

**Department of Bioethics**  
**Case Western Reserve University**  
**Joint Degree Program: MD/MA in Bioethics**  
**Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine Program**  
(prepared 7/2012)

Program Advisor: **Stuart J. Youngner, School of Medicine**

**Background: Joint MD/MA Program**

This five year program trains physicians with advanced knowledge and experience in bioethics. It integrates bioethics scholarship with the medical curriculum, graduating physicians who are able to:

- Apply bioethics principles to their clinical practice;
- Become resources in bioethics for their colleagues and bioethics leaders in the institutions where they practice medicine;
- Pursue scholarly research in bioethics in their chosen area of clinical or laboratory specialization; and, contribute more effectively to the formulation of public and institutional health care policy.

**Need for Joint Degree Program**

There is no other joint degree program of this type in the state of Ohio. However, bioethics is becoming an increasing part of clinical practice, teaching and research. For example, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) requires every hospital to have access to professionals with expertise in bioethics.

**Admission to the Joint Degree Program**

Students must apply separately to Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine (CCLCM) through the CWRU School of Medicine, and to the Department of Bioethics for admission into each program. Admission to one program is not a guarantee that the student will gain admission to the other. Students should apply to the MA Program immediately upon being accepted to medical school, so that they will be able to register for courses upon matriculation. This application process should involve the CCLCM administration so that consent from the student's physician advisor can be obtained.

The simultaneous academic demands of the first year medical school curriculum and those of a rigorous two semesters of the Foundations in Bioethics course required during that year will be significant. Therefore, a student accepted into this program must have: 1) an exceptionally strong background in the biological sciences, as evidenced by depth and breadth of courses and grade point average in undergraduate school; and, 2) considerable comfort with the humanities. Students must apply directly to Marie Norris who is the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in the Department of Bioethics and must inform Dennis Stacey of their intent to apply and actual application. Applications must be in before classes begin.

**Advisory Committee to the Program**

An Advisory Committee consisting of Stuart J. Youngner, M.D., Chairman of the Department of Bioethics), Dennis Stacey, PhD, and Marie Norris will serve as advisors to

the joint degree program at the Lerner College School of Medicine. The advisory committee will meet twice a year in October and May (and additionally as needed to address specific concerns). The bioethics program advisors will keep in regular contact with Alan Hull, MD, PhD, Associate Dean for Curricular Affairs at the Lerner College of Medicine. Together they will identify any problems, and make sure that the demands of the two programs are not interfering with the student's academic performance in medical school.

### **Description of Masters of Arts in Bioethics Program**

The Department of Bioethics offers a graduate program leading to the degree of Masters of Arts in Bioethics. Bioethics has developed into a major area of scholarly inquiry over the past three decades. Professionals from medicine, public health, nursing, the life sciences, law, social work, management, public policy, the social sciences, philosophy, religious studies, and other areas have contributed to the field. The program emphasizes the interdisciplinary and interprofessional nature of the field, and is designed to provide advanced training in bioethics for students and professionals who anticipate encountering ethical issues in the course of their primary career.

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### **Program Requirements for Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine Track for the MD/MA Joint Degree Program in Bioethics**

#### **Background**

The CCLCM is a 5-year medical education program at CWRU with a specific mission to educate and develop physician investigators. The CCLCM joint degree student must satisfy the 27 credit hour requirement of the Masters in Bioethics Program. Because the CCLCM medical school curriculum is unique, the timing and other specifics of how they meet these requirements are outlined below.

#### Masters of Arts in Bioethics Course Requirement for CCLCM MD/ MA in Bioethics Students

- Students will complete the 12-credit hour BETH 401-402 Foundations of Bioethics Course in their first year or during the second half of their first year and the first half of their second year.
- Students will receive 3 credit elective (IBIS 451) hours for completing the Foundations of Medicine program during their first two years of medical school.
- Students will take 3 3-credit graduate electives open to students in the MA Bioethics Program offered from the Department of Bioethics or other approved

courses in the University. *Marie Norris will supply students with this list each semester.*

- Students will complete the required 3 credit Clinical Ethics Rotation (BETH 405). This may be done during years 3, 4, or 5. The clinical rotation requires 60 hours per semester (each semester 1.5 credit hours).

### Double Counted Credits

CCLCM Medical School Curriculum counted toward MA in Bioethics

- Foundations of Medicine course in years 1 and 2 counted as a 3 credit bioethics elective
- Proposed Foundations of Medicine longitudinal groups during years 3-5 counted as a percent of BETH 405: Clinical Ethics Rotation
- CCLCM research project and thesis counted as two 3 credit electives (total 6 credits, if bioethics-related as noted above)

MA in Bioethics credits counted toward CCLCM curriculum

- None at this time

### Administrative Details

- A maximum of 2 CCLCM students will be accepted into the program each year.
- CCLCM students will do clinical rotations to complete BETH 405 (see above) at venues other than CCF
- Any courses or credits will be taught by CWRU faculty with primary or secondary appointment in the Department of Bioethics. This includes advisors (chairs) of the CCLCM student's required research project. Exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis by the Department of Bioethics in conjunction with the CCLCM Associate Dean for Curricular Affairs.
- Any bioethics elective courses taught at CCF or by CCF staff will be pre approved by the CWRU Department of Bioethics and the CWRU School of Graduate Studies, and
- Will be open to all CWRU graduate students with a preference for Masters of Bioethics Students

### Financial Arrangements

CCLCM students will not pay extra tuition for the MD/MA in Bioethics Program. The Department of Bioethics will incur no tuition costs for having these students.