

News item. Retrieved from
<http://www.commens.org/news/item/pragmatist-graduate-conference-interactions-institutions-pragmatism-and-collective>, 19.05.2026.

Category: Academic Meeting

Title: Pragmatist Graduate Conference: "From interactions to institutions: pragmatism and collective experience"

Description: Keynote speakers:

- Rosa Maria Calcaterra (University of Roma-III)
- Hans Joas (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin / University of Chicago)

The 1st Pragmatist Graduate Conference will be held in Paris on 18-19 January 2018. The conference's aim is to give early-career philosophers and social scientists working on pragmatism an opportunity to meet and discuss their work.

Pragmatism, understood as an intellectual movement in the history of ideas, a philosophical method, and a specific approach in contemporary social and political theory, covers a rich variety of ideas and thinkers across different fields of research. For all its diversity, one can nonetheless identify a number of common ideas shared by most pragmatists:

1) a commitment to experience and actual practices as both the starting point and purpose of philosophical, scientific, social or political inquiries. This commitment entails an inclination towards renovated versions of empiricism and experimental method, such as fallibilism;

2) a rejection of traditional metaphysics and its dualistic oppositions, such as the individual and the social, body and mind, thought and world, logic and psychology, theory and practice. This intellectual stance is associated with a defense of various types of naturalism;

3) a marked interest, at least for Dewey, Mead and their followers, in social and political issues. Such an attitude often favors practical involvement at different levels of collective action, be they local or more at large, through concrete public activities.

This graduate conference, "From interactions to institutions: pragmatism and collective experience", will deal with key ideas in both classical and contemporary pragmatism. The emphasis on collective experience refers to the pragmatists' committed attention to shared experience, as well as the interactional dimensions of all our concrete activities. It contrasts with the understanding of experience as merely subjective or reducible to "sense data".

The study of interactions from a pragmatist perspective covers a wide range of topics, spanning across metaphysical to social, ethical and political matters.

Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

- groups, publics and institutions
- social theory, social ontology, or metaphysics of interactions
- levels or strata of interactions and their relations/combinations
- the organization of collective experience (theory of inquiry, social epistemology, cooperative action)
- the political implications of interactions and institutions (e.g., for a theory of democracy)

We therefore expect proposals from all areas of philosophy and the social sciences, including presentations based on case studies and fieldwork about interactions or institutions, to the extent they make explicit use of a pragmatist approach. Given the broad range of possible topics, we welcome papers in all the following fields: social and political theory, ethics, sociology and social anthropology, social psychology, social epistemology, metaphysics, history of ideas.

Submission guidelines:

- Word limit: 500 words
- Prepare your abstract for blind review (your abstract should be anonymous)
- Include a separate document with your contact information, your current academic occupation (i.e., your position or study program, or your most recent degree), and the title of your paper.
- Abstracts can be submitted via e-mail to [pragmatistgraduateconference \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:pragmatistgraduateconference@gmail.com)
- Take into account that you are expected to hand in a paper before the conference, so that your respondent may read it. The deadline will be communicated to accepted presenters. (Working papers and student papers are eligible.)
- Abstracts must be written in English
- Notification of acceptance: early October, 2017

The organizing committee:

- Camille Casale (Paris I), Olivier Gaudin (EHESS), Céline Henne (EHESS), Camille Pascal (Lyon III)

The scientific committee:

- Just Serrano (Goethe Universität, Germany), Matteo Santarelli (Università di Molise, Italy), Nicolas Bernier (Sherbrooke University, Canada)

Place: Paris

Keywords: Pragmatism