Francesco Franda

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AOS: social ontology, metaphysics, applied ontology
AOC: moral philosophy, political philosophy

EMPLOYMENT

2026-PRESENT **University of Milan**
Postdoctoral Fellow in the project *The Normative Roots of Social Kinds*

2023-2026 **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

Forthcoming *ARGO: A Reference Ontology for Arguments*
(with J. Beverley, J.N. Otte, A. Sculley, J.-B. Guillon, B. Donohue, A. Ruttenberg and Y. Schreiber)
Applied Ontology

Forthcoming *How Simple Is the "Simple Picture of Social Truth"?*
Journal of Social Ontology

2026 ***The Metaphysics of Social Powers: Introduction to the Special Collection***
(with P. Souman)
Metaphysics 9(1): 35–41

2026 ***Why Mereological Anti-Conservatism Is No Better Than Conservatism***
Acta Analytica 41(3): 657–668

2025 ***Why art cannot (technically) malfunction***
(with P. Souman)
Synthese 206, 10

2024 ***Ontologies, Arguments, and Large-Language Models***
(with J. Beverley, M. H. Karray, D. Maxwell, C. Benson & B. Smith)
CAOS: Cognition And OntologieS Workshop, held at the Joint Ontology Workshops 2024 (JOWO 2024), *CEUR Workshop Proceedings* 3882

2024 ***On Whether It Is and What It Is***
Acta Analytica 39(3): 467–478

2021 ***Social Kinds, Social Objects, and Vague Boundaries***
2nd International Workshop on Ontology of Social, Legal and Economic Entities (SoLEE 2021), held at the Joint Ontology Workshops 2021 (JOWO 2021), *CEUR Workshop Proceedings* 2969

2018 ***SNOMED CT standard ontology based on the ontology for general medical science***
(with S. El-Sappagh, F. Ali & K.S. Kwak)
BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making, 18, article 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 social kinds and realism
Paper on social kinds and universals

WORK IN PROGRESS

(titles removed to preserve anonymity)

Paper on grounding and the social sciences
Paper on normativity, values and social kinds
Paper on social kind essentialism and modality
Paper on the construction and nature of social kinds

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

2026 ***A Dilemma for Social Kinds***
Social Ontology 2026 (ISOS Conference), Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland, July 21-24, 2026

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 and the Atlantic Center of Philosophy (CAPhi), 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, M. H. Karray, D. Maxwell, C. Benson & B. Smith)

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

2022 ***Construction and Value-ladeness 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: 11th 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***
12th 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***
2nd 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]

2026 ***Foucault***
Histoire de la Philosophie – Treize controverses philosophiques incontournables (BA Course) – April 22, 2026

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

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 MILAN

2026-PRESENT **Postdoctoral Fellow –** Research project: *The Normative Roots of Social Kinds* led by **F. Guala**

UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL

2023-2026 **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, $1,000

2021 **2020-2021 Peter H. Hare Award for Best Overall Paper** for "Getting Real About Social Kinds Antirealism", $1,000

2020 **2019-2020 Peter Hare Department Citizenship Award, $1,000**

2019 **2018-2019 Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award**, $750

2015-2019 **Presidential Fellowship**, $7,500 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] (every two weeks) 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, *Argumenta*, FOIS *(Formal Ontology in Information Systems)*, *Journal of Social Ontology, L'Encyclopédie Philosophique (EP)*, *Metaphysics, Philosophical Inquiries*, *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, Politics 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

ACHILLE C. VARZI
John Dewey Professor of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy
Columbia University

KATHRIN KOSLICKI
Professor of Theoretical Philosophy
Institute of Philosophy
University of Neuchâtel

OLIVIER MASSIN
Professor
Department Chair
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: November 1, 2026)