

Interdisciplinary Initiatives on Law and Values in Health & the Life Sciences at the University of Minnesota

University of Minnesota
Board of Regents
Educational Planning and Policy Committee
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Consortium on Law and Values
in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences



Joint Degree Program
in Law, Health & the Life Sciences

21st century problems demand interdisciplinary approaches:

“**Interdisciplinary research** integrates the analytic strengths of two or more often disparate scientific disciplines to create a new hybrid discipline. . . . By establishing new awards aimed at building interdisciplinary research teams, NIH hopes to help accelerate research. . . .” (nihroadmap.nih.gov/interdisciplinary/)

We are **integrating science, medicine, ethics & law** to address problems: the social implications of genomics, oversight of nanotechnology, researchers’ obligations in an era of huge archived databases, the law and ethics of food security, privacy of health data,



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Joint Degree Program
in Law, Health & the Life Sciences

2 unique programs:

1. Joint Degree Program in Law, Health & the Life Sciences

- Created 1998-99; approved by the Board of Regents in 1999
- Recruits and trains exceptional students to combine a Law degree with one of 23 graduate and professional degrees in biomedicine, life sciences, environmental sciences
- Students may also combine Law with another relevant degree (e.g., Computer Sciences for Law/Bioinformatics)
- Can also minor in Bioethics, Genetics, or Bioinformatics
- 36 students in 2007-08; over 400 faculty members involved



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Joint Degree Program
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Degree options include:

- JD/MD
- JD/MPH in: Epidemiology, Maternal & Child Health, Public Health Admin., Community Health Ed., or Environmental Health
- JD/MS or PhD in Health Services Research
- JD/MS in Science, Technology & Environmental Policy
- JD/MS or PhD in Pharmacology
- JD/MS or PhD in Molecular, Cellular, Developmental Biology & Genetics
- JD/MS or PhD in Conservation Biology
- JD/MS or PhD in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
- JD/MS or PhD in Environmental Health
- JD/MS or PhD in Natural Resource Science & Management



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2nd unique program—the faculty side:

2. Consortium on Law & Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences
 - Founded in 2000
 - Confederation of 17 leading centers and programs dealing with the societal implications of the life sciences
 - Consortium members →



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Joint Degree Program
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1. [Joint Degree Program](#)
2. [Center for Bioethics](#)
3. [Stem Cell Institute](#)
4. [Biomedical Genomics Center](#)
5. [Institute of Human Genetics](#)
6. [Center for Infectious Disease Research & Policy \(CIDRAP\)](#)
7. [Center for Animal Health & Food Safety](#)
8. [National Center for Food Protection and Defense](#)
9. [Center for Neurobehavioral Development](#)
10. [Center for Environment & Health Policy](#)
11. [Center for Plants and Human Health](#)
12. [Center for Microbial and Plant Genomics](#)
13. [Center for Science, Technology, and Public Policy](#)
14. [Water Resources Center](#)
15. [Center for Spirituality and Healing](#)
16. [International Science & Technology Practice & Policy Center](#)
17. [Institute on the Environment](#)



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Joint Degree Program
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Joint Degree Program/Consortium Activities:

- Research funded by NIH, NSF, Greenwall Foundation grants
- Lecture Series on Law, Health & the Life Sciences
- Annual Conference
- Deinar Memorial Lecture on Law & Medicine (with the Center for Bioethics)
- *Minnesota Journal of Law, Science & Technology*
- Visiting Consortium Professorship
- Awarding >\$100K/year intramurally



Consortium + Joint Degree Program = a unique training & research environment:

- Students can compare law, ethics, and policy issues across a wide range of biomedical, life sciences & environmental contexts
- Large multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary faculty
- Highly interdisciplinary research, e.g.:
 - on oversight of nanobiotechnology (NSF-funded)
 - on managing incidental findings in human subjects research (NIH-funded)
 - on genetic testing & disability insurance (NIH-funded)



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Joint Degree Program
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Conference/symposium topics have included:

- Emerging Problems in Neurogenomics
- Creating Stem Cells by Research Cloning
- Intellectual Property Rights for the Public Good
- Environmental Threats to Children's Health
- Genetic Testing & Disability Insurance
- Pharmacogenomics
- Public Health Responses to Bioterrorism
- Governing GMOs



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For more information:

- Joint Degree Program
in Law, Health & the Life Sciences
 - www.jointdegree.umn.edu
- Consortium on Law and Values
in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences
 - www.lifesci.consortium.edu



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