

Robert Steel

Clinical Center Department of Bioethics
US National Institutes of Health

robert.steel@nih.gov
(510) 387-8979

Employment

Staff Scientist - Clinical Center Department of Bioethics, US National Institutes of Health
& liaison to the NIH Division of AIDS (DAIDS), 2022-current
Assistant Professor - Department of Philosophy, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2020-2022
Postdoctoral Fellow - Center for Population-Level Bioethics, Rutgers University, 2019-2020
Postdoctoral Fellow - CC Department of Bioethics, US National Institutes of Health, 2016-2019

Education

University of Pittsburgh - Ph.D. in Philosophy, 2016
Stanford University - B.A. in Philosophy with Honors, 2008

Publications (first author unless *)

- “Distinguishing Appropriate from Inappropriate Conditions on Research Enrollment,” with David Wendler, in *Bioethics* (2023)
- “Risk Dilution: Or, How to Run a Minimal Risk HIV Challenge Trial,” in *Journal of Applied Philosophy* (2022)
- “Compulsory Research in Learning Healthcare: Against a Minimal Risk Limit,” in *Hastings Center Report* (2022)
- “Payment is a Benefit and Why It Matters for Pediatric Trials,” in *Bioethics* (2022)
- “COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate Exemption Requests for Anxiety: Ethical and Practical Considerations,” with Lauren Edwards, Margaret Emerson, and David Cates, in *Psychiatric Times* (2022)*
- “Why Continuing Uncertainties Are No Reason to Postpone Challenge Trials for Coronavirus Vaccines,” with Lara Buchak and Nir Eyal, in *Journal of Medical Ethics* (2020)
- “Reconceptualizing Risk-Benefit Analyses: the Case of HIV Cure Research,” in *Journal of Medical Ethics* (2020)
- “Risk Limits in Fair Subject Selection” commentary in *American Journal of Bioethics* (2020)
- “Blinds and Research Risks,” case commentary with Marion Danis in *American Journal of Bioethics*, (2018)
- “Anticipating Failure and Avoiding It,” in *Philosophers’ Imprint*, (2018)
- “Against Right Reason,” in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, (2018)

Fellowships and Awards

NIH Intramural AIDS Research Fellowship, 2018-2019

Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, 2015-2016

Presentations (peer reviewed unless *)

“Clarifying Risk-Benefit Ratios: the Case of Coronavirus Challenge Trials,” *paper presentation at the American Society of Bioethics and the Humanities, accepted for fall 2023*

“Normative Foundations of Community Engagement” *presentation to the Indo-US Workshop on Clinical Research Ethics, and to the Indo-US Research Workshop—Challenging New Areas (2023)**

“The Ethics of Government Policy Trials,” *paper presentation at the American Society of Bioethics and the Humanities (2022)**

“Fair Benefits?” *commentary on London’s For the Common Good, Hong Kong University (2022)**

“Vaccines,” *roundtable discussion, UNO College of Arts and Sciences Virtual Seminar Series (2021)**

“Upper Limits on Permissible Risk in Human Subjects Research,” *panel presentation at the American Society of Bioethics and the Humanities (2020)*

“Pain, suffering, and the (ir)relevance of human flourishing to health care justice: a debate,” *debate at the American Society of Bioethics and the Humanities (2020)*

“Third Party Risk in Research: Moving Forward on Terminology, Justifications, and Participant Protections,” *panel presentation at the World Congress of Bioethics (2020)*

“Acceptable Risks in HIV Cure Research” *brown bag talk at NIH Division of AIDS (2019)**

“Testing Transmission-Blocking Vaccines in Children” *paper presentation at the American Society of Bioethics and the Humanities (2019)*

“The Risk/Benefit Challenge to HIV Cure Research,” *presentation to Bioethics Interest Group, US National Institutes of Health (2019)**

“Nonclinical Benefit in HIV Cure Research,” *opening panel, Regulation of Clinical Research Related to HIV Cure Conference (2018)**

“Assisted Reproduction in a World of Adoptable Children,” *paper presentation at the American Society for Bioethics and the Humanities (2017)*

Clinical Experience

Attending, NIH Clinical Center Ethics Consultation Service: 2023-current

Fellow on Call, NIH Clinical Center Ethics Consultation Service: 2017, 2018

Service:

Standing Research Ethics Representative, Clinical Science Review Committee (CSRC) for The NIH Division of AIDS (DAIDS).

Member, NIH Clinical Center Ethics Committee

Judge, UNO Ethics Bowl (2021, 2022)

Organizer & Moderator, UNO Ethics of Medicine Lecture Series (2021):

January: “The Ethics of Enrolling Minors in Vaccine Trials.”

February: “Should Health Professions Students Receive Priority Access to the COVID-19 Vaccine?”

March: “Fair Enough? Measuring the Fairness of Healthcare Triage Policies”

April: “Putting Parents on a Pedestal: Testimony, Admiration, and Reproductive Decision-Making”

Volunteer Teacher, Jessup Prison Scholars Program (2017)

Epistemology Paper Session Chair, APA Eastern Meeting (2017)

Referee—

Bioethics: Bioethics, Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics, Journal of Applied Philosophy,

BMC Medical Ethics, Journal of AIDS Research, Nicotine & Tobacco Research

Epistemology: Synthese, Erkenntnis (x2), Pacific Philosophical Quarterly, Inquiry

University Teaching (Instructor)

Human Values in Medicine; Ethical Theory (Spring 2022)

Human Values in Medicine (x2); Philosophy of Medicine (Fall 2021)

Introduction to Ethics (x2); Ethical Theory (Spring 2021)

Introduction to Ethics (x2); Health Justice (Fall 2020)

Other Teaching Experience

Co-designed and Co-Taught a Bioethics Course at the Jessup Maximum Security Prison in Maryland, Offered Through the Jessup Prison Scholars Program (2017)

Teaching Assistant, University of Pittsburgh: Political Philosophy (writing intensive); Intro to Philosophical Problems (writing intensive); Minds and Machines; Philosophy And Public Issues; Political Philosophy; Concepts of Human Nature.

Designed and Taught a Normative Theory Class for the Educational Program for Gifted Youth at Stanford, High School Program (2011 & 2012)