academy (EPSA) is to engage Arkansas High School students in sustained, collaborative philosophical study. Grant funds would enable us to develop and implement the first year of a camp that brings up to 25 high school students (rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors) to the UA Little Rock campus for five days of philosophy community, at no cost to the students. Our goal is a residential camp of five days and four nights, if we can secure enough funding. However, it is possible for us to run this as a day camp in the pilot year, if we can secure support for what is most necessary: food for participants (see details in budget overview below). This is a new initiative, but it builds off of our eleven years organizing the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl.
Through our curriculum, students will be introduced to a variety of basic philosophical and ethical concepts and develop skills in critical thinking, construction and analysis of arguments, and engagement with philosophical issues in contemporary society. Courses will include philosophy seminars and an Ethics Bowl Workshop.

In our seminars, students will practice close reading of primary texts. Texts will be short and chosen with an attention to diversity of philosophical issues and to represent a diversity of philosophical practitioners in terms of race, gender, and sexuality. These seminars will focus on helping students develop proficiency with philosophical concepts. Further, these class sessions will endeavor to spark our collective philosophical imaginations by showing how philosophical reflection can make life more interesting by helping us to think in complex and rigorous ways.

In our Ethics Bowl workshop, students will work together to identify ethical questions, research current social issues, analyze those issues for their ethical dimensions, and develop well-reasoned positions on current ethical questions. The Workshop will include Ethics Bowl-style competition so that students can practice speaking in public in support of their positions, considering alternative points of view, and responding to questions.

**Project Impact**

This initiative serves the discipline of philosophy through community outreach, by expanding the scope of who can engage in philosophical practice. Most US American students are not exposed to philosophy before college; in Arkansas, less than half of graduating high school seniors go on to college [1] and overall about 24% of the population have earned college degrees [2]. There are increasingly fewer opportunities for young Arkansans to experience quality Humanities-based education. The only other academic camp for high school students that includes Humanities instruction initiatives in the state (of which we are aware) is the Arkansas Governor’s School, a four-week residential experience that addresses philosophy as only one small part of its curriculum. The Governor’s School, however, is limited in that it only serves rising seniors, and it is an elite opportunity pitched for gifted and talented students. UA Little Rock’s EPSA aims to serve a broader demographic of students and to focus on the study of philosophy.

Introducing Arkansans to philosophy as part of K-12 education can substantially increase the reach of philosophy in our state. Hopefully, some of these students will be inspired to enroll in philosophy courses if and when they attend university. However, a positive experience with philosophy is beneficial outside of the academic context as well. We believe that when high school students are guided to engage philosophically with each other, facilitated by experienced and passionate philosophy instructors, they will develop a strong appreciation for the power of contemplation and critical thought that will serve them well in their lives.

The Ethics and Philosophy Summer Academy is a new initiative, but it builds off of previous efforts by Philosophy faculty to support pre-college philosophy. Philosophy faculty at UA Little Rock have organized the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl and hosted it on campus for eleven years (although virtually in 2021 and 2022). Our Bowl started as two teams from Little Rock schools competing in 2013, and has grown to as many as eighteen teams from schools across the state. Through this yearly event we have established connections with students and educators at high schools across the state.
Our steering team draws on the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl community, as two members are co-organizers of the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl and two are coaches at Central High School (Little Rock). Jana McAuliffe and Michael Norton have years of experience teaching philosophy and ethics to college students. Michael Norton also coaches the UA Little Rock Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl team, and Jana McAuliffe is the Arkansas State Liaison for PLATO (Philosophy Learning and Teaching Organization). The Central High School Ethics Bowl team has consistently won first place in the Arkansas Bowl and also competed in the National Bowl, placing as high as seventh in the country. Coaches Scott Hairston and Jacob Morris have a proven track record of successful coaching that will inform the Ethics Bowl workshop. Scott Hairston, an English teacher at Central High School, teaches the only accredited philosophy class in a Little Rock School District school, and he has served on the National High School Ethics Bowl Advisory Board and on the Case Writing Committee.


Project Goals
- Expose high school aged Arkansans to the practice of philosophy and philosophical community.
- Support high school aged Arkansans as they use philosophical thinking to deepen their critical and ethical understanding of the contemporary world.

Project Timeline
Fall 2023:
- Apply for additional funding through the Arkansas Humanities Council.
- Develop advertising plan and distribute duties throughout the Steering Committee as to promotion of camp.
- Schedule all rooms at UALR, including housing if funding can be secured.
- Finalize all EPSA policies (program rules and expectations), write a call for applications, and create an online application portal, online registration form, and parental permission forms. Confirm that all agree with UALR policies for hosting minors on campus.
- Schedule the EPSA classes and assign instructors for each session; recruit any additional instructors needed beyond the steering committee from UALR faculty.
- Instructors draft curriculum plans for sessions.

January 2024:
- Apply for additional funds through PLATO

January/February/March 2024
- Advertise the camp through professional networks and through the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl (held in late January/early February)
April 2024:
- Purchase Materials
- Submit food requests

May 2024:
- Finalize curriculum
- Participant applications due; finalize registration.

June/July 2024 (dates still tbd):
- Hold Camp
- Assess Camp through participant survey, parent feedback survey, and instructor feedback
- Write assessment reports for all funders

Project Outreach
The community response to the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl has been overwhelmingly positive: coaches report that their students relish the opportunity to dig into urgent ethical questions and volunteer judges from the Little Rock community are consistently complimentary of the students’ commitment to and enthusiasm for ethical engagement. Students who participate in our High School ethics Bowl have expressed a desire for summer programming that supports HSEB, but this is scarce even at the national level. EPSA will enable us to expand and better serve this group of potential philosophers by strengthening the connections between members of the already existing High School Ethics Bowl community and more broadly between UA Little Rock and high schools throughout the state.

We will use our list of contacts for the Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl to advertise the Ethics and Philosophy Summer Academy. We intend for EPSA and HSEB to be mutually supportive yearly events. We will use these connections to increase the visibility of and expand participation in both events, and EPSA can help us to strengthen the quality of the competition at the HSEB. In addition, the College of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Education at UALR will assist with marketing the camp, as the university hosts other camps for K-12 students.

Accessibility Plan
EPSA will be hosted on the UALR campus and participants will have the support of our Disability Resource Center (https://ualr.edu/disability/). The steering committee can consult the Director of the DRC, Reed Claiborne, and Assistant Director, Julie Shelby, with any questions or concerns related to access for participants (501-916-3143).

In program advertisements we will state our goal to make the camp experience accessible to disabled students, including students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind students, and students who use wheelchairs.

UALR recommends that advertised programs include this statement:
UA Little Rock values the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of the campus experience. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate barriers to your full participation in this camp or event, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator Jana McAuliffe (School of Human Inquiry) at 501-916-3173, jxmcauliffe@ualr.edu.

The registration form will include a request such as:

Please describe any disability-related accommodations that will facilitate your full participation in this camp, which may include such as sign language interpreting, alternate format for written materials (digital, Braille, large print, etc.), wheelchair access, digital handouts, dietary requirements, etc. Feel welcome to contact the Accessibility Coordinator Jana McAuliffe at 501-916-3173, jxmcauliffe@ualr.edu with any questions about accommodations.

**Evaluation Plan**

Goal 1 will be assessed by the number of students who engage in EPSA and also through the evaluations below. As the project grows, we will also track which high schools participate and if necessary develop initiatives that support participation from communities across the state, representing both urban and rural communities.

Goal 2 will be assessed through a pre-writing and post-writing assignment that student participants complete. This will allow instructors to qualitatively track the development of student’s understanding of philosophical and ethical issues over the course of EPSA.

Students will also have the option of completing a questionnaire on the last day of the academy to share anonymous feedback including input on the practical aspects of how the campus is organized and run.

Parents will receive an email with a survey link that asks them to comment on their experience and what their child shared with them.

Instructors will submit feedback on their teaching experiences and the organization and execution of EPSA.

The steering committee will meet in the week following EPSA to review all assessments and create a plan for changes to next year’s academy in terms of curriculum and organization.

**Online Presence**

N/A

**Budget Narrative**

The attached budget is for a fully-funded residential camp providing room and board for 25 students for five days, four nights, to be hosted at the UALR campus. These are estimates that reflect currently published information by UALR Campus Living on securing dorm rooms and campus cafeteria meals for guests, and are subject to adjustment. We have also budgeted for stipends for residential counselors who will oversee students if they stay overnight in the dorms. These figures are based off of the stipends given to RAs at a similar camp at UALR for fine arts.

In the event that we cannot secure funding to support housing, we plan to go forward with the camp in the first year as a day camp. In that event, we will target our recruitment of participants for this first year to
Little Rock area schools, rather than state-wide. If the APA were to fund this Camp in the first year, that support would be a tremendous help to our continued efforts to develop the sustaining funds to hold summer camps for years to come.

**Other Funding Sources**

We are currently writing a grant to the Arkansas Humanities Council to cover our housing expenses (deadline 9/15/23). This fund has exclusions that make it necessary for us to find other sources to accompany it; for example, it will not cover food, which is our major expense. If we could secure the AHC grant, we can develop an overnight camp for Summer 2024; otherwise, we will hold a day camp.

We will seek funding from PLATO (due 1/31/24, announced in March) to support materials (books) and T-shirts.

UALR will support us with advertising, classroom facilities, and accessibility needs.
### American Philosophical Association Small Grant Budget Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
<th>Amount Requested from Other Sources</th>
<th>Amount Requested from APA</th>
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<tr>
<td>housing for student participants and residential counselors in dorm rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>food for all participants</td>
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<td>supplies</td>
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<td>$1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stipends for residential counselors</td>
<td>$2,400.00</td>
<td>$2,400.00</td>
<td>$2,400.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                                                                | $11,800.00     | $6,800.00                          | $5,000.00                 |

Cells in the total row automatically total the items in the column above them.

Proposals over $5,000 normally are not funded.

The total cell for the last column must match the total in the top section of the budget template. If the total here does not match the corresponding total above, the...
Dr. Jana McAuliffe
Associate Professor of Philosophy
UA Little Rock

Areas of Specialization
Social-Political Philosophy, Feminist Philosophy

Areas of Competence
Philosophies of Race, Class, and Sexuality; Contemporary Continental; Ethics; Critical Theory

Faculty Positions
2016-2023 Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Arkansas at Little Rock
2013-2016 Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Marian University.
Chair, Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies, Marian University (2015-2016)
2012-2013 Visiting Instructor of Philosophy, Grinnell College

Education
2013 Ph.D. Philosophy, DePaul University, Chicago, IL
2005 MA Philosophy, DePaul University, Chicago, IL
2001 BA Philosophy, Minor English. University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

Selected Publications

In press — “Teaching Public Philosophy as Course Texts: Strategies for Improving Student Communication,” Teaching Philosophy, (2023)

Selected Projects, Service, and Outreach

2016-23 Co-organizer, Arkansas High School Ethics Bowl
Faculty Advisor, Socratic Society Student Group
2023 Arkansas State Liaison for PLATO (Philosophy Learning and Teaching Organization)
2022-present “Philosophy after Graduation: Conversations between Students and Alums” (ongoing public project in collaboration with undergraduate students)
2020-22 Chair, CHASSE Honors and Awards Committee

contact information
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jxmcauliffe@ualr.edu

Dr. Jana McAuliffe CV
2019-23  Safe Zone, Education Committee
2021-23  UALR Diversity Council
2022-23  UALR, CHASSE Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee

Selected Presentations

2022  —“Feminist comedy and political crisis.” Midwest Society for Women in Philosophy
2021  —“Philosophy after Graduation: Conversations between Students and Alums,” Public Philosophy Network
2019  —“A Public Philosophy Pedagogy,” Public Philosophy Network: Philosophy from All Walks of Life
     —“Patriarchy, Trauma, Language, and Memory” Invited Roundtable Discussion, Eurydice
     —“Mind the snap: self-care, feminist life, and anti-racist politics,” Diverse Lineages of Existentialism
     —“Naming resistance: “race riots”, rebellions, uprisings, and unrest” Invited Roundtable Discussion, Detroit 67

Teaching at UA Little Rock

PHIL 4380 Special Topics, Queer Theory. 1 Section
PHIL 4373/ 5373, Philosophy of Race. 3 Sections
PHIL 4333/5333, Feminist Theory. 2 Sections
PHIL 3347, Philosophy of Law. 3 Sections (1 web)
PHIL 3346, Social-Political Philosophy. 3 Sections (1 web)
SCHL 3300 History of Ideas III. 5 Sections, (3 team-taught)
PHIL 2320, Ethics and Society, Service Learning. 1 Section
PHIL 2320, Ethics and Society. 11 Sections (1 web, 2 web synchronous, 4 web accelerated)
PHIL 1310, Intro. To Philosophy. 14 Sections (6 web, 2 web synchronous, 1 web accelerated)

Directed Student Work (selected to reflect public-facing research projects)

2022-23  —Faculty Mentor, undergraduate sponsored research project, Justin Washington. “P4C-embedded into LRSD curriculum; testing a philosophy program.” *winner first place in Education, UALR Research Expo
2021-22  —Committee Chair, Donaghey Scholars Thesis, Amy Jilek, “The Moral of the Story” (also sponsored research project)
     —Faculty Mentor, undergraduate sponsored research project. Em Williams, “An Axiology of Public Philosophy: A Study in Public Intellectualism.” *winner third place in Humanities, UALR Research Expo
     —Faculty Mentor, undergraduate sponsored research project. Tracy Cook, “Brief Thoughts of the 21st Century.”

Professional Memberships

The American Philosophical Association
The Society for Phenomenological and Existential Philosophy
philoSOPHIA Society for Continental Feminism
Public Philosophy Network

Dr. Jana McAuliffe CV  2
American Association of Philosophy Teachers