

Brandon Waldon

CONTACT INFORMATION	Department of Philosophy University of South Carolina Close-Hipp Building, Room 528 1705 College Street Columbia, SC 29208	<i>Phone:</i> (312) 768-8221 <i>Email:</i> brandonwaldon@gmail.com <i>Website:</i> bwaldon.github.io
APPOINTMENTS	Assistant Professor of Linguistics and Philosophy <i>University of South Carolina, 2025 – Present</i> Scholar in Residence, Interdisciplinary Centre for Ethics <i>Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland, 2026</i> Co-founder, Legal Interpretation and Technology (LegIT) Lab (co-directors: Nathan Schneider, Kevin Tobia) <i>Georgetown University, 2025 – Present</i> Postdoctoral Researcher in Computer Science, Linguistics, and Public Policy <i>Georgetown University, 2024 – 2025</i>	
EDUCATION	PhD, Linguistics, Stanford University, 2024 Dissertation: <i>Probabilistic Language Understanding and Formal Linguistic Theory</i> Committee: Cleo Condoravdi and Judith Degen (co-chairs), Beth Levin, Guillermo Del Pinal AB, Linguistics, University of Chicago, 2015	
GRANTS & CONTRACTS	Future Law Lab Startup Grant, Jagiellonian University, 2025 – 2026. Project: <i>multiXJur: Multiplayer Online Experiments as a Tool in Experimental Jurisprudence</i> (co-lead: Piotr Bystranowski). Legal Tech Advisor (contract), Policy for the People (P4P) AI legal interpretation assistance tool, Georgetown University, 2026. Seed Research Grant, Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI), 2022 – 2024. Project: <i>Towards Clear, Transparent, and Scalable Computational Contract Technology</i> (with Megan Ma; lead PI: Judith Degen).	
FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS	Thank a Teacher Award, Center for Teaching Excellence, University of South Carolina, 2025 Fritz Family Fellowship, Georgetown Tech & Society Initiative, 2024 – 2025. Project: <i>Linguistic Perspectives on Legal Interpretation</i> (faculty mentors: Nathan Schneider, Kevin Tobia). Student Travel Grant, Cognitive Science Society, 2023 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, 2019 – 2022	

Community Impact Award, Stanford Alumni Association, 2019
 Summer Language Intensive Grant, Stanford School of Humanities & Sciences, 2018
 Fulbright Student Research Grant, U.S. Department of State, 2016 – 2017. Host institution: Leibniz-Zentrum Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft (ZAS), Berlin
 Leonard Bloomfield Award, Department of Linguistics, University of Chicago, 2015

UNDER
 REVIEW

Waldon, B., Bystranowski, P. (*under review*). Reading law like others do: Predicting textualism in humans and large language models.

JOURNAL
 ARTICLES

Waldon, B., Condoravdi, C., Tobia, K. (forthcoming). Problems of linguistic generality in statutory interpretation. *Iowa Law Review*.

*: EQUAL
 CONTRIBUTION

Tobia, K.*, **Waldon, B.*** (2026). Linguistics and textualism. *New York University Law Review*, 101, 1046–1119.

Waldon, B., Schneider, N., Wilcox, E., Zeldes, A., Tobia, K. (2025). Large language models for legal interpretation? Don’t take their word for it. *Georgetown Law Journal*, 114(1), 115–183.

Waldon, B., Condoravdi, C., Pustejovsky, J., Schneider, N., Tobia, K. (2025). Reading law with linguistics: The statutory interpretation of artifact nouns. *Harvard Journal on Legislation*, 62(2), 415–467.

Solt, S., **Waldon, B.** (2019). Numerals under negation: Empirical findings. *Glossa: A Journal of General Linguistics*, 4(1), 113.

Del Pinal, G.*, **Waldon, B.*** (2019). Modals under epistemic tension. *Natural Language Semantics*, 27(2), 135–188.

Jasbi, M., **Waldon, B.**, Degen, J. (2019). Linking hypothesis and number of response options modulate inferred scalar implicature rate. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 189.

REFEREED
 CONFERENCE
 PROCEEDINGS

Purushothama, A., Min, J., **Waldon, B.**, Schneider, N. (2026). Prompting from the bench: Large-scale pretraining is not sufficient to prepare LLMs for ordinary meaning analysis. In *Proceedings of the 2026 ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAccT ’26)*, 4552–4580.

Waldon, B., Wells, M., Tiwari, D., Gopalan, M., Schneider, N. (2025). Legal-CGEL: Analyzing legal text in the CGELBank framework. In *Proceedings of the 23rd International Workshop on Treebanks and Linguistic Theories (TLT, SyntaxFest 2025)*, 148–153.

Waldon, B., Schneider, N. (2025). A GitHub-based workflow for annotated resource development. In *Proceedings of the 19th Linguistic Annotation Workshop (LAW-XIX-2025)*, 326–331.

Rathi, N., **Waldon, B.**, Degen, J. (2024). Informativity and accessibility in incremental production of the dative alternation. In *Proceedings of the 46th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.

- Guha, N., Nyarko, J., Ho, D.E., Ré, C., Chilton, A., Narayana, A., Chohlas-Wood, A., Peters, A., **Waldon, B.**, et al. (2023). LegalBench: A collaboratively built benchmark for measuring legal reasoning in large language models. In *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems 36 (NeurIPS 2023), Datasets and Benchmarks Track*, 44123–44279.
- Waldon, B.**, Condoravdi, C., Levin, B., Degen, J. (2023). On the context dependence of artifact noun interpretation. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 27*, 674–692.
- Ma, M., **Waldon, B.**, Nyarko, J. (2023). Conceptual questions in developing expert-annotated data. In *Proceedings of the Nineteenth International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Law (ICAIL 2023)*, 427–431.
- Yu, D., **Waldon, B.**, Degen, J. (2023). The cross-linguistic order of adjectives and nouns may be the result of iterated pragmatic pressures on referential communication. In *Proceedings of the 45th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.
- Waldon, B.**, Brodsky, M., Ma, M., Degen, J. (2023). Predicting consensus in legal document interpretation. In *Proceedings of the 45th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.
- Kursat, L., **Waldon, B.**, Ergin, R., Degen, J. (2022). Evaluating models of referring expression production on an emerging sign language. In *Proceedings of the 44th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.
- Waldon, B.** (2021). Epistemic *must* and *might*: Evidence that argumentation is semantically encoded. In *Proceedings of the Fifty-sixth Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*, 56(1).
- Waldon, B.**, Degen, J. (2021). Modeling cross-linguistic production of referring expressions. In *Proceedings of the Society for Computation in Linguistics*, 4, 206–215.
- Van Loon, A.*, Stewart, S.*, **Waldon, B.***, Lakshmikanth, S.K., Shah, I., Guntuku, S.C., Sherman, G., Zou, J., Eichstaedt, J. (2020). Explaining the ‘Trump gap’ in social distancing using COVID discourse. In *Proceedings of the 1st Workshop on NLP for COVID-19 (Part 2) at EMNLP 2020*.
- Waldon, B.** (2020). Linguistic interpretation as inference under argument system uncertainty: The case of epistemic *must*. In *Proceedings of the Probability and Meaning Conference (PaM 2020)*, 34–40.
- Waldon, B.**, Degen, J. (2020). Symmetric alternatives and semantic uncertainty modulate scalar inference. In *Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.
- Waldon, B.**, Degen, J. (2020). Modeling behavior in truth value judgment task experiments. In *Proceedings of the Society for Computation in Linguistics*, 3, 238–247.
- Karawani, H.*, **Waldon, B.*** (2017). *May* or *might*? Semantic strength and social meaning. In *Proceedings of the 21st Amsterdam Colloquium*, 305–314.

BOOK CHAPTERS	Waldon, B. (2022). A novel probabilistic approach to linguistic imprecision. In N. Gotzner & U. Sauerland (Eds.), <i>Measurements, Numerals and Scales: Essays in Honour of Stephanie Solt</i> , 307–327. Palgrave Macmillan.
EDITED VOLUMES	Gribanova, V., Grimberg, S., Petersen O’Farrill, E., Portelance, E., Waldon, B. (Eds.) (2019). <i>Proceedings of the 27th Meeting of Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics</i> . Michigan Slavic Publications.
AMICUS BRIEFS & PUBLIC COMMENT	Amicus brief, <i>Flowers Foods, Inc. v. Brock</i> , No. 24-935, U.S. Supreme Court, 2026 (with Cleo Condoravdi and Kevin Tobia). Related article forthcoming in <i>Iowa Law Review</i> . Public comment letter to the United States Sentencing Commission, 2025 (with Nathan Schneider, Kevin Tobia, Ethan Wilcox, Jonathan J. Wroblewski, and Amir Zeldes). Amicus brief, <i>Garland v. VanDerStok</i> (decided as <i>Bondi v. VanDerStok</i>), No. 23-852, U.S. Supreme Court, 2024 (with Cleo Condoravdi, James Pustejovsky, Nathan Schneider, and Kevin Tobia). Cited in the Court’s majority opinion. Related article in <i>Harvard Journal on Legislation</i> (2025). Amicus brief, <i>Campos-Chaves v. Garland</i> , No. 22-674, U.S. Supreme Court, 2023 (with Lucas Champollion, Cleo Condoravdi, Masoud Jasbi, and Willow Parks).
SELECTED PRESENTATIONS	Ehrhart, L., Herman, E., Schneider, N., Waldon, B. (2027). <i>Noscitur a sociis</i> : A linguistic perspective on judicial practice. Talk presented by L. Ehrhart at the <i>Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting</i> , San Francisco, CA (upcoming). Wells, M., Waldon, B. , Schneider, N. (2027). Scope disambiguation of negated connectives in English corpora. Talk presented by M. Wells at the <i>Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting</i> , San Francisco, CA (upcoming). Herman, E., Petersen, D., Schneider, N., Waldon, B. (2026). How does syntactic context modulate restrictive interpretation? Implications for linguistics and law. Poster presented by E. Herman at the <i>6th Experimental Pragmatics Conference in Italy (XPRAG.it 2026)</i> , Genoa, Italy. Yazdani, T., Waldon, B. (2026). Does presuppositional scalar enrichment diagnose factivity? An empirical investigation. Poster presented by T. Yazdani at the <i>6th Experimental Pragmatics Conference in Italy (XPRAG.it 2026)</i> , Genoa, Italy. Waldon, B. (2026). Problems of linguistic generality in statutory interpretation. Invited panelist, <i>Philosophy at Trial</i> symposium, <i>Iowa Law Review</i> , University of Iowa. Waldon, B. (2026). Linguistics and textualism. Invited talk at the <i>South Carolina Appellate Judges’ Conference</i> . Waldon, B. , Bystranowski, P. (2026). How do we expect people—and

- machines—to resolve text/purpose tensions in rule interpretation? Talk at the *Incentivized Experiments on Normative Systems* workshop, Interdisciplinary Centre for Ethics, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland.
- Waldon, B.** (2026). Linguistics and textualism. Invited lecture, Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland.
- Waldon, B.** (2026). Large language models for legal interpretation? Don't take their word for it. Invited lecture, Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland.
- Tobia, K., **Waldon, B.** (2026). Linguistics and textualism. Invited workshop talk at *Construction of Meaning*, Stanford University.
- Waldon, B.** (2025). Large language models for legal interpretation? Don't take their word for it. Colloquium talk, Department of Philosophy, University of South Carolina.
- Waldon, B.** (2025). Large language models for legal interpretation? Don't take their word for it. Talk at the *7th General Conference of the International Language and Law Association (ILLA)*, Kaunas, Lithuania.
- Wells, M., **Waldon, B.**, Schneider, N. (2025). Scope ambiguity resolution of negated connectives in English corpora. Poster presented by M. Wells at the *47th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, San Francisco, CA.
- Waldon, B.**, Condoravdi, C., Pustejovsky, J., Schneider, N., Tobia, K. (2025). Reading law with linguistics: The statutory interpretation of artifact nouns. Invited workshop talk at *Construction of Meaning*, Stanford University.
- Waldon, B.**, Brodsky, M., Ma, M., Degen, J. (2023). Predicting consensus in legal document interpretation. Talk (online) at the *45th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, Sydney, Australia.
- Waldon, B.** (2022). Modeling the context dependence of artifact noun interpretation. Invited colloquium talk (online), Georgia Institute of Technology.
- Waldon, B.**, Condoravdi, C., Levin, B., Degen, J. (2022). Modeling the context dependence of artifact noun interpretation. Talk at the *9th Experimental Pragmatics Conference (XPrag)*, Pavia, Italy.
- Degen, J.*, **Waldon, B.***, Hermosillo, A., Velasquez, A., Kachakeche, Z. (2022). Spanish exhibits a color/size asymmetry and scene variation effects in redundant modification (just like English). Talk at the *9th Experimental Pragmatics Conference (XPrag)*, Pavia, Italy.
- Pophristic, S., **Waldon, B.**, Degen, J. (2022). Pragmatic use of morphological information in Serbo-Croatian redundant referring expression production. Poster presented by S. Pophristic at the *9th Experimental Pragmatics Conference (XPrag)*, Pavia, Italy.
- Waldon, B.**, Condoravdi, C., Levin, B., Degen, J. (2022). Context dependence of artifact noun interpretation. Poster at *Sinn und Bedeutung 27*, Prague, Czechia.

Waldon, B.*, Degen, J.*, Kursat, L., Hermosillo, A., Velasquez, A., Ergin, R. (2022). The color/size asymmetry in redundant modification replicates cross-linguistically. Lightning talk (online) at *Experiments in Linguistic Meaning (ELM) 2*, Philadelphia, PA.

TEACHING

As instructor

PHIL 220: Philosophy of Law, University of South Carolina, Fall 2025, Fall 2026

LING 805: Computational Methods, University of South Carolina, Fall 2025

Formal and Computational Linguistic Perspectives on Legal Interpretation (with Nathan Schneider), North American Summer School in Logic, Language and Information (NASSLLI), University of Washington, 2025

As teaching assistant

LINGUIST 30N: Linguistic Meaning and the Law, Stanford, Winter 2024

LINGUIST 116A: Introduction to Word-Formation (grading only), Stanford, Fall 2022

LINGUIST 30N: Linguistic Meaning and the Law (grading only), Stanford, Winter 2022

LINGUIST 130B: Introduction to Lexical Semantics, Stanford, Spring 2021

LINGUIST 116A: Introduction to Word-Formation (grading only), Stanford, Winter 2021

PSYCH 140: Introduction to Psycholinguistics, Stanford, Fall 2019

Lab TA, Stanford Department of Linguistics, 2018 – 2019

PSYCH 140: Introduction to Psycholinguistics (grading only), Stanford, Fall 2018

INVITED GUEST LECTURES

COSC/LING-5402: Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing, Georgetown, Spring 2025

LING-2210: Language and Social Justice, Georgetown, Fall 2024

COSC/LING-5402: Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing, Georgetown, Spring 2024

LINGUIST 30N: Linguistic Meaning and the Law, Stanford, Winter 2022

LINGUIST 196: Undergraduate Research Seminar, Stanford, Fall 2021

LINGUIST 30N: Linguistic Meaning and the Law, Stanford, Winter 2021

LINGUIST 30N: Linguistic Meaning and the Law, Stanford, Winter 2020

TUTORIALS & WORKSHOPS

Implementing Experiments in Empirica, *Incentivized Experiments on Normative Systems* workshop, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Spring 2026

Interactive Multi-Participant Behavioral Experiments, Georgetown Massive Data Institute (MDI), Spring 2025

Web-based Studies with Human Subjects, Georgetown Massive Data Institute (MDI), Fall 2024

Bayesian Power Analysis in R, Stanford ALPS Lab, Fall 2021

Introduction to Unix Systems, Stanford Linguistics, Spring 2019

Introduction to Web-Based Experimentation, Stanford Linguistics, Spring 2019

Introduction to Remote Computing, Stanford Linguistics, Spring 2019

ADVISING &
MENTORING

Graduate advising

Taravat Yazdani, PhD in Linguistics, University of South Carolina, expected 2030

Lillian Ehrhart, MS in Computational Linguistics, Georgetown University (co-supervised with Nathan Schneider), 2026

Research mentoring

Micaela Wells (Georgetown BA '26), Georgetown Massive Data Institute (MDI) Scholars Program, 2024 – 2025

Madigan Brodsky (Stanford BA '24), VPUE Summer Internship Program, Summer 2023

Angelique Charles-Davis and Manh Dao (Stanford BA '24), VPUE Summer Internship Program, Summer 2022

Stefan Pophristic (ALPS Lab Manager), directed study through ALPS Lab, Fall 2021

Leyla Kursat (Stanford MS '22), directed study through ALPS Lab, Summer 2019 and Fall 2021

Qi Han (Stanford BA '22), ALPS Lab Internship Program, Spring 2021

Andrew Yang (Stanford BS '22), ALPS Lab Internship Program, Spring 2021

Dean Manko (Stanford BA '20, MS '22), undergraduate honors and master's thesis projects; VPUE Summer Internship Program (Summer 2020), 2020 – 2021

Francesca Vera (Stanford BS/MS '20), VPUE Summer Internship Program, Summer 2019

SERVICE

Journal reviewing: Semantics & Pragmatics (2020, 2022, 2023, 2026); Linguistics & Philosophy (2024); Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (2024); Discourse Processes (2022); Journal of Memory & Language (2022); Mind & Language (2021).

Conference reviewing: Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024); California Meeting on Psycholinguistics (2019); West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL, 2019).

Conference organizing: Principal organizer and moderator, special session “Linguists read the law: How can linguistic theory and data inform statutory interpretation at the Supreme Court?”, Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting 2027; Co-lead organizer, Symposium on Legal Interpretation and Data (SOLID) 2025, 2026; Co-coordinator (with Cleo Condoravdi), thematic area “Linguistic Meaning in Legal Interpretation”, 7th General Conference of the International Language & Law Association (ILLA), Kaunas, Lithuania, 2025; Student co-organizer, West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 2022, Stanford Semantics Fest (SemFest) 2019, and Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics (FASL) 2018.

Admissions and hiring: Admissions Committee, Linguistics Program, University of South Carolina (2026 – present); Hiring Committee, Linguistics Program, University of South Carolina (2025 – 2026); Computational Linguistics Admissions Committee, Georgetown University (2025); IDEAL Provostial

Fellowship Program, Stanford Department of Linguistics nominating committee (2021); Stanford Center for the Study of Language and Information (CSLI) Summer Internship Program (2021).

Department and university: Chair, Colloquium Committee, Department of Philosophy, University of South Carolina (2026 – present); Diversity & Inclusion Committee Member, Stanford Department of Linguistics (2020 – 2021); Student Coordinator, Stanford Words With Friends reading group (2019 – 2021); Linguistics Representative, Stanford Wellness Information Network for Graduate Students (WINGS, 2018 – 2021); Graduate Student Coordinator, Stanford Cognition & Language Workshop (2018 – 2021); Graduate Student Representative to the Department of Linguistics (2019 – 2020); Social Committee Member, Stanford Department of Linguistics (2017 – 2018).

LANGUAGES	English (native), German (advanced/C1), Arabic (intermediate/B1), French (beginner/A2); fieldwork experience with Spanish and Vietnamese
PROGRAMMING	R, Python, PyTorch, L ^A T _E X, Unix shell, JavaScript, Node.js, WebPPL, PHP, HTML