



United Nations  
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## Report of Regional Expert Meeting on Ethics Teaching

*Marrakech, Morocco, 15-17 June 2008*

### First day (Monday June 16)

#### **Background**

In the context of UNESCO's Ethics Education Programme, a Regional Expert Meeting on Ethics Teaching was held from 15-17 June 2008 in Marrakech organized by the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology of UNESCO in collaboration with the Regional Office in Rabat and the National UNESCO Commission of Morocco. In the past, similar regional expert meetings were organized by UNESCO in Budapest, Moscow, Split, Tehran, Muscat and Istanbul.

The meeting brought together 18 experts from Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia and the objectives were to describe existing ethics teaching programmes in these countries, to facilitate the creation of a regional network of ethics teaching experts in the region and to plan future steps towards regional cooperation in this field. Prior to the meeting, 17 ethics teaching programmes have been identified, described and distributed among the participants.

#### *Welcome and opening*

Welcome by Jan Helge Solbakk, Chief of Bioethics Section, Division of Ethics of Science and Technology of UNESCO, Paris. In his opening remarks Solbakk welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude to the people who had played a crucial role in the planning of this event: to Mina El Mghari, Secretary General of the National Commission of Morocco, to Souria Saad Zoy and Hanae Alami from the Regional UNESCO Office in Rabat, to Nouzha Guessous Idrissi, member of the Biomedical Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Casablanca and the Moroccan Bioethics Association and former member and chair of IBC.

This meeting was the seventh regional meeting of ethics teaching experts organised by UNESCO in due collaboration with National Commissions of UNESCO

#### UNESCO and ethics teaching

Following the welcome and opening addresses, **Jan Helge Solbakk** gave a presentation of UNESCO's Ethics Education Program and other activities of particular relevance for this meeting, such as the Global Ethics Observatory.

The Ethics Education Programme of UNESCO has currently four activities. First, through the Global Ethics Observatory (GEObs), information on experts, institutions (centres, departments, committees), teaching programs and legislation in the field of bioethics and of ethics of science and technology is collected and presented in the UNESCO's databases. UNESCO has at present five functioning databases:

- D1: *Who is who in ethics?* (at present 1074 experts)
- D2: *Institutions, organisations and commissions* (at present 224 institutions)
- D3: *Ethics teaching programmes* (at present 173 programmes)
- D4: *Ethics Related Legislation and Guidelines* (at present 6 countries and 191 instruments)
- D5: *Codes of conduct* (at present 151 codes).

Solbakk also mentioned that a sixth database on *Teaching Materials* will be launched in October 2008.

Second, UNESCO has established an advisory committee of experts to elaborate a core curriculum of bioethics, which, free of charge, can be used to launch bioethics courses in the institutions and universities. The UNESCO curriculum of bioethics is at present in the process of being finalized and will thereafter be pilot tested in several countries (this course was the subject of a more detailed presentation by Nouzha Guessous Idrissi on day 2 of the meeting).

Third, UNESCO is organizing courses on how to teach ethics. The objectives of these courses are:

- to introduce the students to the means and resources of teaching ethics.
- to teach the students the methodologies and methods of teaching ethics.
- to assess and provide feedback on the students' demonstrations of teaching skills under the guidance of experienced teachers.

The first course was given in Romania in November 2006, the second in Kenya from 9-13 July 2007, the third in Slovakia from 10-14 September 2007 and the fourth in Saudi Arabia from 3rd to 7th November 2007. A new course is scheduled for November 2008 in Minsk, Belarus.

Fourth, UNESCO provides various resources to be used for promoting bioethics education at different levels. All publications are available free of charge in print and PDF versions. Information on UNESCO's activities in the field of bioethics and ethics of science and technology, GEObs and publications are available at the following website: <http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics>.

#### Question-and-answer

**Q:** Why is there so little information about UNESCO's ethics activities in this region?

**A:** The Global Ethics Observatory and the Ethics Education Program are less than three years old. It takes time to spread information from the Secretariat in Paris to National Commissions in the Member States. It also takes time to provide the information in languages accessible to different stakeholders.

**Q:** Who qualifies as an ethics expert? What are the criteria UNESCO is using to qualify an individual as an ethics expert?

**A:** This question gave the opportunity to explain in more detail the questionnaire related to database 1, and to inform the participants that after the meeting all of them will receive a request to fill in this questionnaire so that more data about ethics experts in the region can be entered into the database.

**Q:** What qualifies as an ethics teaching program?

**A:** This question gave the opportunity to explain in more detail the different questionnaires related to database 3 on ethics teaching programs.

**Q:** What is the best way forward; to strive for integration of ethics teaching modules in already existing teaching programs in medicine and health sciences, or to opt for an all-embracing teaching program in bioethics?

**A:** This question was discussed several times during the meeting, and most participants seemed to favour both options; in the sense that many expressed the interest in piloting UNESCO's core course curriculum in bioethics in their own universities while at the same time emphasizing the importance of seeking to strengthen the integration of ethics teaching modules in existing teaching programs in medicine and health sciences.

### **Ethics teaching in Algeria**

After the discussion of Solbakk's presentation, **Abdalhafida Ossoukine**, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Oran Es-Senia University, Oran and **Salim Boumeslot**, Faculty of Medicine, Oran Es-Senia University, Oran gave the audience an overview of the state of the art of ethics teaching in Algeria including presentations of their own teaching activities in the field. In Algeria there exists for the time being no nationally accredited teaching in medical ethics/bioethics which has been institutionalised and organised accordingly. All ethics teaching activities are still in the hands of a handful of pioneers in the field. At the Faculty of Law teaching in bioethics of a total duration of 40 hours has been introduced in the fourth study year. This teaching is integrated in a module on human rights (20 hours) and in a post-graduation program in medical anthropology (20 hours), and is mandatory for students taking this module/program. Ethics topics addressed in the module on human rights are: The status of the human embryo, cloning, organ transplantation, objectification ('reification') of the human person caused by patent practices, sexual mutilation, death, ethics committees, blood, breast milk, sperms and the problem of artificial insemination, religious views and the view of positive law with regard to these questions. In the post-graduation program in medical anthropology the following topics are covered: medicine as a social practice, the social dimension of the human body, the relation between medical knowledge and common knowledge, the relations between patients and drugs, the relations between pharmacists and patients, medical uncertainty.

At the Faculty of Medicine ethics is taught during one semester in the first year (15 hours) and in the sixth year (10 hours), covering topics such as introduction to bioethics, ethics at the university, the Nuremberg code, human experimentation, organ donation, euthanasia, medically assisted reproduction, abortion, cloning. At present there are no exams related to the ethics teaching at the two faculties.

Present challenges :

- The lack of a robust institutional backing of existing ethics teaching activities in Algerian universities makes this teaching very vulnerable to e.g. sabbaticals and retirements.
- The prevalence of 'scientistic' attitudes among students
- The lack of openness among medical faculty members with regard to ethics being taught by non-medical academics as well
- The need to move from big amphitheater lectures to modes of teaching better suited for the subject field of ethics
- The need to train a young generation of ethics teachers which can continue the pioneering work undertaken by a handful of dedicated individuals

### **Ethics teaching in Lebanon**

Present at the meeting were Professor **Roger Jawish** from Université St. Joseph and Dr. **Thalia Arawi** from the American University in Beirut. Professor André Megarbane from Université St. Joseph was not able to attend the meeting.

Jawish started his presentation by claiming that ethics cannot be taught, at least not in the same way as the sciences are taught. At the same time he emphasized that ethics teaching in medicine has become a necessity, due to the fact that biomedical research and medical practices have made medicine more and more mechanistic, something which challenges the moral foundations of medicine. Ethics is a branch of philosophy and the aim of ethics teaching is to furnish students with the necessary tools enabling them to reflect on the complexities of the human condition. Ethics teaching should not aim at providing students with answers to their question but at enabling them to make moral judgments. Since 1995 a course entitled, *Philosophical Initiation to Bioethics*, has been taught at the Faculty of Medicine. The aim of this course (of a duration of 10 hours) is to invite the students (80-100 students in second year of their studies) to reflect upon the extra material dimensions of human nature. That is, it aims at identifying and defining the kind of human values that may serve to enhance sound reflection about questions such as: What is life? What is death? What constitutes the human body? What does spirit mean? With regard to personal judgment, this may be expressed by the student at University, during a debate or in research work or in everyday life.

The main topics addressed in this course are:

- the necessity of ethics
- human dignity
- the human body and its values
- manipulations of the human body
- the meaning of suffering
- death and dying, euthanasia
- psyche versus soma
- genetic manipulations (including cloning)
- human procreation and its limits
- uncertainty and medical decision making
- the meaning of healing
- the springs of morality

The methodology employed is that in each class a short introduction to the topic is made by the teacher followed by questions from students. From time to time the introduction is interrupted by a mini-debate between groups of students, something which creates moments of release for the students. Each class or session is ended with a general debate about the issue having been addressed. Students are also encouraged themselves to prepare (individually or in small groups) a particular ethics topic and give a presentation in the class (power point, paper-format as well videos). A topic that could – and probably – should be included as well in the teaching is *Religions and bioethics*, in order to overcome the un-reflected view that secular bioethics and religious bioethics by necessity have to conflict with each other.

Dr. Arawi is responsible for two ethics teaching courses, *Biomedical Ethics* and *Physicians, Patients & Society*. The purpose of the first course *Biomedical Ethics* (an optional course, taught during one term, 32 hours) is to introduce students to bioethics as an interdisciplinary subject. The course is divided into two units. The first unit present theories of ethics that will set the background for discussion of the ethical controversies presented in unit two. Unit two consists of a number of complex contemporary issues that are confronting human beings today and as such. Such issues include:

- medical ethics and the duties of the physician,

- euthanasia,
- cloning,
- in vitro fertilization,
- organ donation,
- research ethics

In addition to clarifying general moral principles, the aim of this course is to focus on and explain the values present in medical practice and consider the moral principles that ensue from these values.

The second course on *Physicians, Patients & Society* (a mandatory course, taught during one year, 25 hours) targets students in the third year of their studies and address among others issues such as

- informed consent,
- confidentiality,
- end of life care,
- organ donation,
- abortion,
- allocation of resources,
- maternal/fetal rights,
- euthanasia,
- medical futility.

In addition, this course aims at increasing students' awareness of the broad range of ethical issues that might face them at the bedside as well as helping them to examine the strengths and weaknesses of numerous possibilities of dealing with these issues at the bedside. The ultimate objective of this course is to reinforce students' personal sense of compassion, commitment and care so that they may become the physicians they aspire to be. The course is organized around a cluster of lectures, but rely as well much on case-study discussions (including virtual discussion rooms) and watching of documentaries.

#### Question-and-answer:

**Q:** What is the philosophical luggage necessary for ethical deliberation and reflexion?

**Q:** Why do we talk so little about the relation between ethics and emotions?

**Q:** Concerning methodology. What is difference between education and training (French: formation) in ethics? Shouldn't ethics teaching be 'majeutic' (Socrates' notion of the moral educator acting as a midwife)? What is the role of video technology and virtual discussion rooms in ethics education?

**Q:** How does one assess ethical sensitivity?

**Q:** Are we sure that *positive* role models are always the most efficient role models in ethics education?

**A:** No attempts were made to give content-full answers to these questions, but these were questions raised several times during the meeting, indicating that they are crucial questions to keep in mind.

#### **Ethics teaching in Morocco**

After the lunch break followed three presentations of ethics teaching programs in Morocco:

1) On behalf of Professor Abdelouahhab Tazi (responsible for the ethics teaching program at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, University of Hassan II – Ain Chock, Casablanca) Professor **Abderrahim Kounda** from the same faculty gave a presentation of the bioethics course to be started in September 2008. This course has been approved for all the different health and life sciences disciplines as well as other faculty disciplines. In total 20 different teachers will be involved in the teaching of the course, which in total counts 168 hours. Topics addressed in the course are:

- the foundations of ethics (14 hours)
- ethics committees (20 hours)
- research ethics: e.g. informed consent, the moral responsibility of researchers (30 hours)
- ethics and the life and health sciences: euthanasia, transplantations, infectious diseases, chronic diseases, prenatal diagnosis, abortion, health and work, the pharmaceutical industry, collective decisions and social protection (104 hours)
- ethics and society: e.g. assisted reproduction, stem cell research, cloning, genetically modified food and ethics of the environment (20 hours).

The main objective of the course is to increase critical reflection. Teaching methods: seminars, clinical case discussions and student presentations.

2) **Rachida Roky**, Faculty of Science Hassan II Ain Chok University, Casablanca. This bioethics course was introduced in 2007 in a master program in applied biology at the Faculty of Science. The teaching is given in the third semester of this master program, counts 40 hours (which amounts to 5% of the master program), and involves 20 students each semester. Topics addressed are:

- the principles and foundations of bioethics
- informed consent
- ethical aspects of research on human beings
- ethical aspects of biobanking
- neuro ethics
- bioethics institutions
- organ donation and organ transplantation
- medically assisted procreation,
- genetic testing

The teaching is organized around lectures, seminars with specialists from the respective fields covered and group discussions.

3) **Noureddine Fikri Benbrahim**, Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Rabat.

This course entitled, *Medical Ethics and Pharmacy*, is spread over all the six years of the medical study curriculum and counts in total 16 hours (10 lectures and 6 seminars). Topics addressed are:

- General introduction, definitions, philosophical concepts and basis (lectures, 1<sup>st</sup> year)
- Religious basis: islam and medical ethics (lectures, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Medical reasoning and decision making (lectures, 3<sup>rd</sup> year)
- The physician-patient relation (lectures, 4<sup>th</sup> year)
- Ethical reasoning (lectures 5<sup>th</sup> year)
- Presentation and discussion of clinical cases (seminar, 6<sup>th</sup> year).

The aim of the course is to familiarize students with ethical analysis and critical reflection. There are no exams required.

Question-and-answer:

**Q:** Are there any plans for a graduate course in bioethics at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy in Casablanca?

**A:** A letter from the President of the University of Hassan II – Ain Chock, Casablanca has recently been sent to the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology, UNESCO, Paris proposing this University to be one of the pilot sites for the core course curriculum on bioethics.

**Q:** Why is a course in bioethics taught at the Faculty of Science? Would it not be more reasonable to teach the ethics of science and technology at this faculty?

**A:** The main reason for this is that this course is targeting students in biology involved in research.

**Q:** Is it not a dilution problem when 16 hours teaching in medical ethics is spread over 6 years at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy in Rabat? Would it not be better to reorganize the teaching so that more hours were taught at the same time?

**A:** Ethical reasoning and ethical components should be integrated in all disciplines taught. In order for a structured teaching program in ethics comprising of a substantial number of teaching hours to be integrated in the medical curriculum an administrative decision is required. Such an option is not under discussion, as part of the discussion on the reform of the medical studies

### **Ethics teaching in Syria**

After the coffee break Doctors: **Tarif Bakdash, Waleed Faisal and Fawaz Saleh** presented Bioethics teaching programs taught at Damascus University. The first course, in medical ethics, at the Faculty of Medicine was presented partly by Tarif Bakdash, partly by Fawaz Salah.

Dr. Bakdash started his presentation by alluding to the metaphor ‘moral compass’, emphasizing the importance of the emotions in ethics teaching and by reflecting upon four questions:

- Why do we teach bioethics (what is happening now)?
- How should we teach bioethics?
- What is the evidence that our teaching works? How is it possible to measure the impact?
- How interested are our Medical and Educational institutions in Bioethics (e.g the National Bioethics Committee did not meet since I joined almost three years ago and we do not have an ethics committee at the Medical syndicate)?

The following course, which is mandatory and started in 2003, is taught in the second semester of the third year medical students (a total of six years) curriculum involving 550 students. The number of teaching hours amounts to 30 hours and covers the following topics:

- Ethics and law
- Codes of moral conduct
- Truth-telling
- Medical responsibility
- The main principles in bioethics: Non malificience, Justice, Autonomy, and Beneficence
- Cloning
- Organ donation
- Genetics testing, genetic fingerprinting
- Resource allocation
- Decisional capacity.
- Religious and cultural issues
- Suicide

- Alternative medicine

Perceived challenges:

- large groups of students do not allow for more interaction
- some students are shy and will not participate in such large groups
- the time allocated for the course is too short
- lack of extra hours for more discussions
- there is no practical training involved
- there is no in hospital training involved
- lack of ways to assess the impact of the teaching
- When they leave the medical school there is no way of reinforcing what they have learned.

The principal, didactic objective of the course is ‘good conduct’ and the mode of teaching is in the form of lectures with open discussions intermittently in a respective and fun way. The system of examination is multiple choice testing.

The second course taught by Dr. Bakdash is: Nursing Ethics, taught in the form of lectures with open discussions intermittently in a respective and fun way (14 hours) at the nursing school during the second semester of the first year. The course is mandatory and involves well above 100 students. Topics addressed are:

- Ethical theories and principles
- The student role in bioethical issues
- Ethical decision making
- Confidentiality
- Truth telling
- Advocacy
- Allocation of resources
- Research ethics
- Nursing issues and children
- Nursing issues and adults
- End of life decision making
- Women’s health issues
- Informed consent
- Mental health issues
- Public health issues.

Stated didactic objectives are: awareness raising, enhancement of moral sensitivity and good conduct, enhancement of abilities to identify, analyze and reason about moral issues, enhancement of ability to morally justify ethical decisions, critical reflection. The system of examination and the perceived challenges in this course are the same as in the ethics course for medical students.

The third course presented by **Waleed Faisal** is a course in research ethics integrated in a teaching program on *Biostatistics* and is taught to undergraduate medical students in their third year. Out of 30 hours 4 hours are devoted to research ethics. In addition the students are asked to apply research ethics in his/her 15-hour field work. The objectives of the course are:

- raising awareness among medical students in medical research ethics
- making medical students able to apply ethical principles when conducting medical research
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Topics addressed during the teaching are:



- the history of research ethics
- ethical dilemmas in conducting medical research (e.g. the investigation of psychological status in sensitive stages of life, the issue of ending treatment of patients in the control group, confidentiality issues)
- ethical systems and codes of conduct (the Nuremberg code, the Declaration of Helsinki, the Belmont Report)
- the principles of the Belmont Report (respect of persons, beneficence, and justice)
- respect of persons (autonomy, informed consent, complete disclosure of information, privacy)
- beneficence (risk/benefit assessment)
- justice (researchers' obligations, and vulnerable groups)
- critical reading

Ethical questions are integrated in the written exam of the course. To this is added the oral examination.

### Second day (Tuesday June 17)

#### **Ethics teaching in Tunisia**

1) **Majed Zemni**, Professor of Professional Ethics and Legal Medicine, Department of legal medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Sousse.

Professor Zemini started his presentation of a graduation program in medical ethics by saying that the best teaching program in ethics is the one that responds to the needs of the participants. The course, which is taught in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the medical studies, amounts to 22 hours (18 hours lecturing and 4 seminar hours), and is integrated into three different teaching modules:

- forensic medicine
- medical law and deontology
- human rights and humanitarian rights

The stated educational objectives of the course are:

- to pinpoint moral problems and awareness in medical practice
- to take a decision with a patient whether he/she is vulnerable or not and choose a solution among those found morally acceptable and in compliance with human conscience
- promote ethical competence ; i.e. to increase the:
  - capacity to converse
  - capacity to deliberate and
  - capacity to undertake a critical analysis

During their first year of study the students have been taught psychology, communication, history of medicine and sociology (70 hours) and in their third year of study they have been taught philosophy of science (18 hours).

Topics addressed during the course are:

- introduction to medical ethics
- ethics and clinical practice
- bioethical legislation (e.g. laws on organ transplantation, medical research, assisted reproduction)
- ethics and end-of-life decisions
- medical deontology
- professional responsibility
- the medico-legal aspects of marriage, divorce, abortion, birth, assisted reproduction etc.
- confidentiality

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- rights and duties of patients
- ethical issues related to the treatment of drug addicts, psychiatric patients, patients suffering for infectious diseases, mandatory vaccinations
- humanitarian law

The course is mandatory, with written exams and it is evaluated by an external audit every three years.

Challenges:

- There is a need for small group teaching instead of lectures with 200 students
- There is need for more clinically integrated ethics teaching

Finally, Professor Zemini made a short introduction to the presentation of different master programs to follow, explaining why in Sousse one has opted for differentiated ethics teaching modules integrated in several master programs in medicine, instead of opting for the development of *one* uniform master level program in ethics: the need to contextualize ethics and adapt the teaching to the particularities of the subject field taught.

2) **Slah Eddine Bouchoucha**, Professor of emergency medicine, University Hospital Farhat Hached, Sousse. The Master Program in emergency medicine is taught during two years to medical doctors specializing in emergency medicine. The program consists of 8 teaching modules, and the ethics teaching is integrated in the last module entitled *Organisation, legislation, deontology and ethics*. A seminar of six hours is dedicated to ethical issues in emergency medicine and the seminar is taught together with teachers from the Department of Legal Medicine. The stated educational objective is to promote good conduct in relation to patients, patients' relatives, colleagues etc. The topics addressed in the seminar are:

- objections to emergency treatment
- information and consent issues
- confidentiality issues
- treatment of minors and mentally incapacitated patients
- death in emergency treatment
- compulsory treatment
- therapeutic obstinacy
- termination of treatment
- breaking bad news

The course is mandatory with written exams. The course is evaluated every second year by an internal audit. Since 1998, 300 medical doctors have been taken this master program.

Challenges:

- to enrich the teaching module in ethics
- to introduce a similar teaching module to general practitioners
- to undertake context sensitive research of the ethic of emergency medicine

3) **Laouani Kechrid Chedia**, Professor at the Department of Internal Medicine, Sahloul University Hospital, Sousse. The master in gerontology and clinical geriatrics is taught to medical doctors specializing in emergency medicine, general practitioners and to assistant physicians at university hospitals. The teaching program consists of 14 modules of which one is entitled *Deontology and Ethics*. The ethics module is taught together with teachers from the Department of Legal Medicine. The modules are taught in the form of seminars once a month (Friday-Saturday). At present only four hours are dedicated to ethical issues. The rationale behind having a specific master in gerontology and clinical geriatrics is fourfold:

- higher life expectancy and the growing number of old patients

- demographic changes (from many-generation families to core family units, women at work, dispersal of families, housing conditions, economic factors)
- the lack of nursing home institutions for elderly people
- medical particularities of treating old patients

Topics and questions addressed during the ethics teaching:

- how to deal with old and ailing patients in the absence of sufficient nursing home institutions and hospital beds for long-term treatment
- how to deal with old and ailing patients suffering from physical, moral or material forms of maltreatment (the importance of differentiating between maltreatment and domestic accidents, the importance of giving the patients liberty to disclose information in a safe environment beyond possibilities of being rebuked by third parties)
- how to deal with information and consent-issues to patients where it is unclear whether they understand and secondly, will remember what has been said and agreed upon (e.g. in relation to taking necessary medication – for example insulin - regularly)
- how to break bad news in a context sensitive way
- ethical issues related to withdrawal of treatment, palliative treatment and euthanasia
- ethical issues related to medical research on old and ailing patients

The course is mandatory with written exams. The course is evaluated by an internal audit.

4) **Ali Mtiraoui**, Dr., Department of legal medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Sousse. Family medicine is focusing on the patient in his/her globality (psyche, soma, social environment; individual, family, collective; protection, promotion, restauration ) and aims at assisting in humanising physicians working in the frontline. The teaching program consists of 10 modules and the ethics teaching is integrated in the last module entitled *Professional exercises in the front line: health systems, professional structures, ethics and deontology*. Although the formal ethics teaching part, amounting to 5 hours teaching, is located in the last module, the teaching in the other modules are organized in such a way that ethical reflection is encouraged and promoted throughout the program (*Health for all equals Ethics in all*). The four facets of ethics integration in all:

- ability to communicate and listen
- shared decision making with the patient
- taking care of the patient's expectations, empathy
- psycho-social aspects

Topics addressed in the ethics teaching module:

- treatment of minors
- reproductive medicine
- abortion
- medical examination to obtain a premarital certificate or in relation to a case of divorce
- information and consent issues
- confidentiality
- maltreatment
- mental capacity
- handicap
- compulsory treatment of psychiatric patients

The course is mandatory with written exams. The course is evaluated by an internal audit.

Question-and-answer:

**Q:** What is the role of universal ethical principles in culture specific contexts? Why don't you make one universal master instead of different ethics modules in different master programs?

**A:** Ethics teaching needs to be contextualized. Ethics teaching should be bottom-up, not top-down, i.e. ethics teaching should take the particularities of a subject area as its point of departure.

**Q:** Is there a problem of overlap between the graduation program and the ethics modules in the different master programs?

**A:** The different ethics modules in the master programs build on and contextualise the topics addressed in the graduation program while at the same time new topics of particular relevance for a particular master program are included.

5) **Mohamed Souguir**, Professor, Department of legal medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Sousse. The course, *Ethics and Human Rights*, is taught for 300 pharmacy students at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Monastir and counts 24 hours. The teaching falls in the first and the second year of the pharmacy studies. The stated educational objective is increased knowledge. Topics addressed in the teaching are:

- introduction to the study of human rights
- experimentation on human beings
- assisted reproduction
- protection of abandoned children
- genetic manipulation, cloning, eugenics
- euthanasia
- therapeutic obstinacy
- humanitarian law

The course is mandatory with written exams.

6) **Salwa Hamrouni**, Faculty of Political, Social and Legal Sciences, Tunis. Salwa Hamrouni gave a presentation of a course in nursing ethics developed by the Tunisian Association of Right to Health, which is to be introduced in September 2008 at Rabata Hospital in Tunis. The course is addressing nurses and other health care professionals working in emergency medicine. In the emergency unit of this hospital in 24 hours 54 nurses are on guard treating between 200 and 280 patients. There are three main reasons for introducing such a course in emergency medicine for other health care professionals than physicians:

- nurses and other health care workers are in permanent contact with these patients
- questions related to human biological material are particularly complex in emergency medicine
- the relation between physicians and other health care workers is often more complex and problematic in emergency treatment situations

Responsible for this teaching course is Madame Aouij, president of the Tunisian Association of Right to Health, in collaboration with Salwa Hamrouni (lawyer) and Dr. Nabil Ben Salah. The course counts in total 20 hours (lectures, 10 hours, plus an interactive seminar, 10 hours). The stated educational objectives of the course are:

- to promote good conduct
- to raise moral awareness and sensibility

The code of conduct of nurses in Tunisia (dating from 1953) differentiates between four different responsibilities:

- to promote health
- to prevent disease
- to restore health
- to alleviate suffering

To this adds two other codes of conduct: *The role of nurses in treating convicts and prisoners* (1975) and *The role of nurses in protecting human rights* (1983).

Particular moral challenges in the nurse-patient relationship addressed in the teaching:

- respect for human rights and religious convictions: how to balance the respect of religious convictions with the need to treat
- patient information
- confidentiality
- end of life decisions
- procurement of organs for donation

Besides deducing principles of moral conduct from the three codes of conduct mentioned above principles of the Universal Declaration of Bioethics and Human Rights are also highlighted, in particular:

- human dignity (how to humanise the relation between the patient and the professional in emergency situations)
- autonomy (how to respect autonomy in non-ideal situations of emergency)
- confidentiality (how to deal with relatives or third parties in ways that does not jeopardize the principle of confidentiality)
- risk-/benefit-assessments
- informed consent (how to take decisions in situations where consent is not obtainable, neither from patients or patients' relatives).

Particular challenges:

- the distinction between making a decision about a task to be carried out and the execution of the task
- the relation between nurses and physicians in the emergency medicine unit
- theft from patients, sale of drugs (allegedly due to lack of sufficient material means).

The course will be taught during one semester for a maximum number of 20 students in each course. For the time being this course is optional. Negotiations are under way with Rabata hospital to give nurses attending the course the possibility of a reduction in working hours in order to attend the course.

7) **Chiraz Ghozzi-Nekhili**, Higher Institute of Accounting and Business Administration, Manouba University. This is a teaching program on Management, in which one part is dedicated to business ethics and to the issue of social responsibility of enterprises. The ethics part is taught during one semester to students in their second year of their Management studies. The course amounts to 58 ½ hours teaching (39 hours training on computer and 19 ½ hours practical training) and are divided into two parts:

- *Business ethics*. Focus is on ethical dilemmas in management, e.g in relation to recruitment and dismissal of employees, transparency in relation to stakeholders etc. In the teaching of this section four questions are at the forefront: (1) Who will be implicated by the decision? (2) What are the expected gains and losses involved? (3) Who has the rights? (4) What rules should be followed by the decision makers?
- *Social responsibility of a company*:: In this part of the course the concept of social responsibility in relation to business, management and administration is discussed. Likewise stake holder theory as conceived within business ethics is introduced. Focus is also on the concept of sustainable development and its relation to the concept of social responsibility within a business and enterprise setting.

One of the stated ethics education objective of this course is to raise awareness about the normative dimensions of business management and administration. The course is mandatory with written exams.

After the lunch break followed a presentation by **Ahmed El Hatttab**, Director of Research, Ministry of Scientific Research and University Cooperation, Morocco, on *Perspectives of the Teaching of Ethics of Science and Technology in Morocco (Perspectives de l'enseignement de l'éthique des sciences et des technologies au Maroc)*. This presentation was originally scheduled for Monday morning, but had to be postponed because of an unforeseen meeting of the Director with

the Minister of Scientific Research and University Cooperation. In the first part of his presentation El Hattab argued that in the wake of scientific and technological development teaching ethics should be viewed as a *social necessity*, as the utilisation of the results of this development for different ends requires reflective decision making in order to avoid the slippery slope and unfortunate consequences and to protect human life, the environment and human dignity and human values. Morocco today is lacking a robust legislation with regard to scientific and technological development and at the same time the ethical dimension of research planning, research practices and decision making is not much present. For these reasons, and until the ethical dimension becomes an integral part of decision making on all levels it is important to teach ethics on all levels (from primary school to university level) and to different stakeholders (teachers, decision makers, civil society, the community at large). Teaching and education are instruments that may aid to convey ethical values. Except for the faculties of medicine ethics teaching is given little space in the education system, although such teaching should be an integral part of all different kinds of teaching. Only in this way will it be possible to educate responsible citizens in a society more and more dependent on developments within science and technology.

In the second part of his presentation El Hattab talked about the conditions for good ethics teaching. He drew attention to the following factors:

- provision of ethical knowledge (as a prerequisite for the appropriation of values)
- promotion of the happiness of the student and his critical ability
- that ethics is taught differently from scientific disciplines while at the same time using scientific knowledge as a support to educate the citizen
- promotion of critical reflection on the social, economical and environmental implications of scientific and technological knowledge
- awareness raising and sensitization
- evaluation not through assessing the capacity to memorize but the capacity to deliberate

Values to be conveyed through the teaching:

- that science and technology are social constructions and productions
- that scientific and technological knowledge is a collection of relative not absolute knowledge
- that science and technology are instrumental in promoting economic, social and cultural welfare
- that science and technology are means to promoting understanding - not hegemony – between and among peoples,
- that science and technology are means to a better understanding of the environment and the balance of ecosystems
- the interpretation of scientific and technological knowledge is socially and historically situated
- ban anthropocentrism, favor eco-centrism

Finally, El Hattab made some observations concerning assessment and evaluation of ethics learning:

- avoid evaluation methods that favor ‘psittacisme’ (repetition of memorized phrases)
- give emphasis to assessment of intellectual capacity and capacity to deliberate
- adopt modes of teaching and evaluation that focus on enlightenment of the citizen
- adopt process oriented forms of evaluation
- all researchers, teachers, decision-makers, users of scientific results, engineers, physicians, lawyers etc. should have in their curricula a component of ethics. For the time being, this is not at all the case in Morocco
- avoid as much as possible lectures, favor active learning, case-discussions, seminars, field work and comparative studies.

- favor integrated ethics teaching.

On behalf of all the participants Solbakk thanked El Hattab for this very frank, open-minded, rich and stimulating presentation and also for the splendid dinner offered by the Ministry of Scientific Research and University Cooperation on Monday evening.

### **Further development of ethics teaching. How can UNESCO contribute?**

In the last presentation in the meeting **Nouzha Guessous Idrissi**, Professor at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Casablanca, former member and chair of the IBC and member of UNESCO's Advisory Expert Committee for the Teaching of Ethics continued the presentation of UNESCO's Ethics Education Program started by Solbakk the first day by giving a more detailed account of the background, genesis and present status of the core course curriculum in bioethics.

The Committee that has developed this course proposal based on the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights is composed of previous and present experts from the International Bioethics Committee (IBC: Prof. Evans, Prof. Guessous-Idrissi, Prof. de Castro and Prof. Gracia, former member of COMEST), the World Commission for the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST: Prof. Apressyan), the World Medical Association (WMA: Prof. Williams), the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS: Prof. Balasubramanian) and a representative of the UNESCO chairs (Prof. Carmi). The Committee has organized meetings in Paris in July 2005, March 2006, June 2006, August 2006, to discuss the draft proposal. And in July 2007 a consultation meeting took place in Paris in cooperation with the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS), gathering 24 experts (from Argentina, Brazil, Cameroun, Canada, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, South Africa, Surinam, Togo, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom) to provide feedback on the draft proposal. . In June 2008 the Advisory Committee revised the proposal, based on the comments and feedback from the consultation meeting in June 2007. One result of the consultation meeting was that the proposal has been divided in two parts: (1) the description of objectives and syllabus of the units, and (2) the cases, illustrations and resource materials which will be more diversified according to regions and culture. The proposal has now been finalised, and three subsequent steps will be undertaken

- development of multimedia resources (with movies) in order to provide learning materials
- production of case books with supportive and illustrative materials
- introduction of the core course in university programmes in different Member States as a pilot project to test the course and obtain feedback for further improvement.

Highlights from the presentation:

- the core course is an introductory course in bioethics
- it is based on the 15 principles in the Universal Declaration of Bioethics and Human Rights, principles applied in different historical, cultural and religious contexts
- the core course is organized in open and flexible modules (17 in total) with both general and module-specific learning objectives
- the first target group for this course is medical students
- the course may, however, also be of interest to students from other health and life sciences as well as to researchers conducting research on human beings
- the course may also be adapted so as to comply with the learning needs of law-, philosophy and social science-students.

General learning objective: Students should be able to:

- identify ethical questions raised by medicine, healthcare and the life sciences

- to provide rational justification for ethical decisions
- to apply the principles of the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*

To these general learning objectives comes a whole range of module specific learning objectives.

### **The way forward**

Based on this presentation, which completed the presentation of UNESCO's Ethics Education Program, and the presentations and discussions of the existing teaching programs in the region there was a final discussion on the outcome of this meeting and the way forward.

As already noted, the eighteen teaching programs presented during the meeting in Marrakech sparked lively discussions and exchange of experiences with regard to achievements made so far, remaining common challenges and pressing needs. When revised and validated these teaching programs will be adding to the 173 programs stored in data base 3.

It became apparent that much of the ethics teaching in the region is still undertaken by a handful of dedicated pioneers in the absence of a robust institutional backing – a precarious situation that renders ethics teaching very vulnerable. It is therefore an urgent need to assist in the building of a new generation of ethics teachers in the region.

The issue of universalism versus particularism was a reoccurring theme during the meeting. The participants grappled with the question of how best to accommodate universal principles of bioethics with culture-sensitive practices.

Another important debate revolved around the best way forward: whether to strive for integration of ethics teaching modules in already existing teaching programs in medicine and health sciences, or to opt for an all-embracing teaching program in bioethics. Many of the participants seemed to favour the first option. On the other hand, a majority of the participants expressed the need for an introductory course related to the philosophical and historical foundations of bioethics as well to existing normative instruments in bioethics. The core course in bioethics developed by UNESCO was acknowledged as potentially very useful in this respect.

The meeting established an informal network of ethics teachers in the region, which will keep alive the ethics dialogue that commenced in Marrakech and explore the possibility of setting-up an exchange program of ethics teachers and students in the region.

Finally, the participants expressed their enthusiastic support for UNESCO's Ethics Education Program and suggested a follow-up to the Marrakech meeting in terms of organizing teacher trainer courses in bioethics in the region and of piloting the UNESCO core course curriculum in bioethics in one or two universities in the region. One University, Hassan II - Ain Chok, Casablanca has already sent an official request regarding the piloting of the teaching program in bioethics.