

Ethics and Public Policy, BA

Ethics and public policy is an interdisciplinary major that presents perspectives on intersecting issues that connect the study of philosophy, economics, law, political science, sociology, and public affairs. All of these disciplines involve a focus on practical questions concerning how individuals ought to behave and how they ought to regulate the behavior of others.

Students choose one field of specialization for the major and may find it easy to pursue a second major in another of the major's specialization fields, thus broadening their prospects for choosing graduate schools or beginning professional careers.

The departments of Philosophy, Political Science, and Sociology and Criminology (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences), the Department of Economics (Tippie College of Business), and the School of Planning and Public Affairs (Graduate College) collaborate to present the major in ethics and public policy; the major is administered by the Department of Philosophy.

Learning Outcomes

The general goals of the major in ethics and public policy are to:

- give students familiarity with the subject matter and methods of four closely related, but distinct disciplines—philosophy, economics, sociology, and political science—acquaintance with which is particularly important for those entering law, government and public service, and related fields;
- teach students to think critically, understand important distinctions, and present and defend positions;
- allow students to see the connections between problems that arise in the four fields that make up the cross-disciplinary major;
- encourage students to solve problems by drawing insights from different fields; and
- prepare students for postgraduate work in one or more of the fields, law school, or any of the many careers where the skills fostered in the major will be invaluable.

Ethics and Public Policy Initiatives

- Increase interactions among majors through events such as clubs and movie nights cosponsored by the Department of Philosophy and the ethics and public policy major.
- Encourage promising students to work individually with faculty on honors projects.
- Continue to improve advising.
- Continue to offer a 1 s.h. course that gives credit to students for participation in some of the programmed lectures, clubs, and film screenings, among other events.
- Advertise and encourage students to enroll in a 2-3 s.h. course that involves relevant internships.
- Review the department's current survey, which can provide more useful and fine-grained advice to improve the ethics and public policy major.