

International Cooperation for Development: Specifics of the Health Area

Curriculum Matrix



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NETHIS
NÚCLEO DE ESTUDOS SOBRE
BIOÉTICA E DIPLOMACIA EM SAÚDE



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International Cooperation for Development: Specifics of the Health Area - Curriculum matrix -

1. Introduction

The purpose of this curriculum matrix is to support the development of different educational projects around a scientific and professional field located at the confluence of three known specialties, both in academia and among government institutions and the private sector: international relations, public health and bioethics.

It is a proposal to be shared by different educational institutions in the formulation and implementation of many types of courses, aimed at serving different professional and institutional demands. That is, a basic programming from which projects can be developed according to specific situations.

The set of themes includes, in an integrated way and in a critical perspective, the conceptual, political and operational dimensions of different spheres of knowledge and practices, favouring the doctrinal aspects and the social relevance of health in the context of international relations. The interdisciplinary approach of these fields is explored from the articulation between the key concepts of **inequality**, **development** and **cooperation** that provides a critical analysis of health conditions in the world vis-à-vis the policies and practices of development and cooperation among countries in the United Nations era.

An interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary field is configured as an "intermediate universe [...] in which the agents and institutions that produce, reproduce or disseminate" knowledge and practices are inserted, according to the definition of scientific field inspired by Bourdieu (2003). In the case at hand, it refers to the areas of activity or "fields" of public health, bioethics and international relations, historically known by the institutionalization of its practices, training of its agents and consolidation of its organizational representations within the society and the state apparatus.

The visibility of this interdisciplinary field or "intermediate universe" between these areas has been the focus of the Center for Bioethics and Diplomacy Studies in Health (NETHIS)¹ established by FIOCRUZ in 2010, in collaboration with the University of Brasilia and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/Brazil). In this context, the proposition of this curriculum matrix arises and the strategies for its wide dissemination.

The motivation for this proposal is the weak link between the actors of these areas, both in education as in the institutional practice that persists historically blurring or hindering this interdisciplinary and intersectoriality. The distance between these actors is revealed from observations about the teaching and researching practices, the dynamics of the associated entities and the segmentation of the labor market between these areas of knowledge and practice.

The boundaries between the institutional areas dominated by health workers and diplomats function more like separating lines than understanding lines and sharing initiatives between the fields of public health and international relations. The same is happening between them and experts in bioethics, with serious implications on the ethical issues inherent to regulatory processes of research, development and technological innovation in the international context.

The articulation between undergraduate and postgraduate courses of these three areas is practically non-existent or very recent. In Brazil, there has been the creation of only one center of studies in this triple border, NETHIS/FIOCRUZ.

The congresses of these specialties merely address the interdisciplinary approach considered here, although the motto of these events in recent years

¹ Detailed reports on the mission and NETHIS' activities can be found at www.bioeticaediplomacia.org.

express this intention² when considering the descriptors of the thematic areas for registering papers, the schedule of conferences and discussion tables and the list itself of papers approved by the respective scientific committees. Possibly the detachment of this interdisciplinary cut denotes only the strong concern for each specialty alone by the promoters and therefore its directors and associates, researchers and authors. It would be absurd to admit a boycott or an aversion of the organizers of the various conclaves, since there is a group of researchers, scholars and practitioners genuinely interested in the interdisciplinary approach to these areas of education, research and professional practice. However, the works with this approach, presented from 2010 in the congresses of Brazilian associations of Public Health (ABRASCO), Bioethics (SBB) and International Relations (ABRI) are scarce; pretty much they refer to the ones promoted by NETHIS/FIOCRUZ.

These considerations denote the relevance of the proposal of a curriculum matrix that allows the creation of educational opportunities on a large scale about International Cooperation for Development: Specifics of the Health Area. This objective gains strength at the magnitude and complexity of the agenda on this topic in the context of external relations policies, particularly, according to recognized ethical and doctrinal conflicts (BENATAR, 2003; ROUNDTABLE, 2015; FIDLER, 2015) that surround the health-development-cooperation trinity.

Other initiatives by NETHIS/FIOCRUZ constitute its ballast facing this new challenge³: BVS Bioethics and Health Diplomacy; Video Library; Cycle of Debates; and Teaching and Research and Communication programs.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this project is divided into an ultimate objective, an intermediate objective and an operational objective.

The ultimate objective is to promote the reorientation of processes regarding international cooperation for development in the health field, based on the principle of solidarity and the concept of health as a human right.

² In this regard, check the webpages of ABRASCO (www.abrasco.org.br), ABRI (www.abri.org.br) and SBB (www.sbbioetica.org.br).

³ Consult the sessions listed in NETHIS/FIOCRUZ homepage (<http://bioeticaediplomacia.org/pt/>): Library (VHL); Video Library; Cycle of Debates; Teaching, Research and Communication.

The intermediate objective is to support the realization of specific courses focusing on an interdisciplinary view of the fields of public health, bioethics and international relations, embracing education as a joint strategy between actors and institutions of these three scientific and professional fields.

The third objective refers to the operational diversity of these courses, preserving the focus on health in the scope of international relations and the ethical regulation of these activities.

In short, this approach requires a flexible curriculum, adjustable to processes of traditional and distance learning through courses of short duration, specialization, master's and doctorate, to be shared by different educational institutions, responding to diversified demands. A curriculum that considers the conceptual, political and operational dimensions of the three spheres of knowledge and practices in question, focusing on the social relevance of health in the context of international relations.

As mentioned initially, the interdisciplinary approach key of this curriculum falls on the articulation between the key concepts of **inequality**, **development** and **cooperation**, seeking a new analysis of health conditions in the world vis-à-vis the policies and practices of development and cooperation between countries in the United Nations era.

3. Clientele

Considerations of the clientele come from the understanding of a curriculum matrix adjustable to different institutional demands of both the educational sector and the services sector.

Clientele is an everyday term to designate those seeking courses, i.e. the "[...] agents and the institutions that produce, reproduce or disseminate [...]" knowledge and practices in an "intermediate universe", according to the meaning aforementioned of scientific field (BOURDIEU, 2003). In this case, the exercise of diplomacy in health with a bioethical approach.

The design of this profile originates from the characteristics of the institutions and actors present in the multifaceted landscape of government agencies, private sector and civil society working in the arenas in which processes on international cooperation in health develop and through which flow conflicting interests between

private habits and public benefits(FONSECA, 1993), often captained by bad Samaritans (CHANG, 2009).

This list of candidates presents a very diverse profile, especially because the educational projects will also be differentiated according to the standards of the education systems and the nature of the entities that offer the courses in different contexts.

In this sense, Rousseau's (1999) reflection in his speech on sciences and arts is an inspiration for the choices available when one thinks both about the clientele and the very nature of the specific courses to be offered from this curriculum matrix: "[. ..] Which party should I take on this matter? The one, gentlemen, that benefits a good man who knows nothing and as such does not feel underestimated".

The following general recommendations, which must appear on specific projects of the courses, as to the characteristics of applicants, are:

- Detachment to stanch interpretative schemes or those restricted to specific fields of political science and international relations, public health and bioethics;
- Interest in developing a new insight about the traditional formulas and conventions of elaboration, implementation, policy assessment and international cooperation projects;
- Commitment to explore and share meanings on public regulation of cooperation processes, guided by the principle of solidarity and by the concept of health as a human and citizenship right.

Regarding the institutional demands, surely they will depend on internal political criteria, but can be stimulated and guided by the disclosure of the courses' offer and by the cooperative joint to be undertaken by NETHIS/FIOCRUZ and other educational institutions that eventually join the project.

4. Program

The design of this curriculum matrix is based on the experience of courses of short duration offered by NETHIS/FIOCRUZ⁴ since 2012.

⁴ Detailed reports on these courses can be found at NETHIS' website: <http://bioeticaediplomacia.org/pt/cursos/>.

The option for the modular structure is to facilitate the conception of differentiated specific courses, according to the institutional decisions of both the supply and demand for such courses. A non-exhaustive list of arguments in favor of this curricular organization includes:

- A simplified management of preferred content, emphasizing curriculum components (modules) of greater interest of certain clientele;
- A general or more in-depth approach to content, measured according to available hours, depending on decisions of the institutions offering it and those demanding each course;
- The possibility of including additional curriculum components, by resolution of the institution offering specific courses or in consideration to the interests of the clientele of these courses;
- The option of providing the whole or part of the modules, for reasons similar to those mentioned previously.

The content of the curriculum matrix is delimited into quadrants, which correspond to four thematic modules:

1. Health, environment and development in the context of international relations;
2. International cooperation in health;
3. International cooperation in health: (between) development and inequalities;
4. Management of policies and projects of international cooperation in health.

The overall design of the curriculum was subject of workshops with advisors and teachers of the project. At this stage, the apprehension of the content was limited to the statement of the ultimate objective of the curriculum and the general objectives of the four modules, as shown in the table at the end of this document. Details of the modular contents of the curriculum matrix will be given later, based on the experience of courses of short duration already undertaken by NETHIS/FIOCRUZ and, specially, based on its new the distance learning course.

The programming of the learning activities of each module content should be done in coordination with activities focused on:

- Correlation, integration and systematization of specific content and from other modules;

- Preparation of analysis of concrete situations, case studies and experiences of the learning actors;
- Formative evaluations.

The curriculum scope can be limited or extended depending on the workload of specific courses, which may take all or part of the set of modules. It is also possible to consider this programming as part of another course with a broader scope. Thus, the curriculum matrix may assume many versions in the form of:

- Courses of improvement, short duration or specialization;
- Modules or subjects of specialization courses with a broader thematic composition that this curriculum matrix – for example, an integral module of a specialization course in public health; bioethics; international relations; or other academic areas;
- Subjects of undergraduate courses, short duration, specialization, master's or doctoral degree in the mentioned areas.

In addition to these options, the range of alternatives can be diversified by use of resources facilitating tele-education, adopting the full content or part of the curriculum matrix in the form of distance learning education courses, both in the *latu sensu* as in the *stricto sensu*.

A detailed description of the teaching units, comprising the sequences of learning activities should be developed in subsequent phases of implementation of that curriculum matrix, i.e., in the preparation of each specific course. At such times, the choices and settings will be made about the content, references and other learning support resources, to be included in the programming of specific courses according to their purposes, clientele and other specifications.

Next, the summary of the matrix course components:

Object: International Cooperation for Development: Specifics of the Health Area, in an interdisciplinary approach and an integrative thematic focus of conceptual, political and operational dimensions of three spheres of knowledge and practices (public health, bioethics and international relations) by focusing the ethical aspects and the social relevance of health in the context of international relations and adopting as key approach the conceptual triad inequality-development-cooperation.

Purpose: To provide educational opportunities in the interdisciplinary field of public health, bioethics and international relations through a didactic and pedagogical

structure that works as a basis for the development of different types of courses designed to meet actors and public and private institutions related to international cooperation.

Clientele: Professionals working in national and international organizations, governmental or from the private sector, directly or indirectly related to international cooperation, as well as teachers, students and researchers in the areas of health, bioethics and international relations.

Modality and timetable: To be specified in the project of courses designed based on this curriculum matrix.

Curricular structure:

Final objective	
To provide educational opportunities designed to meet actors and public and private institutions, interested in deepening reflections on cooperation processes between countries in health, in the political-institutional framework of international relations and focusing on ethical aspects of these processes.	
Modules	General objectives
1. Health, Environment and Development	To critically relate health, environment and development, based on international policies.
2. Health and International Cooperation for Development	To critically explore international cooperation in health as part of the cooperation practices for the development from the mid-twentieth century.
3. International Cooperation in Health: (between) Development and Inequalities	To discuss the understanding of international cooperation as a promoter of development and responsible for reducing inequalities.
4. Management of Policies and Projects of International Cooperation in Health	To reflect on the contemporary conjunctures that stimulate practices of international cooperation in health and its operating procedures.

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