



Ronald Munson Essay Prizes in Philosophy

The 2025 Competition

The Department of Philosophy is pleased to announce the annual competition for the Ronald Munson Essay Prizes in Philosophy. Two prizes will be given: one for the best philosophy paper by an UMSL undergraduate, and one for the best philosophy paper by an UMSL graduate student in philosophy. Each prize comes with a \$150 award. The essay prizes are named in honor of Ronald Munson, a distinguished medical ethicist and philosopher of science who taught in UMSL's Department of Philosophy from 1967 until his retirement in 2010.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Undergraduate Essay Prize, you must currently be enrolled as an undergraduate at UMSL. (You need not be a philosophy major or minor.) To be eligible for the Graduate Essay Prize, you must currently be enrolled in the Philosophy M.A. Program. You are allowed to submit only one paper per annual competition. The paper may be a paper you wrote for a course, a revised version of a seminar paper, part of a thesis project, or something you have written independently. There is no minimum length requirement, but **papers exceeding 8,000 words will not be considered**. You are welcome to write on any topic in philosophy.

Format, Deadline, and Review Process

Please submit an electronic copy of your paper by email attachment to Jill Delston at delstonj@umsystem.edu. The paper must be formatted so that it can be sent out for anonymous review. Your name should not appear anywhere in the attached file but do include both your name and your preferred e-mail address in your initial e-mail. Also, please include "Munson Prize" in the subject line of your email and indicate whether you are submitting for the graduate or undergraduate prize. Create a title page for your paper with both a full title and a word count. Papers should be double-spaced. Any style of citation is acceptable, so long as that style is used consistently throughout the paper. **Improperly formatted papers may not be considered**. Papers must be received by **Sunday, March 30th, 2025**, to be considered for this year's competition. Submitted papers will be sent to an external reviewer, and an announcement of the winner will be made on the department website (<http://www.umsystem.edu/~philo>) in May, once the winning essays are selected. (The reviewer may determine that no award be given if no essay of sufficient merit is submitted.)

Academic Biography of Ronald Munson

Ronald Munson was a founding member of the University of Missouri-St. Louis Department of Philosophy and Professor of the Philosophy of Science and Medicine from 1967-2010. He joined the faculty after receiving his Ph.D. from Columbia University, where he was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, and taught as a Preceptor in Columbia College. He was awarded an NEH Postdoctoral Fellow in Biology at Harvard University and later held an appointment as a Faculty Research Fellow at Harvard Medical School. He also served as a Visiting Professor at University of California, San Diego, and at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. He was awarded research grants from NEH and NSF as well as the University of Missouri Research Board.

Munson became a nationally acclaimed bioethicist after beginning his career as philosopher of biology. He has published in *Philosophy of Science*, *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, *Philosophy and Medicine*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, and *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Some of his articles have been anthologized many times. He serves as a medical ethicist for National Institutes of Health and as a consultant for National Cancer Institute. He is an Associate Editor of the *American Journal of Surgery*.

He has published eleven books. The most recent, *The Woman Who Decided to Die* (Oxford) is a collection of bioethics cases drawn from his experience. His book on organ transplants, *Raising the Dead* (Oxford) was named a "Best Book in Science and Medicine" by National Library Association. Munson's *Intervention and Reflection* (Wadsworth) now in its tenth edition, is the nation's most used bioethics text. The book he wrote with Daniel Albert and Michael Resnik, *Reasoning in Medicine* (Hopkins), focused on medical decision making. *Man and Nature* (Dell) outlined the new philosophy of biology, and *The Way of Words* (Houghton-Mifflin) was among the first books in informal logic. The *Elements of Reasoning*, 7th ed. (with Andrew Black) continued the new tradition.

Munson is also the author of well-received novels, including *Nothing Human*, *Fan Mail*, and *Night Vision*, which have been translated into German, French, Japanese, Dutch, and Swedish. *Fan Mail* was also twice produced as a radio play, once in Germany and once in Switzerland.