

**AA 2019/2020**  
**BIOETHICS (T039)**  
Spring Term

**Mirko D. Garasic**

**Introduction**

Bioethical questions have a crucial role both in people's personal choices and in the political domain. The goal of the course is to introduce students to the main controversies in contemporary bioethics, especially to those concerning freedom of choice, the control of life, and cutting-edge medical research. At the end of the course, students will be equipped with the conceptual tools required to understand the main debates in bioethics and the most relevant positions in the debate. Hopefully, they will be also able to take their own stance on these subjects. To this purpose, for almost each class two opposing readings will be presented and discussed by students.

We will start with a general introduction to the domain and methods of bioethics, and then move to discussing the issues of abortion and reproductive freedom. We will then introduce the issues of valuing life in its extreme and most difficult circumstances, and explore the complex theme of autonomy in cases of assisted suicide, euthanasia, and vegetative states. In the last part of the course we will discuss the bioethical challenges prompted by genetics, such as cloning, human enhancement, and patenting genes, and how controversies over them impact on medical research. We will conclude by exploring the ethics of medical experimentation on humans and animals, and focus on the questions of justice in the resource allocation for health at state and global level.

Particular attention will be paid to the "controversies" over these topics, and students will be asked to present in favor or against a particular issue (see reading material).

**Class 1 – Introduction (Feb 11, 2020)**

Arras, John, "Theory and Bioethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/theory-bioethics/>)

Suggested:

Helga Kuhse and Peter Singer, "What Is Bioethics? A Historical Introduction", in Helga Kuhse and

Peter Singer (eds), *A Companion to Bioethics*, Wiley-Blackwell, London and New York, 2009; 2009, pp. 3-12

### **Class 2 – Methods in Bioethics (I) (Feb 12)**

James F. Childress, “Methods in Bioethics”, in Bonnie Steinbock (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of Bioethics*, Oxford University Press, 2007, pp.15- 45;

Daniel P. Sulmasy, ‘Reinventing’ the Rule of Double Effect, *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 114-152

### **Class 3 – Methods (II): Principle-based versus Case-based Approach (Feb 18)**

John D. Arras, “The Way We Reason Now: Reflective Equilibrium in Bioethics”, in Steinbock, *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 46-71

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*Controversies: Are There Universal Ethical Principles That Should Govern the Conduct of Medicine and Research?*

Daryl Pullman, “There Are”; Kevin S. Decker, “There Are Not”, in Arthur C. Caplan, and Robert Arp (eds), *Contemporary Debates in Bioethics*, Wiley- Blackwell, 2013, pp. 17-42

### **Class 4 – The Ethics of Abortion (Feb 19)**

Judith Jarvis Thomson, “A Defence of Abortion”, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1 (1):47-66, 1971

Don Marquis, “Abortion Revisited”, *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 395-415

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*Controversies: Is The Deliberately Induced Abortion of a Human Pregnancy Is Ethically Justifiable?*

Jeffrey Reiman “Abortion is ethically justifiable”; Don Marquis, “Abortion is not ethically justifiable”, *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 105-136

### **Class 5 – Issues about Reproductive Freedom (Feb 25)**

Carolyn McLeod, For Dignity or Money: Feminists on the Commodification of Women’s Reproductive Labour, *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 258-284

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*Controversies: Should In Vitro Fertilization Be an Option for a Woman?*

Laura Purdy, “Yes”; Christopher Tollefsen, “It Should Not”, *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 435-464

### **Class 6 – Doing and Allowing Harm (Feb 26)**

Howard-Snyder, Frances, “Doing vs. Allowing Harm”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2011 (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/doing-allowing/>)

*Controversies: Is Killing always worse than Letting Die?*

Nesbitt, Winston. "Is killing no worse than letting die?", *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, Vol.12, No. 1, 199, pp. 101-106; Kuhse, Helga. "Why Killing Is Not Always Worse-and Is Sometimes Better-Than Letting Die", *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics* (1998), 7, 371-374

### **Class 7 – Autonomy in Bioethics (Mar 3)**

Bruce Jennings, "Autonomy", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 72-89.

Jeanette Kennett, "Mental Disorder, Moral Agency, and the Self", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 90-113.

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*Controversies: Should the Child Have the Right to Refuse Medical Treatment to Which the Child's Parents or Guardians Have Consented?*

William J. Winslade, "He Should"; Catherine M. Brooks, "Should Not", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 167-196

### **Class 8 – Consent, Confidentiality, and Truth-telling (Mar 4)**

Eyal, Nir, "Informed Consent", *Stanford Encyclopedia*  
(<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/informed-consent/>)

Allen, Anita, "Privacy and Medicine", *Stanford Encyclopedia*  
(<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/privacy-medicine/>)

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*Controversies: Are There Are Circumstances in Which a Doctor May Withhold Information?*

Tom L. Beauchamp, "There Are"; Jason T. Eberl, "There Are Not", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 401-434.

### **Class 9 – Organ Transplantation (Mar 10)**

Ronald Munson, "Organ Transplantation", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 211-239

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*Controversies: "Is It Morally Acceptable to Buy and Sell Organs for Human Transplantation?"*

Mark J. Cherry, "It is"; Arthur L. Caplan, "It Is Not", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 43-72

### **Class 10 – End of life (I): Death (Mar 11)**

Stuart J. Youngner, "The Definition of Death", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 285-303

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*Controversies: Can There Be Agreement as to What Constitutes Human Death?*

James L. Bernat, "Yes"; Winston Chiong, "No", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 360-400

### **Class 11 – End of life (II): Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia (Mar 17)**

Gerald Dworkin, "Physician-Assisted Death: The State of the Debate", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 375-394

James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia." *New England Journal of Medicine* 292, 2 (1975): 78-80.

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*Controversies: Is Physician-Assisted Suicide Ever Ethical?*

John Lachs, "Yes"; Patrick Lee, "No", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 197- 228

### **Class 12 – Vegetative States and Severely Disabled People (Mar 18)**

Eike-Henner W. Kluge, "Severely Disabled Newborns", *Companion to Bioethics*, pp. 274-285

Jeff McMahan, "Death, Brain Death, and Persistent Vegetative State", *Companion to Bioethics*, pp. 285-289

### **Class 13 – Human Enhancement (Mar 31)**

Thomas H. Murray, "Enhancement", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 491-515

Julian Savulescu, "Genetic Interventions and the Ethics of Enhancement of Human Beings", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 516-535

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*Controversies: Should we enhance our love?*

Brian D. Earp, et al. (2015). The Medicalization of Love. *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics*, 24(3), 323–336 "Yes", Mirko D. Garasic, (2017) Enhancements 2.0: self-creation might not be as lovely as some think, *Topoi*, available at: <http://rdcu.be/qTZq> "No"

### **Class 14 – Cloning (Apr 1)**

Andrea Bonnicksen, "Therapeutic Cloning: Politics and Policy", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 441-470

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*Controversies: Were It Physically Safe, Would Human Reproductive Cloning Be Acceptable?*

Katrien Devolder, "Yes"; Stephen E. Levick, "No", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 73-104

### **Class 15 – Patenting Genes (Apr 7)**

Gannett, Lisa, "The Human Genome Project", *Stanford Encyclopedia* (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/human-genome/>)

Louise Irving and John Harris, Biobanking, *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 240-257

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*Controversies: Is It Ethical to Patent or Copyright Genes, Embryos, or Their Parts?*

Lawrence M. Sung, "Yes"; David Koepsell, "No", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 137-166

### **Class 16 – Neuroethics and Neuroprivacy (Apr 8)**

Martha J. Farah, *Neuroethics: the practical and the philosophical*, 2005  
([http://repository.upenn.edu/neuroethics\\_pubs/8](http://repository.upenn.edu/neuroethics_pubs/8))

Marcello Ienca & Roberto Andorno, "Towards new human rights in the age of neuroscience and neurotechnology", *Life Sciences, Society and Policy* (2017) 13:5

### **Class 17 – Big Data and AI (Apr 15) (Guest Lecture Dr. Marcello Ienca)**

#### **"Ethics and Artificial Intelligence"**

Shaw, Jonathan, "Artificial Intelligence and Ethics", *Harvard Magazine*, Jan.-Feb. 2019.

Additional Reading TBD

### **Class 18 – Research Ethics (Apr 21)**

Wendler, David, "The Ethics of Clinical Research", *Stanford Encyclopedia*  
(<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/clinical-research/>)

Florence Luna, "Research in Developing Countries", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 621-647

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*Controversies: Are International Clinical Trials Exploitative?*

Jamie Carlin Watson, "Yes"; Richard J. Arneson, "No", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 465-500

### **Class 19 – Experimenting on humans and animals (Apr 22)**

Jason Karlawish, "Research on Cognitively Impaired Adults", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 597-620

Alastair Norcross, "Animal Experimentation", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 648-670

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*Controversies: Should We Prohibit the Use of Chimpanzees and Other Great Apes in Biomedical Research?*

Jean Kazez, "We should"; Carl Cohen "We Should Not", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 261-290

### **Class 20 – Genetic and Stem-Cell Research (May 28)**

Matthew DeCamp and Allen Buchanan, "Pharmacogenomics: Ethical and Regulatory Issues",  
*Oxford Handbook*, pp. 536-570

Bonnie Steinbock, "Moral Status, Moral Value, and Human Embryos: Implications for Stem Cell Research", in *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 416-440

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*Controversies: Should Stem-Cell Research Utilizing Embryonic Tissue Be Conducted?*

Jane Maienschein: "Yes"; Bertha Alvarez Manninen, "No", *Contemporary Debates*, pp. 229-260

### **Class 21 – Global Health Issues (May 29)**

Ruth Macklin, "Global Health", *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 696-720

Jonathan D. Moreno, Bioethics and Bioterrorism, *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 721-734

### **Class 22 – Public Health Ethics (May 5) (Guest Lecture: Dr. Zohar Lederman)**

#### **"Ethical Frameworks in Public Health"**

Nancy E. Kass, "An Ethics Framework for Public Health", *American Journal of Public Health*, November 2001, Vol 91, No. 11, pp. 1776-1782.

J.P. Spike, Principles for public health ethics, *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health*, 2018, 4, pp.13-20.

Additional Readings TBD

### **Class 23 – Roboethics and the Environment (May 6)**

Spyros G. Tzafestas, "Roboethics: Fundamental Concepts and Future Prospects", *Information* 2018, 9, 148

### **References**

We will read selected chapters from:

1. Bonnie Steinbock (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of Bioethics*, Oxford University Press, 2007;
2. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/life/>.
3. Arthur L. Caplan e Robert Arp (eds), *Contemporary Debates in Bioethics*, Wiley- Blackwell, 2013.
4. Helga Kuhse and Peter Singer (eds), *A Companion to Bioethics*, Wiley-Blackwell, London and New York, 2009;

### **Teaching Methods**

Lectures, class debate, and student presentations

**Assessment Method**

- Performance in class (participation to the debates in class, engagement and individual presentations):30%;
- final oral examination: 70%.

Those who wish to write a final research paper, are welcome to do so, although it is not compulsory. In case they do, the final assessment will be so re-calculated:

- oral examination: 20%;
- final paper: 50%.

**Honor thesis**

A good final grade and a preliminary discussion with the professor

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays before class (1:00pm-2:00pm), or by appointment (email: mgarasic@luiss.it)