# Bioethics (Second-level Degree)

## Prof. Adriano Pessina

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with adequate knowledge of the main topics of bioethics and to form the student with a mature philosophical reflection that allows them to address specific issues related to the profound transformations of human experience introduced by biotechnologies.

At the end of the course, students will have a fundamental grasp of bioethics and a critical understanding of the key issues in this area; they will be able apply independent judgement in approaching some of the complex practical and theoretical scenarios introduced by the development of new technologies. Furthermore, through in-depth analyses and class discussions about some specific issues, the conceptual tools aimed at the analysis of situations and at the development of philosophical argumentation shall be consolidated.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The annual course is divided into an institutional module and a single subject module. The general part of the course will: define the epistemological foundations of bioethics; examine the debate on the relationship between the concepts of persona and human being; focus on ethical and anthropological themes related to extracorporeal generation, assisted suicide, euthanasia and so-called brain death.

The single subject part is dedicated to the ethical and anthropological problems connected with the project of improving, perfecting and transforming man himself in a context that is no longer therapeutic. We will examine both the issues related to so-called liberal eugenics, and the perspectives that arise in the context of so-called *Human Enhancement*, with the intention of rethinking some of the theoretical frameworks concerning the redefinition of anthropocentrism and the question of the ego.

***READING LIST***

A. Pessina, *Bioetica L’uomo sperimentale*, 3rd Edition, Milan-Turin, Pearson 2020.

A. Pessina, *L’io insoddisfatto. Tra Prometeo e Dio*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2016.

J. Habermas, *Il futuro della natura umana,* trad.it. Torino, Einaudi 2002.

**Please note** Those who have already passed the Bioethics exam in the three-year course *will be able* to replace the volume *Bioetica. L’uomo sperimentale* with the textA. Pessina (edited by) *Paradoxa. Etica della condizione umana*, Vita e Pensiero 2010, or agree on an alternative volume with the lecturer.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures. Analysis and discussion of course topics. Three hours per week.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be examined by means of an oral exam. Students must demonstrate their knowledge of the key concepts presented on the course, and their ability to navigate among the essential topics/issues discussed in lectures and in the texts on the reading list. Students will be assessed on the following: the relevance of their responses; the appropriate use of specific terminology; the ability to present a well-structured argument; the ability to make conceptual links and identify unresolved questions; and their use of philosophical language.

Marks:

30 with distinction: excellent, very sound knowledge, excellent expressive ability, full understanding of concepts and arguments.

30: very good, full and sufficient knowledge, accurate and well-articulated expression.

27-29: good, sufficient knowledge, generally accurate expression.

24-26: quite good knowledge, but incomplete and not always accurate.

21-23: generally good but superficial knowledge. Frequently inappropriate expression.

18-21: sufficient knowledge of the main issues.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Owing to its introductory nature, there are no prerequisites in terms of course contents. However, students will require basic knowledge of philosophy, an interest in and intellectual curiosity about the ethical issues raised by technological developments and a certain propensity for formulating arguments.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board.