

Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Certificate of Distinction in Biomedical Ethics

Purpose:

A Distinction in Biomedical Ethics acknowledges advanced training and experience in clinical bioethics. This Distinction is granted by Vanderbilt University Medical Center and the Office of Graduate Medical Education (GME) after successful completion of a curriculum coordinated through the Vanderbilt Center for Biomedical Ethics and Society (CBMES). The program seeks to enhance physician leadership in ethics and clinical knowledge, practical application and institutional infrastructure for healthcare ethics.

Eligibility and Application Process

Only current, active trainees in Vanderbilt GME programs are eligible to participate in this ethics program. Trainees must obtain approval from their program director (PD) prior to applying in the form of a brief letter of support. The letter of support must indicate that the trainee has availability to commit to the program requirements (below). This *does not* need to be a formal letter of recommendation; the PD must only indicate their support for the trainee's time commitments to the program. In addition, applicants should submit a brief personal statement (less than 200 words) indicating prior experience, intentions and interests for obtaining this Distinction. No prerequisite training or experience is necessary to apply or complete this program. Applicants should also submit a CV.

Curriculum and Requirements

The ethics program has three primary components: group discussion seminars and conferences, experiential activities, and a capstone project.

Group Discussion Seminars and Ethics Conferences: Seminars are designed to cover primary areas of clinical biomedical ethics and will be coordinated with CBMES faculty. Seminars are led by the trainees and facilitated by invited faculty; participation is required. At each seminar, two trainees will present a 30-minute didactic on the subject of that seminar. This will be followed by an hour-long case-based discussion lead by the trainees and faculty.

Completion of the program requires attendance at seminars, and no more than two absences will be permitted without making alternative arrangements for fulfilling the requirement. Seminars will be scheduled in the early evening to allow for attendance by all participants. When obtaining PD support for the program, excused absence from clinical duties for these

conferences is expected, except during extenuating circumstances. Seminars should be completed during one academic year (exceptions will be made on a case by case basis). In addition to the seminars, participants will participate in activities at the CBMES including Monday afternoon conferences.

Seminar Content:

- Approaching ethics at the bedside: theories and principles, ethics infrastructure
- Informed consent, decision-making capacity, surrogacy and advanced directives
- Financial conflicts and resource allocation
- End-of-life, withdrawal of care and medically ineffective care (futility)
- Unique ethical considerations for trainees
- Mistakes and disclosure of errors
- Vulnerable populations

Experiential: The core experiential activity will include participation on the Vanderbilt Ethics Consultation Service and in the work of the VUMC Ethics Committee. Each participant may have different scheduling of the Consultation Service experience depending on their clinical responsibilities. This will require coordination with their training PD as part of the application process. The bulk of the experiential component will consist of at least two weeks on the Ethics Consultation service. In order to capture the arc of a consult, there should be continuity with at least one week at a time on site at the CBMES. Completion of this requirement may occur over any number of years necessary for the trainee. However, it is best if participants can complete some portion of the Consultation service rotation **early in the year**. Participants will also become members of the VUMC Ethics Committee, and participation in Ethics Committee meetings will be expected whenever scheduling permits.

After completion of the experiential component, a trainee will have competency in working through an ethics consultation. The components include: how and why consults are generated, initial intake and analysis by the consultation service, intervention planning and implementation, further analysis, documentation and follow up.

Capstone: The capstone component will focus around a case in which the trainee was involved either during their clinical experiences or while on the Consultation service. Participants will work with CBMES faculty to develop this case for the following settings: (1) Group Discussion Seminar, (2) Ethics Committee Meeting, (3) CBMES Monday Case Conference. Finally, participants will be encouraged and supported in scholarly productivity to find a journal for publication of their case. The primary goals of the program are for participants to be leaders in peer-education and to develop a substantive foundation for practical engagement with biomedical ethics. The capstone may also be tailored to the interest of each participant, working with their departmental training programs and the program director. If something

other than a case-based capstone project is desired by the trainee or their department this can be arranged with the course faculty.

Summary

Completion of the Distinction in Biomedical Ethics certificate requires:

1. Group Discussion Seminars (9 credit hours; intermittent)
 - a. Leadership of 1 seminar session: didactic teaching and case-based discussion
2. Experiential:
 - a. Ethics Consultation Service (60 credit hours; 2 weeks)
 - b. Ethics Committee Attendance (2 credit hours, intermittent)
3. Capstone:
 - a. Ethics Committee Presentation
 - b. Monday Case Conference at CBMES
 - c. Other

Program Accreditation

Vanderbilt University Medical Center – Graduate Medical Education Committee. The PD from the trainee’s specialty, the Director of the CBMES and Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education will sign off on each certificate.

Faculty:

Brian C. Drolet, MD – Course Co-Director, Center of Biomedical Ethics and Society

Kate Payne, JD, RN, NC-BC – Course Co-Director, Ethics Consultation Service Co-Director, Center of Biomedical Ethics and Society

Keith Meador, MD, ThM, MPH – Director, Center of Biomedical Ethics and Society

2017 – 2018 Ethics Certificate Participants

	Graduation Year	Primary Training Program
Adam Pendleton	2018	Geriatric Psychiatry
Audrey Bennett	2019	Internal Medicine
Austin Smith	2019	Emergency Medicine
Britany Lynn Raymond	2018	Anesthesiology
Claude Pirtle	2019	Department of Biomedical Informatics
David Voce	2021	Neurosurgery
Hannah Dudney	2018	Obstetrics and Gynecology
Jonathan Douds	2018	Pathology
Joshua Arentz	2018	Pediatric Critical Care
Kelly Harris	2019	Pediatrics
Megan Desai	2020	Anatomic and Clinical Pathology
Shayne Taylor	2018	Med-Peds
Simone Maybin	2019	Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Stephanie Kiser	2019	Med-Peds
Stockton Beveridge	2018	Pediatrics
Uchenna Anani	2018	Neonatology/Pediatrics

2018 – 2019 Ethics Certificate Participants

	Graduation Year	Primary Training Program
Andrew DAlessandro	2020	Emergency Medicine
Annette Vannilam	2019	Pediatric Gastroenterology
Brett Shaffer	2019	Anesthesiology
Calvin Gruss	2019	Anesthesiology
Christopher L Brett	2021	Radiation Oncology
Emily Deaton	2019	Pediatrics
Jennifer Burba	2020	Neurology
Jennifer L West	2019	Emergency Medicine
Kristin Favela	2019	Pediatric Endocrinology
Kristin Hines	2019	Internal Medicine
Kyle Hamm	2021	Anesthesiology
Mary Killian	2020	Pediatrics
Matthew Mart	2020	Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine
Michael Tozier	2020	Internal Medicine
Nicole Drawbridge	2020	Pediatrics
Nicole M King	2019	Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine
Paul Jacob	2019	Medicine; Division of Infectious Diseases
Pranit N Chotai	2021	General Surgery
Sumit Mehta	2020	Obstetrics and Gynecology

2019 - 2020 Ethics Certificate Participants

	Graduation Year	Primary Training Program
Kelsey Nestor	2020	Emergency Medicine
Rebecca Propper	2020	Pediatrics - Critical Care
Daniella Dinizo	2020	Anesthesiology
Joseph Panza	2020	Gyn Fellow
Lisa M. Kodadek	2020	Surgery, Division of Trauma, Surgical Critical Care, and Emergency General Surgery
Meghan Breed	2020	Emergency Medicine
Aimee Caillet	2020	Pediatrics, Pediatric Gastroenterology
Meaghan Ransom	2020	Pediatrics
Sarah Myer	2020	Psychiatry, Geriatric Psychiatry
Alexander Decastroabeger	2020	Ophthalmology
Keelin Roche	2020	Surgery, Division of Trauma, Surgical Critical Care, and Emergency General Surgery
Stacy Blank	2021	Medicine-Pediatrics
Patrick Kelly	2022	Neurosurgery