

SAMUEL Z. ELGIN

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Areas of Specialization:

Metaphysics, Logic

Areas of Competence:

Epistemology, Philosophy of Science

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

University of Pennsylvania:	Associate Professor of Practice	2025–Present
University of California, San Diego:	Assistant Professor in Political Science	2020–2025
University of California, San Diego:	Postdoctoral Fellow in Philosophy	2018–2020
Yale University:	Ph.D. in Philosophy	2018
Reed College:	B.A. in Philosophy	2011

PUBLICATIONS

<i>The Metaphysics in Counterfactual Logic</i>	2026
Philosophical Logic , Forthcoming	
<i>Unstructured Purity</i>	2026
Noûs , Vol. 60, No. 3, pp. 685–697	
<i>Indiscernibility and the Grounds of Identity</i>	2026
Philosophical Studies , Vol. 183, pp. 2693–2715	
<i>Haecceities and the Triviality of the Identity of Indiscernibles</i>	2025
Synthese , Vol. 205, Article 113	
<i>Definition by Proxy</i>	2025
Philosophical Studies , Vol. 182, pp. 629–653	
<i>The Levels of Scientific Disciplines</i>	2025
Topoi , Vol. 44, pp. 273–285	
<i>Monism and the Ontology of Logic</i>	2024
Extreme Philosophy: Bold Ideas and a Spirit of Progress	
Ed. Stephen Hetherington. Routledge	
<i>The Semantic Foundations of Philosophical Analysis</i>	2023
The Review of Symbolic Logic , Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 603–623	
<i>Definition</i>	2022
Philosophical Studies , Vol. 179, pp. 3019–3036	
<i>Physicalism and the Identity of Identity Theories</i>	2022
Erkenntnis , Vol. 87, pp. 161–180	
<i>Knowledge is Closed under Analytic Content</i>	2021
Synthese , Vol. 199, pp. 5339–5353	
<i>Counterfactual Logic and the Necessity of Mathematics</i>	2021
Journal of Philosophical Logic , Vol. 50, pp. 97–115	
<i>Merely Partial Definition and the Analysis of Knowledge</i>	2021
Synthese , Vol. 198, pp. 1481–1505	
<i>On Question-Begging and Analytic Content</i>	2020
Synthese , Vol. 197, pp. 1149–1163	
<i>The Unreliability of Foreseeable Consequences, a Return to the Epistemic Objection</i>	2015
Ethical Theory and Moral Practice , Vol. 18, pp. 759–766	

WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Grounds of Nonground—Revise and Resubmit at Australasian Journal of Philosophy

Rationalist Contingency

The Ghosts in Our Midst

Outline of an Intensional Theory of Hyperintensionality

GRANTS

Faculty Career Development Program 2024
UC San Diego

General Campus Grant Funding 2024
UC San Diego

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

An Intensional Theory of Hyperintensionality 2027 (Upcoming)
Metaphysics Workshop, National University of Singapore

Unstructured Purity 2025
Metaphysics Workshop, UC Berkeley

Unstructured Purity 2025
Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association

Definition by Proxy 2024
Metaphysics Workshop, Princeton University

Definition by Proxy 2022
Colloquium, Oriel College, Oxford University

The New Paradox of Analysis 2021
Central Division, American Philosophical Association

Physicalism and the Identity of Identity Theories 2019
Department Colloquium, University of California, San Diego

The Semantic Foundations of Philosophical Analysis 2018
Department Colloquium, Reed College

Dewey, Confucius and the Aims of Education 2016
Conference on Educational Reform, Hangzhou Normal University

REFEREED PRESENTATIONS

The Grounds of Nonground 2025
Central Division, American Philosophical Association

The Grounds of Nonground 2024
Inaugural Workshop, Association of Analytic Metaphysics in the Italian-Speaking World

The Higher-Order Foundations of Arithmetic 2024
Workshop on Ground and Metaphysical Explanation, University of Bristol

Indiscernibility and the Grounds of Identity 2024
Pacific Division, American Philosophical Association

The Triviality of the Identity of Indiscernibles 2024
Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association

Higher-Order Counterfactual Logic 2023
Ten Years of Modal Logic as Metaphysics, University of Hamburg

Indiscernibility and the Grounds of Identity 2023
Workshop on Ground and Metaphysical Explanation, University of Southampton

Definition by Proxy 2023

<i>Central Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	
The Triviality of the Identity of Indiscernibles	2022
<i>Northern New England Philosophical Association, University of New Hampshire</i>	
Definition by Proxy	2022
<i>Higher-Order Metaphysics Workshop, University of Southern California</i>	
The Levels of the Empirical Sciences	2022
<i>Central Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	
Counterfactual Logic and the Necessity of Mathematics	2020
<i>Conference on Mathematical and Numerical Inspirations in Philosophy, Stanford University</i>	
Counterfactual Logic and the Necessity of Mathematics	2020
<i>13th Annual Conference on the Philosophy of Logic and Mathematics, University of Cambridge</i>	
Does Definition Admit of Substitution?	2020
<i>Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	
Physicalism and the Identity of Identity Theories	2019
<i>Society for the Metaphysics of Science, University of Toronto</i>	
The Semantic Foundations of Philosophical Analysis	2019
<i>International Congress on Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science and Technology</i>	
The Semantic Foundations of Philosophical Analysis	2019
<i>Truthmaker Semantics: Applications in Philosophy and Linguistics, University of Hamburg</i>	
The Semantic Foundations of Philosophical Analysis	2018
<i>Northern New England Philosophical Association, University of Vermont</i>	
The Semantic Foundations of Philosophical Analysis	2018
<i>Conference on Essence and Language, Canadian Metaphysics Collaborative</i>	
Verifying Physicalism	2018
<i>Workshop on the History & Metaphysics of the Concept of Laws of Nature, Central European University</i>	
Question-Begging and Analytic Content	2018
<i>Graduate Philosophy Conference, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México</i>	
Question-Begging and Analytic Content	2018
<i>Central Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	
Merely Partial Definition and the Analysis of Knowledge	2017
<i>Philosophers' Cocoon, University of Tampa</i>	
Merely Partial Definition and the Analysis of Knowledge	2017
<i>Epistemic Virtues and Epistemic Skills, Bled Epistemology Conference, Slovenia</i>	
Computability and Conceivability	2016
<i>Conference on Evidence and Imagination, University of Graz</i>	
Merely Partial Definition and the Analysis of Knowledge	2016
<i>Northern New England Philosophical Association, Keene State College</i>	
Concerning the Nature of Definition	2015
<i>Northern New England Philosophical Association, Bates College</i>	
Ethical Atomism and the Immorality of Hypocrisy	2015
<i>Conference for Young Analytic Philosophers, Salzburg</i>	
Hypocrisy: The Tribute Vice Pays to Virtue	2015
<i>Graduate Philosophy Conference, Syracuse University</i>	
The Myth of Balanced Consequences	2014
<i>British Society for Ethical Theory, University of Cambridge</i>	

COMMENTARIES

Settling the Question, by Jonathan Schaffer <i>Conference on Deep Metaphysics</i>	2026
The Elamite Picture of Reality, by Raul Saucedo <i>Conference on Deep Metaphysics</i>	2026
Metaphysical Determination, General and Specific, by Javah Xie <i>Metaphysics in the Blue Ridge Workshop</i>	2025
Equivalence and Theory Expansion, by Diego Arana <i>Central Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	2024
Tropes of Mereology: A Theory of Facts and Truth-Making, by Aviv Hoffman <i>Pacific Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	2021
Compliance and Command, by Kit Fine <i>Graduate Philosophy Conference, Yale University</i>	2016
Diamonds are Forever, by Cian Dorr <i>Graduate Philosophy Conference, Yale University</i>	2015
Natural Kinds Light, by Ásta Kristjana Sveinsdóttir <i>Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	2012
Explanatory Kinds: A Definition of Normality for Generics, by Bernard Nickel <i>Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association</i>	2012

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

At the University of Pennsylvania:

Introduction to Normative and Applied Ethics	2026
Modal Logic and Metaphysics	2026

At the University of California, San Diego:

Ethics and Society I	2021, 2022, 2023 & 2025
Ethics and Society II	2021, 2022, 2023 & 2025
Critical Reasoning and Consumption	2021, 2022 & 2023
Symbolic Logic	2019

Dissertation Committees:

Claudi Brink, Philosophy, UC San Diego	2022
Joe Stratmann, Philosophy, UC San Diego	2022

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Consultant, AI Ethics Evaluation <i>Handshake</i>	2025–Present
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SERVICE AND MEDIA

Professional Service

Mentor <i>American Philosophical Association Mentorship Program</i>	2026–Present
Organizer <i>University of Pennsylvania Metaphysics Workshop</i>	2026
Organizer <i>UC San Diego Metaphysics Workshop</i>	2024
Organizer <i>UC San Diego Metaphysics Working Group</i>	2018–2025

Journal Reviewer

Acta Analytica; Analysis (x6); Argumenta; Dialectica (x2); Ergo (x3); Erkenntnis; Inquiry; Journal of the American Philosophical Association; Journal of Philosophical Logic; Journal of Philosophical Research; Journal of Philosophy (x2); Mind; Noûs; Open Philosophy; Philosophical Quarterly (x2); Philosophia; Philosophical Studies (x5); Philosophy and Phenomenological Research; Studia Semiotyczne; Synthese (x10)

External Reviewer

Czech Science Foundation (GACR)

Swiss National Science Foundation

Junior Research Fellowship, Magdalen College, University of Oxford

Spring Centennial Center Research Grants, American Political Science Association

University Service

Faculty Executive Committee

2023–2025

Warren College, UC San Diego

Graduate Student Faculty Advisor

2021–2025

UC San Diego Department of Political Science

Alumni Steering Committee

2024

Reed College

Media

Quoted in “Silicon Valley Is Turning to Philosophers to Shape the Future of AI,” by Lila Shroff

2026

The Atlantic