

NASS 2026 Conference Schedule

Day 1 – Friday, October 23

8:30-9:00am Registration and Welcome ([Zoom Link 1](#))

(All scheduled times are U.S. Eastern Standard Time, EST)

9:00-10:45am Sessions A1 & A2

Session A1: Authenticity and Freedom in the Algorithmic Age ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Moderator: Dane Sawyer

- Oris Kondwani Chimphambano – *Rethinking Authenticity on Social Media through Sartre*
- Christophe Premat – *Cyber-Enframing and the Generalization of the “Negro Condition”: Existential Freedom in a Probabilized World*

Session A2: AI, Bad Faith, and Self-Deception ([Zoom Link 2](#))

Moderator: Kiki Berk

- Beth Butterfield – *AI, Self-Deception, and Bad Faith*
- Dominic Brandolini – *Social Media Algorithms as Idea-Exis: How Social Media Facilitates Bad Faith*
- Joseph Nguyen – *Sartre on Bad Faith: A Metastable State of Human Reality*

11:00-12:00pm Keynote Address: Professor Stefano Gualeni: Existence and Care in Virtual Worlds? ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Stefano Gualeni is a Full Professor at the Institute of Digital Games, University of Malta. His academic books include *Virtual Worlds as Philosophical Tools* (Palgrave, 2015), *Virtual Existentialism* (Palgrave Pivot, 2020, with Daniel Vella), and *Fictional Games: A Philosophy of Worldbuilding and Imaginary Play* (Bloomsbury, 2023, with Riccardo Fassone). Stefano’s games, essays and philosophical fictions can be found on his webpage at www.gua-le-ni.com. Stefano’s philosophical fictions include *The Clouds: An Experiment in Theory-Fiction* (Routledge, 2024), *What We Owe the Dead* (Set Margins', 2025), *Scholar's Codex* (Tune and Fairweather, 2026), and *Errata Corpora* (Set Margins', forthcoming in 2027)

12:00-1:15pm Lunch Break

1:15-3:00pm Sessions B1 & B2

Session B1: Meaning, Difference, and the Existential Condition ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Moderator: Damon Boria

- Kiki Berk – *Beyond Nihilism: Camus on Worthwhileness and Meaning in Life*
- Madeline Brenchley – *AI and the Age of Apathy: Rereading Irigaray and Descartes on Wonder*
- Peter Jones – *Transcendence Through Ignorance and Inauthenticity: A Crisis of Identity*

Session B2: Phenomenology, Worldhood, and Artificial Intelligence ([Zoom Link](#))

Moderator: James Sares

- Rui Ge – *Phenomenologies of AI: From Husserlian Horizon to Sartrean Hodology*
- René Gimpel – *Artificial Intelligence, a virtual misnomer; Virtual Worlds, a nebulous artificiality*

3:15-5:00pm Sessions C1 & C2

Session C1: AI, Ethics, and the Fate of Human Freedom ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Moderator: James Sares

- Christopher Riendeau – *The Sub-Man in the Machine: How AI Threatens Radical Freedom*
- Nico Gascon – *The Implicit Rights of AI: A Sartrean Critique*
- David Detmer – *An Existentialist Critique of “Artificial Intelligence”*

Session C2: Existentialism, Art, Language, and Meaning ([Zoom Link 2](#))

Moderator: Varun Chandrasekhar

- Varun Chandrasekhar – *Existentialism And/As/In Music*
- Paul Gyllenhammer – *Prose and Poetry (again)*
- Timur Cengiz Uçan – *Ludicity and Lucidity: Language, Games, and Language Games in the Works of Sartre and Wittgenstein*

5:15-5:45pm Digital Get Together (Honor Bill McBride, Michel Rybalka, and Steve Hendlev) ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Day 2 – Saturday, October 24

9:00-10:45am Sessions D1 & D2

Session D1: Telecommunication: Regressive and Progressive Analyses ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Moderator: Dane Sawyer

- Judith Chavarria – *Technology and Subjectivity: The Critique of the Radio in Sartre and Adorno*
- Tyrique Mack-Georges – *Transmitting Praxis: Sartre's Method and Telecommunication*
- Owen Davies – *Sartre, Situation, and Micropolitics*

Session D2: The Look, the Other, and Digital Recognition ([Zoom Link 2](#))

Moderator: Paul Gyllenhammer

- Farhang Erfani – *The Look Without a Subject: Sartre, AI, and Authenticity*
- Niten Singh Rana – *Posting-For-Others*
- Justin Taylor – *The Digital Big Other: Sartre, Lacan, and the Culture of Evaluation*

11:00-12:45pm Sessions E1 & E2

Session E1: Virtual Worlds, Community, and Existential Relationships ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Moderator: Paul Gyllenhammer

- Kimberly S. Engels – *Existential Rupture and Authentic Support in Digital Spaces: The Case of the Reddit Experiencer Forum*
- Amy Gardner – *Haunted and Helped by Virtual Ghosts: An Argument for Meaningful Online Relationships*
- Daniel Smith & Robin Babb – *One Bad Actor Spoils the Whole World: Care, Vulnerability, and Agency in Role-Playing Games*

Session E2: AI, Language, Knowledge, and Social Science ([Zoom Link 2](#))

Moderator: T. Storm Heter

- Dennis Skocz – *Artificial Intelligence: What Would Sartre Say? Clues for a Sartrean Perspective in His Philosophical Works*
- Solange Guénoun – *Jean Améry (1912-1978): Naufragé de l'existentialisme sartrien?*

12:45-2:00pm Lunch Break & Business Meeting (Everyone is Welcome!) ([Zoom Link 1](#))

2:00-3:45pm Sessions F1 & F2

Session F1: Existentialism, History, Politics, and Liberation ([Zoom Link 2](#))

Moderator: T. Storm Heter

- T. Storm Heter – *Existentialist Anti-Colonialism*
- Devin Zane Shaw – *Francis Jeanson: Logics of Colonialism and Resistance*
- A. Shahid Stover – *Existential Liberation Phenomenology of Black Rage*

Session F2: Sartre, Embodiment, Identity, and Ontology ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Moderator: Dane Sawyer

- Joshua Silickas – *The Body in Theory and the Body in Practice: Sartre at the Limits of Critical Phenomenology*
- Dane Sawyer – *An Existentialist-Oriented Metaphysics: Reading Sartre through Whitehead's Philosophy of Organism*

4:00-5:45pm Sessions G1 & G2

Session G1: AI, Art, Literature, and Creativity ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Moderator: Kimberly S. Engels

- Heiner Wittmann – *Rethinking Sartrean Studies in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*
- Steven W. Quackenbush & Alanah K. Vargas – *What Is Synthetic Literature? Generative AI and the Poetic Project*

Session G2: Freedom, Agency, and the AI Subject ([Zoom Link 2](#))

Moderator: T. Storm Heter

- Xiaoqi Weng – *Beyond Nested Positionality: Algorithmic Mediation and the Need for a Richer Existential Geometry*
- Jose Fernandez – *Existence Precedes Essence in the Machine: Why Superintelligent AI Will Not Punish Humanity*
- Sarah Silveira – *What Kind of Subject? AI, Freedom, and Self-Referential Subjectivity*

6:00-6:30pm Closing Remarks ([Zoom Link 1](#))

Zoom Links for NASS 2026

Zoom Link 1: Topic: Dane Sawyer's Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ulv-edu.zoom.us/j/4185596202>

Meeting ID: 418 559 6202

Zoom Link 2: Topic: Thunderstorm Heter (he/his/him)'s Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://esu-online.zoom.us/j/9222296249>

Meeting ID: 922 229 6249