January 1, 1985

Dear Medical Student:

The course on medical ethics and jurisprudence should offer an opportunity for free and exploratory discussion of a range of basic questions about medicine and human life, questions you will encounter throughout your practice of medicine.

The lecturers for each session are expected to launch a discussion which calls for your active participation, for the contribution of your experience and personal views.

Toynbee's principle of challenge and response is the basis for this course. This means listening attentively to what others have to say and responding vigorously to positions which may differ sharply from your own. It also means taking the initiative in expressing your own positions and inviting a response from others.

Welcome to the course. Let's make it a serious, wild, and memorable experience!

Dr. David J. Roy,
Director,
Center for Bioethics,
Clinical Research Institute of Montreal.

Co-ordinator,
Course of Medical Ethics and Jurisprudence 1985.

Written on behalf of the course co-ordinating committee:
J. Lella, M. Kaye, M. Somerville, A. Booth, D.J. Roy.
McGill University,
Faculty of Medicine

MEDICAL ETHICS AND JURISPRUDENCE 1985

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

The course on medical ethics and jurisprudence is offered to medical students in their fourth year. The timing is significant. The students are completing one phase of their intellectual lives and of their professional careers. A long period of preparation is coming to an end. A new period of more independent involvement in professional work is about to begin. Whatever area of medical practice or specialization the fourth year student intends to pursue, he or she will undoubtedly meet up with experiences, challenges and responsibilities quite different from those that marked the four years of medical school.

Surely, the student will face demands which call for the full employment of the knowledge and technical skill acquired during medical school. However, the responsibilities of the medical profession demand of a doctor more than technical skill and up-to-date knowledge. Human relationships are at the heart of all medical practice. Deep human hopes and fears and all the varieties of what people value in life are brought into play when illness strikes and life is threatened. This is true of the patient and no less true of the doctor. Broad and deep medical knowledge is only one part of medical expertise. A knowledge of the human heart, of what people value in life, of the demands of interpersonal relationships, of values
and value conflicts in our society, a knowledge of medicine's limits as well as of its functions indicate another domain of medical expertise which a doctor and medical student can ill afford to ignore.

These few thoughts suggest several of the key objectives of the course on medical ethics and jurisprudence.

1) The course should offer the student the opportunity for free, unfettered and unrestricted discussion of some of the difficult and crucial ethical and human questions which the doctor will continue to face as long as medicine is practiced. The course should offer the student a period for reflection, a time to "get it all together", after four years of medical school.

2) The course will be structured to demand and stimulate the kind of discussion which calls for attentive listening to positions and value choices which may sharply differ from one's own. How else can one be brought to critically examine one's own assumptions about what is really worthwhile in human life and in the practice of medicine? Know thyself was the Socratic maxim. Coming to know one's mind on key human questions is part of medical expertise.

3) The doctor practices medicine within a society. Contemporary biomedicine inevitably touches upon fundamental human values which are, in one way or another, protected by society and its laws. The course should
bring the student to an understanding of the law as it affects medicine. It should also bring the student to face the deeper problems which arise when law and medicine are not in tandem.

4) Medicine can hardly be conceived exclusively as a neutral, fact-bound, value-free science limited to a restricted domain of human nature. What counts as health, well-being, illness, disease, abnormality depends on a range of choices about what is individually and societally worthwhile. Judgments about medical treatment and nontreatment inevitably include judgments of value. These value judgments guide medicine silently and surely most of the time. The need for clarification begins when contradictory value judgments are dividing medicine on matters which are central, not marginal, to human life and human development. The course is designed to help the student identify these value judgments.

5) Human values are not all of the same order, not all of the same weight. The course should bring the student to identify value conflicts which typically arise in the contemporary practice of medicine. How does one measure value priorities? If two values are in conflict, which is to be honored, which sacrificed? How are such decisions to be made? In a word, the course should introduce the student to the methods of ethical analysis, to the frameworks capable to bridging or balancing value conflicts in medicine.
It is impossible to list in advance all the real objectives of a course such as this one on medical ethics and jurisprudence. The reason is simple. Each student will bring personal expectations and purposes to the course and that may well be a source of surprises. This course must by its very nature leave room for the unexpected.

Dr. David J. Roy,
Director,
Center for Bioethics,
Clinical Research Institute of Montreal.

Co-ordinator,
Medical Ethics and Jurisprudence 1985.
MEDICAL ETHICS AND JURISPRUDENCE - 1985

MAIN SESSIONS

Place : McIntyre Building, Martin Theatre
Time : Thursday, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Overall duration of Course:
  Seminars : Wednesdays, January 16 - March 16
  (see page on seminars)
  Main Sessions : Thursdays, January 17 - March 7

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January 17, Opening Main Session

Theme : The Refusal of Life-Prolonging Treatment

Presentation : Video Cassette of the British film
  "Whose Life Is it Anyway?"

Respondents : Joseph Lella
  Michael Kaye
  Richard Sherlock
  Bartha Knoppers

January 24, Theme : Ethical Problems in the ICU

Faculty Co-Ordinator : Les Bayne

Fourth-Year Students : Susan Kahn
  Alan Liszauer
  David Klaus

Respondents : Richard Sherlock
  Joseph Lella
  Michael Kaye
January 31,      Theme    :  Informed Consent

Faculty Co-Ordinator : Margaret Somerville

Fourth-Year Students : Michael Libman
                     Orly Mashal
                     Warren Kearney
                     Marie-Claude Lemieux
                     William Cunningham

Respondents        : Michael Kaye
                    Joseph Lella
                    Gordon Crelinsten

February 7,      A Workshop on Law and Medicine

This workshop will cover the most important aspects of the
law relating to the practice of medicine.

Faculty            : Margaret Somerville
                    Gordon Kugler

February 14,      Theme    :  The Incompetent Elderly

Faculty Co-Ordinator : David Gayton

Fourth-Year Students : Maynard Luterman
                      Shirley Gavlas
                      Candy Jones-Fraser

Respondents       : Roger Balk
                    Richard Sherlock
                    To Be Announced

February 21,      A Workshop on Medical and Clinical Ethics

The main concepts, methods, and problems of ethics in med-
icine will be presented in combination with case material.

Faculty            : David J. Roy
                    Richard Sherlock
                    Dawson Schultz
February 28, Theme: The Psychiatric Patient: Whose Welfare?

Faculty Co-Ordinator: Ted Callanan

Fourth-Year Students: Isabel Côté, Edith Moser
Dimitri Petsikas

Respondents: Richard Sherlock
To Be Announced

March 7, Closing Session: A Symposium Open To Health Care Personnel of Montreal

Theme and Invited Speakers To Be Announced
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to:

1) Write a brief (three to five page) review of an article of your choice, preferably chosen from the course bibliography. The review should contain a succinct précis of the article's main ideas and your own personal critique.

Deadline
Thursday
February 21, 1985

2) Write a five to ten page personal view (in a style similar to an Editorial or the Personal Views which appear regularly in the British Medical Journal) on a topic dealing with some aspect of medicine, ethics and law. The topic to be chosen by the student.

Deadline
Thursday
March 30, 1985
MEDICAL ETHICS AND JURISPRUDENCE - 1985

BIBLIOGRAPHY


THE SEMINARS

The seminars will be held on Wednesdays, 12:00 to 1:00 PM, starting Wednesday, January 16th, 1985.

You must visit Audrey Booth, Department of Humanities and Social Studies in Medicine, McIntyre Medical Sciences Building, to select your seminar group and be informed about where your seminar will be held.

Please visit Mrs. Booth as soon as possible in January. The seminar is a compulsory part of the course.
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Seminar Sessions
Suggestions of Starting Points for
Each Seminar Discussion

January 16,
The opening seminar will be used as a course planning session. It will be held in the Martin Theatre at 12:00 to 1:00 PM. All students must be present.

January 23,
Each seminar leader will present a case or question from his or her clinical experience to start and focus the discussion.

January 30,
Two students in each seminar group will present questions for discussion based on their experience during their hospital period of medical education. The group itself will select the students to do this service.

February 6,
Two students will raise questions based on the preceding week's main session on informed consent.

February 13,
An article will serve to open the discussion on some aspects of the preceding main session workshop on Law and Medicine.

February 20,
Two students will be asked to raise questions based on the previous main session dealing with the incompetent elderly.

February 27,
An article on the theme of ethics and clinical judgment will be used to continue discussion on subject of the preceding main session workshop on Medical and Clinical Ethics.

March 6,
This last seminar session will serve to evaluate the entire course. Feed-back from the seminar leaders during a luncheon meeting in late March will contribute to perfecting next year's course.