Syllabus

Unit of Medical Ethics

Ankara University Medical Faculty

"Deontology or Medical Ethics"

Outline of a 30-hour course for the 2nd semester students

(Revised version to begin in the 1993-1994 academic year)

(A) Medical Methodology

A conceptual-semantical clarification of "What?", "Why?" and "How?" in medical activity as a whole, seen in a philosophical perspective and based on a comparison with science(s); basic divisions and principal disciplines in medicine and its education; underlining of the differences in purpose and method between different aspects of medical activity; the relevance of these points in medical education in general.

(B) Medical Evolution

A methodological discussion on history and medical history, particularly as compared with science; a study of the development of medicine in space-time considered in its main outline; an emphasis of the evolutionary approach to medical development, with considerable academic exclusion of "historical" and not infrequently "unnecessary" detail.

(C) Medical Ethics

A clarification of the related basic concepts such as Ethics (and Philosophy), Bioethics, Medical Ethics, Morals, Values, Axiology, Deontology.

(1) Medical Deontology

A study of the obligations and responsibilities of the medical person; an analytical consideration of the Turkish Deontology Regulation; a mention of similar texts (laws, declarations and the like) regarding medical activity; a critical analysis of the different versions of the Physician's Oath, with an emphasis on its historical background and the present state in the face of contemporary developments in medicine, science and society (realized with an active student participation).
(2) Medical Axiology

Values and value judgments, with special emphasis on different aspects of medical activity; moral problems seen, basically if not exclusively, as "conflicts" of interest, wish, inclination, world view and the like between individuals, groups of individuals, social strata and so on; principal approaches in ethics and medical ethics, with special reference to a basically subjectivist metaethics; the main aspects of medical activity and the relevance and applicability of different ethical views as regards them; the doctor-patient relationship considered in the light of its evolution, psychological grounding, normative aspects, and the factors or determinants affecting it; contemporary axiological issues in medicine in the light of democracy and human rights; (medical esthetics and medical ethics: yet to be developed); argumentative discussions and student presentations on certain specific moral issues in medical activity.

(Divided into two groups in the first years of education because of their high number, the course is given twice a week, with two hours for each group of students.)

Prof. Yaman Örs, MD DPhil, will be responsible for section A, the introductory part of section C, the discussion on Oath, the general aspects of C-2 and the doctor-patient relationship; and Ms Berna Arda, MD, Assist. Prof., for the rest of the program. There is a hope that another young lady, an MD and doctoral student, will join the academic staff as a lecturer, and thus replace the two colleagues (the director and a lecturer) retiring this year.

At the graduate level, the Unit has three research assistants, one of them being a doctoral student at the thesis stage and the two others candidates of "specialist", with three additional doctoral students at the same stage. One of the latter is a dental doctor and the rest are all MD's. The Unit grants the PhD degree in "Deontology and Medical History", to be completed in about four years and with a "mixed" combination of courses on these two methodologically quite different disciplines. Two earlier doctoral students, a registered nurse and a social worker, have already completed their work; and a third, an MD, is about to submit her thesis.

Expectedly, the mixed nature of this degree, shared by the title of the undergraduate course as well up to ten years ago, is due to the historical combination of the two disciplines in the medical faculties of this country (as, possibly, it used to be in certain Central European countries). For a specialty degree in the same area, the candidate has to complete his or her studies in two to three years, including a thesis, and the degree received is to be formally approved by the Ministry of Health, as in the case of any other specialty in medicine.

------