

PROPOSAL FOR COMBINED DEGREES IN MEDICINE (MD) WITH A COMPETENCY IN MORAL REASONING AND ETHICAL JUDGMENT AND PHILOSOPHY (MA) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN BIOETHICS

Presented by:

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In September 2003, the ICHE approved the offering at IUPUI of an MA program in philosophy, with concentrations in either bioethics or American philosophy. The present proposal is for a program at IUPUI leading to combined degrees in medicine and philosophy. Students completing the program will receive a Doctor of Medicine (MD) and a Master of Arts (MA) in Philosophy, with a concentration in bioethics. The proposed combination is not uncommon. Among the institutions offering combined degrees in medicine and bioethics are the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Pittsburgh, Case Western Reserve University, Georgetown University, Michigan State University, and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Background

Bioethics, the ethics of the life sciences, encompasses both medical and environmental ethics. It is a field of rapidly growing importance, both nationally and internationally. Environmental concerns are ever more pressing, and the development, delivery, financing, and regulation of healthcare products and services is a major economic and social endeavor. Bioethical issues – social, legal, and philosophical – confront a diverse array of institutions, including state and federal agencies, healthcare organizations, research and educational institutions, corporations (national and multinational), human rights organizations, medical insurers, and religious bodies. In combining the philosophical study of bioethics with the study of medicine, students will acquire the perspective, knowledge, and expertise that will equip them to provide leadership concerning the bioethical issues faced by such institutions, as well as to implement ethical principles in their own practice.

The Indiana University School of Medicine requires students to achieve a level 3 (the mastery level of competence) in three of the nine competencies that comprise the IUSM curriculum in order to be eligible for graduation. A program leading to combined degrees in medicine and philosophy, with a concentration in bioethics, will be an important addition to the school's ethics curriculum, and it will provide participating students with the opportunity to achieve a level 3 in the Moral Reasoning and Ethical Judgment competency.

Since the introduction of the master's program with tracks in both bioethics and American philosophy, the IUPUI Department of Philosophy has intended for the bioethics track to be primarily for mid-career professionals and students in IUPUI's professional schools. A

partnership with the School of Medicine would be especially welcome for four reasons: the value of a medical background for students who intend to work as clinical bioethicists, the crucial knowledge that medicine provides for addressing bioethical issues, the national stature of the IU School of Medicine, and the prospect of attracting to the department's graduate courses substantial numbers of highly capable medical students.

Program Requirements

Students wishing to be accepted simultaneously into both the MD and MA program will need to meet all requirements for admission into both programs with the exception of the admission tests. The Department of Philosophy will accept MCAT scores in lieu of the GRE scores required of students seeking only the MA in Philosophy degree. As is customary, the combined-degrees program will enable students to obtain the two degrees, MD and MA, while earning fewer total credits than if they pursued the two degrees separately. This reduction is the result of each degree program counting some courses from the other program as part of the course work required for its own degree. During their fifth year of training, the students will choose two electives from a list of courses in Medicine (see appendix A). While completion of these electives will earn the students eight (8) credit hours towards the total 164 credits required for an MD degree, they may also count up to seven (7) of these credits towards the 30 credits required for the MA in philosophy. Furthermore, P803, the capstone of the MA program, will count as six (6) credits for both degrees. Thus the program enables students to obtain both degrees with a total of **181** credits of course work rather than the **194** credits required if the two degrees are obtained independently.

The capstone of the proposed combined-degrees program is the 6-credit course Philosophy P803, in which students complete a thesis or research project addressing medical and philosophical aspects of a bioethical issue. In addition to counting toward the credits required for both degrees, P803 will provide students with the opportunity to achieve a level three in the School of Medicine's Moral Reasoning and Ethical Judgment competency.

The following is a sample schedule of courses for students pursuing the combined-degrees program here proposed.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE COMBINED DEGREES IN MEDICINE (MD) AND PHILOSOPHY (MA) <i>(Italicized courses are counted toward both degrees.)</i>	
First Year Medicine Program: 40 cr.	
Fall	Spring
Fall semester of MS1 year	Spring semester of MS1 year
Summer Philosophy Program: 3 cr.	
Students will be offered one 3-credit hour courses from the list of courses in Appendix B	
Second Year Medicine Program: 40 cr.	
Fall Semester of MS2 year	Spring semester of MS2 year
Third year Philosophy Program: 15 cr.	
Students will choose three 3-credit hour courses from the list of Philosophy courses in Appendix B (9 cr. total)	Students will choose two 3-credit hour courses from the list of Philosophy courses in Appendix B (6 cr. total)
Fourth Year Medicine Program: 44 cr.	
MS3 year: <i>(Students may choose one course from Appendix A as an elective; up to 7 cr. hours from this list may be counted towards MA)</i>	
Fifth Year Medicine Program: 40 cr.; Philosophy Program: 12 cr.	
MS4 year (Students will have three required clinical rotations, a minimum of seven elective rotations (four of which must be established electives from Elective Program Catalog, and the required capstone course).	
<i>PHIL P803 Thesis or Research Project (6 cr.(Work may be spread over multiple years))</i>	
<i>Students will choose two elective courses from the list shown in Appendix A, one if they had already taken an elective from this list the previous year (8 cr. towards MD and 6-7 cr. towards MA)</i>	

Other optional course schedules for MD/MA students:

Students may begin the MA by taking one 3 cr. course during the summer prior to their 1st year of medical school.

The full-time year devoted to the MA could be done after the 3rd year of medical school as opposed to the 2nd year.

Students may complete the first two years of medical school and then begin the MA by completing a year devoted to the MA full-time (18 cr.) before their clerkship (3rd) year. (This option is for MD students who apply to the MA program during their 1st or 2nd years).

Students may complete the first three years of medical school and then begin the MA by completing a year devoted to the MA full-time (18 cr.). (This option is for MD students who apply to the MA program during their 2nd or 3rd years).