

CURRICULUM VITAE

RYAN S. OLSON

Fall 2025

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Present Positions

2025—	Faculty Affiliate Human Flourishing Program Harvard University
2024—	Research Professor (Senior Scientist) University of Virginia
2024—	Senior Fellow Co-chair, Colloquy on Culture & Formation Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture University of Virginia

Former Positions

2016—2024	Director Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture University of Virginia
2016—2024	President Advanced Studies in Culture Foundation

2018—2021	Associate in Late Antiquity Center for Hellenic Studies Harvard University
2012—2018	Fellow in Late Antiquity Center for Hellenic Studies Harvard University
2008—2016	Program Director Kern Family Foundation
2005—2008	Director Education Policy Initiative Mackinac Center for Public Policy

Education

2007	D.Phil.	University of Oxford	Classics
Supervisors: Prof. Christopher B.R. Pelling (FBA), Prof. Martin Goodman (FBA) Examiners: Prof. Christina Kraus (Yale), Prof. Tessa Rajak, Prof. Tim Rood, Prof. Teresa Morgan			
2004	M.St.	University of Oxford	Oriental Studies
Examiners: Prof. Sir Fergus Millar (FBA), Prof. Tessa Rajak			
2002	M.A.	University of Durham	Theology
Supervisors: Prof. David Brown (FBA), Prof. Ann Loades			
2001	DipCS	Regent College, Vancouver	Semitic Languages
1998	B.A.	North Park University	Biblical Studies

Bibliography

Books:

Olson, R. S. *The Moral Ecology of Aristotle*. In progress.

Olson, R. S. *Classical Education in America*. In progress.

Mumford, J. and Olson, R. S. *The Necessity of Character: Moral Formation and Leadership in Our Time*. New York: Finstock & Tew. ix + 208 pp.

Hunter, J. D. and Olson, R. S., eds. *The Content of Their Character: Inquiries into the Varieties of Moral Formation*. New York: Finstock & Tew, 2018. xii + 316 pp.

Olson, R. *Tragedy, Authority and Trickery: The Poetics of Embedded Letters in Josephus*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010. xiv + 254 pp.

Articles:

Olson, R. S. "On the Promotion of Flourishing in Education: Formative Concepts," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 73.5 (2025), 615-635. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2025.2542680>

Olson, R. Review of A. R. Dyck, *Cicero: The Man and His Works*, in *The Hedgehog Review*, forthcoming (in preparation).

Olson, R. "Curating Character Education Resources: A Case Study," Human Flourishing Program, Harvard University, forthcoming (in preparation).

Olson, R. Review of J. Ma, *Polis: A New History of the Greek City-State from the Early Iron Age to the End of Antiquity*, in *The Hedgehog Review*, Summer 2025, 152-154.

Olson, R. "What the Ancients Knew: Moral and Civic Formation in Antiquity," *The Hedgehog Review*, Spring 2024: 46-60.

Olson, R. "Gregory the Great's *Conversionis Gratia: Ipse becoming idem*," *Sources of the Christian Self: A Cultural History of Christian Identity*. Ed. J. M. Houston and J. Zimmerman, 223-240. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018.

Olson, R. "Letters in the War between Rome and Judaea," *Epistolary Narratives in Greek Literature*. Ed. O. Hodkinson and P. A. Rosenmeyer, 349-370. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Olson, R. "Character Education," *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Education*. Ed. J. W. Guthrie and P. J. Schuermann. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, 2015, 2021. DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780199756810-0052.

Reports:

Olson, R. and M. LaFaive. *A Michigan School Money Primer for Policymakers, School Officials, Media and Residents*. Midland, Mich.: Mackinac Center for Public Policy, 2007. 180 pp.
<http://www.mackinac.org/8534>

Olson, R., C. Womble, M. Eppelman, E. Aldrich, J. Mancini, P. Berry. *Character Education in the 50 States: A Policy Review*. University of Virginia, forthcoming (in preparation).

Olson, R. and P. Berry. "Independent School Leadership Consortium: A 2025 Report." University of Virginia, forthcoming (in production).

Invited Lectures, Presentations & Consultations (selected)

- “Aristotle’s Moral Ecology: Teaching, Seeking, and Catching the Virtues,” Character Caught, Sought, and Taught: Theories and Evidence,” Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Oriel College, Oxford University, January 2026.
- “Flourishing Today and Tomorrow: Unpacking the Science of Human Flourishing,” SLO CAL (A Destination and Marketing Management Organization serving San Luis Obispo County, Cal.), November 13, 2025.
- “Principled Innovation and Moral Ecology: A Panel for Students and Faculty,” Arizona State University, November 7, 2025.
- “Flourishing and Belonging: HR Principles and Practices,” Heart + Mind Research Webinar for Executives, September 2025.
- “‘Putting the *Human* Back in Human Resources’: Flourishing and Belonging in US Corporations, A Preview of Findings from a 2024 Survey of HR Managers,” Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Character and Global Challenges conference, Oriel College, Oxford University, January 2025.
- “The Education of Flavius Josephus,” Smith Lecture, Thales College, October 3, 2024.
- “An Exploration of Civic Friendship: From Aristotle’s Ethics to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Political Leadership,” with Angel Adams Parham, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Virtuous Leadership and Character conference, Magdalen College, Oxford University, January 2024.
- “Character in Cultural and Professional Context: Insights from ‘Vocations and the Common Good,’” Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Character and Virtues in Professional Practice conference, Oriel College, Oxford University, January 7, 2023.
- “Character Formation in Moral Ecology,” Integrating Research on Character and Virtues, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Oriel College, Oxford University, September 10, 2022.
- “Culture & Capitalism: Reclaiming America’s Moral Tradition of Thrift & Thriving,” Business Honors Program, Florida State University, February, March 2022.
- “Our Augustinian Moment,” at Harvard Faculty Club, Harvard University, June 2019.
- “Aristotle’s Vertical Networks & Our Cultural Crisis,” Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, University of Virginia, May 2019.
- “The Lost Culture of Learning & Three Roads Forward,” North Carolina Classical Education Conference, October 2018.

“The Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture & the Classical Tradition,” Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, University of Virginia, September 2017.

“Character & Education 2030: Possibilities for PISA,” Directorate of Education & Skills, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, March 2018 (by invitation of the director).

“Character Constructs: Challenges & Possibilities for Assessment,” Directorate of Education & Skills, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, September 2017 (by invitation of the director).

“Character, the Self, and Moral Ecology,” at University of Indianapolis, Woodrow Wilson MBA in Education Leadership, July, November 2015.

“Strategic Philanthropy in K-12 Education,” at Association of Education Finance and Policy Annual Conference, March 2014.

“Character Education: Athletics and Moral Ecology,” at Philanthropy Roundtable and Florida Philanthropic Network conference, July 2011.

“Trivium: History,” “Trivium: Principles,” “Trivium: Prospects,” at Brookfield Academy, Brookfield, Wis., August 2007.

“Michigan School Finance,” Economics of Education, Eastern Michigan University, Summer 2007.