

## **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:**

- Understand basic issues in bioethics and the literature on these issues
- Develop capacities to engage in bioethics research
- Complete a mentored research project, and develop competencies in oral and written presentation of the results of the project
- Develop a beginning capacity for ethics consultation
- Understand the elements, ethics, review, and approval of clinical research
- Understand and participate in IRB review of research
- Gain familiarity with clinical care and the clinical environment
- Develop the capacity to evaluate empirical and conceptual research in bioethics
- Develop the capacity for rigorous argumentation and analytical thinking

### **II. Activities**

**To meet these goals, fellows will be involved in the following activities:**

- 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, and other departmental activities
- Contribute to the functioning of the Department, including performing assigned departmental service activity
- Should initiate regularly scheduled meetings with mentor (usually every week or every other) to discuss research finds, and to develop training and career goals. Circulate manuscripts for feedback before submission and follow manuscript transmittal procedures
- Schedule practice talks before teaching or presenting outside of NIH. Department Chair, Christine Grady and/or Renee Goodman must also be aware and permitted 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, during the first year, the fellow will 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 2<sup>nd</sup> year fellow)
- IRB meetings (as an observer)
- Weekly in-patient rounds or outpatient clinic
- Speaker training sessions
- Fellows feedback sessions
- Statistics training
- Bioethics Consultation service orientation (towards end of first year)
- Participate on NIH, Clinical Center, Ethics Committee Meetings
- Participate in the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fellows conference, optional
- Ethics Grand Rounds

**And during the second year, the fellow will:**

- Serve as the fellow on call for the bioethics consultation, taking first call, triaging, organizing and conducting the consult with the attending, completing the consult report, entering it into the medical record, sending out evaluations.
- Actively participate in the Joint Bioethics Colloquium each semester
- Plan a second year elective with their mentor (as appropriate)
- Participate in the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fellows conference
- Participate on NIH, Clinical Center, Ethics Committee Meetings
- Ethics Grand Rounds

**Additional recommended, but optional, activities:**

- Attend Bioethics Interest Group meetings, attend and/or present
- Teach and present at intramural and external courses/meetings
- Attend other NIH or DHHS Committee meetings (such as Human Subjects Research Advisory Committee (HSRAC), the Animal Research Advisory Committee (ARAC), the trans NIH Bioethics Committee (TNBC), the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Human Research Protections (SACHRP))

**III. Mentoring:**

Each fellow is assigned a primary mentor, who will guide the fellow in his or her work. This will include guidance related to: selecting research projects, optimizing learning through the departmental activities, meeting expectations, and career planning. Fellows often do collaborative research with their mentors, but may find

opportunities to collaborate with others 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.

Fellows are expected to participate in the following mentoring meetings:

- Weekly or Bi-Weekly: meeting with assigned mentor
- Monthly: group meeting with department chair (all fellows); fellows feedback
- Semi-annual: fellow, mentor and chair of the department (Christine) will meet to ensure that the fellow is achieving their goals and that the mentor is providing guidance  
*(in January with 2<sup>nd</sup> year fellows – in April with 1<sup>st</sup> year fellows).*

#### **IV. Department Operations and Norms**

##### **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 will end in September.

Fellows are expected to conduct their work in the department. Exceptions will occur and these will be addressed on an individual basis. Absence from the department during a work day should be approved in advance by the mentor and Departmental staff (Renee and Mertis) should be notified. Anyone traveling for work related activities, taking an approved day or more of leave, home sick, or expecting to arrive late or have to leave early for any reason, should inform the administrative staff and mentor.

Departmental activities are scheduled on the Bioethics calendar. All fellows are expected to consult the calendar and arrive at these activities on time.

Teleworking or working off-site is a privilege that is granted to those persons who can be as or more productive in another setting than in the office. Fellows should discuss this with their mentors. Fellows whose mentors agree that it is a worthwhile arrangement may be allowed to telework one day a week. This only applies after March of the first year of the fellowship, and does not apply when a fellow is on call for the Bioethics Consultation Service. The day of the week will be staggered to assure that a critical mass remains in the department every day. Fellows approved for working off-site should inform the administrative staff.

##### **B. Dress:**

The NIH is a professional environment. The department is not a lab facility. 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.

Therefore, dress in the department 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 since it is common to interact with patients, families, and professional staff when on call or on clinical rounds. (i.e. a little more dressed up than daily casual professional). 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 practice talks before all planned presentations. Practice talks should occur with enough time to revise the talk before the presentation date. At least one practice talk should be given to your mentor (and any others you wish to invite). One practice talk should be open to the assigned team (see next paragraph) or to 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 may be assigned to teams. The fellow should attend practice talks, interviews, and other events assigned to his/her team.

#### D. Manuscripts

Fellows will work with mentors on prioritizing their research projects and manuscripts. Manuscripts that are written during the fellowship must undergo substantive review by the mentor and other members of the department who are familiar with the topic. Once the author(s) and the mentor are satisfied with the quality of the manuscript, please follow the transmittal process (found on the BEP share I:\Manuscript Procedure Forms). The signature of the Department Chair is required before the manuscript is sent to the CC Deputy Director for Clinical Research for approval.

Manuscripts should include the following disclaimer "The views expressed are the authors 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. **No books or other contracts**

**can be signed without approval from NIH legal counsel.** 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.

E. Departmental Jobs:

Each member of the department (fellows and faculty) is assigned a departmental duty and is expected to carry out that duty for the departmental community. Guidelines are provided to each fellow describing his/her 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, and usually by CC and sometimes NIH administration, using the forms found on the share drive. Completed forms should be given to Mertis. Each person is requested to put details of all predicted travel on a data call spreadsheet several months in advance of travel. Considerable approval time is needed, 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 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 fellows research and scholarship.

N.B. International travel is very hard to get approved, especially for fellows.

## B. Excused Absence with Stipend and Vacation

Fellows, because they are not official government employees, 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 Renee should be notified in advance of the requested leave date(s);

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

While the department will attempt to accommodate ***time away*** (vacation and/or interviews during career search in 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 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/topics/outside.htm>