

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 of 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 further 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

Requirement	Credits
Requirements for the Minor	18

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).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
BMH 490	Bioethics and Medical Humanities Capstone Course	3
PHIL 132/ RLST 131	Bioethics	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 12 credits (at least 3 credits at the 400 level) of the following: ¹ 12		
<i>Ethics</i>		
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 or STS 432	Medical and Health Care Ethics	
PHIL 498		
WMNST 458	Critical Feminist Issues in Reproduction	
<i>Humanities</i>		
CAS 253	Health Communication	
CAS 453	Health Communication Theory and Research	
HIST 103	The History of Madness, Mental Illness, and Psychiatry	
<i>Other</i>		
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

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Career Paths

Potential career paths include: medicine, law, health or life sciences, health administration, health informatics, or forensics.

Contact

University Park

BIOETHICS PROGRAM

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<https://bioethics.psu.edu/>

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<https://www.abington.psu.edu/minors-abington/bioethics-medical-humanities-minor> (<https://www.abington.psu.edu/minors-abington/bioethics-medical-humanities-minor/>)