**Public Ethics**

## Prof. Alberto Pirni

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

The course aims to provide the key theoretical tools for the design, development, and assessment of public policies. This means, first of all, the presentation of an extensive definition of the concept of *Public ethics*, with specific reference to two different – yet interrelated – profiles: on the one hand, the fundamental and primary theoretical-problematic field and the relative contexts of application, and, on the other hand, the close observation of some of the most relevant terms forming the specific terminology of public ethics, with a focus on Public institutions. Therefore, a second part of the course will be based on the presentation and critical analysis of the main *theories of justice* that are currently being discussed in the ethical-public debate as potential models for social and public policies.

At the end of the course, students will have acquired a clear knowledge of the definition and application of public ethics, together with a specific competence in critical thinking, argumentative skills, autonomy of judgment with respect to concrete situations. They are also expected to have a conscious familiarity with some key concepts of ideal ‘lexicon’ of public ethics, suitable for each application and professional context, with particular reference to the main theories of justice and their specific issues.

***COURSE CONTENT***

a) Defining profiles: what is ethics and in what way can it be called public.

b) The essential vocabulary of public ethics: the analysis of the concepts of integrity, duty, responsibility, trust, transparency, bureaucracy, corruption, power and democracy.

d) On the concept of ‘justice’: preliminary overview.

e) Justice and equality: theories of justice between Platonic roots, modernity and contemporary debate.

***READING LIST***

Alongside the material provided during lectures, students shall study two books in preparation for the exam: any one book from Point a); the book in Point b). Alternative or additional reading material may be indicated during the course. Non-attending students are invited to contact the lecturer in order to agree on the exam syllabus.

a) General reading (one from the following list):

F. Botturi-F. Totaro (edited by), *Universalismo ed etica pubblica,* Milan, Vita e Pensiero 2006.

F. Merloni – A. Pirni, *Etica per le istituzioni. Un lessico*, Pref. di R. Cantone, Roma, Donzelli 2021.

S. Maffettone, *Etica pubblica,* Milan, Net 2006.

b) In-depth study material:

S. Maffettone-S. Veca (edited by), *L’idea di giustizia da Platone a Rawls,* Rome-Bari, Laterza 2008 (and further printing).

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures and seminar-based activities to discuss texts. In-depth study seminars also via participatory teaching.

As well as for the particular topics concerned and the teaching method employed, a fixed attendance is sincerely recommended.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Assessment will be carried out through the traditional form of the oral exam.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Although there are no specific prerequisites for the course, for its best understanding, students are expected to be familiar with philosophical thought starting from the Classics of the Western tradition, together with competence and propension to theoretical exercise and argumentative practice.

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.