

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan-Flint
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Philosophy

Bénédicte Veillet, assistant professor of philosophy, Department of Philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of Philosophy, with tenure, Department of Philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2008	University of Maryland, College Park
M.A.	2002	Bowling Green State University, Ohio
B.A.	2000	University of Hawaii, Hilo

Professional Record:

2011 – Present	Assistant Professor, University of Michigan-Flint
2009 – 2011	Faculty Research Assistant, University of Maryland, College Park
2008 – 2009	Visiting Assistant Professor, Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Veillet teaches a wide array of courses in philosophy including Ethics (normative and applied), Social and Political Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy, Metaphysics, and the Philosophy of Religion. Since beginning her career at the University of Michigan-Flint, Professor Veillet has taught 13 different courses in addition to supervising a number of student research projects. At the core of Professor Veillet’s teaching philosophy is the belief that learning philosophy is a process of self-discovery for students. This often unsettling process necessitates creating a classroom environment that promotes her students’ willingness to question their deeply held beliefs, and equally important, their willingness to listen and understand points of view that are different from their own. One element in Professor Veillet’s evolving pedagogy for her introductory courses is to have students work together in small groups throughout the semester thereby promoting student participation in discussion and fostering empathy for other points of view. As a result of a Catalyst Course Redesign Grant, Professor Veillet has also reorganized her lectures to be a combination of interactive notes, relevant videos, and web links that underscore the relevance and applicability of the philosophical concepts at hand. For her upper division courses that are primarily directed towards philosophy majors, the goal is to conduct a deep reading of the texts which is accomplished through guided reading questions that her students use to prepare their responses and present in class.

Research – Professor Veillet specializes in the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of cognitive science, and the philosophy of psychology. In framing her research agenda, Professor Veillet sees her research addressing three central questions regarding the relationship between concepts and consciousness. First, although some philosophers claim that our experiences are so fine-grained (e.g., shades of orange in a fall forest) that there must be something non-conceptual about our conscious experience, Professor Veillet argues that because we have the capacity to *re-identify* every shade of orange we see, our conscious experience is in fact conceptual. The second area of scholarship entertains the possible differences between sensory and emotional states, with those that are strictly cognitive and conceptual; ultimately, Professor Veillet concludes that beliefs do not have their own distinct conceptual

phenomenology. Finally, Professor Veillet explores the puzzling nature of consciousness – that is, how do conscious and vivid experiences arise from the brain. Rather than claiming that there is something special about consciousness, Professor Veillet contends that what makes consciousness special is the special way we think consciousness through our use of phenomenal concepts. Having published her last paper in *Philosophical Studies*, a top-tier generalist philosophy journal, Professor Veillet has clearly established herself as a respected analytic philosopher working on consciousness.

Recent and Significant Scholarly Activity:

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Veillet, Bénédicte (2015). “The Cognitive Significance of Phenomenal Knowledge.” *Philosophical Studies*, 172 (11): 2955-2974.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2012). “In Defense of Phenomenal Concepts.” *Philosophical Papers*, 41 (1): 97-127.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2012). “Belief, Re-Identification and Fineness of Grain.” *European Journal of Philosophy*, 20 (2).
- Veillet, Bénédicte and Carruthers, Peter (2011). “The Case Against Cognitive Phenomenology.” In T. Bayne and M. Montague (eds.), *Cognitive Phenomenology*, Oxford University Press: 2011.

Conference Presentations

- Veillet, Bénédicte (2016). “The Epistemic Gap and Epistemic Emotions.” Toward a Science of Consciousness, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2016). “Epistemic Arguments and Explanatory Targets.” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, San Francisco, California.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2015). “The Phenomenal Concept Strategy and Epistemic Emotions.” Toward a Science of Consciousness, University of Helsinki, Finland.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2015). “Making Sense of the Acquaintance Argument.” The Conscious Person Project, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2015). “Does Everyone Get Our Phenomenal Concepts Wrong?” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2013). “Learning Something New.” Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2013). “Transparency, Phenomenal Concepts and *a Posteriori* Physicalism.” SPAWN Conference, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.
- Veillet, Bénédicte (2012). Comments on “Psychology, Neuroscience, and the Consciousness Dilemma,” Katalin Balog, (ed). Fourth Online Consciousness Conference (CO4).
See <http://consciousnessonline.com>.

Service – Professor Veillet is an active and visible member of her department, college, and university, as well as her professional community. Within her department, Professor Veillet regularly attends all department meetings and functions, and has attended the college’s Council of Chairs meetings on the occasions when her department chair was unable to attend. Professor Veillet also has served on the following department committees: the 2014-15 tenure-track position in Ethics, the fall 2014 sabbatical replacement search, the Freeman Scholarship Committee and has been the Philosophy Club advisor in 2012-13. For the college, Professor Veillet has served on the Academic Standards and the LEO Review committees, as well as serving as an outside member for a tenure-track search within the Department of History. At the university level, Professor Veillet’s service includes regular participation in commencement ceremonies, hosting the Mentee Breakfast for the Faculty Mentoring program, and presenting at the Human Rights Day. Finally, Professor Veillet is a member of the Center for Cognition

and Neuroethics Advisory Board, and has served a referee for the following journals: *Philosophical Studies*, *Topoi: An International Review of Philosophy*, the *European Journal of Philosophy*, and the journal *Mind*. In the college's assessment, Professor Veillet has been successful in establishing herself as an active and visible member of the faculty at the University of Michigan-Flint.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): "All five pieces are nuanced, precise, well-informed, and well-argued. They are densely written: jam-packed with argument after argument. No words are wasted. There are central topics and themes, and the work coheres well. The breadth is also good... ..her more recent work will, I believe, ensure her standing as a highly respected philosopher of mind."

Reviewer (B): "These four pieces all make important contributions to her areas of specialization, namely, the nature of phenomenal concepts, the nature of perceptual content, and the interconnections among them... [Regarding her argument of the alleged phenomenal qualities of concept representations in 'The Case Against Cognitive Phenomenology'] In my view this is a very ingenious, original and sophisticated solution to a puzzle of cognitive phenomenology that undoubtedly has helped to move the debate forward."

Reviewer (C): "All of this makes clear that Dr Veillet is a burgeoning player in the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of psychology, and epistemology. Her work is solidly mainstream and concerned with a family of issues intersecting the philosophy of mind (including the philosophy of psychology and cognitive science) and epistemology. The focus is narrow enough to allow her to make progress on particular topics, but is has implications that give it a broader importance that much philosophy produced today lacks... Dr Veillet is working at a high level and has a definite presence in the field. Unlike many of her peers writing on consciousness, she is commendably cautious with an eye for telling details that others are going to overlook. She is a force for the good in an area that tends to polarize discussants."

Reviewer (D): "I think it is *good* work, however, and will play a modest but nontrivial role in shaping future debates on these topics. I don't see any indication that she will move beyond these topics, but I also think that there is a career's worth of papers to be written, and that she will continue to be a productive member of the scholarly community."

Reviewer (E): "In short, Veillet's papers make clear, cogent, and thoughtful contributions to the literature in a number of related areas in the philosophy of mind and psychology, and I believe they should, and will, be widely read and cited."

Reviewer (F): "Prof. Veillet's papers, to my mind, are of very high quality and manifest a secure grasp of the literature and issues with which she deals, along with a good deal of originality and insight."

Reviewer (G): "Dr. Veillet has all the virtues that analytic philosophers aspire to: she writes with remarkable clarity; she is extremely careful in setting-up her arguments and delineating the scope of their conclusions; she is excellent (formidable, even) at taking apart a philosophical argument. What I found most impressive, however, is her knack for honing in on assumptions that the rest of the field takes for granted and investigating those assumptions in a way that yields new criticisms or reframes old issues in a new way."

Reviewer (H): “Veillet has published three substantial papers in highly ranked refereed journals, and has co-authored two other papers with Peter Carruthers. All five of these articles are insightful and productive contributions to ongoing philosophical debates.”

Summary of Recommendation:

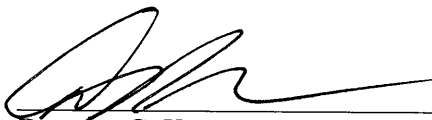
Professor Veillet specializes in the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of cognitive science, and the philosophy of psychology whose research agenda addresses three central questions regarding the relationship between concepts and consciousness – the conceptual basis of conscious experience, the position that beliefs do not have their own distinct conceptual phenomenology, and finally, how we think about consciousness through phenomenal concepts. As a teacher, Professor Veillet is committed to a pedagogy that emphasizes self-discovery among her students and works tirelessly to create the requisite classroom environment that promotes the willingness among her students to question their deeply held beliefs, and listen and understand points of view that are different from their own. Lastly, Professor Veillet is an active and visible member of her department, college, university and professional communities, whose service ranges from being the Philosophy Student Club advisor to a referee for some of the discipline’s highest ranked journals. In sum, Professor Veillet has demonstrated the requisite excellence in scholarly achievement and recognition, teaching, and service to her department, college, university and professional community worthy of promotion to associate professor with tenure. With enthusiasm and great pride, I recommend that Bénédicte Veillet be promoted to associate professor of philosophy, with tenure, Department of Philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences.

Recommended by:

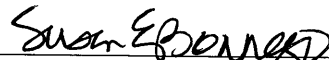


Susan Gano-Phillips, Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Recommendation endorsed by:



Douglas G. Knerr, Provost and
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs



Susan E. Borrego, Chancellor
University of Michigan-Flint

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