

# Francesco Franda

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[francesco.franda@unine.ch](mailto:francesco.franda@unine.ch) | [francescofranda.com](http://francescofranda.com)

**AOS:** social ontology, metaphysics, applied ontology

**AOC:** moral philosophy, political philosophy

## EMPLOYMENT

- 2023-PRESENT**    **University of Neuchâtel**  
Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) Postdoctoral Fellow in the project  
[\*An Ontology of Production, Products and By-Products\*](#)
- 2023**                **University of Amsterdam**  
Lecturer
- 2022-2023**        **Frankfurt School of Finance & Management**  
Lecturer

## EDUCATION

- 2022**                **State University of New York at Buffalo**  
PhD in Philosophy  
Dissertation: [\*Social Kinds: A User's Manual\*](#)
- 2015**                **University of Bologna**  
MA in Philosophy, *summa cum laude* ["110/110 e lode"]
- 2014**                **Columbia University**  
Visiting Student at the Department of Philosophy
- 2012**                **University of Bologna, University of Burgundy**  
Double B.A. in Philosophy, *summa cum laude* ["110/110 e lode"]

## RESEARCH

### PUBLICATIONS

- 2025**                [\*Why Mereological Anti-Conservatism Is No Better Than Conservatism\*](#)  
*Acta Analytica*
- 2025**                [\*Why art cannot \(technically\) malfunction\*](#)  
(with P. Souman)  
*Synthese* 206, 10
- 2024**                [\*Ontologies, Arguments, and Large-Language Models\*](#)

(with J. Beverley, H. Karray, D. Maxwell, C. Benson & B. Smith)  
in Ítalo Oliveira (ed.), *Joint Ontologies Workshop (JOWO)*, Twente, Netherlands:  
CEUR, pp. 1-9

- 2024 [\*On Whether It Is and What It Is\*](#)  
*Acta Analytica* 39(3): 467-478
- 2021 [\*Social Kinds, Social Objects, and Vague Boundaries\*](#)  
*Proceedings of the 2nd International Workshop on Ontology of Social, Legal and Economic Entities (SoLEE)*
- 2018 [\*SNOMED CT standard ontology based on the ontology for general medical science\*](#)  
(with S. El-Sappegh, A. Farman & K.S. Kwak)  
*BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making*, 18(76): 1–19
- 2014 [\*L'identità diacronica fra ontologia e metafisica\*](#)  
*Rivista di Filosofia Analitica Junior* 5(2): 66–81

#### ARTICLES UNDER REVIEW

(titles removed to preserve anonymity; drafts available upon request)

**Paper on AI and social agency**  
**Paper on an ontology of arguments**  
**Paper on social kinds and realism**

#### WORK IN PROGRESS

(titles removed to preserve anonymity)

**Paper on grounding, immanentism and social kinds**  
**Paper on normativity, values and social kinds**  
**Paper on social kind essentialism and modality**

#### PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES

##### INVITED TALKS

- 2026 ***Searching for a Unified Theory of Artifact Function***  
(with P. Souman)  
First Swiss Colloquium on Applied Ontology (SCAO 2026), University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland  
February 5-6, 2026
- 2024 ***Social Kinds, Values and Realism***  
University of Antwerp, Belgium, May 16, 2024
- [\*Metaphysics Collaborative\*](#), February 22, 2024

2023 ***La fragilità come categoria sociale***  
Istituto Universitario Salesiano Venezia (IUSVE), Italy, November 6, 2023

***Generi Sociali***

University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy, July 5, 2023

**PEER-REVIEWED TALKS**

2025 ***Moral and Political Values in Social Theorizing: A Descriptive Approach to a Normative Matter***  
*The Philosophy of Neutrality: The 2025 Symposium of the Swiss Philosophical Society*, Neuchâtel, Switzerland, August 27–29, 2025

***From Dead to Resurrected: A Puzzle for Mind-Dependent Kinds***  
*The 14th Conference of the European Network for the Philosophy of the Social Sciences (ENPOSS)*, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy, September 10–12, 2025

*Social Ontology 2025 (ISOS Conference)*, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, August 5-8

***Artificial interactive systems as non-social agents***

(with G. Sansò)

*Sopha2025 : International Congress SoPhA 2025*, Nantes University, France, June 30-July 2, 2025

2024 ***Artificial interactive systems as non-social agents***  
(with G. Sansò)  
*Social Ontology 2024 (ISOS Conference)*, Duke University, Durham, USA, July 22-25, 2024

***Ontologies, Arguments, and Large-Language Models***

(with J. Beverley, H. Karray, D. Maxwell, C.-B. Benson & B. Smith)

*CAOS 8: Cognition And OntologieS*, organized at the *10<sup>th</sup> Joint Ontology Workshop (JOWO)*, held at the *14<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Formal Ontology in Information Systems (FOIS 2024)*, Enschede, Netherlands, July 15–19, 2024

2022 ***Construction and Value-ladenness in the Making of Social Kinds***  
*The 11th Conference of the European Network for the Philosophy of the Social Sciences (ENPOSS)*, University of Málaga, Spain, September 21-23, 2022

*Social Ontology & Collective Intentionality*, University of Vienna, Austria, August 23-26, 2022

2021 ***Social Kinds, Social Objects, and Vague Boundaries***  
*SoLEE 2021: 2nd International Workshop on Ontology of Social, Legal and Economic Entities*, held at *JOWO 2021: Episode VII The Bolzano Summer of Knowledge*, Bolzano, Italy, September 11-18, 2021

***Getting Real About Antirealism***

SOPhiA 2021: 11<sup>th</sup> Salzburg Conference for Young Analytic Philosophy, University of Salzburg, Austria, September 9-11, 2021

*Social Ontology 2021*, University of California, San Diego, USA, August 9-21, 2021

2020

***Causality, Convention, and Natural Kinds***

12<sup>th</sup> Biennial Collective Intentionality Conference, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, July 13-25, 2020

2019

***A Well-Tempered Pluralism about Social Kinds***

ENSO VI: the Sixth Conference of the European Network on Social Ontology, University of Tampere, Finland, August 22-24, 2019

2017

***Defining ‘organization’ with Basic Formal Ontology***

2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop on Representing Social and Legal Entities in the Biomedical Domain at ICBO (International Conference on Biomedical Ontology), Newcastle, UK, September 13, 2017

***Organizations: an Ontological Approach***

ENSO V: the Fifth Conference of the European Network on Social Ontology, Lund University, Sweden, August 30 – September 1, 2017

***ArgO: An Ontology for Arguments*** (with J. Neil Otte and Jean-Baptiste Guillon)

*Rich Semantics and Direct Representation for Digital Collections*, workshop at JCDL (Joint Conference on Digital Library), University of Toronto, Canada, June 22, 2017

***Reduction, Existence, and Natural Kinds***

*Meeting of the North Carolina Philosophical Society*, University of North Carolina Wilmington, USA, February 24-25, 2017

**COMMENTARIES**

2025

***Commentary on Michael J. Raven’s “Artifacts”***

*The Neuchâtel Workshop on Contemporary Metaphysics: Truth, Worlds, and Circumstances*, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, May 2–3, 2025

**INSTRUCTION RECORD**

**FULL INSTRUCTOR**

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Feb – Aug 2023

***Metaphysics***

***Ethics and the Good Life***

***Fixing Frankenstein: Normative Questions in Philosophy of Technology***

*Feminism and Philosophy*

*Bachelorscriptie Filosofie: Ethics and the Good Life*

FRANKFURT SCHOOL OF FINANCE & MANAGEMENT

Aug 2022 – Jan 2023      *Introduction to Academic Skills* (2 courses)

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

Winter 2022      *Introduction to Ethics*

Summer 2021      *Critical Thinking*

Summer 2020      *Medical Ethics: Social and Ethical Values in Medicine*

Spring 2019      *Contemporary Moral Problems*

Fall 2018      *Introduction to Philosophy*

Spring 2018      *Introduction to Philosophy*

**GUEST LECTURES**

UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL [unless otherwise stated]

2025      *L'intelligence artificielle peut-elle comprendre ce qu'elle écrit?*

*13 Questions incontournables* (BA Course) – December 17, 2025

*Metaphysical Realism and Anti-realism*

*Concepts-clés de philosophie contemporaine* (MA Proseminar) – September 22, 2025

*Foucault*

*Histoire de la Philosophie – Treize philosophes incontournables* (BA Course) – May 14, 2025

2024      *Est-ce que les machines peuvent penser?*

*13 Questions incontournables* (BA Course) – October 9, 2024

*Metaphysical Realism and Anti-realism*

*Concepts-clés de philosophie contemporaine* (MA Proseminar) – October 2, 2024

*Foucault*

*Histoire de la Philosophie – Treize philosophes incontournables* (BA Course) – May 22, 2024

***Social Kinds***

*Philosophy of Language* (BA Course), University of Antwerp – May 15, 2024

***AI Systems, Social Agency, and Emotions*** (co-taught with G. Sansò)

*Effort and Capacities* (MA Seminar) – May 7, 2024

***Using BFO to Build Ontologies***

*Formal Ontology* (BA Seminar) – May 6, 2024

***How to Write and Publish a Paper*** (co-taught with S.-P. Chevarie-Cossette)

*Professional Skills* (MA Proseminar) – March 13, 2024

***Ontologies in Context: The Semantic Web, OWL, and Protégé***

*Formal Ontology* (BA Seminar) – March 11, 2024

***Objections to John Searle's Account of Social Reality***

*Social Ontology* (MA Seminar) – February 27, 2024

**2023**      ***Est-ce que les machines peuvent penser?***

*13 Questions incontournables* (BA Course) – October 11, 2023

**2021**      ***The Puzzle of the Statue and the Clay***

*Metaphysics* (BA Course), University at Buffalo – November 23, 2021

**TEACHING ASSISTANT**

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

Fall 2021	N. E. Williams – <i>Metaphysics</i>
Spring 2021	N. E. Williams – <i>Social Ontology</i>
Fall 2020	N. E. Williams – <i>Philosophy of Science</i>
Spring 2020	N. E. Williams – <i>Philosophy of Science</i>
Fall 2017	D. Hershenov – <i>Medical Ethics: Social &amp; Ethical Values in Medicine</i>
Spring 2017	M. Gifford – <i>Contemporary Moral Problems</i>
Spring 2016	M. Donnelly – <i>World Civilization</i>
Fall 2015	M. Donnelly – <i>World Civilization</i>

**STUDENT SUPERVISION**

UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL

BA Theses – Second Reader

**2024-2025**     **Lisa Meisser** – *Organized groups and feature groups, a study on different types of social groups*

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

BA Theses – Supervisor

**2023**            **Sjoerd Bonnema** – *The Limits of Dark Humor*

**Donna van Eijden** – *Refutation Through Literature: The Plague as Critique of The Karamazov Brothers*

**Leon Jiskoot** – *The Commodification of Evil*

**Dominic M. van Noort** – *The ethical foundation of care giving machines: Building a framework using ethics of care and principlism*

**Maartje van Pijkeren** – *Theosis as a Way to Transcend Theodicy: A Conceptual Analysis of Deification in Relation to the Existential Problem of Evil in Plato and Early Eastern Christian Theology*

**Andrea Sanders** – *Narrativism about Personhood in Dworkin’s Life’s Dominion*

BA Theses – Second Reader

**2023**            **Aram Balian** – *The Positive and Negative Repression of the Mentally Ill: A critical understanding of Dutch Participation Society and the role of labour*

**Shane O’Callaghan** – *Weaponization of Religion in Political Discourse: Finding a place for religion in deliberative democracy*

## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL

**2023-PRESENT**     **SNSF Postdoctoral Fellow** – Research Project: [\*An Ontology of Production, Products and By-Products\*](#) led by **K. Koslicki** and **O. Massin**

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

**Fall 2019 – Spring 2022**     **Research Assistant** to **N. E. Williams**

**Fall 2016**                         **Research Assistant** to **B. Smith**

## **HONORS & SERVICE**

**FELLOWSHIP & AWARDS** (all faculty nominated) – UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

- 2023                    2021-2022 **Thomas Perry Dissertation Prize for the best dissertation** completed by a student in the University at Buffalo Philosophy Department, \$1000
- 2021                    2020-2021 **Peter H. Hare Award for Best Overall Paper** for “Getting Real About Social Kinds Antirealism”, \$1000
- 2020                    2019-2020 **Peter Hare Department Citizenship Award, \$1000**
- 2019                    2018-2019 **Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, \$750**
- 2015-2019            **Presidential Fellowship, \$7500 a year**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE & COLLECTIVE DUTIES**— UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

- 2018-2019            **Senator of the UB Graduate Student Association** (elected position; voting member)
- 2017-2018            **Senator of the UB Graduate Student Association** (elected position; voting member)
- 2016-2017            **Senator of the UB Graduate Student Association** (elected position; voting member)
- Fall 2016             **Co-organizer of the UB Undergraduate Philosophical Society**

#### **ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

##### **SEMINAR ORGANIZATION**

Organizer and convener: *Séminaire de lecture en ontologie sociale* [Social Ontology Reading Seminar] (bi-weekly)  
University of Neuchâtel, Spring semester 2026

##### **CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION**

2025 [\*The Neuchâtel Workshop on Contemporary Metaphysics: Truth, Worlds, and Circumstances\*](#)

(co-organizer: Pauline Souman)

University of Neuchâtel, May 2–3, 2025

2025 [\*The Metaphysics of Social Powers: Individuals, Groups, and Artifacts\*](#)

(co-organizer: Pauline Souman)

University of Neuchâtel, February 6–7, 2025

2018 [\*University at Buffalo \(SUNY\) Graduate Philosophy Conference\*](#)

(co-organizers: Botan Dolun, Shane Hemmer and Eric Merrell)

University at Buffalo, October 6, 2018

##### **EDITORIAL WORK**

**Guest editor** (with Pauline Souman), [\*Metaphysics\*](#), Special Issue: [\*The Metaphysics of Social Powers\*](#)

## **PEER REVIEW & REFEREEING**

*Acta Analytica*, FOIS (*Formal Ontology in Information Systems*), *Journal of Social Ontology*, *L'Encyclopédie Philosophique (EP)*, *Metaphysics*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Rivista di Estetica*, *Studia Philosophica*, *Synthese*

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

[\*International Society for Social Ontology \(ISOS\)\*](#)

[\*Labont – Center for Ontology\*](#)

[\*Metaphysics Collaborative\*](#)

[\*National Center for Ontological Research \(NCOR\)\*](#)

[\*Swiss Center for Ontological Research \(SCOR\)\*](#)

## **LANGUAGES**

Italian                      Native Speaker

English                     Fluent

French                      Fluent

## **REFERENCES**

### **NEIL E. WILLIAMS**

*Professor*

Department of Philosophy

University at Buffalo

### **RYAN MULDOON**

*Professor*

*Department Chair*

Department of Philosophy

Director

Philosophy, Political Science and Economics Program

University at Buffalo

### **BARRY SMITH**

*SUNY Distinguished Professor of Philosophy*

*Julian Park Chair*

Department of Philosophy

University at Buffalo

*Affiliate Professorship*

UB Biomedical Informatics

*Affiliate Professorship*

UB Computer Science & Engineering

*Director*

National Center for Ontological Research

### **ALEX KING**

*Associate Professor*

*Department Chair*

Department of Philosophy

Simon Fraser University

### **KATHRIN KOSLICKI**

*Professor of Theoretical Philosophy*

Institute of Philosophy

### **OLIVIER MASSIN**

*Professor*

*Department Chair*

University of Neuchâtel

Institute of Philosophy  
University of Neuchâtel

Teaching statement, student evaluations, faculty-written teaching letters, and letters of support from former students available upon request

(CV last update: April 4, 2026)