

John Basl

Department of Philosophy and Religion
360 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115

Email: j.basl@northeastern.edu
Web: <http://johnbasl.net>

Academic Appointments and Affiliations

Northeastern University

Associate Professor	2019 –
Assistant Professor	2013 – 2019
Associate Director, AI and Data Ethics Initiatives - Northeastern Ethics Institute	2021 –
Affiliated Faculty - Khoury College of Computer Science	2023 –
Faculty Affiliate, Core AI - Northeastern Institute for Experiential AI	2021 –

Harvard University

Faculty Associate - Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics - Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society	2020 –
AI Initiative Fellow-in-Residence - Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics - Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society	2019 – 2020

Bowling Green State University

Assistant Professor	2011 – 2013
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Education

University of Wisconsin – Madison

Ph.D. in Philosophy	2011
M.A. in Philosophy	2009

Northeastern University

B.S. in Philosophy	2006
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Areas of Specialization

Applied Ethics (Technology, AI, Environment), Ethics, Philosophy of Biology

Areas of Competence

Philosophy of Science, Metaethics

Books and Edited Collections

Basl, J., *The Death of the Ethic of Life*
Oxford University Press, 2019

Basl, J., and Sandler, R. (eds), *Designer Biology: The Ethics of Intensively Engineering Biological and Ecological Systems*
Lexington Books, 2013

Reports and White Papers

Sandler, R., and Basl, J., "Getting from Commitment to Content in AI and Data Ethics: Justice and Explainability", in collaboration with Atlantic Council and Steven Tiell, 2021.

Sandler, R., and Basl, J., "Building Data and AI Ethics Committees", in collaboration with Accenture and Steven Tiell, 2019.

Refereed Articles

Gray Grant, D., Behrends, J., Basl, J., "What We Owe to Decision Subjects: Beyond Transparency in Automated Decision Making"
Philosophical Studies, Forthcoming

Meyer, M., Basl, J., Choffnes, D., Wilson, C., Lazer, D., "Bringing Ethics to User-Sourced Online Data Collection and Sharing"
Nature Computational Science, Forthcoming

Kopec, M., et al., "The Effectiveness of Embedded Values Analysis Modules in Computer Science Education: An Empirical Study"
Big Data & Society, (10:1) 2023.

Basl, J., and Schouten, G., "Can We Use Social Policy to Enhance Compliance with Moral Obligations to Animals?"
Ethical Theory and Moral Practice, 21(3) 2018, pp 629-647

Basl, J., "A Trilemma for Teleological Individualism"
Synthese, (194:4) 2017, pp. 1057-74

Basl, J., and Coons, C., "Ought to Is: The Puzzle of Moral Science"
Oxford Studies in Metaethics: Vol. 12, Shafer-Landau, R., 2017

Smead, R., Sandler, R., Forber, P., and Basl, J., "A Bargaining Game Analysis of International Climate Negotiations"
Nature Climate Change, (4) 2014, pp. 442-445

Basl, J., "Machines as Moral Patients We Shouldn't Care About (Yet)"
Philosophy and Technology, (27:1) 2014, pp. 79-96

Basl, J., and Sandler, R., "The Good of Non-Sentient Entities: Organisms, Artifacts, and Synthetic Biology"
Studies in History and Philosophy of the Biological and Biomedical Sciences, (44:4) Part B, 2013, pp. 697-706

Basl, J., "State Neutrality and the Ethics of Human Enhancement Technologies"

American Journal of Bioethics: Neuroscience (1:2) 2010, pp. 41-48
Basl, J., "Restitutive Restoration: New Motivations for Ecological Restoration"
Environmental Ethics (32:2) 2010, pp. 135-147

Book Chapters

- Behrends, J., and Basl, J., "Trolleys and Autonomous Vehicles: New Foundations for the Ethics of Machine Learning"
Autonomous Vehicle Ethics: The Trolley Problem and Beyond, Jenkins, R., Cerny, D., Hribek, T., (eds.), Oxford University Press, 2022.
- Sandler R., and Basl, J., "Justified Species Partiality"
Animals in Our Midst, Bovenkerk, B., and Keulartz, J. (eds.), Springer, 2021.
- Basl, J., and Bowen, J., "AI as Moral Right-Holders"
Oxford Handbook of AI Ethics, Dubber, M., Pasquale, F., Das, D., (eds.), Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Eckelman, M., Isaacs, J., Basl, J., Bosso, C., Eggelson, K., "Case Studies of Product Life Cycle Environmental Impacts for Teaching Engineering Ethics"
Next Generation Ethics, Ali Abbas (ed.), Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Basl, J., "Sensitivity Enhancement: The Ethics of Engineering Non-Human Research Subjects"
Designer Biology: The Ethics of Intensively Engineering Biological and Ecological Systems, Basl, J. and Sandler, R. (eds.), Lexington Books, 2013
- Basl, J. and Sandler, R., "Three Puzzles Regarding the Moral Status of Synthetic Organisms"
Synthetic Biology and Morality: Artificial Life and the Bounds of Nature, Kaebnick, G. and Murray T.H. (eds), The MIT Press, 2013
- Basl, J., "The Moral Status of Artificial Intelligences"
Ethics and Emerging Technologies, Sandler, R. (ed.), Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013
- Streiffer, R., and Basl, J., "The Ethics of Engineering Animals for Agriculture"
Ethics and Emerging Technologies, Sandler, R. (ed.), Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013
- Streiffer, R., and Basl, J., "Ethical Issues in the Application of Biotechnology to Animals in Agriculture"
Oxford Handbook of Animal Ethics, Beauchamp, T. and Frey, R. (eds.), Oxford University Press, 2011

Invited Articles and Reviews

- Basl, J., Review of *Subhuman*, by T.J. Kasperbauer
Notre Dame Philosophical Review (2018).
- Basl, J., "The Ethics of Creating Artificial Consciousnesses"
APA Newsletter on Philosophy and Computers (13:1) 2013, pp. 23-29
- Basl, J., "Nothing Good Will Come from Giving Up Aetiological Accounts of Teleology"
Philosophy & Technology (25:4) 2012, pp. 543-546
- Sandler, R., and Basl, J., "Transhumanism, Human Dignity, and Moral Status"
Open Peer Commentary, *American Journal of Bioethics* (10:7) 2010, pp. 63-66

External Grants and Funding

Research Community Development Grant: Summer Training Program to Expand the AI and Data Ethics Community Role: Co-PI (Ronald Sandler, PI) Funding Agency: NSF-2147220 Total Initial Award: \$299,375 2024 Supplemental Award: \$60,000	2023 – 2025
Digital Health Humanities Teaching Modules Role: Senior Investigator (Sari Altschuler, PI) Funding Agency: NEH (AKA-270156-20) Total Award: \$149,673	2022 – 2025
Value-Sensitive Design for Early Stage VR and AR Research Role: Project Lead Funding Agency: Facebook Reality Labs Total Award: \$90,000	2020 – 2021
“Mid-scale RI-1 (MY:IP): Observatory for Online Human and Platform Behavior Role: Senior Personnel (David Lazer, PI) Funding Agency: NSF-2131929 Total Award: \$15,717,700	2021 – 2026
“FW-HTF-RL: Co-worker Robots to Impact Seafood Processing (CRISP): Tools and Methods for Enhanced Worker Experience Role: Co-PI (Taskin Padir, PI) Funding Agency: NSF-1928654 Total Award: \$2,500,000	2019 – 2023
“Towards a Digital Health Humanities Curriculum: Tools and Strategies” Role: Senior Investigator (Sari Altschuler, PI) Funding Agency: NEH (AKA-270156-20) Total Award: \$35,000	2019 – 2021
“Ethics Education in Life Cycle Design, Engineering, and Management” Role: Co-PI (Matthew Eckelman, PI) Funding Agency: NSF-1338687 Total Award: \$247,724	2015 - 2017
“Designing and Integrating LCA Methods for Nanomanufacturing Scale-Up” Role: Researcher (Jackie Isaacs, PI) Funding Agency: NSF-1120329 Total Award: \$1,259,658	2015 - 2017

Other Awards and Recognition

Exemplary Engineering Ethics Programs National Academy of Engineering Center for Engineering Ethics and Society Recognized for Case Studies and Ethics Primer (with Matthew Eckelman, Jacqueline Isaacs, Christopher Bosso, and Kathy Eggleston)	2016
Department of Residential Life’s Faculty Member of the Year Northeastern University	2014-2015

The Berent Enç Graduate Teaching Award 2011
 Department of Philosophy, UW-Madison

Talks

“An Ethics Ecosystem for AI and Big Data: What, Why, How”	
Broad Institute	2023
New England UAS and AAM Fall Summit	2022
MATRIX AI Consortium for Human Well-Being Seminar (UTSA)	2022
University of Florida AI Ethics and Policy Symposium	2022
“What We Owe to Decision Subjects: Beyond Transparency and Explanation In Automated Decision-Making”	
(co-authored with David Gray Grant and Jeff Behrends)	
University of Georgia, Kleiner Colloquium Series	2023
DLI Seminar, Cornell Tech	2022
Bentley University Center for Business Ethics	2021
Digital Data and Emerging Technologies – University of Magna Graecia	2021
New Challenges for Applied Ethics Seminar Series	2021
Rocky Mountain Ethic Congress	2020
“Classifier Robustness: Beyond Accuracy in the Ethics of Algorithmic Decision-Making”	
(co-authored with Daniel Rassaby)	
Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress	2021
“Ethics in the Age of Information and AI”	
Inbound	2019
“Why Everyone has it Wrong About the Ethics of Autonomous Vehicles”	
(co-authored with Jeff Behrends)	
Centre for Moral, Social, and Political Theory – ANU	2019
National Academy of Engineers – Frontiers of Engineering Symposium	2019
“Artifact Welfare? A Problem of Exclusion for Biocentrism	
Toronto Centre for Ethics	2019
“Of Trolleys and Teslas: Could Trolley Cases Help Us To Understand How to Program Autonomous Vehicles”	
(Co-authored with Jeff Behrends)	
Centre for Ethics – University of Toronto	2019
AIX – Umass Boston	2019
Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress	2018
Safrá Center for Ethics	2018
Tufts University STS Brownbag	2018
Technology, Knowledge, and Society Conference	2019
“Ethical Challenges in Robotics”	
NU@Noon	2017
“Default Assumptions and Moral Principles”	
Northeastern CSSH Welcome Talk	2017

Artificial Intelligence and Moral Status – An Introduction	
Northeastern Master Class	2017
“Do We Need AI Research Subjects Oversight Committees”	
(Co-authored with Ronald Sandler)	
Ethics of AI, Center for Mind, Brain, and Consciousness at NYU	2016
Robotics: Law and Ethics, The Italian Academy at Columbia University	2016
“Two Dogmas of Biocentrism”	
Workshop on Value Theory in Environmental Ethics, CREUM, Montreal	2016
“The Inadequacy of Traditional Moral Status Arguments for Abolition of Animal Consumption and Experimentation” (with Gina Schouten)	
Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress	2015
“Identifying and Addressing Ethical Challenges in Emerging Technology”	
*Plenary Address, 3 rd Annual Graduate Student Workshop in Applied Philosophy at Bowling Green State University	2015
“The Levels of Selection and the Instability of Individualism in Environmental Philosophy”	
ISHPSSB, University du Quebec a Montreal	2015
“Inferring from Ought to Is: The Puzzle of Moral Science”	
(Co-authored with Christian Coons)	
Chapel Hill Metaethics Workshop	2015
Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference	2014
Department of Philosophy, Bowling Green State University	2014
“The Costs of Being Made Good Enough: Moral Enhancement as a Solution to Climate Change”(Co-authored with Avery Forget)	
American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division), ISEE Group Meeting	2014
“Biological Interests and Voluntary Amputation”	
Western Michigan University Medical Humanities Conference	2014
“Philosophical and Ethical Problems in Scientific Research”	
New England College of Optometry	2014
“Two Dogmas of Biocentrism I: The Individualist Dogma”	
Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference	2013
“Making Animals Too Smart for Their Own Good: The Ethical Concerns Associated with Enhancing Non-Human Animals”	
Department of Philosophy, Coastal Carolina University	2013
Department of Philosophy and Religion, Northeastern University	2013
American Philosophical Association (Pacific Division)	2012
Department of Philosophy, Concordia University	2011
Northeastern Workshop in Applied Philosophy	2011
“Two Dogmas of Biocentrism II: The Biocentric Dogma”	
Teleological Organisation: Organisms, Ecosystems, and Artifacts at Carlsberg Akademi, Copenhagen	2012
“Machines as Moral Patients”	
Symposium for AISB / IACAP World Congress	2012
“The Case for Biological Well-Being”	
Eastern Michigan University’s 2 nd Annual Undergraduate	2012

Philosophy Conference (Keynote Speaker)	
Restitutive Restoration: A New Model of Restoration	
Sustainable U: Perspectives on Sustainability in Higher Education in Northwest Ohio and Beyond, Bowling Green State University	2011
“Ecosystem Selection and the Trait-Group Framework”	
ISHPSSB, University of Utah	2011
“The Levels of Selection, Moral Considerability, and the Teleological Organization of Biotic Communities”	
American Philosophical Association (Central Division), ISEE Group Meeting	2011
Department of Philosophy, Bowling Green State University	2011
Department of Philosophy, Florida International University	2011
Department of Philosophy, Beloit College	2010
“On the Possibility and Implications of Moral Status Enhancement”	
Exploring Human Enhancement Symposium, The Center for Values, in Medicine, Science, and Technology at the University of Texas at Dallas	2011
“On the Possibility and Implications of Moral Status Enhancement in Non-Human Research Subjects”	
Department of Philosophy and Political Science, Quinnipiac University	2011
“Locating Selection: Problems for Trait-Group Realism”	
Graduate University of Wisconsin Philosophy Conference, University of Wisconsin – Madison	2010
“Getting Social”	
American Association of Philosophy Teachers	2010
International Workshop-Conference on Teaching Philosophy	
“Restoration in the Age of Machines: Restoration, Restitution, and Nanotechnology”	
American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division), ISEE Group Meeting	2008

Selected Media Appearances

Ethics in the Age of Information and AI	
Inspired Money Podcast (December 3, 2019)	
AIs should have the same ethical protections as animals, with Eric Schwitzgebel in Aeon Magazine (April 26, 2019)	
Frankenstein and his creation: Who's the real monster? Examining Ethics Podcast (October 25, 2017)	
Designer babies on the horizon? Top of Mind with Julie Rose (September 5, 2017)	
Neuromarketing in the age of iPhones The Epoch Times (March 3, 2017)	

Commentaries

On Kyle Fruh’s “Wild Rights”	2013
American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division), Main Program	
On Nathan Kowalski’s “The Metaphysics of Crisis: Maintaining Moral Contingency”	2010

in Environmental Philosophy
 American Philosophical Association (Pacific Division), ISEE Group Meeting
 On Avram Hiller's "What is Appropriate Use" 2008
 Fifth Annual ISEE/IAEP Joint Meeting on Environmental Philosophy

Courses Taught

Graduate Level	Undergraduate Level
Biocentrism and Moral Status	Introduction to Ethics
1 st Year Proseminar (20 th Century Analytic)	Biomedical Ethics
Ethics of Emerging Technologies	Environmental Ethics
AI Ethics	Honors Ethics of Technology
	Technology and Human Values
	History of Ethics
	Contemporary Moral Issues Online
	Metaphysics
	Research Ethics Online
	Research Skills and Ethics

Selected Professional Activities

AI and Ethics	2020 –
Editorial Board Member	
10 th Annual Values in Science, Medicine, and Technology Conference	
Program Committee	2020
Northeastern AI + Data Ethics Working Group	
Director	2018 –
Undergraduate Program Director	
Northeastern University – Philosophy and Religion	2018 –
Northeastern University Departmental Search Committee	
Member	
Northeastern University Tier 1 Grant Committee	
Evaluator	2015
Northeastern University's First Pages	
Selection Committee	2015-2016
Invited speaker	2014
BGSU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee	
Member	2011 - 2013
BGSU Arts and Humanities Curriculum Committee	
Member	2012 - 2013
BGSU Philosophy Department Placement Committee	
Assistant	2012 - 2013
BGSU Philosophy Department Personnel Committee	

Chair	2012 - 2013
Member	2011 - 2012
BGSU Philosophy Department Colloquium Committee	
Chair	2011 - 2014
BGSU Philosophy Department Undergraduate Committee	
Member	2011 - 2012
BGSU Workshop in Applied Philosophy 2011 on Manipulation	
Referee	
Referee/Reviewer	
AI and Ethics	
AI in Society	
American Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics	
American Journal of Bioethics	
Australasian Journal of Philosophy	
Business Ethics Quarterly	
Cell Reports Medicine	
Environmental Ethics	
Environmental Values	
Episteme	
Journal of the APA	
MIT Press	
National Science Foundation	
Nous	
Oxford University Press	
Philosophical Review	
Philosophy and Phenomenological Research	
Philosophy and Technology	
Public Affairs Quarterly	
Science and Education	
Synthese	
Philosophy TV	
Co-founder and Co-owner	
http://www.philostv.com	