

MY DIETRICH SCHOOL STORY

*Santino Petrocelli:
Studying among the Masters*

When **Santino Petrocelli** and four of his fellow philosophy majors wanted to study Richard Rorty, a prominent American philosopher on whom no course was then offered, they approached one of their professors. Distinguished Professor Robert Brandom enthusiastically responded, developing a directed study on the topic just for this interested group of students. Brandom was uniquely qualified to lead the students in this study, as Rorty had been his dissertation supervisor at Princeton University.

This sort of access for students to the University of Pittsburgh's world-renowned faculty members is central to the mission of the Department of Philosophy. The department was created in the early 1960s, when Chancellor Edward Litchfield and Provost Charles Peake decided to invest in and create a philosophy department that would be among the best in the world. To do so, they recruited Wilfrid Sellars, one of the greatest American philosophers, laying the foundation for the department to become home to the best living philosophers, a lineage that continues today.

Immediately after Sellars' arrival, Pitt became ranked among the top five philosophy departments in the country, and in the more than 50 years since, it has never fallen out of the top five in National Research Council and other reputational rankings.

When the department was created with the goal of establishing a world-class department of the best and brightest in philosophy, it was the University's intention that all students should have access to and be able to interact with all department faculty members. Today, every faculty member in the department teaches every term, and, as all students in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences are required to take at least one course that meets the general education requirement for philosophy, many choose to do so within the philosophy department.

The outstanding international reputation of the philosophy department and its faculty is what attracted Petrocelli to Pitt. Like many of the upperclassmen in the department, he began his college career at another institution but transferred to Pitt once he identified his passion for philosophy.

"What interested me at first about the philosophy major was the subject matter I was exposed to in introductory classes—philosophers writing beautiful passages, the content of which is aimed at asking life's biggest questions," Petrocelli says. "Then I read up on the department here at Pitt. It is one of the best in the English-speaking world, consistently ranked in the top five by the generally recognized authorities."

In his time at Pitt, Petrocelli has honed his interest in the field of philosophy, focusing most recently on the philosophy of math. In the summer of 2015, he completed a Brackenridge Summer Research Fellowship, for which he conducted research comparing the respective attempts by Bertrand Russell and Gottlob Frege at reducing math to logic and considered this in the context of a recent revival of their attempts called logicism.

Completing the fellowship and the directed study were very rewarding to Petrocelli, but he says that what has made his education here most rewarding is the complete Pitt experience. "It's hard to choose a single most rewarding experience," he says. "I've met some people whose friendship has proven very rewarding, taken some classes that were very rewarding, and completed some projects that were very rewarding. I don't think I would be telling the truth if I prioritized one of them."

One of the unique experiences that Petrocelli has enjoyed during his time at Pitt was as an officer in the Panther Cycling Club. While holding a leadership role in the club provided challenges at times, it also provided him with the opportunity to share his passion for cycling with others in the community, further develop his own cycling abilities, provide access for him and Pitt students to local and regional races, and even send Pitt students to national championships.

Petrocelli, a Pittsburgh-area native, is on track to graduate in December. He plans to continue his studies and eventually teach philosophy himself. To undergraduates considering a major in philosophy, he offers this advice: "Absolutely do it! Read as much as you can, and keep up with all of your assignments. Also, talk to your professors early. It is completely appropriate to reach out and talk to faculty about your future and about philosophy."

To learn more about the University of Pittsburgh's world-renowned Department of Philosophy, visit www.philosophy.pitt.edu.

ENGAGING STUDENTS COMPLETELY

The Department of Philosophy has three programs to engage undergraduate students outside the classroom:

1. The **Philosophy Club**, organized and run by undergraduate students under the guidance of a faculty advisor, meets weekly during the academic year to discuss philosophical material. The club also hosts guest speakers from the philosophy department four times each year.
2. Since 1987, the Department of Philosophy has housed a chapter of **Phi Sigma Tau Honor Society**, the philosophy honor society. The Pitt Phi Sigma Tau chapter serves not only to recognize academic achievement by undergraduate students in philosophy but also to connect Pitt students with philosophically engaged students across the country. Moreover, the Phi Sigma Tau journal, *Dialogue*, the first journal to publish only the work of students, enables philosophy students to join the professional debates within the field.
3. The Department of Philosophy is initiating a program to connect current undergraduates with **Pitt alumni** who majored in philosophy. Though some philosophy majors decide to do graduate work in philosophy, most will seek careers outside academic philosophy. The purpose of this new program is to provide students with living examples of how a philosophy degree might give shape to a rewarding career in professions other than academia.

PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL CAREERS

- Only a handful of philosophy majors study philosophy in graduate school. Many go on to study political, cognitive, or computer sciences or pursue careers in law, medicine, or business.
- Though they did not attend Pitt as undergrads, both University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Patrick Gallagher and Interim Vice Provost and Dean of Students Kenyon Bonner studied philosophy as undergraduates.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

Helping Students to Start Smart

Imagine yourself as an entering University of Pittsburgh freshman. You chose the University for two main reasons: its academic reputation and a well-regarded program in your field of interest. You are excited to live and study on its city campus, nestled just east of downtown Pittsburgh.

But, truth be told, you also feel a bit overwhelmed. You view Pitt's size, with a freshman class of more than 3,000 students, as both a blessing and a curse. You know that a university this large offers substantial resources and opportunities, but you fear you might get lost, both literally and figuratively.

We understand. That's why the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences offers the comprehensive Office of Freshman Programs.

The Office of Freshman Programs, led by Assistant Dean Laura Dice, helps incoming freshmen to make a smoother academic and social transition from high school to college, offering an impressive total of nearly 100 courses just for freshmen. The program aims to provide an especially welcoming environment with perks that freshmen will only be able to experience during their first term in college.

The optional but highly recommended Introduction to the Arts and Sciences (IAS) functions as a fun and informative overview of the University, the Dietrich School, and the city. Small classes of 19 students give freshmen the chance to interact and get to know each other. And highly practical content—how to use the resources at Hillman Library, appropriate communication skills and interactions with faculty, academic integrity, and the goals of a liberal arts and sciences education—gives students the basic toolbox of skills they will need over and over again throughout their academic careers.

Two other popular options within the Office of Freshman Programs are the Freshman Seminar and Academic Communities. Picture the seminar as IAS+. It includes IAS as well as fulfills the Seminar in Composition requirement. Seminar students also get to take part in Explore Pittsburgh, which takes students into the city's diverse neighborhoods and cultural institutions. Students who choose an Academic Community get a special treat—they can select from varied offerings that fit their interests and have the chance to form even closer bonds with fellow freshmen, as the communities meet more frequently and often offer built-in social opportunities. Each Academic Community includes IAS (as either a stand-alone class or part of the more in-depth Freshman Seminar).

This fall, Freshman Programs offered new internationally based Academic Communities—Asian, European, and global studies communities—that include a related area course, IAS, and students' choice of foreign language study. Freshman Programs also debuted another new, interdisciplinary Academic Community, The Beautiful Mind, which pairs an introductory neuroscience course, Brain and Behavior, with an introductory studio arts course, Drawing Studio I.

At the Dietrich School, we're committed to helping all of our students to get off to a smart start. To learn more about the Office of Freshman Programs, visit asundergrad.pitt.edu/freshman-programs.

John A. Twynning, PhD

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies



Dean Twynning welcomes freshman students to a film screening offered by Freshman Programs.

FACULTY PROFILE

A Conversation with Distinguished Professor of Philosophy Robert Brandom

Next year will mark Distinguished Professor of Philosophy **Robert Brandom's** 40th year at the University of Pittsburgh. He has published 12 books, the most influential of which are *Making It Explicit* and *Between Saying and Doing: Towards an Analytic Pragmatism*, and he has had 20 books written about him and his work. His work focuses on the philosophy of language, the philosophy of mind, and the philosophy of logic; on German idealism and neopragmatism; and on American philosopher Wilfrid Sellars.

In 2000, Brandom was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, and in 2004, he received the Distinguished Achievement in the Humanities Award from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Brandom has given the John Locke Lectures at the University of Oxford, the most prestigious invited philosophy lectureship. Most recently, he was awarded the 2015 Anneliese Maier Research Award, presented by Germany's Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The award recognizes "researchers from abroad from the fields of the humanities and social sciences whose scientific achievements have been internationally recognized in their research area."

What motivates you to teach?

"I find ideas exciting, and I am eager to pass on my knowledge and excitement. The Department of Philosophy is distinctive in that, due to its international reputation, a number of students who are studying elsewhere and come to an interest in philosophy transfer to Pitt to complete their degree. This self-selected group of majors is composed of some of the smartest and most talented undergraduates, who are particularly impressive and rewarding to teach."

Please talk about your teaching style.

"My students are reading original texts, difficult texts, most often from the 19th century, focusing on the philosophy of mind. I ask my students to read before class and come prepared with questions. In class, I tell stories about how these questions fit with larger questions of thought, how they compare and contrast. I give students context for what questions are being addressed and why and what we can learn from the answers. It is very important that students be independently engaged with the questions themselves."

"Each class is an adventure in ideas. In each class, we see examples of ideas that were so original and important [that] they transformed the thinking and the individuals who mastered these ideas. We must follow what happened and how the world looked different after people had these ideas."

What surprises you about your students?

"There is a general perception that students now are more career oriented in their short-term focus. This has not been my perception at all. Students are interested in getting an education, and they appreciate that the proper model for a student-teacher relationship is not a customer-business relationship but a client-professional relationship. Clients know that they do not 100 percent know what they want. They come with a general goal. Students come with a general goal of becoming educated beings, and they do not know exactly what they need to know and do. I continue to be surprised [by] and impressed with the extent to which students understand that."

What advice would you give to undergraduate students who show an interest in philosophy?

"Realize that, unlike other investments, the value of an education is proportionate to what is put into it. You can't get it; you have to give it to yourself. Most people are interested in the subject not [because they want] to become philosophers but because of the way you develop your own mind by understanding the best thinking of the best philosophers throughout the ages. It gives one perspective on one's own time. If we do not understand how we got here, we can't understand how to move on. With a historical perspective, we see an evolving and developing tradition. Students of philosophy can carry that conversation forward."

What advice would you give to parents whose undergraduate student may be interested in tackling this major?

"Don't panic! There are many things to do with a philosophy degree outside academia. A degree in philosophy is esteemed by law schools as well as [by] the captains of business and industry. They appreciate the flexibility of the mind that an education in philosophy develops."

"The Year of the Humanities in the University" in 2015–16

Excerpted from an article in the Pitt Chronicle by Laura Clark, April 27, 2015

Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Patricia E. Beeson has named academic year, 2015–16, as the Year of the Humanities in the University. The designation, says Beeson, "is designed to highlight the important role that humanistic thinking plays in research and education across the University." The year will feature a range of events and programs intended to infuse the importance of the humanities into the spectrum of academic disciplines, including the social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, medicine, and others.

Don Bialostosky, professor and chair of the Department of English, is leading the committee that will coordinate the year's initiatives.

"I am honored that Provost Beeson asked me to chair the committee and am excited about the enthusiasm on the part of all the committee members," Bialostosky said. "I am confident that the Year of the Humanities will be a timely reminder of the importance of the humanities, not only as significant subjects in their own right, but as a way of thinking that is vital to all the disciplines and professions." Visit humanities.pitt.edu for more information.



the year of the
HUMANITIES
IN THE UNIVERSITY

Pitt Ranked Second in Philosophy in Worldwide Survey

By Joe Miksch

This story first appeared in the Pitt Chronicle on June 15, 2015.

The University of Pittsburgh is No. 2 in the world in the discipline of philosophy.

QS World University Rankings evaluated more than 3,500 universities in 36 individual disciplines for its 2015 subject rankings and placed Pitt second in the realm of philosophy, behind only New York University and ahead of Oxford, Harvard, and Cambridge.

Anil Gupta, chair of Pitt's Department of Philosophy in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, says, "What distinguishes our department are the creativity of our faculty and their willingness to explore unfashionable ideas and our superb graduate students."

Gupta adds, "Of the six philosophers from the United States inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences this year, three have Pitt ties. And Pitt faculty, particularly Distinguished Professor of Philosophy Robert Brandom and Distinguished University Professor of Philosophy John McDowell, are among the most influential philosophers working today."

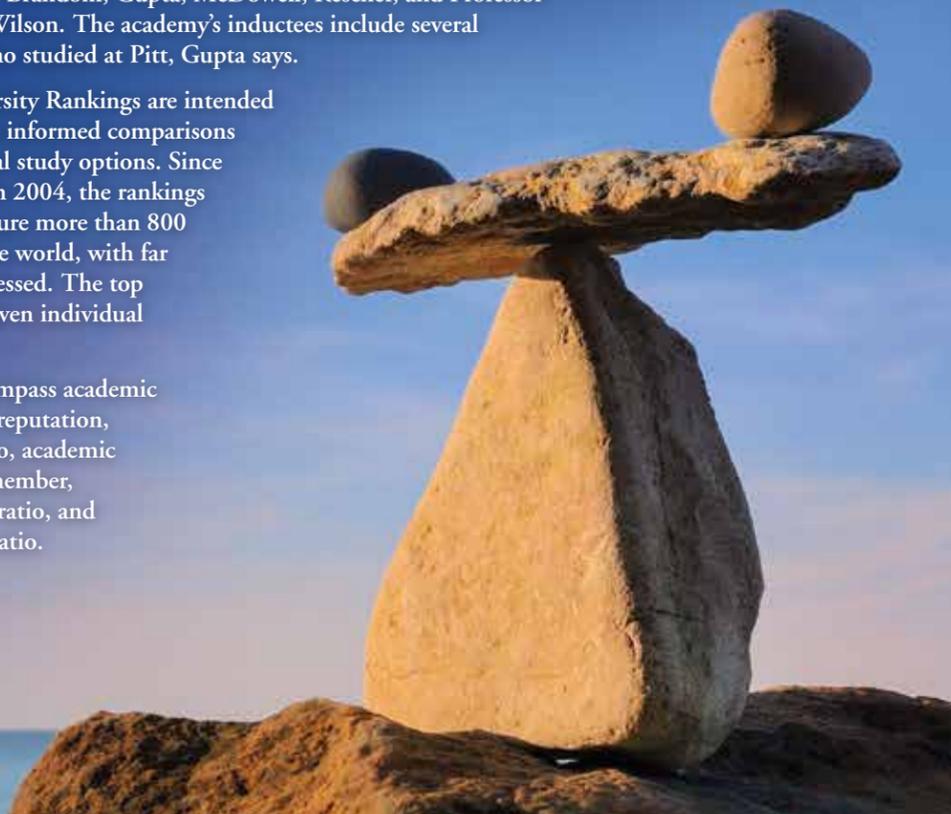
The research of Pitt's philosophy faculty has made a deep impact on the field. Beyond the hundreds of books published by Pitt faculty members, numerous authors worldwide have written about Pitt professors and their work. Eighteen books have been published on Brandom, 14 on Distinguished University Professor of Philosophy Nicholas Rescher, and 11 on McDowell.

Among many other honors, Brandom and McDowell are recipients of the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Rescher has received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit from the Federal Republic of Germany. Gerald J. Massey, Pitt Emeritus Distinguished Service Professor of Philosophy and former director of the Center for Philosophy of Science at Pitt, also has received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit award.

Furthermore, five philosophy faculty members are fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences—Brandom, Gupta, McDowell, Rescher, and Professor of Philosophy Mark Wilson. The academy's inductees include several other philosophers who studied at Pitt, Gupta says.

The QS World University Rankings are intended to help students make informed comparisons regarding international study options. Since first being compiled in 2004, the rankings have expanded to feature more than 800 universities around the world, with far more (over 3,000) assessed. The top 400 universities are given individual ranking positions.

Ranking criteria encompass academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty to student ratio, academic citations per faculty member, international student ratio, and international faculty ratio.



Introducing the New Advising Center Director

The Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences welcomes **Nancy Allen** as the new director of the Advising Center. As director, Allen leads a staff of 25 full-time professional academic advisors from a broad range of academic backgrounds. The advising team emphasizes one-on-one academic advising, helping students in their initial years at Pitt to explore academic and career goals, become familiar with University policies and procedures, and connect with the many resources and opportunities the University has to offer.

Allen comes to Pitt from Immaculata University, located outside Philadelphia, Pa., where she served as assistant dean in the College of

LifeLong Learning. Prior to that, Allen served in Villanova University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as the director of academic advising. There, in addition to overseeing academic advising for first- and second-year students, Allen trained faculty advisors, implemented a professional development program, and taught one English course each term. She was named the regional Outstanding Academic Advising Administrator by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in 2010. She is an active member of NACADA and has served on the Editorial Board for the *NACADA Journal* and presented at both regional and national NACADA conferences.

Allen has a breadth of experience in higher education administration, having held positions as director of West Chester University's Pre-Major Academic Advising Center, executive director of graduate and professional studies at Cabrini College, associate dean and dean of continuing education at Arcadia University, and assistant dean of Rider University's College of Continuing Studies. Allen also has taught courses in literature, the humanities, autobiography, and communication.

Allen holds a BA in English from Bucknell University, an MA in English from Duquesne University, and a PhD in English from New York University.



COPING SKILLS FOR INCOMING STUDENTS

by Mary Koch Ruiz, University Counseling Center

The transition from high school to college can be a time of heightened anxiety for incoming students. Changes, fears, and expectations accompany the transition and, coupled with homesickness, can be quite overwhelming for many students. Some incoming students feel overly optimistic and confident in their abilities to manage the challenges that they will encounter in college; others feel anxious, underprepared, and frightened. It is extremely important for all students to be realistic about their academic, social, and personal expectations in order to make a successful transition. It also is important for parents and students to talk together about those expectations to clarify any romanticized or inaccurate reflections of college life. This will help to better prepare students for challenges that may present themselves after students arrive at school.

Some common struggles students may encounter when starting college include the following:

- an initial feeling of disappointment regarding the school chosen
- a sudden dramatic change in lifestyle
- the challenge of making new friends
- unmet expectations of a roommate, classes, and/or social situations
- academic workload
- additional stressors, such as a recent divorce or death in the family or the termination of a high school relationship

The following are healthy suggestions to help students cope with the transition:

- Acknowledge and express your feelings of homesickness, anxiety, and sadness. They are normal.
- Keep in touch with your family and high school friends via phone calls, e-mails, and text messages.
- Become involved in campus activities to meet other students and distract yourself from feeling homesick. Becoming part of a social group helps incoming students to feel connected to their new environment and has a positive impact on attitude.
- Maintain a healthy diet and sleep schedule; they help to stabilize your mood.
- Explore the campus. More familiarity with new surroundings helps to enhance a sense of control.
- Talk with someone on campus, like a resident assistant or a counselor in the University Counseling Center.
- Keep an open mind. Open-mindedness fosters learning, self-development, and more opportunities to meet others.

RESOURCES

University Counseling Center
Wellness Center
Mark A. Nordenberg Hall
Second Floor
412-648-7930
counseling.pitt.edu

Student Organization
Resource Center
833 William Pitt Union
412-624-7115
sorc.pitt.edu

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Advising Center	412-624-6444
Academic Resource Center	412-648-7920
Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies	412-624-6480
Office of Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity	412-624-6828
Office of Freshman Programs	412-624-6844
Office of Student Records	412-624-6776

asundergrad.pitt.edu

Questions or concerns? E-mail us at pittpride@as.pitt.edu.



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Bellet Awards Presented

The University of Pittsburgh Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences has named **Paul Floreancig**, professor in the Department of Chemistry, and **Michael R. Glass**, lecturer in the Urban Studies Program, winners of the 2015 Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence Awards. The awardees were honored during a reception and dinner on April 14 at Pitt's University Club.

Established in 1998 with a gift from Dietrich School alumnus David Bellet (BA '67) and his wife, Tina, and endowed in 2008 through the family's further generosity, these annual awards recognize outstanding and innovative teaching in undergraduate studies in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

A committee appointed by the Dietrich School associate dean for undergraduate studies evaluates teaching skills based on student and peer evaluations, student testimonials, and dossiers submitted by the nominees. Full-time faculty members who have taught in the Dietrich School during the past three years are eligible. Each award recipient receives \$6,000.

For more information and to view videos honoring this year's recipients, visit as.pitt.edu/teaching/bellet.



2015 Bellet Award winners **Michael Glass**, Urban Studies Program, and **Paul Floreancig**, Department of Chemistry

The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, as fully explained in Policy 07-01-03, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran. The University also prohibits and will not engage in retaliation against any person who makes a claim of discrimination or harassment or who provides information in such an investigation. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance these values consistent with the University's mission. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs and activities. This is a commitment made by the University and is in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.

For information on University equal opportunity and affirmative action programs, please contact: University of Pittsburgh; Office of Diversity and Inclusion; Katie Pope, Title IX Coordinator, and Cheryl Ruffin, 504 and ADA Coordinator; 500 South Craig Hall; 200 South Craig Street; Pittsburgh, PA 15260; 412-648-7860.

For complete details on the University's Nondiscrimination Policy, please refer to Policy 07-01-03. For information on how to file a complaint under this policy, please refer to Procedure 07-01-03.

*Except where exempt by federal or state laws.

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UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
DIETRICH SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
THE PITT PRIDE
Fall 2015

1	Last day to withdraw from all classes with the dean's office and receive a partial refund
6	Deadline to apply for April 2016 graduation; last day for spring term 2016 enrollment appointment
7	Spring term 2016 open enrollment period begins
25-29	Thanksgiving recess for students (no classes)
26-27	Thanksgiving recess for faculty and staff (University closed)
14-19	Final examination period for undergraduate day classes
19	Fall term ends; official date for degrees awarded in fall term; Dietrich School December Graduate Recognition Ceremony
20	Residence halls close
20-January 5, 2016	Winter recess for students (no classes)
22	Fall term grades must be approved by instructors by 11:59 p.m.
23	Fall term grades available online
24-January 3, 2016	Winter recess for faculty and staff

December

DON'T FORGET: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available January 1 for the upcoming academic year. The FAFSA is the most important form to complete in order to qualify for almost all types of financial aid. Visit fatsa.gov to access the online application and for many helpful tips.

For the online academic calendar, go to provost.pitt.edu/information-on/calendar.html.

1 Last day to resign from all classes with the student appeals office

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November