

Bioethics and Jewish studies scholar to be dean of University of Chicago divinity school

People in the [April 26, 2017](#) issue

Laurie Zoloth, a leader in bioethics and Jewish studies, has been appointed dean of the University of Chicago Divinity School. She begins in the role on July 1.

Zoloth currently serves as a professor at Northwestern University, holding appointments in the Department of Religious Studies and in the Feinberg School of Medicine.

Zoloth's scholarship includes biblical and Talmudic texts, the ethics of genetic engineering, stem cell research, and social justice in health care. As a founding board member of the Society for Scriptural Reasoning, she also researches inter-religious dialogue and how religion plays a role in public discussion and policy.

Zoloth is author of *Health Care and the Ethics of Encounter: A Jewish Discussion of Social Justice* and coeditor of five books, including *Notes from a Narrow Ridge: Religion and Bioethics*.

Zoloth began her career as a neonatal nurse working in impoverished communities. She said those early years are central to how she views religious studies and bioethics—bringing together theory and an understanding of how arguments of theology and moral philosophy can address societal challenges.

Zoloth has been the president of the American Academy of Religion and the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities. Her work on bioethics and health care led her to serve on the NASA National Advisory Council, the space agency's highest civilian advisory board; the National Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee; and the executive committee of the International Society for Stem Cell Research. She has testified in front of Congress, the President's Commission on Bioethics, and state legislatures.

Zoloth succeeds Richard A. Rosengarten, associate professor of religion and literature. —the University of Chicago