

**Bioethics. 2-Day Course**  
**Kollokvierum Vest, Victor Albeck Bygningen**

**April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**Aim:** The aim of the course is to give the students a nuanced view on and basis for a critical assessment of ethical questions within the biomedical field and hereby enhance the ability critically to evaluate the ethical implications in research projects within the health sciences.

**Contents:** The course gives an overview of the central questions within biomedical ethics. There will be an introduction to the sources of bioethics and select concrete questions. Among the concrete questions such issues as reproduction, genetics, end of life, allocation of resources, experiments with human beings and animals, and the relation to the patient will be of central concern. Further, during the course a casebased approach will give a concrete understanding of bioethical issues and a deeper understanding of one's own position and that of others.

All the teachers are affiliated to Centre for Bioethics and Nanoethics, Aarhus University. [www.bioetik.au.dk](http://www.bioetik.au.dk)

## **Programme**

### Day 1 (April 24<sup>th</sup>)

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| 8 – 9   | <i>Welcome and introduction</i> to bioethics. What is bioethics? Ulrik B. Nissen, Associate Professor.   |
| 9- 11   | <i>The Foundation of Bioethics.</i> Introduction to the different approaches to bioethics. The overview will present principle-based bioethics, absolute rule approach, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, and Christian ethics. UBN   |
| 11- 12  | <i>Case-work.</i> We will be working with a case, where the different approaches to bioethics can be applied. UBN  |
| 12- 13  | Break  |
| 13 – 15 | <i>Ethical aspects of gene therapy and stem cell research.</i> The lecture provides an overview of the development of bioethics. This serves as the background for an introduction to the use of the principle-based bioethical theory of Beauchamp and Childress to evaluate biomedical research ethically. In the light of this theory the course participants will be challenged to use the ethical tools on a concrete biomedical case: Gene therapy. The ethics of stem cell research will also be discussed. Finally, regulation-possibilities within stem cell research will be outlined. Mette Ebbesen, PhD fellow |
| 15 – 16 | <i>Questions in reproduction.</i> The lecture will raise a discussion of population issues, assisted reproduction, and prenatal screening. These issues will be discussed in the light of the ethical approaches presented earlier in the course. UBN  |

## Day 2 (April 25<sup>th</sup>)

- 8 – 9      *Ethical questions regarding genetic counselling.* After a brief exposition of genetic counselling (GC) this lecture will elucidate some of the major ethical questions that arise in connection with GC – for the counselee, the counsellor, and society as a whole. There will be a special focus on the question as to whether the traditional ideal of non-directive counselling can and should be maintained. Kees van Kooten Niekerk, Associate Research Professor
- 9 – 10      *Questions of life and Death.* We will take a look at ethical decisions at the end of life from the perspectives of two theories: consequentialism and deontology. We will also look into various conceptions of the quality, value and sanctity of human life. Morten Dige, Assistant Professor
- 10 – 11      *Case: Should one have children who are at risk of inheriting the mutation causing Huntington's Disease?* A couple of which the male partner has a 50% risk of being a carrier of the Huntington gene contacts a genetic counsellor for reproductive advice. The participants of this workshop are invited to discuss (a) which options the couple has and the pros and contras connected with each of them; (b) which option they would choose, if they were the male partner; (c) whether they would recommend some options rather than others, if they were the genetic counsellor. KKN
- 11- 12      *Is the Danish health care system based on an ethic?* A fundamental principle in the Danish health care system has been the notion of equal access for everyone irrespective of economic status. The public health care system has been an essential part of the Danish welfare society. Ethically this is based on concepts such as justice and solidarity. The alternative is a private health care system built upon the principle of the freedom of the individual. Can one argue equally well for both models? Do we have tenable intermediate solutions? What is the health care system actually offering: Health? Quality of life? How far can economic considerations be used for a prioritization of health care services? Svend Andersen, Professor
- 12 – 13      Break
- 13 – 14      *Experimentation with human subjects.* What kind of ethical considerations are important with respect to experimentation with human subjects? Does it make a difference, if we are speaking about embryos? UBN
- 14 – 15      *Animal ethical and religious considerations on the use of animals.* Throughout the ages different views on the human being's ethical duties with respect to animals have been articulated. Already in Genesis we find two different stories of creation raising different questions: Are the animals merely there for our use? Or are human beings rather to be seen as custodians? In this lecture the contemporary use of animals for experimentation will be discussed and the ethical issues will be raised. Aage Kristian Olsen, D.V.M., Ph.D.
- 15 – 16      *The relation to the patient.* Several central issues concerned with the patient-relation will be discussed. Particularly questions such as confidence, trust, autonomy, and informed consent will be raised. UBN