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### **New Program Proposal**

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Changes proposed by: rrichard

**Program level:**

Undergraduate

**Proposal type:**

Minor

**Name of Department:**

Philosophy

**Name of College/School:**

Arts & Sciences

**Institution:**

**The University of Alabama**

**Field of Study/Program Title:**

Medical Ethics

**CIP Code:**

**Proposed Implementation Term:**

Fall 2022

**Other considerations for timing and approval (e.g., upcoming SACSCOC review):**

N/A

**Proposed Delivery Method:**

Main Campus

**General academic requirements for minors are as follows:  
1) Intended to be a secondary area of study outside of the student's primary major  
2) Comprised of 15-21 hours  
3) Students cannot double-count courses required by their major(s)  
4) Minimum of 6 hours of required upper-level (300/400) coursework in the minor is encouraged  
5) At graduation, the student must have a 2.0 GPA on all coursework in the minor**

**Please provide a description of the minor and at least three student learning outcomes expected of students who complete this minor.**

The practice of medicine raises many ethical concerns from the beginning of life to the end of life, and relative to abortion, stem cell research, cloning, the allocation of scarce or limited resources, animal experimentation, genetic engineering, patient autonomy, assisted euthanasia, medical enhancement and more.  The Medical Ethics Minor will introduce students to these and other ethical issues, questions and problems explicitly raised by the practice of medicine.  Additionally, students will also gain an understanding of medical ethics relative to the broader background:  how the ways we conceive health and disease affect the practice of medicine; how ethical issues intersect with the law; how conceptions of justice might play a role in the practice of medicine; what role political and economic institutions might play relative to the practice of medicine; what role religion might play in deliberations about medical practice; and how our understanding of psychology and neuroscience might influence ethical deliberation.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to explain and analyze the situations that raise ethical questions in the practice of medicine, from birth to the end-of-life, and relative to abortion, stem cell research, cloning, the allocation of resources, animal experimentation, patient autonomy, medical enhancement and more.
2. Students will be able to apply and analyze general ethical principles to common medical contexts and question arising relative to end-of-life considerations, abortion, stem cell research, cloning, the allocation of resources, animal experimentation, patient autonomy, medical enhancement and more.
3. Students will be able to explain and evaluate the general principles used in particular medical contexts to answer ethical questions and solve ethical problems, in light of standard justificatory approaches based on utilitarian, deontological and virtue based theories.

**Please provide a rationale for the minor to include staffing needs, student demand, and benefits to students in other disciplines.**

These ethical issues explicitly raised by the practice of medicine are most obviously of direct concern to those going into a medicine related field – as physicians, nurses, hospital administrators, patient advocates, public health workers and medical researchers. Many of these ethical issues are also of relevance to everyone, since virtually all of us will encounter one or more of them in our own lives or the lives of those we care about.  There are broader ethical questions related to conceptions of health and disease, as well as conceptions of justice and the intersection of ethical issues with legal, political and economic institutions.  How we think on these broader issues will affect all members of a society, insofar as they are simply members of that society.  Moreover, how we decide the ethical issues will likely have implications beyond a single society, since medical practice in a society may have implications for the practice of medicine elsewhere.  The practice and institutions of medicine have become so central to our lives that we might all be better off if our ethical deliberations about the practice of medicine were better informed.  This minor will give students an opportunity to better understand the ethical issues raised by medicine and how to better deliberate about them, and in light of the broader concerns they might raise that go beyond the narrow practices of medicine.

Staffing needs can be covered by the current department faculty and staff.

While there is no way to determine with certainty the demand for this minor, there are good reasons to believe that it will be significant.  First is the widely accepted relevance of Medical Ethics to Medicine related fields in general.  This would give pre-Med students a reason to minor in Medical Ethics, in part for the obviously relevant content, but also to enhance their application to Medical school.  Students interested in graduate work in Public Health would similarly have reasons to minor in Medical Ethics.  Nursing students are required to take either our PHL 223 Medical Ethics or PHL 292 Intro to Ethics.  It is unknown how many would take additional Ethics courses from us, but more advanced courses in Medical Ethics might be attractive as well.  In a recent survey of McCollough pre-Med students, over half indicated an interest in a Master’s program in Medical Ethics or Philosophy of Medicine.  This at least indicates a substantial interest in our Medical Ethics course offerings.

**Are there sufficient faculty to teach the courses in the minor (even if one of the faculty members leaves/retires)?**

Because ethics is a central and fundamental sub-discipline in philosophy, almost all of our 14 full time faculty are qualified to teach one of the required courses, Introduction to Ethics (PHL 292/221-Honors), and many have done so.   We currently have five faculty who regularly teach courses explicitly in medical ethics.  We therefore have sufficient faculty to teach the second required course in Medical Ethics (PHL 223).   As we have just hired an additional Philosopher of Medicine is successful, we have multiple faculty who can teach each of the following electives: PHL 230, 341, 381, 423, 488, or 489.  The required courses are offered each semester with multiple sections.  Of the electives, all are offered at least one semester each year, except PHL 381 and 422, which are generally offered every third semester.

If there were to be increased enrollment demands in our W courses, we have two options.  First is simply to offer more sections.  All of the W courses in the Medical Ethics minor except PHL 422 Neuroethics can be taught by multiple Philosophy faculty.  Second, and perhaps less optimal is to simply raise the caps of these courses.  Currently we cap them at 24 and could easily raise the caps of these courses to the 35 allowed for W courses.

**Program Body**

**Please enter all program requirements in the box below. Use the table creation widget to provide a listing of all required courses, electives, support courses, and the total credit hours required for completion. Use the comment function to create sub-headings where appropriate to group courses.   
  
Any new courses that have yet to be proposed will be initially indicated by "Course X Not Found" preceding the proposed title. However, your proposal will not continue forward with the approval process until course inventory forms have been submitted for all new courses included in this program requirement section. Course Inventory submissions can be made through CourseLeaf CIM at the following address:** [**http://courseinventory.ua.edu/cim/**](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/cim/)**. For any questions regarding course inventory submissions, please contact the Office of the University Registrar at schedule@ua.edu.   
  
Finally, please include any additional admission or retention requirements specific to this program as well.**

There are three main components to this minor.

* The first component: two required courses that will introduce students to the fundamentals: [PHL 223](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20223) Medical Ethics – the basic ethical questions, problems, and issues specifically raised by the practice of medicine; and [PHL 221](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20221) Honors Introduction to Ethics or [PHL 292](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20292) Introduction to Ethics – the basic approaches, principles and methods (tools) used in ethical analysis and deliberation in general.
* The second component: two courses from a list that include courses that provide a broader, social perspective to issues related to politics, social institutions, justice, equity ([PHL 230](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20230) Political Philosophy and [PHL 234](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20234) Social Philosophy); and courses that engage with the law and religion ([PHL 341](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20341) Law and Morality and [PHL 381](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20381) Philosophy of Religion), factors that often have relevance to medical ethics in practice.
* The third component: two courses from a list of philosophical seminars that include [PHL 422](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20422) Neuroethics, [PHL 423](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20423) Seminar in Medical Ethics, [PHL 488](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20488) Philosophy of Mental Health  and [PHL 489](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20489) Philosophy of Medicine, and that addresses fundamental issues related to medical ethics at a more advanced level.

| **Code and Title** | | **Hours** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Required Courses: | | 6 |
| [PHL 292](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20292) or | Introduction to Ethics |  |
| [PHL 221](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20221) | Honors Introduction to Ethics | |
| [PHL 223](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20223) | Medical Ethics |  |
| Two Courses from the following: | | 6 |
| [PHL 230](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20230) | Political Philosophy |  |
| [PHL 234](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20234) | Social Philosophy |  |
| [PHL 341](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20341) | Law and Morality |  |
| [PHL 381](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20381) | Philosophy of Religion |  |
| Two Courses from the following: | | 6 |
| [PHL 422](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20422) | Neuroethics |  |
| [PHL 423](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20423) | Seminar in Medical Ethics |  |
| [PHL 488](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20488) | Philosophy of Mental Health |  |
| [PHL 489](http://courseinventory.ua.edu/search/?P=PHL%20489) | Philosophy of Medicine |  |
| Total Hours | | 18 |

**Note: These courses cannot be double counted satisfying the Ethics minor as well.**

The College of Arts and Sciences does not allow the double counting of classes, so a student could not use the same courses to complete both minors (Medical Ethics Minor and Ethics Minor).  This is confirmed by the Duplication of Coursework statement, found at: <https://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#requirementstext>

**List any course prerequisites not included in the Program Body field above that are required for students to complete the minor.**

None.

**Are any of the courses in the minor outside of the Department and/or College? If so, do you have approval from the Department that offers the course to include it in the minor?**

None.