ETHICS IN SOCIETY PROGRAM

The Program in Ethics in Society consists of an interdisciplinary honors program and a minor that are open to undergraduates in all majors.

Mission of the Program in Ethics in Society

The Program in Ethics in Society, which operates under the umbrella of the Bowen H. McCoy Family Center for Ethics in Society, is designed to foster scholarship, teaching, and moral reflection on fundamental issues in personal and public life. The program is grounded in moral and political philosophy, but it extends its concerns across a broad range of traditional disciplinary domains. The program is guided by the idea that ethical thought has application to current social questions and conflicts, and it seeks to encourage moral reflection and practice in areas such as business, technology, international relations, law, medicine, politics, science, and public service.

Ethics in Society Courses

Courses offered by the Program in Ethics in Society are listed under the subject code ETHICSOC on the Stanford Bulletin’s ExploreCourses (https://explorecourses.stanford.edu/search?q=ETHICSOC&view=catalog&departmentcode=ETHICSOC=on&filter-coursestatus-Active=on&term-Summer=on&collapsec=on&filter-departmentcode=ETHICSOC=on&filter-catalognumber-ETHICSOC=on&filter-coursestatus=Active=on&filter-catalognumber-ETHICSOC=on) web site. There are many course offerings at Stanford that address moral and political questions, only some of which are crosslisted by the Program in Ethics in Society.

Honors in Ethics in Society

The honors program in Ethics in Society offers undergraduates the opportunity to write a senior honors thesis within a community of interdisciplinary scholars. The course of study combines the analytical rigor of moral and political philosophy with the subject matter of each student’s major to develop a sophisticated understanding of problems of social concern. Such problems include: the nature and implications of treating people with equal dignity and respect; the scope of liberty; the legitimacy of government; and the meaning of responsibility. The program poses these issues and others in the context of debates which arise in our common public life. It thus extends moral concern and reflection across disciplines such as medicine, law, economics, political science, sociology, computer science, international relations, and public policy.

Students in the program write honors theses on such topics, employing moral and political philosophy to address practical problems. Previous theses have considered questions such as the just distribution of health care, obligations to future generations, the role of moral values in education, the moral implications of genetic engineering, and the relationship between gender inequality and the structures of work and family. Students in the program have won scholarships to graduate study including Marshall, Rhodes, and Fulbright fellowships. Others have taken the step from moral analysis to moral commitment, pursuing careers of public service.

The honors program in Ethics in Society is open to majors in every field and must be taken in addition to a department major. Applicants must declare a major before applying to the program. Applicants should have an overall GPA of B+ or higher. Required courses must be taken for a letter grade.

Students interested in pursuing honors in Ethics in Society can apply for early acceptance in spring of their sophomore year or apply at the regular deadline in mid-October of their junior year. Students should contact the program coordinator for more information and to begin the application process.

Requirements

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<th>Core Courses</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>ETHICSOC 20 Introduction to Moral Philosophy</td>
<td>4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>or ETHICSOC 1 Ethical Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETHICSOC 171 Justice</td>
<td>4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETHICSOC 190 Ethics in Society Honors Seminar</td>
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Electives

Two 4- or 5-unit undergraduate courses on a subject approved by the faculty director, designed to support research conducted for or connected to the honors thesis.

Thesis units spread across Autumn, Winter, and Spring quarters

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The electives selected by the student should be focused around a central theme such as environmental ethics, ethics and politics, ethics and economics, biomedical ethics, ethics and technology, or a theme approved by the faculty director. Ethical Reasoning courses (https://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu/undergrad-grad/undergraduate-courses/ethical-reasoning-requirement) that fit the student’s thematic focus may be counted towards the University-wide electives in the minor. Electives are normally taken after completion of the Gateway Courses.

Courses credited to the Ethics in Society minor may not be double-counted toward major requirements.

Faculty Director: Brent Sockness

Affiliated Faculty:

Eamonn Callan (Education), Jorah Dannenberg (Philosophy), Barbara Fried (Law), Pam Karlan (Law), Barry Maguire (Philosophy), Alison McQueen (Political Science), Benoît Monin (Psychology, Graduate School of Business), Josiah Ober (Classics, Political Science), Rob Reich (Political Science, Philosophy), Debra Satz (Philosophy), Brent Sockness (Religious Studies), Emilee Chapman (Political Science), Juliana Bidadanure (Philosophy)

Related Courses

There are many courses taught across the University that treat moral, political, and social issues pertinent to the Ethics in Society Honors Program and Minor. With the introduction of the Ethical Reasoning “Way” the number of these courses is growing. For a listing of current courses that fulfill the Ethical Reasoning requirement, see ExploreCourses (https://explorecourses.stanford.edu/search?q=ETHICSOC&view=catalog&page=0&academicYear=20162017&filter-catalognumber=ETHICSOC=on&filter-coursestatus-Active=on&filter-Quarter=Winter=on&collapse=,5,&filter-catalognumber-ETHICSOC=on&filter-quarter=WAYER=on&collapse=,5,&filter-catalognumber-ETHICSOC=on&filter-academicYear=). The electives selected by the student should be focused around a central theme such as environmental ethics, ethics and politics, ethics and economics, biomedical ethics, ethics and technology, or a theme approved by the faculty director. Ethical Reasoning courses (https://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu/undergrad-grad/undergraduate-courses/ethical-reasoning-requirement) that fit the student’s thematic focus may be counted towards the University-wide electives in the minor. Electives are normally taken after completion of the Gateway Courses.

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Winter Quarter


Spring Quarter

ExploreCourses: ETHICSOC courses offered Spring Quarter (https://explorecourses.stanford.edu/search?q=ETHICSOC&view=catalog&page=0&academicYear=20162017&filter-term-Spring=on&collapse=&filter-catalognumber-ETHICSOC=on&filter-coursestatus-Active=on&filter-catalognumber-ETHICSOC=on)