

# MA in Bioethics

## University of Washington, School of Medicine, Department of Bioethics & Humanities

Director of Graduate Studies: Nancy S. Jecker, PhD [direktor@uw.edu](mailto:direktor@uw.edu)

Graduate Program Advisor: Margaret Mitchell [gradprog@uw.edu](mailto:gradprog@uw.edu)

**Overall goal for the MA:** Our flexible 2-year, in-residence program provides students with the foundational knowledge, skills, and experience to enrich their careers and broaden their competency in bioethics. The program offers training in research and clinical aspects of bioethics as well as empirical and normative methods of analysis. Students have the opportunity to study with faculty from the University of Washington, the Treuman Katz Pediatric Bioethics Center, and the Seattle Veteran’s Health Administration. The program helps prepare students to teach, publish, and conduct research that incorporates bioethical analysis. Opportunities for in-depth study on a topic of interest are available through elective courses, mentored research, and practicum experiences.

**Target Audience:** Practicing clinicians, biomedical scientists, health lawyers, post-doctoral fellows, and physicians accepted into a University of Washington [Clinical Fellowship Program](#) or the [Treuman Katz Pediatric Bioethics Fellowship Program](#) as well as students applying to or currently enrolled in professional degree programs at the University of Washington (i.e. [Law](#), [Nursing](#), [Social Work](#), or [Medicine](#)). Candidates should possess strong writing, critical thinking and verbal communication skills. Many applicants plan to pursue a career in academic medicine with a focus in bioethics.

**Course Requirements:** Completion of the MA in Bioethics requires a minimum of **40** credits, of which at least **29** must be at the 500 level. Students must complete **25** required credits of BH (or approved) courses, an additional **6** credits of elective courses, **3** credits of a practicum, and **6** credits of a masters project. Students are encouraged to take additional electives as they see fit to further develop their area of specialty knowledge and interest, with guidance from their faculty mentor(s). **This curriculum is designed as a 2-year, in-residence program of study.** Applications due January 15. Students are also required to attend 3 Bioethics Grand Rounds, and lead two BRI discussion groups.

Core Course Work and required credits in area	Required Course(s), Credits	Electives/other options	Core Competencies	Faculty
<b>Ethical Theory: 10</b> Ethical Theory	BH 502 (5), Ethical Theory (A) AND 5 additional credits from the list of electives	BH 574/PHIL 411 (5) Justice in Healthcare 556 (5) Justice and Health (A) BH 556 (3) Social Justice & Health BH 404 (5) Metaethical Theory VALUES 511 (5) Ethics Matters VALUES 512 (5) Justice Matters	Students will gain an understanding of major theories of normative ethics, including both teleological and deontological approaches. Coursework will emphasize Western philosophy during the modern (post-enlightenment) period, and will include critiques of standard approaches, such as feminist and multicultural.	Jecker, Blacksher, Philosophy faculty

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**Empirical Research Methods: 6**

Empirical Research in Ethics	BH 527 (3) (S), AND 3 additional credits from the list of electives	BH 552 (4) Advanced Qualitative Methods HSERV 521 (3) HSERV 521 Qualitative Methods in Health Services Research HSERV 527 (4) Survey Research Methods (S) BIOSTAT 511/512/513 (4) Medical Biometry BIOSTAT 517/518 (4) Applied Biostatistics EPI 512/513 (4) Epidemiologic Methods HSERV 523/524 (4) Adv HS Research Methods HSERV 590L (3) Intro to Qualitative Methods NMETH 582/583 (4) Interpretive Methods in Nursing Research Others as approved	Students will be exposed to a range of methods utilized in empirical research specifically targeting questions of ethics, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. Coursework will emphasize: how to ask a good research question, how to work with conceptual frameworks within empirical projects, how empirical methods inform normative questions (and vice versa)	Starks, Edwards, Fullerton, PHG faculty, SPHCM faculty
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**Clinical Ethics Topics: 6**

Methods in Clinical Ethics	BH 548 (3) Introduction to Clinical Ethics <b>AND</b> BH 535 (3) Medical Ethics and Jurisprudence		Students will learn to recognize and apply utilitarian, deontological, feminist, virtue, casuistic, and other ethical reasoning in clinical cases and develop/improve ethics consultation skills. Students will study paradigm cases that have shaped clinical ethics and examine the relationship between classic and contemporary cases. Laws, policies, and organizational issues that pertain to routine ethics consultations will also be addressed. Students will be better able to articulate and substantiate arguments expressed in typical clinical ethics debates.	Dudzinski, Kuszler
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**Research Ethics: 3**

Research Ethics & Regulation	BH 536/LAW H 536 (3) Research Ethics	BH 597 (1+) Applied Research Ethics (Special Topics)	Students are introduced to research ethics paradigms and regulations. Coursework includes case analyses, classic cases in research ethics, and special topics (e.g. genetics, research with vulnerable populations, emergency research).	Mastroianni, Starks, Burke, Edwards, Fullerton
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**Master's Project: 6**

	BH 596 (6)	The Master's Project affords students the opportunity to prepare a 20-25 page research paper under the direct supervision of a faculty member (Master's Project Advisor). It provides students with an intensive writing experience that culminates in a potentially publishable paper. The final product aims to make an original contribution to the bioethics literature.	BH, Philosophy, PHG, LAW, Treuman Katz Pediatric Bioethics Center, Fellowship
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**Practicum: 3**

	BH 595 (3)	The practicum offers experiential learning in clinical, research, and professional ethics. . The practicum supplements formal coursework by helping students better appreciate how ethical deliberation, teaching, consultation, and/or research skills can be practically applied in clinical, classroom, &/or research contexts.	Burke, other BH regular, adjunct & affiliate faculty.
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**Required & Other Electives: 6+**

Health Policy:  
 HSERV 514 (3) US Health & HC:  
   Health Policy Research  
 HSERV 552 (1-3) Health Policy  
   Development  
 Health Law:  
 HSERV 551/LAWH 512 (2) Health  
   Law  
 Others as approved