Bioethics

## Prof. Alessio Musio

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

The course aims to introduce a philosophical reflection on the main ethical and anthropological questions raised by medicine and technoscience to try to understand and evaluate the continuous *transformations of human experience* that they determine together.

At the end of the course, students will be able to know the main bioethical issues and will have the conceptual tools to participate competently in public debates on bioethics, thanks to an adequate vocabulary and argumentative method.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided into three parts. The first part is dedicated to a brief survey of the origin of bioethics, and it is aimed at placing its nature of “critical awareness of technological civilization” in the foreground: students will then reflect on the transformations of human experience determined by technology, so as to be able to also evaluate the role played by *habit* in the awareness of these transformations.

The second part will focus on the presentation of the more classic chapters of the bioethical debate, addressing issues relating to the “beginning” and the “end of life”, along a path that from extracorporeal fertilisation will investigate the problem of therapeutic obstinacy, euthanasia, and assisted suicide, interpreted in the light of the fundamental anthropological distinction between the experience of *pain* and that of *suffering*.

The third part of the course will be dedicated to the analysis of the theme of *surrogacy*, to understand its inevitable repercussions on the meaning of anthropology and of our civilization, starting with the distinction between *people* and *things*.

Synthetic overview of the contents:

* The definition of bioethics and its history; the debate on the distinction between “secular bioethics” and “Catholic bioethics”; the relationship between *technology* and *habit*.
* The issue of the “person” and its problematic functionalist reduction (from the discovery of the value of the *uniqueness* of the ego to the logic of *discrimination*).
* Coming into the world and death of “someone” (critique of the notions of ‘beginning’ and ‘end of life’); understand the distinction between pain and suffering; from the spectrum of therapeutic obstinacy to the distinction between passive euthanasia, euthanasia and assisted suicide.
* The issue of surrogacy in relation to technology, feminism and desires.

***READING LIST***

Adriano Pessina, *Bioetica L’uomo sperimentale,* III Edition, Milan -Turin, Pearson 2020 (in particular: pp. 3-44; 69-103; 125-154; 177-200).

Alessio Musio, *Baby Boom. Critica della maternità surrogata,* Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2021 (in particular: pp. 9-54; 143-209).

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lessons. Analysis and discussion of the course topics. Three hours a week.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam consists of an interview aimed at verifying and assessing: the learning and understanding of the topics covered during lectures and in the textbook specified in the reading list; the students’ presentation and argumentatition skills; their mastery of the philosophical lexicon; the ability to establish links among the various topics.

*Assessment:*

30 cum laude: excellent, solid knowledge, excellent presentation skills, complete understanding of the topics covered.

30: very good, complete and adequate knowledge, correct and well-articulated presentation skills.

27-29: Good, satisfactory knowledge, essentially correct presentation skills.

24-26: Quite good, although incomplete and not always correct knowledge.

21-23: Generally good but superficial knowledge. Often inappropriate presntation skills.

18-21: Sufficient knowledge of the main topics

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Since this is an introductory course, there are no prerequisites for attending it. However, students are expected to have interest and intellectual curiosity for the philosophical reflection dedicated to concrete issues.

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.