

Pontifical Academy for Life

Equal at birth? A global responsibility

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The fundamental role of education – in global
bioethics

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Outline

- 1. Why do we educate and what is good education?**
- 2. What is the mission of bioethics education?**
- 3. Two philosophies of bioethics education**
- 4. Bioethics education and global bioethics**
 - Global ethical framework**
 - Global bioethics principles**
 - Focus on global bioethics teaching**

Why do we educate and what is good education?

St. Augustine (405):

What is the best approach to teaching?

Education is not successful if it is not passionate and inspired.

It should not merely be focused on knowledge or skills but it should motivate and inspire.

Teachers and learners are united in the same endeavor:

—————→ *they want to be better persons*

Why do we educate and what is good education?

The ultimate aim of education is transformative: to effect beneficial changes in humans.

→ education is fundamentally a moral enterprise

But at the same time it is conservative.

John Dewey: *A common faith* (1934):

Education is the manifestation of humankind's responsibility to conserve, transmit, rectify and expand the heritage of the values we have received.

What is the mission of bioethics education?

More restricted and focused than education in general:

Professional education:

What is valuable in being a professional and what is required for participating in a professional community?

What is the mission of bioethics education?

What do we hope to achieve?

Knowledge

- Information and facts
- Identification of moral issues

What is the mission of bioethics education?

What do we hope to achieve?

Skills

- Recognize ethical issues
- Analysis and reasoning
- Understanding and explaining
- Justification and argumentation

What is the mission of bioethics education?

What do we hope to achieve?

Attitudes

- Sensitivity to ethical questions
- Professional virtues
- Good conduct

What is the mission of bioethics education?

What do we hope to achieve?

a. Knowledge

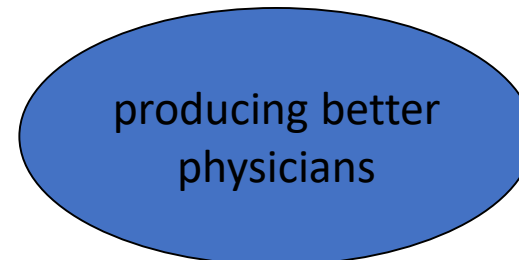
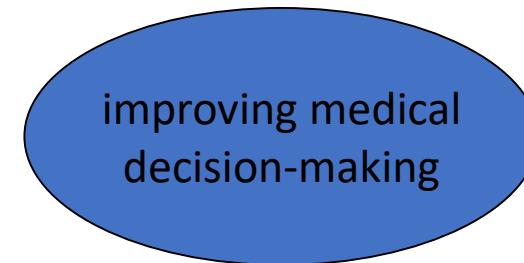
- Information and facts
- Identification of moral issues

b. Skills

- Recognize ethical issues
- Analysis and reasoning
- Understanding and explaining
- Justification and argumentation

c. Attitudes

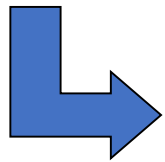
- Sensitivity to ethical questions
- Professional virtues
- Good conduct



Two philosophies of bioethics education

modest view

- focus on facilitating clinical practice: teaching skills
- pragmatic: focus on what is practical and measurable



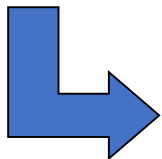
Promote better decisions

Gillon (1996): ethics teaching is not intended to improve the moral character of future doctors

Two philosophies of bioethics education

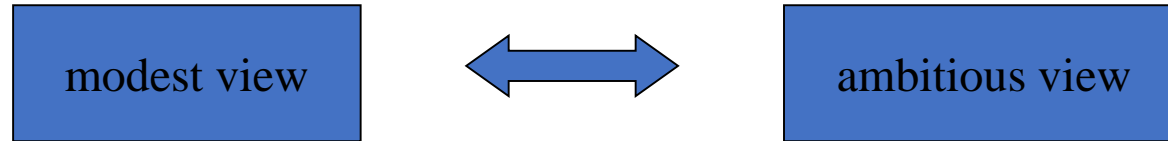
ambitious view

- focus on character formation, integrity and professional virtues
- ultimate aim is to make medicine more humane
- professionalism not only requires transmission of information but learning of values and attitudes



Make better health professionals

Two philosophies of bioethics education



- need for ethics teaching reiterated every time when professional behavior is problematic
 - Shipman report in UK (2004)
 - NIH/NSF requirement for ethics education (2010)
- ➔ Ethics teaching as remedy against lack of virtuous behavior
- ethics is not an add-on but it is already there, intrinsic in medical culture
 - ➔ Formal and explicit bioethics education should connect with the internal morality: ‘the hidden curriculum’

Bioethics education and global bioethics

Global ethical framework

Global bioethics principles

Focus of global bioethics teaching

Global ethical framework

The ideals of cosmopolitanism

- unity of humanity: Human beings belong to the cosmos; world citizenship.
- the cosmos includes the whole of humanity; universal community.
- boundaries have no moral significance.
- openness to differences.
- focus on what human beings have in common.
- all human beings have equal moral status.
- global citizens have responsibilities and solidarity, not merely rights.

Global ethical framework

Common humanity

Expanding the circle of moral concern

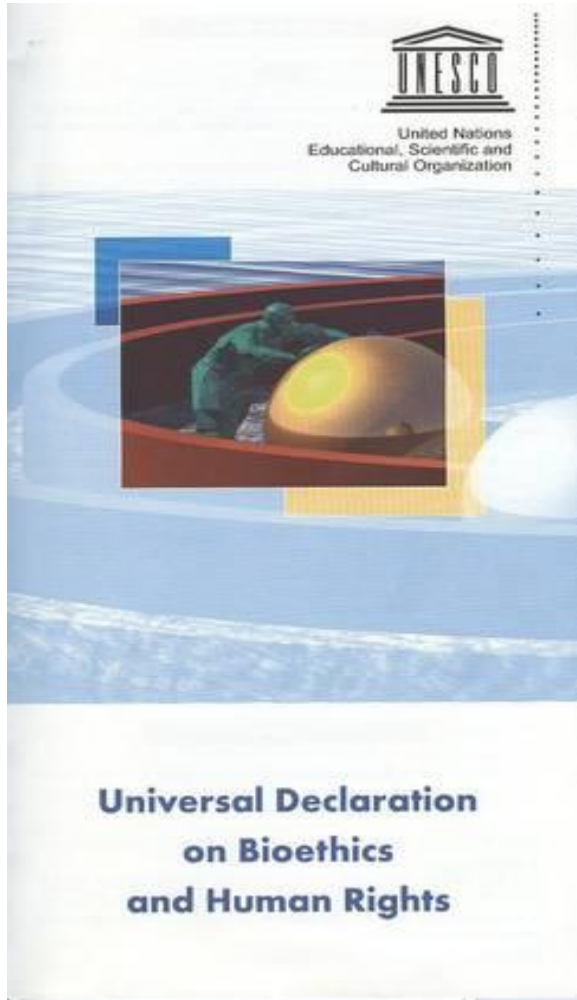
- Augustine: monstrous births are human
- Pope Urban VIII (1639): Indians are human
- Pope Leo XIII (1888): condemnation of slavery

Common home

Emphasis on commons and common good

- 1987: Brundtland Report: common future
- 2009: Pope Benedict XVI: the book of nature is indivisible
- 2015: Pope Francis: Laudato Si: common home

Global bioethics principles



UNESCO 2005: 15 principles for global bioethics

1. *Human dignity and human rights*
2. *Benefit and harm*
3. *Autonomy and individual responsibility*
4. *Consent*
5. *Persons without the capacity to consent*
6. *Respect for human vulnerability and personal integrity*
7. *Privacy and confidentiality*
8. *Equality, justice and equity*
9. *Non-discrimination and non-stigmatization*
10. *Respect for cultural diversity and pluralism*
11. *Solidarity and cooperation*
12. *Social responsibility and health*
13. *Sharing of benefits*
14. *Protecting future generations*
15. *Protection of the environment, the biosphere and biodiversity*

Global bioethics principles

Human dignity and human rights

Benefit and harm

Autonomy and individual responsibility

Human vulnerability and personal integrity

Privacy and confidentiality

Non-discrimination and non-stigmatization

Cultural diversity, pluralism and universalism

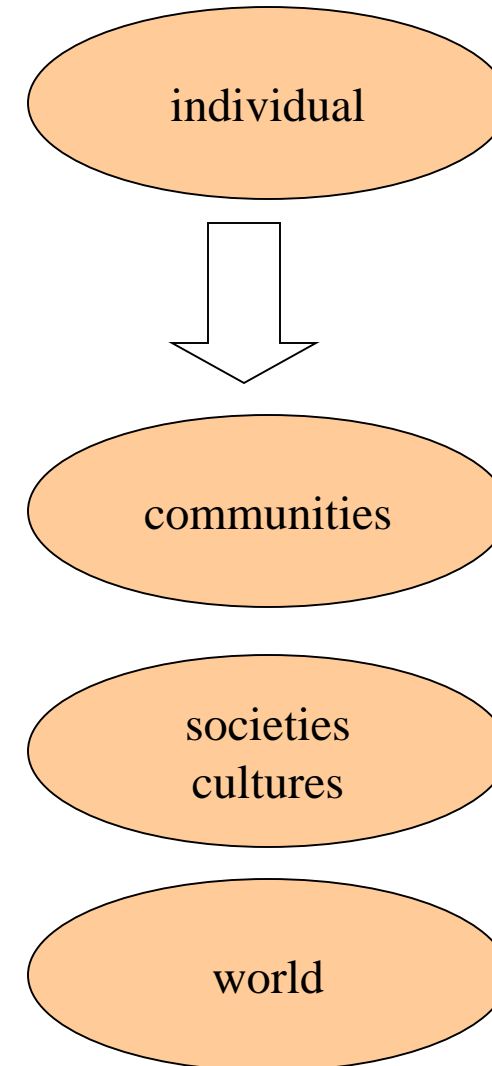
Solidarity and cooperation

Social responsibility

Sharing of benefits

Future generations

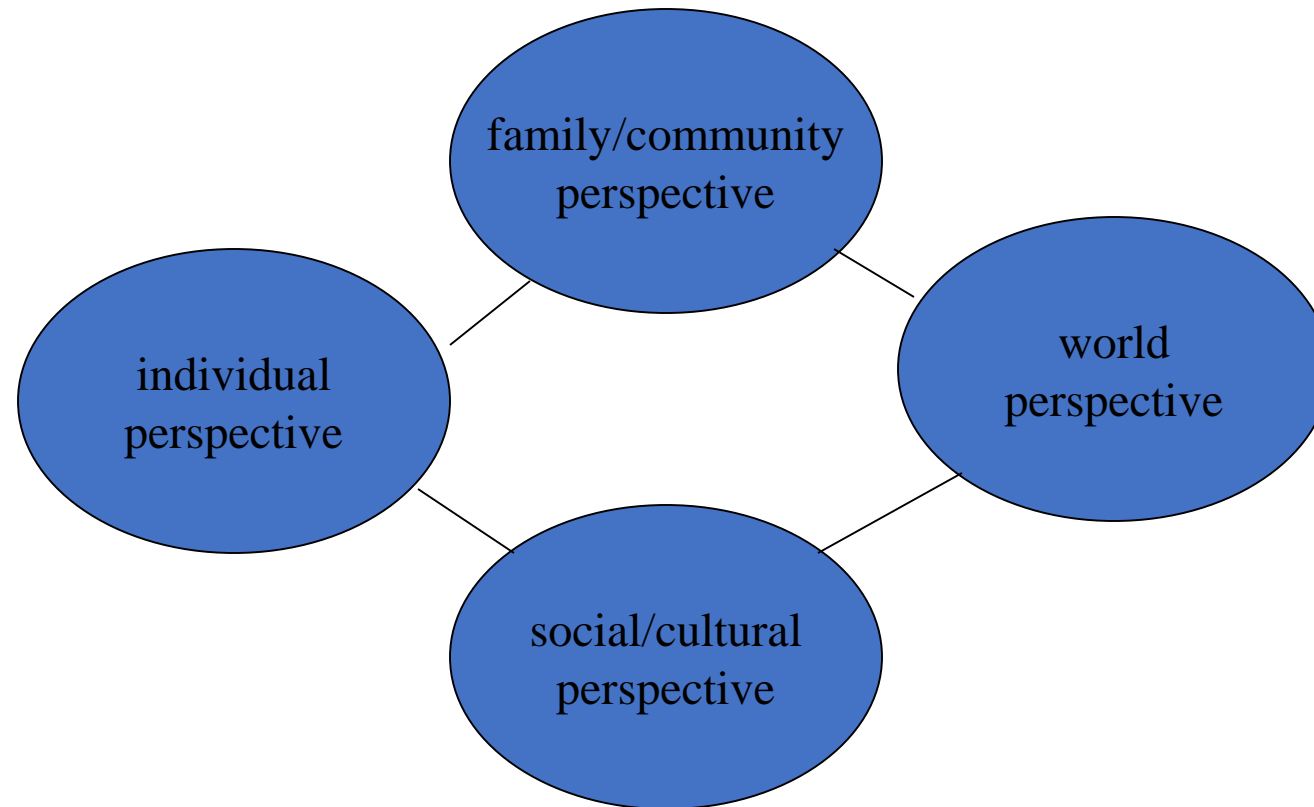
Protection of the environment and biodiversity



Bioethics is weighing and balancing of ethical principles

argumentation

justification



Global bioethics principles

Ethical principles

Human dignity and human rights

Human vulnerability and personal integrity

Cultural diversity, pluralism and universalism

Solidarity

Social responsibility

Sharing of benefits

Future generations

Protection of the environment and biodiversity

New concepts

Common heritage of humankind

- Common good

- Benefit sharing

- Future generations

Sustainability

Intergenerational justice

Diversity

Global bioethics principles

Ethical principles

Human dignity and human rights

Human vulnerability and personal integrity

Cultural diversity, pluralism and universalism

Solidarity

Social responsibility

Sharing of benefits

Future generations

Protection of the environment and biodiversity

New concepts

Common heritage of humankind

- Common good

- Benefit sharing

- Future generations

Sustainability

Intergenerational justice

Applications

- status of human genome
- patenting/property rights
- vulnerable groups
- pain and suffering
- food (obesity/ hunger)
- international clinical trials
- migration of health professionals
- human/ organ trafficking
- bioprospecting/ biopiracy
- refugees and migrants
- environmental degradation

Global bioethics principles; enlarging of ethical perspective

Mainstream bioethics

Autonomous individual

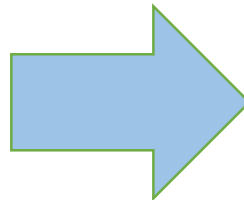
Rational decision-maker

Care and competency are individual affairs

Ownership of the body

Informed consent as transaction

No responsibility for social, economic and political conditions



Global bioethics

Social ethics

Individual person always embedded

Personal autonomy is produced in social conditions

Respect for human vulnerability

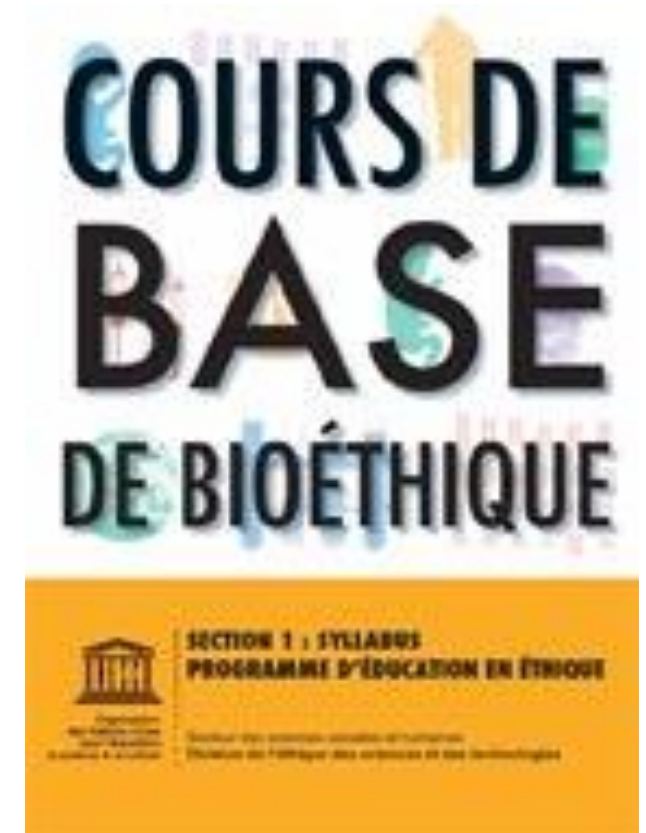
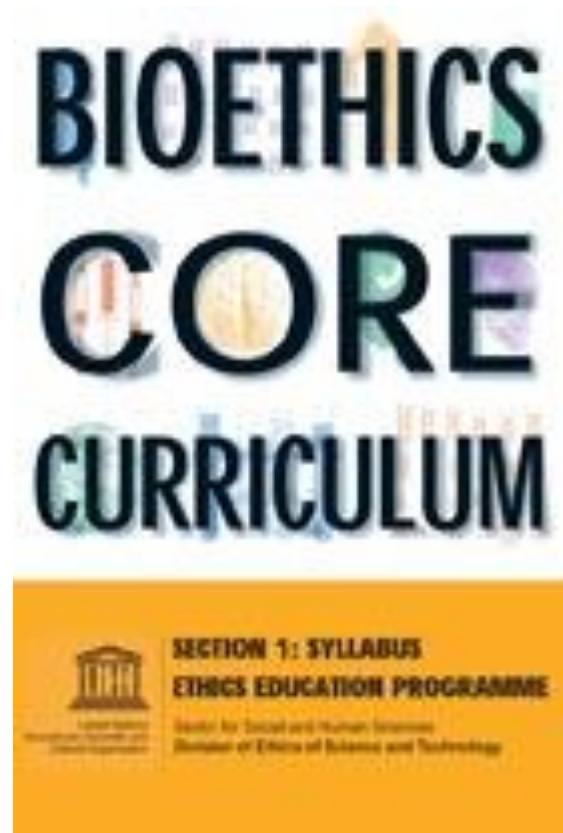
Positive notion of society; conditions make human flourishing possible

Focus on the common good

Need for collective action

Focus of global bioethics teaching

Example: UNESCO Bioethics Core Course



UNESCO Bioethics Core Course

- based on principles of Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights
- proposes a minimum program
- flexibility: does not impose a particular model
- global outreach: useful in all regions
- heterogeneity: variety and diversity around a common core
- *aim: to facilitate the introduction of bioethics primarily in medical and science schools*

Structure and Contents of Core Course in Bioethics

Contents: 17 modules

Structure:

- Section 1: Syllabus: Learning Objectives; Outline; Teacher Manual
- Section 2: Study materials: Cases, videos, literature, etc.

General Objectives:

Students should be able to

- identify ethical issues in medicine, health care and life sciences
- provide rational justification for ethical decisions
- apply the ethical principles of the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*

UNESCO Bioethics Core Curriculum

For each unit

- Unit learning objectives
- Outline of the syllabus
- Teacher manual

UNESCO Bioethics Core Curriculum

UNIT 3: HUMAN DIGNITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Unit learning objectives

- Students should be able to explain and apply the concepts of human dignity and human rights
- Students should understand the relevance of these concepts in the context of bioethics

Outline of the Syllabus

1. Concepts of dignity in the history of ideas
2. Human dignity as an intrinsic value of the person capable of reflection, sensitivity, verbal communication, free choice, self-determination in conduct and creativity
3. The diverse understandings of human dignity in different cultural and moral traditions and different types of society
4. A person's dignity and rights entail others' obligation to treat a person respectfully
5. Ethical aspects of health care provider-patient relations in regard to human dignity and human rights

Thank you