

The Metaphysical Society of America

Seventy-Sixth Annual Meeting

-- On a theme selected in recognition of the resurgent interest in systematic metaphysics as first philosophy --

Cosponsored by the Yale University Department of Philosophy

New Haven, Connecticut

March 19-21, 2026

Metaphysics and the Authority of Intelligence

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Shortened Form*

Papers selected for presentation will focus on the character and authority of metaphysically attuned intelligence. The latter approached as a power that discloses the nature and limits – formal, practical, orientational – of the thinking associated with the modes of thought specific to such culturally formative domains of knowledge as art, the exact and physical sciences, history, information science, religion, and moral and political philosophy. The selected papers will address, in particular, one or more of the following questions:

- What are the philosophical and practical implications of the thinking that systematically discloses or establishes or applies ontology and epistemology as inseparable moments within a culturally constitutive realm of knowledge?
- In what ways does an axiomatic or semantic or constructivist or pragmatic approach to metaphysical thinking as a means of assessing the authority of intelligence (not merely discursive rationalism) in a culturally formative domain of knowledge contrast with an account – ancient, medieval, modern, contemporary – that is “onto-epistemological”?
- What major ancient, medieval, modern, or contemporary philosophical works either tacitly presuppose or explicitly articulate the “first principle” of onto-epistemology, namely that *knowing is of being* (in both senses of the genitive)? What is the most properly “scientific” approach to thinking with first principles?
- How has a particular systematic philosophy (ancient, medieval, modern, contemporary) characterized “intelligence” – not the IQ variety but that which originates with Platonic and/or Aristotelian *nous* – and most consequentially related it to speculative and practical reason, or simply to calculative thinking at large?
- How is the authority of intelligence – not simply rationality or “understanding” in the Kantian sense of *Verstand* – in one or more realm of culturally formative knowledge (such as physical science, information science, art, religion, history, or moral philosophy) predicated, “somehow,” as Aristotle put it, upon the identity of the knower (as such), the act of knowing, and the known?

*A detailed rationale of the conference theme may be obtained from Phillip Stambovsky at pstambovsky@snet.net.

Abstracts (*without* the author's name) of approximately 500 words are to be emailed as a pdf attachment to a cover letter which contains 1) the author's full name, 2) institutional affiliation, if any, and 3) title of the abstract. The email subject line should read: 2026 MSA submission [*last name of author*]. The deadline is September 1, 2025. All submissions will be vetted by the conference program committee. Address: communication@metaphysicalsociety.org.

To ensure inclusion in the program, and in order to be made available to all who register for the conference, the complete text (*including authors' names*) of the papers selected for presentation are to be submitted as a pdf attachment to a cover letter no later than February 1, 2026.

Completed papers are to have a reading time of no more than 30 minutes, which correlates, approximately, with a 3750-word limit (c. 15 pages). This is necessary in order to meet scheduling demands and to allow sufficient time for open discussion. Further information on the conference is available at the website of The Metaphysical Society of America.

Aristotle Prize: Awarded for an outstanding paper by an author who does not, or not yet, hold a PhD. To be considered for the Aristotle Prize submissions must include both an abstract and the completed paper (not to exceed 3750 words, excluding notes and other supporting material). Eligible submissions must be accompanied by a covering letter indicating that the attached pdf files (abstract and paper) are to be considered for the Aristotle Prize of the Metaphysical Society of America. The Prize – which is strictly merit based and is not necessarily awarded each year – carries a cash award of \$500, inclusion in the program, and assistance with costs associated with attending the meeting. Send submissions to: communication@metaphysicalsociety.org.

Deadline: September 30, 2025.

Plato Prize: For an outstanding paper by an author with a PhD awarded no more than six years prior to the submission deadline: September 30, 2025. Authors should email pdf files of the complete paper along with the abstract and clearly indicate in the covering note that the submission is to be considered for the Plato Prize. Entries are subject to a 3,750-word limit (excluding notes and other supporting material). The Plato Prize – which is strictly merit based and is not necessarily awarded each year – carries a cash award of \$500, inclusion in the program, and assistance with costs associated with attending the meeting. Send submissions to: communication@metaphysicalsociety.org.

Travel Grants: Thanks to the generous support of past presidents of the MSA, along with grants from the Hocking-Cabot Fund for Systematic Philosophy and the estate of John Lachs, the Metaphysical Society is pleased to be able to offer reimbursements for travel expenses up to \$400 to graduate students and post-doctoral researchers whose papers are selected for the conference program. (All relevant expense-receipts must accompany every request to the Metaphysical Society of America for reimbursements.)