MILITARY ETHICS, MA

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More Information: http://militaryethics.case.edu

Degree: Master of Arts (MA)
Field of Study: Military Ethics

Program Overview

Military ethics is a broadly interdisciplinary study, incorporating concerns about the conduct of war, decisions on how and when to engage in military operations, and issues relating to the moral psychology and care of those who serve and of veterans of military service. It focuses on the core values and moral principles that collectively govern the men and women serving in the military forces of nations around the world, as members of what is sometimes termed the “military profession” or “the profession of arms.” The ethical foundations that define the profession of arms have developed over millennia from the shared values and experiences, unique role responsibilities, and reflections of members of the profession on their own practices—eventually coming to serve as the basis for various warrior codes and the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC). Traditional just war theory (political and moral philosophy governing when the use of military force is justified for the resolution of international conflicts) plays a key role in international relations as well as in international law, including the LOAC and international humanitarian law.

The program has been designed to educate students on and guide their research into vital global issues in military ethics. These issues include (but are not limited to) modern applications of classical just war theory and traditional warrior’s codes, the principle of noncombatant immunity, human rights, international humanitarian law, humanitarian intervention, the ethical use of emerging military technologies, civil-military relations and society’s obligations to troops and veterans, transitional justice, and the moral foundations of sustainable peace.

The study of military ethics supports long-term humanitarian goals, such as preventing unjust wars; decreasing incidents of war crimes, genocide, human rights abuses, and other atrocities produced by the dehumanizing effects of armed conflict; supporting the mental health and successful transitions of military service members and combat veterans; and fostering a lasting peace founded in justice.

Graduate Policies

For graduate policies and procedures, please review the School of Graduate Studies section of the General Bulletin.

Program Requirements

The program curriculum is interdisciplinary, with a foundation in moral and political philosophy and international relations. Each student will complete a minimum of 30 credit hours, including a 6 credit hour cumulative research program that will typically be completed during the summer term following a full academic year of course work.

Over a 12- to 24-month program of study (designed to facilitate the enrollment of military personnel on educational assignment and the academic student looking for an intensive program), students will study foundational topics in moral and political philosophy, together with advanced core and elective topics in military and professional ethics, military medical ethics, military law, ethical leadership, and other related subjects (including optional supplemental electives in areas such as religious studies, history, literature, journalism, political science, classics, and the arts).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 405</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 417</td>
<td>War and Morality</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 419</td>
<td>Philosophy of State Violence: War, Colonization, Punishment, and Immigration</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 436</td>
<td>Military Ethics, the Military Profession, and International Law</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 501</td>
<td>Military Ethics MA Capstone</td>
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Capstone

When students begin the program, the program director will work with them individually to develop initial concepts for their specific concentrations of study and their capstone/culminating project. The capstone/culminating project involves both academic research and fieldwork, and is integrated with the degree candidate’s professional experience or interest. PHIL 501 will feature a summative project designed to integrate their common studies, but tailored to their individual future interests in teaching, further graduate study, or employment in public policy or foreign affairs, and may produce outcomes other than a traditional paper/thesis (such as the detailed and well-defended design of a military ethics training/education curriculum).

The outline of the project will typically be presented and defended by the spring recess of the candidate's second semester in residence, and the project itself completed over the following summer term, for graduation in August the year following matriculation. If special circumstances prevent a student from completing the program in the intended time frame, the academic advisor will work with the student to create an alternative schedule.

Electives

Students will take a minimum of four elective courses. The selection of topic for the capstone project will dictate the selection of relevant elective courses by each student (in consultation with program faculty) to create an appropriate concentration of study. Electives may be in military and professional ethics, military medical ethics, military law, or ethical leadership, or in optional supplemental areas such as religious studies, history, literature, journalism, and the arts.

Elective courses from the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Law include:

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<tr>
<td>ARTH 436</td>
<td>Representations of War in Ancient Rome</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLSC 419</td>
<td>Greek Tragedy: Plays and Performance in Ancient Athens</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAWS 1901</td>
<td>International Law: Fundamentals</td>
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<td>LAWS 4101</td>
<td>International Law</td>
<td>3</td>
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Sample Plan of Study

First Year

Fall

PHIL 405 Ethics 3
PHIL 417 War and Morality 3
Elective 3
Elective 3

Hours 12

Spring

PHIL 419 Philosophy of State Violence: War, Colonization, Punishment, and Immigration 3
PHIL 436 Military Ethics, the Military Profession, and International Law 3
Elective 3