BIOETHICS INTENSIVE COURSE AGENDA
April 13-17, 2026

PLEASE NOTE TIMES BELOW ARE CENTRAL DAYLIGHT TIME (CDT)

Monday, April 13, 2026

Houston Methodist Research Institute, 2nd floor, Boardroom

10:00 a.m.	**Event Check-in**
10:30 a.m.	**Welcoming Remarks and Course Introduction** *Janet Malek, PhD*
10:45 a.m.	**Opening Session: Case Improvisation** *Jared Smith, PhD*
11:30 a.m.	**Break**
11:45 a.m.	**Setting the Scene** *Janet Malek, PhD* A brief history of the field of bioethics and description of its current state is presented in this lecture.
12:30 p.m.	**Lunch**
1:30 p.m.	**The Ethics Work-Up** *Janet Malek, PhD* The Ethics Work-Up, developed by Center faculty, is a structured tool that is intended to stimulate moral and self-reflection and to provide intellectual structure and practical guidance to the responsible management of ethical challenges in clinical care.
3:00 p.m.	**Break**
3:15 p.m.	**Small Group Case Discussions (breakout rooms)**
4:45 p.m.	**End of Day**

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Houston Methodist Research Institute, 2nd floor, Boardroom

8:00 a.m.	**Breakfast**
8:30 a.m.	**Informed Consent and Shared Decision Making** *Jared Smith, PhD* This session will cover consent requirements and challenges, shared decision making, tools for assessing decision-making capacity in tough cases, and cognitive biases that can affect decision making.
9:45 a.m.	**Break**
10:00 a.m.	**Small Group Case Discussions (breakout rooms)**

11:00 a.m.	**Break**
11:15 a.m.	**Surrogate Decision Making**
	Joanna Smolenski, PhD
	This session will cover the ethical importance of surrogates, the standards of surrogate decision making, and challenges related to making medical decisions for incapacitated patients.
12:15 p.m.	**Lunch**
1:15 p.m.	**Beneficience**
	Matt Shea, PhD
	This session will cover the ethical concepts of benefit and harm, the best interest standard for medical decision making, and common conflicts related to the good of the patient.
2:15 p.m.	**Break**
2:30 p.m.	**Small Group Case Discussions (breakout rooms)**
3:30 p.m.	**End of Day**

Wednesday, April 15, 2026

Houston Methodist Research Institute, 2nd floor, Boardroom

8:00 a.m.	**Breakfast**
8:30 a.m.	**How to Conduct a Clinical Ethics Consultation**
	Trevor Bibler, PhD
	Participants will learn the practical steps involved in conducting a clinical ethics consultation, with a focus on processes including information gathering and issue spotting.
9:30 a.m.	**Break**
9:45 a.m.	**How to Conduct a Clinical Ethics Consultation (continued)**
10:30 a.m.	**Break**
10:45 a.m.	**Mediation and Facilitating Family Meetings**
	Claire Horner, JD, MA
	Effectively leading or assisting with family meetings is a critical skill for clinical ethics consultants. When, why, and how to conduct a family meeting will be discussed in this session, along with mediation skills and techniques.
12:00 p.m.	**Lunch**
1:00 p.m.	**Case Conversation/Role Play**
	Janet Malek, PhD, Claire Horner, JD, MA
	This session offers participants the opportunity to apply ethical concepts, consultation approaches, and facilitation techniques that have been covered thus far in the course in a realistic case scenario.

2:15 p.m.	**Break**
2:30 p.m.	**How to Write an Ethics Consulation Note**

Adam Omelianchuck, PhD

Participants will learn how to write a high-quality ethics chart note. Using small groups, participants will deconstruct several exemplar ethics chart notes, identifying strong and weak ethics chart notes. Essential elements of the chart note, best practices, language to avoid, and how to write strong ethical analyses within chart notes will be discussed.

Thursday, April 16, 2025

Houston Methodist Research Institute, 2nd floor, Boardroom

8:00 a.m.	**Breakfast**
8:30 a.m.	**Chart Notes Workshop**

Adam Omelianchuck, PhD

Discussion/review of chart notes written by course attendees.

9:30 a.m.	**Creating a Committee and Quality Improvement**

Janet Malek, PhD

During this session, we will consider how an ethics committee can be created to align with institutional values, promote collaboration, and meet the needs of the institution. Addtionally, we will discuss different types of quality improvement strategies that ethics consultants and ethics consultation services or ethics committees can use to describe and evaluate their consultations.

10:30 a.m.	**Break**
10:45 a.m.	**Policy Development**

Claire Horner, JD, MA

This session will provide general guidance on drafting and implementing ethics policies, plus an opportunity to solicit specific feedback on your own policy challenges.

11:45 a.m.	**Lunch**
12:45 p.m.	**End-of-Life Decision Making: Medical Facts and Patient Preferences**

Holland Kaplan, MD

The session will cover several critical aspects of end-of-life decision making including withholding and withdrawing treatment, DNAR orders, and advance directives.

2:00 p.m.	**Potentially Inappropriate Treatment**

Joanna Smolenski, PhD

This session will evaluate different proposals regarding medical inappropriateness in the clinic, and consider what options may be available in circumstances where such treatment is requested by patients or surrogates.

3:00	Break
3:15 p.m.	**Capstone Case – Role Play (breakout rooms)** *Clinical Ethics Team*
4:30 p.m.	**End of Day**

Houston Methodist Hospital, Dunn Conference Center

8:00 a.m.	**Breakfast**
8:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions I** o Pediatrics o Responding to Religious Reasoning
9:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions II** o Reproductive Ethics o Mental Health
10:30 a.m.	**Break**
10:45 a.m.	**Question and Answer Session** *Clinical Ethics Team* Participants will have the opportunity to ask a panel of course faculty questions about any of the course topics, including the HEC-C exam, consultative processes, and ethical foundations.
11:30 a.m.	**Conclusion of Course**