

Shelly Yiran Shi

Updated January 26, 2026

Department of Philosophy
University of California, San Diego
9500 Gilman Dr, La Jolla, CA

Email: yis007@ucsd.edu
Office: RWAC 0436
Website: <https://www.shellyshi.com>

- Area of Speciality** Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Physics, Metaphysics
- Area of Competence** Data Ethics, Feminist Epistemology, History of Science, Buddhist Philosophy
- Education**
- | | |
|---|------------------|
| University of California, San Diego | La Jolla, CA, US |
| PhD in Philosophy and Science Studies | 2020 – present |
| Oxford University | Oxford, UK |
| Recognised Student in Philosophy (Assoc. Member, Oriel College) | Hilary 2026 |
| Columbia University | New York, NY, US |
| MA in Philosophical Foundations of Physics | 2017 – 2019 |
| London School of Economics and Political Science | London, UK |
| BSc (Hons) in Philosophy and Economics | 2014 – 2017 |
- Publications**
- Nothing Matters** in *Philosophy of Science* (2025)
Winner of the [Mary B. Hesse Award](#)
<https://doi.org/10.1017/psa.2025.10144>
- Are Symmetry Principles Meta-Laws?** in *Synthese* 205, 223 (2025)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-025-05064-w>
- Works in progress**
- Why Not a Gravitational Perpetual Motion Machine?**
Winner of the [Clifton Memorial Award](#)
- Chien-Shiung Wu: Breaking Parity Against Disparity**
In Preparation
- Patchwork General Relativity**
With Craig Callender
- Approximation Methods in General Relativity**
- Talks**
- | | |
|---|--------|
| Nothing Matters | |
| Spacetime Matters Conference, Utrecht University, Netherlands | Sep'25 |
| Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting, New Orleans, US | Nov'24 |
| British Society for the Philosophy of Science Annual Conference, York, UK | Jul'24 |
| ILMPS Conference in Philosophy & Foundations of Physics, KCL, UK | Jun'24 |
| Chien-Shiung Wu: Breaking Parity Against Disparity | |
| Philosophy Speaker Series, NYU Shanghai, China | Sep'25 |
| Science Studies Graduate Symposium, UCSD, US | May'25 |
| Feminist Philosophy of Physics Workshop, University of Michigan, US | Jun'24 |
| Why Not a Gravitational Perpetual Motion Machine? | |

	Philosophy of Logic-Math-Physics Conference, Western University, Canada	May'25
	Caltech Philosophy of Physics Reading Group, Caltech, US	Apr'25
	Are Symmetry Principles Meta-Laws?	
	European Conference on Foundations of Physics, University of Bristol, UK	Jul'23
	Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting, Pittsburgh, US	Nov'22
	Graduate Philosophy Colloquium, UCSD, US	Apr'22
	Values and Statistics in Algorithmic Fairness	
	Science, Values and Policy Workshop, Yosemite, US	Jun'23
	Algorithmic Fairness: A Statistical Problem in Social Contexts?	
	Philosophy, AI and Society Workshop, Stanford University, US	Jan'23
Awards and scholarships	Clifton Memorial Award for best paper at the Philosophy of Logic-Math-Physics (LMP) graduate student conference, Western University, Canada	2025
	International Institute Research Award (UCSD) for archival research	2025
	Mary B. Hesse Award for the best graduate student essay at the Philosophy of Science Association (PSA) Biennial Meeting, New Orleans, US	2024
	NSF Travel Grant Award for PSA	2022, 2024
	Dean of Arts and Humanities Travel Award (UCSD)	2023, 2024
	Graduate Student Association Travel Award (UCSD)	2023, 2024
	Graduate School of Arts and Science Scholarship (Columbia)	2017 – 2018
	Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Fellowship Award (Columbia)	2018
Research employment	Research assistant Department of Philosophy, UCSD The Nature of Scientific Explanations (Eddy Keming Chen)	Jul'23 – Sep'23
	Research assistant Department of Philosophy, UCSD <i>Laws of Physics</i> , book project (Eddy Keming Chen)	Jul'22 – Sep'22
	Research assistant Department of Philosophy, UCSD “Governing without a Fundamental Direction of Time: Minimal Primitivism about Laws of Nature” and “Strong Determinism” (Eddy Keming Chen)	Jul'21 – May'22
Teaching employment	Instructor of Record Department of Philosophy, UCSD PHIL 24: Science and Pseudoscience	Summer'25
	Teaching assistant Department of Philosophy, UCSD PHIL 24: Science and Pseudoscience (Craig Callender)	Winter'25
	PHIL 55: Living in a Digital World (David Danks)	Fall'24
	PHIL 27: Ethics and Society (Reuven Brandt)	Spring'24
	PHIL 12: Scientific Reasoning (Karen Kovaka)	Fall'23
	Teaching assistant Department of Data Science, UCSD DSC 215: Statistical Thinking and Experimental Design (Yoav Freund)	Winter'24
	Teaching assistant Culture, Art, and Technology program, UCSD CAT 3: AI Narratives (Romain Delaville)	Spring'23
	CAT 2: Asian Diasporas in Film and Media (Nguyen Tan Hoang)	Winter'23
	CAT 1: Un/Natural Environments (Phoebe Bronstein)	Fall'22
	CAT 3: Our Future Climate (Adam Burgasser)	Spring'22

CAT 2: The Process of Music (Joe Bigham) Winter'22
 CAT 1: Origins (Guillermo Algaze) Fall'21
Instructor of record Veritas China
 Philosophy of Physics: Spacetime Summer'19/20/21
Teaching associate Department of Physics, Columbia University
 PHYS1111: Origins and Meaning (Brian Greene) Fall'19

Service and other participation

Reviewer *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*
Reviewer *Philosophy of Science*
Reviewer Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAccT) 2024, 2026
Reviewer European Workshop on Algorithmic Fairness 2024, 2025
Instructor *Corrupt the Youth*, University City High School, San Diego (×3) 2025
Judge California State Summer School for Mathematics and Science (COSMOS) Student Ethics Competition (×2) 2024, 2025
Participant Athena in Action, University of Notre Dame 2024
Co-organizer First Feminist Philosophy of Physics Workshop, UMich 2024
Commentator Society for the Metaphysics of Science Annual Conference 2023
Participant Minorities and Philosophy COMPASS workshop, UMich 2019
Volunteer A Night of Philosophy and Ideas, Brooklyn Public Library 2019

Graduate coursework

(* denotes audited courses)

Philosophy of Science
 Philosophy of Cosmology* (James Weatherall and Chris Smeenk) Fall'24
 Philosophy of the Biology of Sex* (Karen Kovaka) Fall'24
 Philosophy of Space and Time* (Craig Callender) Spring'23
 Philosophy of Science (Nancy Cartwright) Winter'22
 Philosophy of Climate Change* (Karen Kovaka) Fall'22
 Philosophy of Science: Rethinking Laws (Eddy Chen) Spring'21
 Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics (David Albert, Columbia) Spring'18
 The Direction of Time (David Albert, Columbia) Fall'17
Science Studies
 Environmental Communication (Christo Sims, Communication) Spring'23
 Science Studies III (Nydia Pineda De Avila, History) Spring'23
 Science Studies II: Sensory Studies (David Serlin, Communication) Spring'22
 Science Studies I (Catherina Gere, History) Fall'21
Metaphysics and Epistemology
 Metaphysics: Grounding (Eric Watkins) Spring'21
 Epistemology: Truth, Value, and Knowledge (Gila Sher) Spring'21
 Core Course in Epistemology (Jennifer Carr) Winter'21
Ethics
 Core Course in Ethics (Reuven Brandt) Winter'22
 Data Ethics (David Danks) Fall'21
History of Philosophy
 Greek Philosophy (Monte Johnson) Spring'22

Leibniz (Donald Rutherford)	Fall'20
Philosophy of Mind	
Philosophy of Pain (Matthew Fulkerson)	Winter'21
Physics	
Cosmology (George Fuller)	Spring'25
Compact Objects* (Raphael Flauger)	Spring'25
General Relativity III (Raphael Flauger)	Spring'24
General Relativity II (Raphael Flauger)	Spring'23
General Relativity I (Raphael Flauger)	Winter'23

References

Craig Callender

Tata Chancellor's Professor
 Department of Philosophy
 University of California, San Diego
 ccallender@ucsd.edu

Nancy Cartwright

Distinguished Professor
 Department of Philosophy
 Durham University and University of California, San Diego
 nancy.cartwright@durham.ac.uk

Eddy Keming Chen

Associate Professor
 Department of Philosophy
 University of California, San Diego
 eddykemingchen@ucsd.edu

Kerry McKenzie

Associate Professor
 Department of Philosophy
 University of California, San Diego
 kmckenzie@ucsd.edu

David Albert

Frederick E. Woodbridge Professor
 Department of Philosophy
 Columbia University
 da5@columbia.edu

Karen Kovaka (for a teaching letter)

Assistant Professor
 Department of Philosophy
 University of California, San Diego
 kkovaka@ucsd.edu