

Project Posting ID: F21.034

Title of Project: Research in Ethics, Law and Policy

Faculty mentor: Jeffrey Brian Downard

Overview

Students will assist faculty in research on philosophical topics concerning law, ethics and policy. Working together, the projects will address questions about the application of moral and legal principles to a range of practical problems including environmental sustainability and structural injustice. Projects will be aligned with student experience and interests and will provide opportunities to dig more deeply than is commonly possible in class work into important legal cases, statutes, and policy analyses--as well into theoretical readings in ethics and jurisprudence.

What the student will DO and LEARN

Students will learn to find new legal cases on a given research topic. They will examine the legal reasoning in the cases, including those found in current federal supreme court cases. They will learn to evaluate the validity and soundness of competing arguments offered on each side by the majority and minority of the court. Students will learn to analyze statutes and policies. They will explore philosophical essays in ethical theory and jurisprudence with the aim of applying the ideas to the legal and policy questions. They will learn to write case briefs, policy summaries and synopses of philosophical arguments.

Additional benefits

This experience will help students gain the research skills needed to excel in a range of graduate programs including law school, public policy and philosophy. It will help to prepare students for successful careers in law, policy analysis and as researchers.

Additional qualifications

Intellectual curiosity, an earnest work ethic and good organizational skills. Previous experience taking philosophy, logic or legal theory classes is not necessary but is considered as a positive mark in an application.

Time commitment

6 hours a week / 30 weeks (Spring and Fall)