THE RIJEKA MODEL OF BIOETHICAL EDUCATION

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Historical Overview:
- 1623. Jesuit school and institutes
- 1724. the City Council requested the establishment of Philosophy Studies
- 1773-1780. Royal Academy
- 19th century The Imperial Royal Naval Academy
- 1912.-1918. Royal Hungarian Mercantile Academy
- Today: seven faculties, four university departments (biotechnology, physics, informatics and mathematics), Cleaner Production Centre University of Rijeka, Science and Technology Park, University library, Student Union, dormitory...
39 departments
15 study programmes
Bologna system (since 2005.)

Department of Social Sciences and Medical Humanities

- established in the year 1976.
- main areas of scientific and educational activities:
  - social sciences approach to medical issues
  - foreign languages in medicine
  - ethical and bioethical aspects in modern biomedicine
Main activities of the Department

- **Scientific projects:**
  - Medical Ethics in Croatia (1990.-1995.)
  - Bioethical Education in Croatia (1996.-2002.)
  - Bioethics and Politics (2002.-2005.)
  - Bioethics and Culture (2007.-)
  - Clinical Bioethics: Education for Communication with Deaf Patients (2007.-)

- **Scientific meetings:**
  - Rijeka Days of Bioethics (each year in May, since 1999.), annual meeting of ISCB, monthly meeting of Croatian Bioethical Society – Rijeka branch,

- **Publications:**

- **Education**

The beginnings of bioethics in Rijeka

- started to develop in the early nineties of the last century – to these days, constantly records new subject matters
  - 1991/1992 the elective course Hippocratic Oath Today in the curriculum of medicine study
  - the date that refers to the beginning of bioethical history at Rijeka School of Medicine is academic year 1992/1993. and introducing the course Medical ethics and Introduction to bioethics (1993/1994).
Study programmes

- 4 study levels
  - prediploma study: Nursing, Radiology, Medical laboratory, Physiotherapy and Midwifery
  - graduate study: Medicine, Dental medicine, Organization, planning and managing in the health care, Sanitary engineering
  - postgraduate study: Family medicine, Internal medicine, Health management, Developmental biomedicine
  - postgraduate doctoral study: Biomedicine, Health care and ecological engineering

Different bioethical courses for different studies (and levels):

- Bioethics in health care with communication skills (midwifery); Bioethics in health care (nurses), Ethics in health system (physiotherapy), Ethics in health care (radiology), Medical ethics (medical laboratory diagnostics)
- Medical ethics and Bioethics (Organization, planning and managing the health care), Bioethics (sanitary engineering), Dental ethics (dental medicine)
- Bioethics in scientific work and research, Bioethical research protocol

According to Dean’s declaration Rijeka 2005, the course Medical ethics (previously called Medical ethics and bioethics on 1st year of medical study) to be introduced on 6th year of medical study in the academic year 2010/2011.

Elective courses:
- Bioethics and culture of dialogue in medicine/nursing
- On Health Differently
- Clinical bioethics
within last two decades the medical school of Rijeka developed a recognizable model of bioethical education
part of pre-clinical teaching (with aim to be extended in period of clinical teaching)

**The Rijeka model of bioethical education** - a specific approach to the basic elements of the educational process:

IN THE CONTENT

IN THE METHODS

IN THE EVALUATION

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**Characteristic of the contents:**

1. each study programme contains a general component, common to all studies
2. each study programme is devoted to elaboration of particular contents linked to ethical problems of specific profession to be
3. open character of the content: the students are invited to directly participate with their proposals
In the method:

- **MAIN METHODS**
  - LECTURES
  - GROUP WORK
  - SEMINARS
  - WORKSHOP
    - Programmed teaching
    - Conflicting group
    - Case analysis

**LECTURES**

- directed to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge of ethics
- offering conceptual and historical attitudes in medical ethics
- focused on the development of the awareness of complexity of moral conclusions in modern medicine
- according to the evaluation of educational incomes, 35% of teaching activities should be dedicated to lectures
- technical reasons: situated in a large lecture-room, the students follow the presentation by a lecturer
- questions and conversation
- efforts in making lectures interesting, dynamic and attractive (team lectures, lectures supplemented by documentary or feature films…)

- **INTERDISCIPLINARY VIEW ON A CERTAIN ETHICAL PROBLEM OR A CONCEPT**
Merits of lectures as a method of bioethics education:

1) understanding the extension and complexity of a moral problem
2) illustration of matters that are real, vivid and dynamic in ethics, as well as the setting that surrounds the person who is to reach an ethical decision
3) stimulation of moral imagination and empathy in students and the emphasis on interdisciplinary character of bioethics
4) economy of time, space and didactic facilities
5) preparation for discussion in smaller groups

Seminars

The goal of seminars:
- recognition and definition of ethical problems
- introducing the skills of analysis to students
- acquiring the understanding of attitudes and form opinions
- informing the students about the existence of literature with a problem-based and systematic approach to bioethics - implementing written sources help students to perceive contaries between personal and scholar view on specific ethical problems
- BIOETHICAL LITERATURE (recognizing, defining and analysing an ethical problems)
Workshops

- Conditions: circle, "face to face" conversation
- Previous agreement: not to evaluate negatively, laugh at or ignore any idea presented
  all students should participate in the realisation of accepted topics

Student activities:
1. list of ideas
2. ethical realisation (students search a number of solutions for the topic/problem, look for literature, examine cases to support the current significance of the topic)
3. variants of group work: programmed teaching, conflicting/opposed groups and case analysis

Students activities

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<tr>
<th>PROGRAMMED TEACHING</th>
<th>CONFLICTING/OPOSED GROUPS</th>
<th>CASE ANALYSIS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Programmed teaching: realized in the bioethical workshop – aim of workshop is interdisciplinary and integrative approach to bioethical problem</td>
<td>In conflicting/opposed group, students can present and explain reasons for and against a medical-ethical act (abortion, euthanasia, surrogate motherhood...).</td>
<td>The third model includes the examination of essential contents of ethical decision-making through case analysis.</td>
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In the evaluation

- continued process
- students have regular right to present their standpoints and opinions on all teaching aspects
- at the end, students evaluate goals, contents, methods and ways of organizing the curriculum

Conclusion

- The Rijeka Model of bioethical education – still/always in phase of searching the most appropriate approach
- According to the students assessments, the courses of medical ethics and bioethics – useful, interesting and dynamic
- Active participation of students: from content design to the realization

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION...