



**FOR APPROVAL**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

**SPONSOR:** Sioban Nelson, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
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**PRESENTER:** Same as above  
**CONTACT INFO:**

**DATE:** December 6, 2017 for January 11, 2018

**AGENDA ITEM:** 6

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Proposal to close the Major in Health Care Ethics, Faculty of Arts and Science.

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs approves the closures of undergraduate programs within an existing degree, as defined by the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (*AP&P Terms of Reference, Section 4.4.b.i.*).

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for approval] (January 11, 2018)

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

Proposal to close the Major in Health Care Ethics received approval from the Faculty of Arts and Science Council on December 13, 2017.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

This is a proposal to close the Major in Health Care Ethics, one of six programs in the suite of Human Biology programs offered by the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS). Admissions were administratively suspended in April 2014. The effective date of the closure is June 30, 2018, when all of the current students are expected to have graduated. The Major is in partial fulfilment of the Honours Bachelor of Arts degree.

The decision to close the program is a result of the 2013-14 UTQAP review of the Human Biology programs in FAS. One key recommendation of the review report was that the program

re-assess the Specialists and Majors and consider reducing the number of programs and overlap in the curricula.

As a result, it was decided to focus on the larger, more popular Human Biology programs and evaluate the best courses of action for realigning and improving these programs. As the Major in Health Care Ethics had remained small in enrolment and less popular than the other Human Biology programs, the decision was made to administratively suspend admissions in April 2014 and assess next steps while engaged in the larger process of curriculum renewal of all the programs. As part of the curricular renewal, the 300-level Human Biology bioethics course content was realigned to suit a wider audience of life science students. This course was made a program requirement for every Specialist program in Human Biology as of 2017-2018, which will result in a broader range of students having access to this academic area.

In the winter of 2015, the decision was made to close the program after students had completed requirements and the curricular changes being made in the other Human Biology programs was complete. The decision to formally close the program was made in consultation with the FAS Dean's Office, other Life Science programs in FAS, the School of the Environment, the Department of Philosophy, and the Dalla Lana School of Public Health.

Currently there is one student registered in the Major in Health Care Ethics who has completed the program requirements and is expected to graduate in June 2018. While it is not expected that lapsed students will return to compete the major, plans are in place to accommodate them as needed.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no financial implications to the closure of the program.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Be it Resolved

THAT the proposed closure of the Major in Health Care Ethics undergraduate program, to which admissions have already been suspended, as described in the attached proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Science dated October 27, 2017, be approved with an anticipated program closure date of June 30, 2018.

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#### **DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

- *Proposal for the closure of the Major in Health Care Ethics, Faculty of Arts and Science*



## University of Toronto Proposal for the Closure of an Existing Program (Graduate or Undergraduate)

*(This template has been developed in line with the University of Toronto's Quality Assurance Process.)*

*The process followed for the closure of any program is the same as that required for the approval of any new such program.*

<b>Closure Proposed:</b>	Health Care Ethics Major (ASMAJ2084)
<b>Department / Unit (if applicable):</b>	Human Biology
<b>Faculty / Academic Division:</b>	Arts & Science
<b>Faculty / Academic Division contact:</b>	Mary Pugh, Acting Vice-Dean Undergraduate and International
<b>Department / Unit contact:</b>	Ron Wilson, Gianna Leggio
<b>Effective date program was closed to new admissions:</b>	April 2014
<b>Effective date of full closure of program:</b> (date by which students currently in the program will be expected to graduate)	June 30, 2018
<b>Version Date:</b>	October 27, 2017

## 1 Brief Summary

The Human Biology Program proposes to close its Health Care Ethics major program of study effective June 30, 2018.

Health Care Ethics is one of five programs currently fully administered by the Human Biology Program (HBP) listed below:

- Fundamental Genetics and its Applications, STG (major, specialist)
- Global Health, STG (major, specialist)
- Health Care Ethics, STG (major)
- Health and Disease, STG (major, specialist)
- Human Biology, STG (major)
- Neuroscience, STG (major, specialist)

In 2013-2014 these programs underwent a UTQAP cyclical review. One key recommendation of the review report was that the program re-assess the specialists and majors and consider reducing the number of programs and overlap in the curricula. Following the review revising the majors and specialists was among the top priorities for quality enhancement of the Human Biology programs. As part of curricular renewal, the program carefully considered its ability to offer programs where there was declining interest among students. The Health Care Ethics major represented less than 1% of HBP's total program enrolment in 2013-2014, and issues were identified with the nature of the program requirements. In April 2014 it was decided to suspend admissions to the program. At the same time, HBP focused on assessing and outlining its priorities for undergraduate education and reorganizing its programs with much higher program enrolment.

The decision to formally close the program was made in consultation with the FAS Dean's Office, other Life Science programs in the Faculty of Arts & Science, the School of the Environment, the Department of Philosophy, and the Dalla Lana School of Public Health.

## 2 Rationale

The Health Care Ethics major program was launched in 2009, with two new courses being introduced that year as key core requirements to this new program: HMB306H1: Epistemological Considerations in Emerging Technology and HMB406H1: Health Care Ethics.

The program was initially launched due to the increase of interest in the field of bioethics in academia, but student interest (as gauged through program of study enrolment) never piqued. At its largest, the Health Care Ethics major had 35 students in the program (2011-2012); at the same time HBP's second smallest major program (Environment & Health) had 71 students and the largest major program had 1,132 students, with the total number of Human Biology

Program students across all majors and specialists was 3,385.

While there had been some discussions with the Department of Philosophy in regards to the Health Care Ethics major, including granting priority access to Health Care Ethics major students into PHL383H1: Ethics & Mental Health, this priority status was not taken advantage of by the Health Care Ethics major students. This led to consultation through the larger Self-Study as well as with Donald Ainslie (Professor, Philosophy and Principal of University College), Sarah Wakefield (Associate Professor, Geography and Director of the Health Studies Program), and Rachel Barney (Professor, Philosophy), and the general agreement was that the Health Care Ethics major program was not having the intended impact.

The Self-Study and review report suggested HBP was stretching itself too thin at the expense of the potential quality of all of its programs. It was decided that HBP would focus on our larger programs first and evaluate and determine the best course of actions for realigning and improving these programs, and in the meantime, admissions to the Health Care Ethics major would be suspended until such a time that it could be revisited to determine if it should be closed or reopened and/or realigned.

It was decided in Winter 2015 after consultation with HBP faculty and relying on the consultation with Philosophy and Health Studies regarding the lack of impact the Health Care Ethics major had, HBP would move to formally close the Health Care Ethics program once all students in the program had graduated and our realignment of our other programs was complete.

The Human Biology Program now has a better focus and is able to put our teaching and resources where our faculty strengths lie, and it can now better integrate bioethics- and the importance of ethical research and protocol- into all of our remaining programs as our relevant resources can be aimed at our larger programs, as opposed to the Health Care Ethics Program, thereby positively impacting many more students.

### **3 Impact on other programs/units of the proposed closure**

The suspension of admissions to the Health Care Ethics proposal had little to no negative impact on the Human Biology Program or its other programs. Students still in the Health Care Ethics major (7 at the time of admissions suspension) still had enrolment priority access to the HBP administered courses they could use toward their Health Care Ethics major program requirements. One significant positive impact of the suspension of admissions was that it allowed HBP to realign its 300-level bioethics course (HMB306H1) to suit a wider audience of life science students (in terms of pre-requisite course preparedness) so that we could then give priority enrolment to our specialist program students, allowing us to require a bioethics course as a program requirement for every specialist program administered by HBP as of 2017-2018.

## 4 Student Accommodation

At the time of admissions suspension, all students enrolled in the Health Care Ethics Major were allowed to complete the full requirements of their program.

As of September 2017, there is one student still registered in the Health Care Ethics major, however they completed the major's requirements in August 2016. Their degree requirements are also nearly complete: they are currently enrolled in one course to satisfy one remaining program requirement for their other (non-HBP administered) major program of study, and are expected to complete course work by December 2017, and graduate June 2018.

We do not anticipate any lapsed students will return wishing to complete the major. However, should there be a student who re-registers and resumes their Health Care Ethics major, the Human Biology Program will work with the student to ensure they are able to enrol in the courses they need and to find suitable alternatives to any required courses as needed. . Further, the only two required courses beyond 100-level course requirements that are not option based (i.e. only one course may be used to satisfy the requirement, as opposed to a requirement where there are options to which course may be used to satisfy the requirement) are HMB306H1 and HMB406H1, and these courses will continue to be offered.

## 5 Faculty / Staff Accommodation

Our teaching-stream HMB faculty will not be impacted by this closure as we are not planning on closing either of our ethics courses (neither of which are taught by our program-appointed faculty- both are taught by the same sessional instructor- Dr. Kerry Bowman whose appointment is with the Department of Family and Community Medicine) as they are valued courses in our other programs as outlined in the above proposal.

## 6 Governance Process

	Levels of Approval Required
<b>Decanal / Provostial Sign-Off</b>	November 3, 2017
	Faculty/Divisional Council (approval of closure of minors, where there is a continuing (specialist or major) December 13, 2017
<b>Submission to Provost's Office</b>	December 13, 2017
	AP&P (approval of program closures: undergrad specialists/majors; minors where there is no

	specialist of major; graduate fields or diploma, and collaborative programs) January 11, 2018
	Academic Board (approval of degree, graduate program, diploma closures) NA
	Executive Committee of Governing Council (executive confirms degree, grad program, closures) NA
<b>Inclusion in Annual report to Quality Council</b>	Summer 2018
<b>Inclusion in Annual report to MTCU (in case of closure of degree)</b>	