BIOETHICS AND MEDICAL HUMANITIES, MINOR

Requirements for a minor may be completed at any campus location offering the specified courses for the minor. Students may not change from a campus that offers their major to a campus that does not offer their major for the purpose of completing a minor.

Program Description

The tremendous current activity in the biomedical sciences affects both the public and private sectors, including medical care, the pharmaceutical industry, genetics, environmental epidemiology, agricultural science, the insurance industry, occupational health, forensic sciences, and behavioral variation. All these areas go beyond the science itself, with varied impact on people in different age, sex, ethnic, geographic, or economic segments of society. For that reason, life and health sciences research has major social implications that bear on humanities disciplines ranging from ethics and history to religious studies and literature, affecting clinical practice, agricultural practice and research, public policy and private investment. Understanding these issues is important for an informed citizenry. Students electing the BMH minor will start with a basic background in biology coursework, and will take a curriculum that includes 18 credit hours, beginning with an introductory course on basic ideas of bioethics, followed by a choice of other relevant humanities courses, and capped with an integrative course involving original research by the student. The minor will be suitable for students in almost any major, especially students going on to academic work or careers in health, the life sciences, informatics, forensic or legal professions.

What is Bioethics and Medical Humanities?

Should we use medical science to enhance our mental or physical performance? Where does therapy end and enhancement begin? Do we have a right to choose the time and means of our own death—and should medical personnel be permitted to assist us? Do we have a right to health care? Should governments try to influence our food choices in order to promote public health, and counter the influence of advertising and marketing by food companies? What can we learn from the COVID-19 pandemic about addressing systemic racism and structural injustice? These are the kinds of questions we explore in bioethics using philosophy, art, fiction, film ... and much, much more.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are interested in health care ethics, food ethics, and environmental ethics.
- You want fresh perspectives on ethical issues, new and old—from the genetic modification of our food to the genetic modification of ourselves!
- You want to be part of animated discussions about pressing issues that affect humanity.
- You are studying philosophy, gender and sexuality, public or global health, health administration, anthropology, biobehavioral health, nursing, health communication, etc.
- You are premed or prelaw; or you intend to pursue a career in medicine, law, health care, public health, veterinary science, biological sciences, environmental sciences, bioinformatics, or public policy—among many other areas.

Program Requirements

Requirements for the Minor

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the minor, as specified by Senate Policy 59-10 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/59-00-minors-and-certificates/#59-10). In addition, at least six credits of the minor must be unique from the prescribed courses required by a student’s major(s).

### Prescribed Courses

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMH 490</td>
<td>Bioethics and Medical Humanities Capstone Course</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 132/RLST 131</td>
<td>Medical and Health Care Ethics</td>
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### Additional Courses

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Select 12 credits (at least 3 credits at the 400 level) of the following:

### Ethics

- BBH 301W Values and Ethics in Biobehavioral Health Research and Practice
- BIOL 461 Contemporary Issues in Science and Medicine
- NURS 464 Dying and Death
- PHIL 432 Medical and Health Care Ethics
- or STS 432 Medical and Health Care Ethics
- PHIL 498
- WMNST 458 Critical Feminist Issues in Reproduction

### Humanities

- CAS 253 Health Communication
- CAS 453 Health Communication Theory and Research
- HIST 103 The History of Madness, Mental Illness, and Psychiatry

### Other

- ANTH 470 Our Place in Nature
- ANTH 471H Biology, Evolution, and Society
- CSD 269 Deaf Culture
- FDSC 280
- HPA 301W Health Services Policy Issues
- KINES 345 Meaning, Ethics, and Movement
- WMNST 250 Sexual Identity over the Life Span

1 One course must be selected from the list of Ethics courses.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.
Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

University Park
Liberal Arts Academic Advising
814-865-2545
http://starfish.psu.edu
http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/undergraduate-students/advising/advisers-by-major (http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/undergraduate-students/advising/advisers-by-major/)

Abington
Pierce Salguero
Associate Professor
1600 Woodland Road
Abington, PA 19001
215-881-7826
salguero@psu.edu

Berks
Kesha Morant Williams
Associate Professor of Communication Arts & Sciences
Franco, 149
Reading, PA 19610
610-396-6218
BKBMH@psu.edu

Career Paths
Potential career paths include: medicine, law, health or life sciences, health administration, health infomatics, or forensics.

Contact
University Park
BIOETHICS PROGRAM
University Park, PA 16802
814-867-0811
mmekel@psu.edu
https://bioethics.psu.edu/

Abington
DIVISION OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
1600 Woodland Road
Abington, PA 19001
215-881-7826
salguero@psu.edu
https://www.abington.psu.edu/minors-abington/bioethics-medical-humanities-minor (https://www.abington.psu.edu/minors-abington/bioethics-medical-humanities-minor/)

Berks
HASS DIVISION