

THE ETHICS INITIATIVE



“Notre Dame is uniquely positioned to integrate the Catholic intellectual tradition with the major research questions of our time.”

Meghan Sullivan, the Wilsey Family College Professor of Philosophy and Ethics Initiative Director

We are living through a century of unprecedented technological, economic, and social change. And each new development poses significant ethical questions that we must study and respond to decisively.

The Notre Dame Ethics Initiative will establish Notre Dame as a premier global destination for the study of ethics, offering superb training for future generations of ethicists and moral leaders, a platform for engagement of the Catholic moral tradition with other modes of inquiry, and an opportunity to forge insights into some of the most significant ethical issues of our time.



Research



Education & Formation



Public Engagement



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ETHICS INITIATIVE



Our work

The Notre Dame Ethics Initiative directs its work toward three areas:

- Research:* The Ethics Initiative will facilitate University-wide collaboration to advance interdisciplinary research on major questions in ethical theory and applied ethics. It will help recruit and support leading scholars in key departments, including philosophy and theology, as well as interdisciplinary faculty area groups, including virtue ethics, technology ethics, business ethics, and environmental ethics.
- Education & Formation:* The Ethics Initiative will develop the next generation of ethicists and moral leaders who are agents of change rooted in the common good. It will incubate large-scale, public-facing undergraduate courses on topics related to ethics and human flourishing and convene stakeholders from across the University to develop pathways for Notre Dame graduate students to receive training, formation, and exposure to ethics in their coursework, research efforts, and professional lives.
- Public Engagement:* In addition to hosting a roster of regular ethics events on campus and in the community, the Ethics Initiative will convene and train academic leaders and educate students to advance productive debate and public understanding around ethically complex issues.

To advance these goals, the Ethics Initiative will a) make strategic hiring investments in departments and area groups, b) build an ethics education program for graduate students, and c) work to establish an ethics institute. The proposed institute, an evolution of the existing Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study, would facilitate interdisciplinary research in ethical theory and applied ethics, coordinate projects that cross academic units, and support ethics-related education and public engagement efforts.

Our approach

What goals should guide our development of artificial intelligence? How should we handle vexing tradeoffs when it comes to the environment, the global economy, public health, and international conflict? In what ways can research and teaching be harnessed to address the epidemics of loneliness and distrust that plague our society?

Notre Dame should lead as a major research university that seriously understands and integrates religious and spiritual dimensions into these and other ethical debates. Such understanding is essential to addressing complex ethical questions and shaping the public's moral imagination and conviction.

Our leadership



Meghan Sullivan
*Director, Ethics Initiative;
Director, Notre Dame Institute for
Advanced Study; Acting Director,
Notre Dame Technology Ethics
Center; Wilsey Family College
Professor of Philosophy*



Angie Appleby Purcell
*Managing Director, Ethics
Initiative and Notre Dame
Institute for Advanced Study*

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