

FELLOWSHIP GOALS AND REQUIREMENTS

The NIH Department of Bioethics Fellowship Program is designed to provide an opportunity for post-baccalaureate, pre-doctoral, and post-doctoral fellows to develop knowledge and skills in bioethics that will help shape their future careers. During the fellowship, fellows will actively and professionally engage in and support departmental activities, and have significant responsibilities as part of the NIH Bioethics Consultation Service.

I. Goals

By the end of the fellowship, fellows will have:

- A foundation for understanding basic issues in bioethics and familiarity with the literature on these issues
- Developed capacities to engage in bioethics research
- Completed a mentored research project, and develop competencies in oral and written presentation of the results of the project
- Developed a beginning capacity for ethics consultation
- A basic understanding of clinical research and research ethics
- Gained familiarity with clinical care and the clinical environment
- Developed the capacity to evaluate empirical and conceptual research in bioethics
- Developed the capacity for rigorous argumentation and analytical thinking
- Further clarified and worked towards their career goals

II. Activities

To meet these goals, all fellows will:

- Work on mentored research projects in bioethics
- Present and publish research findings and scholarship
- Actively participate in and present at works-in-progress at least annually
- Actively participate in journal club, CC Ethics Committee meetings, Ethics Grand Rounds, fellowship selection, Works in Progress, seminars, visiting speakers, and other departmental activities as appropriate
- Contribute to the functioning of the Department, including performing assigned departmental service activity
- Work closely with mentor through regularly scheduled meetings (usually every week or every other) to establish and discuss goals, research plans and activities, and to develop training and career goals.
- Circulate manuscripts for feedback from faculty and fellows before submission, submit manuscript to NIH Library for iThenticate check and follow manuscript transmittal procedures

- Schedule practice talks before teaching or presenting outside of NIH. Department Chair must also be aware and have given permission for the outside talk and/or teaching assignment prior to commitment of the presentation or teaching assignment.
- Review at least 1 article for a peer reviewed publication with their mentor
- Submit a proposal for a workshop or paper to the ASBH or PRIM&R annual meetings

In addition to the above, during the first year, fellows will attend and actively participate in:

- Year-long general Bioethics First Year Fellows' Seminar
- Course on Ethical and Regulatory Aspects of Clinical Research
- Bioethics consultation service (as an observer alongside 2nd year fellow)
- IRB meetings (as an observer)
- Weekly in-patient clinical rounds or outpatient clinic
- Speaker training sessions
- Fellows feedback sessions
- Empirical methods and statistics training
- Bioethics Consultation service orientation (towards end of first year)
- Empirical Research Lab meetings (ERL)
- Clinical Center Ethics Committee Meetings
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Fellows conference
- Works in Progress
- Ethics Grand Rounds

And during the second year, the fellow will attend and actively participate in:

- The bioethics consultation service as the fellow on call: taking first call and intake, triaging, organizing and conducting the consult with the attending, completing the consult report, entering it into the medical record and the consult database, sending out evaluations, and maintaining the consultation log.
- The Joint Bioethics Colloquium each semester
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Fellows conference
- Clinical Center Ethics Committee Meetings
- Ethics Grand Rounds, fellows' feedback, Works in Progress, Journal club, and ERLs

Additional recommended, but optional, activities:

- Attend and/or present at NIH Bioethics Interest Group meetings
- Plan a second-year elective with their mentor (as appropriate and optional)
- Teach and present at CC, intramural and external courses/meetings
- Attend other NIH or DHHS Committee meetings compatible with interests and

career goals.

III. Mentoring:

Each fellow is assigned a primary mentor or co-mentors, who will guide the fellow in their work. This will include guidance related to: selecting research topics and conducting research, optimizing learning through departmental activities, meeting expectations, and career planning. Fellows often do collaborative research with their mentors, but also may find opportunities to collaborate with others (other faculty, other fellows, others at NIH) on research projects. Fellows interested in collaborative projects with other faculty, with fellows, or with others outside of the Department should first discuss this with their mentor, and when appropriate with the Department Chair. Any project to which a fellow devotes fellowship time must be discussed with the mentor, so they are aware of the full range of activities the fellow is involved in.

Fellows are expected to participate in the following mentoring meetings:

- Weekly or Bi-Weekly: meeting with assigned mentor(s)
- Quarterly: group meeting with Fellowship coordinator and/or Department Chair (all fellows); fellows' feedback
- Semi-annual: fellow, mentor and Department Chair meet to ensure that the fellow is achieving their goals and that the mentor is providing guidance
(*in January with 2nd year fellows – in April with 1st year fellows*). *In November, with all fellows.*)

IV. Department Operations and Norms

Please note: Standard operations, rules, and norms are essential to a well-functioning fellowship and a well-functioning department. Rules and norms are useful only when they are taken seriously and approached and interpreted with a mindset that proactively applies mutual respect, clear communication, taking responsibility, high standards of professionalism, etc.

A. Hours of Operation and schedules:

The CC Department of Bioethics is open Monday through Friday, officially from 8:30am to 5pm, and the Bioethics Consultation Service is on call 24/7/365. Fellowships begin in September (after Labor Day) and end in September.

For the first 6 months of the fellowship, Fellows are expected to conduct their work in the department 5 days/week. After the first 6 months of the fellowship, Fellows may be given the privilege of teleworking once a week. Fellows should discuss with their

mentors how they will use their time and be productive. Teleworking does not apply when a fellow is on call for the Bioethics Consultation Service, when they should be at the CC during working hours.

When not in the physical workplace, fellows should annotate the Master Telework calendar (aka as “BEP Leave Away Telework” calendar in Outlook) , indicating whether they are teleworking or away. When teleworking, it is expected that fellows will participate in meetings virtually with their cameras on, except when instructed or their absence is approved in advance by the mentor. Departmental activities are scheduled on the Bioethics calendar. Fellows are expected to consult the calendar and attend these activities on time.

Anyone traveling, taking an approved day or more of leave, who is out for illness or is expecting to be late or have to leave early from meetings for any reason, should inform their mentor.

B. Dress:

The NIH is a professional environment. Often visiting dignitaries, patients, physicians, and/or other outsiders come through the department for meetings, tours, etc. Often members of the department are called to meetings or to visit patient floors. Consult requests are unpredictable.

When in the department, dress is casual professional, this means dress for a professional office. (not a lab, a class, a party, or a friend’s house).

While on call for Bioethics Consultation Service or attending clinical rounds: Dress is business professional (i.e. a little more dressed up than daily casual professional) since it is common to interact with patients, families, and professional staff when on call or on clinical rounds. Also, open toed shoes are not appropriate for labs or patient care areas.

C. Presentations and Conferences:

Fellows are often invited to give presentations to other departments and institutes at NIH as well as at national meetings, professional conferences, schools, etc.

Fellows should give at least one practice talk before all planned presentations. Practice talks should occur with enough time to revise the talk before the presentation date. After working with your mentor on your presentation, please schedule a practice talk with the assigned team (see next paragraph) or with everyone in the department. The purpose of practice is to receive constructive criticism and allow for improvement prior to the actual presentation.

Members of the Department are assigned to teams. Fellows should attend all practice talks, interviews, and other events assigned to their team.

D. Manuscripts

Fellows will work with mentors on prioritizing their research projects and manuscripts. Manuscripts that are written during the fellowship undergo substantive review by the mentor and other members of the department (or outside) who are familiar with the topic. Once the author(s) and the mentor are satisfied with the quality of the manuscript, please submit the article to the library for iThenticate and follow the transmittal process (found in the procedure document in the Manuscript Clearance Folder on the BEP share drive). The signature of the Department Chair is required before the manuscript is sent to the CC Deputy Director for Clinical Research for clearance.

Manuscripts should include the following disclaimer “The views expressed are the author(s) and do not represent the positions or policies of the Clinical Center, the National Institutes of Health, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.”

Manuscripts written in the course of work for the federal government cannot be copyrighted and are considered work of the US Government (17USC§105), many publishers have specific options for government work. Please check the appropriate box on copyright forms or ask for language if needed. Book or other contracts require approval from NIH legal counsel or tech transfer before signing.

In addition, the NIH Public Access Policy requires NIH authors to deposit an electronic version of final, peer-reviewed manuscripts upon acceptance into NIH’s PubMed Central archive to be made publicly available no later than 12 months after the publication date. Please refer to the Manuscript Clearance Procedure document in the BEP share folder labeled Manuscript Clearance.

For manuscripts that will be submitted to a journal that charges a publication fee, approval must be granted from the CC Procurement Office BEFORE the article is submitted. Please work with Paul or Mertis to establish a POTS/Procurement order, provide them with the estimated price for the publishing. If the vendor accepts the article, provide Paul or Mertis and the assigned purchasing agent an invoice to proceed with payment.

Please review the guidelines on authorship (in manuscript folder on share **drive**)

E. Departmental Jobs:

Each member of the department (fellows and faculty) is assigned a departmental job and is expected to carry out that job for the departmental community. Guidelines are provided to each fellow describing their assignment. Some jobs are shared between 2 fellows. Attention to these jobs is important to the smooth operation of the Department and contributes to the congenial and welcoming atmosphere in the Department. Some jobs are more visible than others but all are important.

Everyone is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the common spaces (including the kitchen, refrigerator, conference room, and library).

V. Outside the Department

A. Travel

All requests for travel will depend on the budget, individual research interests, and the Department's priorities. Travel must be approved through the mentor and the Department Chair, the CC travel coordinator, and sometimes NIH administration, using the forms found on the share drive (travel document forms are in a folder on the share drive). Completed forms should be given to Mertis. There are strict timelines for approval of travel, so please ask **AS SOON AS YOU KNOW ABOUT A MEETING**.

New fellows will be supported, *if* the budget allows, to attend the annual meeting of the American Society of Bioethics and Humanities (ASBH) each year or the Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM&R) annual meeting; second year fellows will be supported if their submission has been accepted, budget permitting.

During the fellowship, fellows may be permitted additional travel related to their research, budget permitting. Priority will be given to conferences where 1) the fellow is invited to present, or 2) a submitted proposal was accepted (fellows should consult with their mentors *before* submitting a proposal), or 3) the topic of the conference is deemed important to the fellow's research and scholarship.

N.B. It is difficult to get approval for fellows for international travel.

B. Excused Absence with Stipend and Vacation

Because fellows are not official government employees, they do not earn annual or sick leave. However, they may be excused for: 1) Federal holidays, 2) illness, 3) personal emergencies, and 4) vacations. For vacations, trainees receive a maximum of three weeks excused absence per year. Mentors may exercise discretion in granting additional short absences as deemed appropriate.

Time away from the department must be approved by the fellows' mentor and recorded on the master calendar

The Bioethics Consultation Service schedule is drawn up a year in advance and begins each July 1. Please submit your vacation plans to Dr. Saskia Hendriks prior to distribution of the on-call schedule. ***Please do not plan vacations or last minute leave during your scheduled on-call time.*** For unavoidable schedule changes, fellows should find someone to cover for them and inform Saskia, the attending on call, and the administrative staff.

While the department will attempt to accommodate *time away* (vacation and/or interviews during career search in 2nd year), please be respectful of the three weeks per year Departmental policy.

C. Outside activities

Any activity outside the department that is connected with a fellow's work at NIH should be cleared with the fellow's mentor.

For outside activities that are unrelated to the fellow's work at NIH, the fellow *should not use or reference their NIH affiliation* except possibly as one of several biographical details (e.g. in a bio sketch). *If their NIH affiliation is mentioned a disclaimer should be included stating that the fellow is acting in her/his personal capacity and not as part of the NIH CC Department of Bioethics, and that any views expressed are the fellow's own and do not represent those of the Government.*

NIH requires approval for all outside activities, this includes clinical fellows engaging in outside professional practice. <https://ethics.od.nih.gov/outside>

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