Bioethics

Am I prepared to deal with the ethical complexities of my chosen field?

Our society faces significant bioethical challenges in this era of globalization and rapid biomedical discovery. Stem cell research and utilization, artificial reproductive technologies, the ongoing need for human subjects’ protection, the role of corporate sponsorship in research, and the fragmented economic infrastructure of health care delivery are only a few of the more vexing challenges that face us as we move into the twenty-first century. Society will turn to healthcare professionals, biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry leaders, life science researchers, civic leaders, and others to lead the ongoing public deliberation on these important topics.

Should I enroll in the Master of Arts in Bioethics program?

Emory’s MA in Bioethics program provides rigorous, advanced, interdisciplinary study in bioethics for professionals and students interested in social and ethical challenges in medicine and the life sciences. Graduates will be able to help advance the national conversation on important issues influencing public policy, scholarship, clinical practice, and education in the field.

How can a Master of Arts in Bioethics enrich my career?

This Masters degree can complement any advanced degree in the life sciences and medical fields, as well as degrees in law, theology and business. Many graduates have found that a MA in Bioethics broadens their expertise and helps create unique opportunities in their profession, whether in clinical care or research, law or business, NGOs or the academy.

The Emory Master of Arts in Bioethics Program provides students the opportunity to develop bioethics expertise with a dynamic network of experts, like-minded professionals, scholars, and resources that will grow with them and support them throughout their career.
The Emory Distinction
Consistently ranked in the top 20 among national universities, Emory University is renowned for its outstanding liberal arts college and superb professional schools, for its national and international partnerships and collaborations, and as one of the Southeast’s leading health care systems. Emory’s Master of Arts in Bioethics program emphasizes our university’s commitment to ethical thinking and action. With its complementary strengths in the health sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities, Emory offers the opportunity for its faculty, students and graduates to be at the forefront in bioethics education and research.

The Center for Ethics
The Center for Ethics is in the unique position to provide a truly interdisciplinary focus. As an independent, university-wide program, the Center includes faculty from every school in the university and fosters education and scholarship across Emory University. Center faculty are leaders in the field of bioethics, sit on major national commissions and Boards, are editors of premier journals, and are involved in multisite grants and collaborative projects with other universities and institutions nationwide and internationally.

What sets our program apart:
Three areas of specialization make the Emory MA in Bioethics a unique opportunity for students.

NEUROETHICS: Emory University, a world leader in neuroscience research, is also a world leader in the ethical and social implications of neuroscience. The Center for Ethics is home to Emory’s neuroethics program, which includes teaching in the graduate neuroscience program, research with top neuroscientists, and an annual Neuroscience and Ethics Award and lecture. The Center is also the home to the American Journal of Bioethics Neuroscience, the premier journal in the field of neuroethics and the official journal of the Neuroethics Society.

PUBLIC HEALTH ETHICS: With our partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as the work in which faculty are engaged throughout the region, students in Emory’s MA in Bioethics Program engage in some of the most pressing ethical challenges facing today’s public health workforce. Students can participate in public policy development, revision, or implementation, and can choose to work directly with partners at the CDC for their practicum experience.

UNIQUE CLINICAL ETHICS OPPORTUNITIES: There are a multitude of clinical ethics opportunities in Atlanta, but particularly noteworthy is Grady Health System in mid-town Atlanta. As one of the largest public hospitals and busiest emergency rooms in the country, students interested in clinical ethics will have an invaluable opportunity to explore the ethical challenges that arise in the care of patients at the only Level 1 Trauma Center within a 100-mile radius.

The Master of Arts in Bioethics degree immerses students in a sea of provocative ethical questions generated by advances in health care, science and technology, and encourages students to engage creatively with the issues in order to derive their own deliberated conclusions.
A curriculum as deep and diverse as its applications

Students in the MA in Bioethics program must complete a total of 30 credits, including 18 credits of required bioethics courses and 12 credits of elective courses.

Required courses (18 credits):

- Bioethics foundations courses (9 credits) – Three core courses which explore theory as well as classic and contemporary issues in bioethics.
- Bioethics seminar (2 credits) – A one credit class, taken twice, that develops students’ critical thinking skills through interdisciplinary discussion and critical engagement with contemporary issues in bioethics.
- Bioethics practicum (4 credits) – An experiential course which provides an opportunity to observe or participate in real-life bioethics settings
- Thesis (3 credits) or Comprehensive Exam options

Elective courses (12 credits) – Classes are chosen from a variety of related disciplinary fields and professional schools at Emory, or as an approved independent study. The goal of elective courses is to allow the student to broaden their understanding of bioethics by drawing from the rich multidisciplinary environment at Emory and engaging in focused work in an area of interest to the individual student.

Part-time or full-time study available

FULL TIME STUDY: Students can complete the MA in Bioethics in 12 months (fall, spring, and summer terms). This option may be particularly attractive to students who plan to pursue doctoral or professional degrees in related fields.

PART-TIME STUDY: Part-time students can take as few as one class each semester, which would put them on track to graduate in approximately three years. This option may be particularly attractive to full time professionals who desire career enhancement but have time constraints that limit their availability to take courses.

Program Requirements

All students must have a degree from an accredited four-year college or university before beginning the program. Additionally, most entering students will have also acquired an advanced degree in a related discipline, such as medicine, nursing, law, business, public health, or theology. Students will be practicing professionals who have interest or experience in bioethics and who wish to integrate the MA in Bioethics into their career plan. Others will combine graduate work in Bioethics with their professional education.

Dual Degrees

MA IN BIOETHICS/MASTER OF NURSING SCIENCE (MSN): The purpose of the program is to prepare advance practice nurses from the very onset of their careers to be equipped to identify, address, and assess ethical issues as they appear in clinical practice and healthcare administration. Students who graduate with a dual MA in Bioethics/MSN degree will not only be prepared to enhance the care they provide to patients, but also will be prepared to work on issues of public and institutional policy as it relates to the provision of clinical care, to serve on ethics committees, or to conduct education on the ethical foundations of clinical practice.

MA IN BIOETHICS/MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH): The goal of this program is to train a select group of students in the intersection of public health and bioethics. Students who graduate with a dual MA in Bioethics/MPH degree will be well qualified to work in public health to help set priorities for pandemics or other allocations of scarce resources, to set public policy for health departments or states on access to health care, or to conduct education on the ethical foundations of public health practice.
MA IN BIOETHICS/MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (MTS): A dual MA in Bioethics/MTS is offered in conjunction with the Candler School of Theology. The purpose of the program is to train a select number of students to pursue careers in faith-based organizations, to teach at secondary schools, or to pursue advanced studies in bioethics and moral theology. This degree allows the student to earn both the MTS and MA in Bioethics in two years rather than in the usual three.

MA IN BIOETHICS/MD: A dual MA in Bioethics/MD is offered in conjunction with the Emory School of Medicine. Students who graduate with a dual MD/MA in Bioethics degree will not only be prepared to enhance the care they provide to patients, but also will be prepared to work on issues of public policy as it relates to the provision of clinical care, to serve on or chair ethics committees, or to conduct education on the ethical foundations of clinical practice. Students step out of the medical curriculum after year 3 to complete the MA-Bioethics before returning for the final year of medical school.

MA IN BIOETHICS/JD: A dual MA in Bioethics/JD is offered in conjunction with Emory School of Law. Students who graduate with the dual degree in law and bioethics will not only be able to work effectively at the intersection of these disciplines, but also will be poised to participate in the development of public policy and health legislation. This degree allows students to earn both the JD and MA in Bioethics in 3.5 years rather than four.

MA IN BIOETHICS/DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY (DPT): The purpose of the program is to constructively engage physical therapists in relevant bioethical issues in order to help enhance care for patients in a constantly changing healthcare environment, to prepare them to work on matters of public and institutional policy as it relates to the provision of clinical care, to serve on ethics committees, and/or to conduct education on the ethical foundations of clinical practice. As physical therapists’ roles and responsibilities have increased, so have their educational needs and desires. The combined Master of Arts in Bioethics/DPT degree will provide future physical therapists with the opportunity to develop unique perspectives and skills that will enable graduates of the program to engage in the ethical dimension of healthcare policy and to serve in an expert capacity on panels in healthcare settings that deal with ethical dilemmas.

MA IN BIOETHICS/MASTER OF DIVINITY (MDiv): The purpose of the program is to train students to pursue careers in faith-based organizations, a healthcare environment, public healthcare policy, or to pursue advanced studies in bioethics and moral theology. The combined MA in Bioethics/MDiv degree will provide future faith leaders with the opportunity to develop unique perspectives and skills. This new combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities will enable Emory’s dual degree graduates to influence the ethical dimension of pastoral care, patient advocacy, healthcare policy, and to serve in an expert capacity on panels in healthcare settings that deal with ethical dilemmas.

Application Requirements
Applicants for the MA in Bioethics must include the following with their application to the Laney Graduate School:

- A personal statement that describes the student’s interest in bioethics and goals for obtaining the MA degree;
- A curriculum vitae;
- A writing sample;
- 3 letters of recommendation;
- GRE scores from the last 5 years, except in the case of career professionals with advanced degrees who may submit an example of professional writing instead (with permission of the Director of Graduate Studies);
- TOEFL scores from the last 5 years for international applicants.

Contact
For more information about our program of study, please visit our website at ethics.emory.edu/MABioethics and explore the links to information for admissions, courses, research and more.

For further insight, please contact:
CORY ANDREW LABRECQUE,
Director of Graduate Studies
Emory University Center for Ethics
1531 Dickey Drive
Atlanta, GA 30322
404.727.1208

Requests for Additional Information:
RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS
Emory University Center for Ethics
1531 Dickey Drive
Atlanta, GA 30322
(404) 727-1752

gs.emory.edu/academics
ethics.emory.edu/MABioethics

Laney Graduate School
Programs
Anthropology
Art History
Behavioral Sciences and Health Education
Bioethics
Biological and Biomedical Sciences
Biochemistry, Cell and Developmental Biology
Cancer Biology
Genetics and Molecular Biology
Immunology and Molecular Pathogenesis
Microbiology and Molecular Genetics
Molecular and Systems Pharmacology
Neuroscience
Population Biology, Ecology, and Evolution
Biomedical Engineering
Biostatistics
Business
Chemistry
Clinical Psychology
Cognition and Development (Psychology)
Comparative Literature
Computer Science and Informatics
Development Practice
Economics
English
Environmental Health Sciences
Environmental Sciences
Epidemiology
Film and Media Studies
French
History
Health Services Research and Health Policy
Islamic Civilizations Studies
Mathematics
MD/PhD
Music
Neuroscience and Animal Behavior (Psychology)
Nursing
Nutrition and Health Sciences
Philosophy
Physics
Political Science
Religion
Sociology
Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies