

Clinical Ethics FAQs for UNC Medical Students

WHAT CLINICAL ETHICS (CE) OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE FOR UNC MEDICAL STUDENTS?

There are several ways that medical students can augment their curriculum and learn more about clinical ethics:

- Join the Clinical Ethics Discussion Group (CEDG)
- Apply for membership to the Hospital Ethics Committee (HEC)
- Choose classes or projects within TEC that focus on clinical ethics issues, methods, and application
- Attend Clinical Ethics Grand Rounds and other Center for Bioethics events
- Request opportunities to shadow HEC faculty members in their CE teaching or attend an HEC meeting as a guest
- Visit the [Center for Bioethics](#) and [UNC Hospital Ethics Committee](#) for more information

WHAT IS CEDG?

One main gateway into many of the activities listed above is to join the *Clinical Ethics Discussion Group (CEDG)* or talk with its student leadership or faculty advisors. [CEDG](#) is a student interest group dedicated to educating medical students on clinical ethics and illuminating the intersections of clinical ethics and daily practice for health care providers.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DOES CEDG OFFER?

CEDG organizes 2-3 events per semester that highlight current ethical issues that inform medical education and practice. CEDG guest speakers provide students with an opportunity to discuss common and novel ethical challenges in clinical care. CEDG student leaders are also appointed to the UNC Hospital Ethics Committee (HEC), serving as active HEC members during the Foundation Phase of TEC. CEDG leaders join the “trainee” core of the HEC, which includes residents and fellows interested in clinical ethics, as well as graduate and post-graduate students pursuing bioethics studies.

WHAT IS THE HOSPITAL ETHICS COMMITTEE?

The [UNC HEC](#) is a standing committee addressing the ethical issues that arise in patient care. Its Clinical Ethics Service (CES) provides clinical ethics consultation, ethics education, and policy development. The HEC membership is diverse, including health care providers and staff, School of Medicine faculty and trainees, graduate students from other programs on campus, and members of the Chapel Hill community. Membership requires participation in HEC monthly meetings (1st Thursday of the month from 4-5:00 PM) as schedules permit and provides opportunities to participate in the activities of the committee, including ethics consultation.

ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PURSUING AN ETHICS PROJECT?

Yes! For students currently in the **Foundation Phase** of the curriculum, contact the seminar leaders of the *Social and Health Systems (SHS)* courses for further ideas. SHS 1 and 2 cover an array of topics relevant to clinical ethics; SHS 3 offers opportunities to closely examine a topic including its ethical issues relative to medical practice. For students in the **Application Phase**, your SHS 4 instructors are a good resource for ideas. The **Individualization Phase** includes opportunities to really tailor your interests. There are several electives that permit you to design an area of study. You may also consider our clinical ethics electives -- SOCM 412 and SOCM 420 -- for a concentrated dive into practical clinical ethics work.

COULD I FOCUS A SCHOLARLY CONCENTRATION ON AN AREA OF ETHICS?

Yes, you may wish to consider applying for a Scholarly Concentration during your first year of medical school. For example, the Humanities Scholarly Concentration is a longitudinal experience for medical students that involves a combination of elective work and a scholarly paper or project in a field in the humanities of your choosing, one of which can include ethics. Students in this concentration have explored ethics questions, worked with the Clinical Ethics Service

in consultations and policy development, and developed scholarly projects aimed to positively impact ethical clinical practice.

HOW DOES THE CENTER FOR BIOETHICS SUPPORT ETHICS EDUCATION?

CEDG faculty advisors and the UNC Hospital Ethics Committee have their academic home in the Center. The 10 core faculty and 22 associate faculty members are engaged in a wide variety of activities related to or promoting bioethics across our campus. Please visit the [Center](#) web site to become acquainted with their scholarship and interests. (<https://bioethics.unc.edu/>) Students at our various longitudinal campuses should also check with their on-site ethics faculty members. For students interested in helping prepare undergraduate students for careers in the health sciences, the Center collaborates with The UNC Parr Center for Ethics, including the undergraduate “Bioethics Society of UNC” which provides a space for students to consider complex bioethics issues and engage in conversations about the fields of bioethics and medical humanities.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER ETHICS LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE AREA?

- [UNC Center for Bioethics](#)
 - Lecture series on a variety of topics throughout the academic year; if you are interested in joining the listserv email Brandy Elsenrath (below).
- [Parr Center for Ethics at UNC](#)
 - “The University’s central resource for facilitating informed, nonpartisan inquiry about ethical matters.”
- [The Kenan Institute for Ethics](#) at Duke
- [The Trent Center for Bioethics](#) at Duke
- [Center for Bioethics, Health & Society](#) at Wake Forest University

WHOM MAY I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?

Reece Carter, MS2
CEDG Co-director for 2022
reece_carter@med.unc.edu

Matt Washko, MS2
CEDG Co-director for 2022
matthew_washko@med.unc.edu

Jean Cadigan, PhD
CEDG Faculty Advisor
UNC Center for Bioethics Core Faculty
jean_cadigan@med.unc.edu

Arlene Davis, JD
CEDG Faculty Advisor
Co-Chair of UNC Hospital Ethics Committee
arlene_davis@med.unc.edu

Barry Saunders, MD, PhD
Scholarly Concentration Program
barry_saunders@med.unc.edu

Bex Forcier
Service and Data Coordinator
UNC Hospital Ethics Committee
bex_forcier@med.unc.edu

Gary Gala, MD
Co-Chair of UNC Hospital Ethics Committee
gary_gala@med.unc.edu

Benny Joyner, MD, MPH
Vice Chair HEC and Co-Director Ethics Service
benny@unc.edu

Brandy Elsenrath
Center Coordinator, UNC Center for Bioethics
brandyselnerath@unc.edu

Rimma Osipov, MD, PhD
Clinical Ethics Elective Faculty Member
Depts of Medicine and Social Medicine
rimma@med.unc.edu