

# Oral Health Care at the Intersection of Professional and Business Ethics



A New Graduate Course  
Offered by the  
Center for Health Policy and Ethics  
at Creighton University



The American College of Dentists is making available a limited number of partial scholarships to Fellows interested in taking this course. Contact the ACD Executive Office for more information at: **(301) 977-3223.**

## Course Description

Throughout the ages, many health care providers have had to wear two hats: that of entrepreneur, whose private business involves selling highly valued health care advice and treatments; and that of a member of a profession committed to serve society. Yet the ethos or moral foundation of a business is not identical to the ethos of a profession, but complementary at best and mutually exclusive at worst. In this course, we focus on the practice of dentistry, but many health care providers face similar conflicts, such as pharmacists, occupational and physical therapists, optometrists, and plastic surgeons.



**Week 1 & 2.** We review dentistry's dramatic reshaping from mere quackery practiced by itinerant barber-surgeons to a scientifically based, socially elevated, and self-regulating profession.

**Week 3 & 4.** We compare the ethos underlying an entrepreneurial approach and that of a professional approach to dentistry. The ethical implications of these differences are analyzed with special attention to the issue of oral health disparities.

**Week 5 & 6.** We discuss the ethical challenges raised by esthetic treatments. Special attention is paid to the difference between medical indications and patient desires, the dangers of overtreatment, and the legally significant professional standard of care.

**Week 7 & 8.** We review the ethical challenge of being competitive (as an entrepreneurial ethos demands), yet collegial (as a professional ethos demands), in reference to the topics of advertising, error management, peer review and whistle blowing.

## Learning Objectives

- Describe the development of the modern profession of dentistry and oral health care, applying historical, sociological, legal and literary sources.
- Examine the concept of a profession from an ethical perspective.
- Explain the differences between a professional ethos and an entrepreneurial ethos and discuss the ethical implications of these differences.
- Discuss the historical development of esthetic dentistry and its anthropological and philosophical ramifications, and examine key ethical and legal challenges raised by the practice.
- Compare the functions of competition and of collegiality in (oral) health care with specific reference to commercial advertising.
- Discuss the function of professional self-regulation with specific reference to error management and peer review.

## Course Schedule

This 8-week course is currently slated to be offered annually (2012-2014) in the months of May and June.

The course is offered as part of Creighton University's Master of Science in Health Care Ethics. However, it can be taken without enrolling in the degree program. Students who next decide to pursue the master's degree will receive full credit for this 3-credit course towards the degree. When contacting the university's online education office (see contact info on the back), those interested in taking only this course should request being enrolled as a "Special Student."



# Master of Science in Health Care Ethics

The Master of Science in Health Care Ethics is an interdisciplinary degree offered through the Center for Health Policy and Ethics (CHPE) at Creighton University. The course work examines quality of life and survival in populations that may receive low quality care due to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or other factors. The emphasis on vulnerable populations and social justice mirrors the University's core Jesuit and Catholic values of conscience, compassion and concern for poor and marginalized groups and individuals. Upon completing the program, you will have gained:

- Insights into the role of ethics in health care;
- An in-depth understanding of the complex issues and factors in the field;
- An enhanced ability to explain, justify, analyze and write about ethical decisions in health care.

## Curriculum

From professionalism to health policy analysis and from ethics committees to end-of-life care, the online M.S. in Health Care Ethics is ideal for professionals in the health care or related fields who want to become more effective in their current roles.

The M.S. in Health Care Ethics consists of 30 credit hours—27 hours of core courses and 3 hours of electives. A Practicum and a Capstone project offer the opportunity to synthesize knowledge gained into comprehensive projects.

The MHE624 elective on “Oral Health Care at the Intersection of Professional and Business Ethics” can be completed at any time in the program.

## Core Courses (27 credit hours)

- Health Policy
- Research Ethics
- Law and Health Care Ethics
- Social & Cultural Contexts of Health Care
- Philosophical Bioethics
- Theories of Justice
- Practical Ethics in Health Care Settings
- Practicum
- Capstone Project

## Online Format

Creighton's degree program is offered in a completely online format to accommodate students who have full-time professional obligations and responsibilities. Students can commence their degree program in August, January or May. All courses are offered in 8-week blocks. When competing responsibilities necessitate a break, students can take an 8 or 16 week break and then continue their studies without any further delay because all core courses are offered at least twice and generally three times per year. Each course combines a variety of learning experiences, including carefully selected scholarly readings, audio-visuals, online discussions, written assignments, etc.



## The Center for Health Policy and Ethics

Founded in 1985, Creighton University's Center for Health Policy and Ethics is one of the leading centers of



excellence in health care ethics worldwide. With 7 on-site faculty members, 13 faculty associates and affiliates, 5 contributed services faculty members, and 5 staff members, the Center has been able to offer innovative educational programs, engage in advanced research, and provide professional consultancy services locally, nationally and internationally.

## Creighton University

Founded in 1878 and grounded in the Jesuit, Catholic intellectual tradition, Creighton University is dedicated to preparing students to be responsible leaders and distinguished professionals who are committed to serving others. National recognition for Creighton's dedication to excellence includes consistently being ranked a top Midwest master's university by U.S. News & World Report. The University is also ranked as a “Best Value” and a “School to Watch” for its innovation. Creighton University has four health sciences schools (including a School of Dentistry), a School of Law, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business Administration, University College, and the Graduate School which grants, among others, the Master of Science in Health Care Ethics degree.

Call toll free at: (866) 717 - 6365  
or visit [Creighton-Online.com/MSHCE](http://Creighton-Online.com/MSHCE)