

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 -3 covers an array of topics relevant to clinical ethics. 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.

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 12 core faculty and 25 associate faculty members are engaged in a wide variety of activities related to or promoting bioethics across our campus. Please visit the [Center](#) website 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?

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