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# BIOETHICS

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## About the Program

The Interdisciplinary Minor in Bioethics Program (BIOE) is unique at Puget Sound, and rare among liberal arts colleges. This six-credit-program encompasses work in the fields of biology, natural science, neuroscience, religion, philosophy, literature, sociology, psychology, politics, economics, exercise science, and business. It enables students to study topics at the intersection of the life sciences and the humanities (broadly conceived) such as: regenerative medicine and human stem cell research, global health, race, culture, gender and health care, human and animal experimentation, genetic screening and gene therapy, human population growth, genetics, embryology, reproduction, death and dying, disability studies, neuroscience, and animal rights. The program prepares students for analyzing and understanding the ethical, social, and cultural dimensions of problems at the nexus of these topics. Faculty drawn from several disciplines and departments provide the unique interdisciplinary perspective that is the hallmark of this minor.

The Bioethics Minor at Puget Sound helps students to analyze, understand, and integrate the challenging issues facing society as a result of advances in medicine, health and science. In keeping with its interdisciplinary nature, the Bioethics Program highlights the following University of Puget Sound curricular goals: *An understanding of the interrelationship of knowledge; familiarity with diverse fields of knowledge; the ability to think logically and analytically; the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; informed appreciation of self and others as part of a broader humanity in the world environment; an acknowledged set of personal values.*

The Bioethics Minor helps to prepare students for a broad range of future careers or advanced study in medicine and the health professions, the sciences, research, teaching, law, journalism, public policy, environmental health, hospital chaplaincy, biotechnology, social work, clinical ethics consultation, genetic counseling, and Master's programs in Bioethics or Public Health.

## General Requirements for the Minor

General university degree requirements stipulate that 1) three units of the minor be taken in residence at the University of Puget Sound; 2) students earn a GPA of 2.0 in courses taken for the minor; and 3) all courses taken for the minor must be taken for graded credit. Any exceptions to these stipulations are indicated in the minor degree requirements listed below.

## Requirements for the Minor in Bioethics

Completion of six units to include:

1. One unit of BIOL 101, or 111 (these courses can satisfy the Natural Scientific Core requirement), or the AP equivalent.
2. BIOE/REL 292 or BIOE/PHIL 292.
3. Three elective units distributed as follows: Scientific (up to 1 course), Ethical (up to 2 courses), and Humanities & Social Sciences (up to 2 courses).
4. BIOE 400 Bioethics Integration Seminar.

## Notes

- a. BIOE/REL 292 or BIOE/PHIL 292 is a prerequisite for BIOE 392 and 400.
- b. Students who study abroad may apply one approved course toward the elective requirement unless an exception is granted by the Program Director.

### *Scientific*

BIOL 102 Evolution and Biology of Sex  
BIOL 212 Cell Biology  
BIOL 213 Genetics  
BIOL 361 Biochemical Pathways and Processes  
BIOL 362 Nanobiology  
BIOL 370 Conservation Biology  
BIOL 375 Developmental Biology  
BIOL 404 Molecular Biology  
CONN 410 Science and Economics of Climate Change  
EXSC 424 Recent Advances in Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Neuroplasticity  
NRSC 201 Introduction to Neuroscience  
NRSC 450 Senior Seminar: Special Topics in Neuroscience  
PSYC 312 Applied Psychological Measurement  
PSYC 320 Psychological Disorders

### *Ethical*

AFAM/REL 265 What is Justice?  
BIOE 255 Pandemic Ethics, Law, and Health Inequities  
BIOE/REL 272 Public Health Ethics  
BIOE 350 Clinical Bioethics  
BIOE 392 Practicum: Clinical Bioethics  
CONN 393 The Cognitive Foundations of Morality and Religion\*  
PG 348/PHIL 378 Philosophy of Law  
PHIL 105 Neuroethics and Human Enhancement  
PHIL 250 Moral Philosophy  
PHIL 285 Environmental Ethics  
PHIL 286 Ethics, Data, and Artificial Intelligence  
PHIL 370 Social and Political Philosophy  
REL 298 Reproductive Ethics  
STHS 333 Evolution and Ethics\*

### *Humanities & Social Sciences*

BUS 478 Environmental Law  
COMM 352 Health Communication Campaigns  
CONN 320 Health and Medicine\*  
CONN 357 Exploring Animal Minds\*  
CONN 387 Never-Never Land\*  
CONN 478 Animals, Law, and Society\*  
ECON 225 Environmental and Natural Resource Economics  
ECON/ENVR 327 Climate Change: Economics, Policy, and Politics  
ENGL 348 Illness and Narrative: Discourses of Disease  
ENGL 374 Literature and the Environment  
IPE 331 International Political Economy of Food and Agriculture  
IPE 389 Global Struggles Over Intellectual Property\*  
PG/PHIL 390 Gender and Philosophy  
PHIL 230 Philosophy of Mind  
PHIL 389 Race and Philosophy  
REL 204 Religions of the Book  
SOAN 360 Sociology of Health and Medicine  
SOAN 365 Global Health  
SOAN 370 Disability, Identity, and Power  
STHS 318 Science and Gender\*

STHS 330 Evolution and Society Since Darwin \*  
STHS 366 Medicine in the United States: Historical Perspectives  
STHS 375 Science, Technology, and Politics\*

\* Can also satisfy the Connections core requirement.  
For complete descriptions of the elective courses, please consult the relevant departments in which these courses appear.

### Course Offerings

Unless otherwise specified, each course carries 1 unit of credit and is offered at least once each academic year. Please see “Frequency of Course Offerings” on page 20.

**Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry.** See *Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry in the Core Curriculum* section of this Bulletin for course descriptions.

#### SSI1 180 Global Bioethics

### Bioethics (BIOE)

**255 Pandemic Ethics, Law, and Health Inequities** This course investigates the ethical dilemmas and health law during pandemics. It covers various ethical issues regarding health equity, prevention, containment, cure, and management. In the US, the coronavirus pandemic has exposed health inequities that are propelled by racism and structural injustice. The course explores racial health disparities and the disproportionate and devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people of color, immigrants, and marginalized groups. Writing assignments, group exercises, and a final project promote students to engage in health communication. Students examine various case studies and stories of marginalized groups by challenging many Eurocentric assumptions of mainstream bioethics today. Course topics may include race and health inequities, medical exploitation of African Americans in the US, disease stigma, vulnerabilities of essential workers, COVID-19 and xenophobia, social distancing, wearing masks, stay-at-home orders, PPE shortages, disability and triage, surveillance technology governance, vaccine acceptance, immunity passports, and reopening schools and workplaces. The class design utilizes a participatory, student-centered approach to classroom learning. Course materials include films, news media, legal cases, and public health literature. The course has no prerequisites.

**272 Public Health Ethics** This course is an introduction to public health ethics in health policy and bioethics. It explores a broad spectrum of legal and public health contexts to demonstrate how religious and cultural factors affect health. Students analyze religion and culture as social determinants of health in various case studies. Case studies range from tobacco control laws to public health in religious communities. Course topics include vaccination, HIV/AIDS, sex education, racism and health, recreational use of marijuana, health of refugees, genetically modified organisms, drug pricing, gene patenting, PTSD, food policy, tobacco control, alternative medicine, and experiences with spirituality and healing. The class design utilizes a participatory, student-centered approach to classroom learning. Course materials include religious literature, legal cases, and public health literature. *Cross-listed as BIOE/REL 272. Cannot be audited.*

**292 Basics of Bioethics** This course is an examination of Western philosophical and religious understandings of moral issues brought on by advances in health care, science and technology. In this course, students will learn the “Principles approach” to bioethics, as well as other ethical approaches to the difficult moral issues raised by contemporary medical science and its clinical applications. To that end, case analysis will be used extensively in this course. The course is designed to help

facilitate connections for students between medical/scientific advances, ethics, religious values, and American public policy about technology and health care. Each class session will alternate between theoretical and medical/scientific considerations, and the concreteness of bioethical case analyses. *Cross-listed as BIOE/PHIL/REL 292. Credit will not be granted to students who have received credit for SSI1 150 or SSI2 150. Offered frequently.*

**350 Clinical Bioethics** BIOE 350 is an application of ethical principles and philosophical reasoning in the health care setting. The application of medical ethics to clinical situations goes beyond following standards of practice. This course will focus on clinical ethics and explore how it differentiates from the larger field of bioethics. This course will teach students to apply the foundational concepts of bioethics to a variety of real health care situations. Students will learn to think through and discuss the unique features presented by different health care settings. The course will familiarize students with the common responsibilities of a clinical ethicist including: consultation, education, and policy review/development. Students will analyze real clinical ethics cases, utilizing the four principles and the four-box method. This course will also focus on an exploration of health policy and its development, emphasizing social justice and human rights as providing the moral and ethical bases of policy. *Prerequisite: BIOE/REL 292 or BIOE/PHIL 292. Offered every other year.*

**392 Practicum: Clinical Bioethics** This course is an experiential learning course that focuses on the practical application of ethical principles and philosophical reasoning in a clinical health care setting. This course provides the opportunity for students to learn how to identify ethical issues and properly to address them in the clinical setting, as well as to learn the “practical approach” to real-life clinical issues. Students split time between the classroom and the on-site hospital setting, taking information learned in different clinical settings and learning how to work through ethics issues. Students also learn typical duties of a clinical bioethicist including: consultations, education, and policy development/review. *Prerequisite: BIOE/REL 292 or BIOE/PHIL 292 and permission of instructor. Pass/Fail Required. Cannot be audited. Offered occasionally.*

**400 Bioethics Integration Seminar** This is the capstone course required of all students who aim to attain the interdisciplinary curricular designation of Emphasis in Bioethics. Since the Integration Seminar enrolls seniors from a variety of majors, the primary goals of the course are two-fold: (1) for students to learn to process, synthesize and integrate the ethical implications of the courses they have taken toward the Bioethics Emphasis, and (2) for students to discover their post-baccalaureate “niche” in the scholarly community of Bioethics and the medical humanities. Weekly themes in medical humanities include: the history of medicine; literature, the arts, and medicine; philosophy and medicine; religion and medicine. Students will also have the opportunity to read classic primary texts in bioethics—articles, books, and films—from different sub-disciplines of the field, such as race and health care, medicine and technology, history of medicine, and end-of-life issues. In analyzing these texts, students will learn to explain why each one is regarded as a model in its field, and to process and articulate its relevance for one’s own interest area within Bioethics and the medical humanities. The course builds upon students’ own interest areas and acquired expertise as they undertake a capstone project that is presented to faculty members on the Bioethics Faculty Advisory Board. *Prerequisite: BIOE/REL 292 or BIOE/PHIL 292; graduating seniors and permission of instructor. Offered spring semester.*