

# HEALTH CARE ETHICS, PH.D. & M.D. DUAL DEGREE

The Ph.D. in Health Care Ethics and M.D. dual degree program at Saint Louis University trains physicians who not only want to more conscientiously inform their own clinical practice but also influence their peers and society through their role in institutional, professional and societal policymaking.

As the art and science of medicine become increasingly advanced, new technologies and crises require hospitals, health care systems and policymakers to consider the ethical implications of clinical practice, institutional policies and governmental regulations. Physicians are often at the forefront of these discussions, most especially at the bedside of individual patients under their care. Most hospitals and larger health care systems utilize professionally-trained ethicists or ethics committees to help them navigate such issues.

This dual degree program forms future physicians who will also serve as ethics leaders at institutional and extra-institutional levels like state health commissions. Graduates may also pursue academic careers in schools of medicine or directing residency programs.

## Program Highlights

- The Albert Gnaegi Center for Health Care Ethics (<https://www.slu.edu/arts-and-sciences/bioethics/>) has an internationally renowned faculty with expertise in both foundational bioethical theory and the practical aspects of clinical decision-making and policy-setting, including physicians and other specialists in the ethics of pediatric care, end-of-life care, biomedical research and public health.
- Students begin their health care ethics and medicine dual degree studies at Saint Louis University as traditional first-year students in the School of Medicine.
- After the second year of medical school, students begin full-time study in health care ethics.
- Students are expected to complete the Ph.D. in health care ethics in three to five years, after which they return to the School of Medicine to complete the third and fourth years of medical studies.

For additional information, see the catalog entries for the following programs:

## Medicine, M.D. (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/medicine/medicine/doctor-medicine/>)

Health Care Ethics, Ph.D. (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/health-care-ethics/health-care-ethics-phd/>)

## Accreditation

The Saint Louis University School of Medicine is fully accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), the accrediting body for medical education in the United States.

## Admission

Students must meet the admission requirements and be admitted into both the M.D. and health care ethics Ph.D. programs according to the

processes of each of the participating academic units in order to pursue a dual-degree program.

Individuals may apply to the Ph.D. program concurrently with application to the School of Medicine or following their admission to the School of Medicine; however, admission to the dual-degree program is contingent upon admission to both the Ph.D. and the M.D. programs.

## Requirements

A minimum of 48 credits is required for SLU's health care ethics Ph.D. This ordinarily includes 33 credits of course work, three credits of practicum, and 12 credits of dissertation research.

SLU's Center for Health Care Ethics accepts seven credits from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the M.D. curriculum. The required courses HCE 6110 Intro-Medicine for Ethicists (1 cr), one three-credit elective and the HCE 6150 Practicum, Health Care Ethics (1-3 cr) are waived based on medical school coursework in Patient, Physician, and Society I and II, and in Fundamentals of Biomedical Science.

M.D./Ph.D. students will be recognized as having satisfied all three Research Tools requirements based on trainee knowledge of medical terminology, biostatistics and library database searches. The remaining 27 credits of Ph.D. coursework, comprehensive exams, the dissertation and the public defense of the dissertation must be completed during the three years of Ph.D. study.

## Continuation Standards

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in all graduate/professional courses.