

Lingnan University
Department of Philosophy

Course Title	: Bioethics
Course Code	: PHI3223
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Sectional approach
Class Contact Hours	: 3 hours per week
Category in Major Programme	: Programme Elective - Ethics and Practical Philosophy Profile
Prerequisite(s)	: N/A
Co-requisite(s)	: N/A
Exclusion(s)	: N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	: N/A

Brief Course Description

The course will address selected issues in bioethics that have been a matter of much recent controversy: abortion, euthanasia, organ donation, sanctity of life, experimentation with humans and with animals, moral implications of the human genome research, etc. The emphasis will be on the attempt to reconstruct the best reasons for conflicting views and then compare them in a critical way.

Aims

The aims of the course include introducing the students to the main arguments for the opposed views on several hotly contested topics in bioethics. It is expected that they will learn to analyze and evaluate the relevant arguments, and that this will also help them to take sides about these controversial issues in a more reasonable and informed manner.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

- (LO1) Describe the main different positions on various bioethical dilemmas and the arguments in support of these views.
- (LO2) Evaluate the opposing arguments on these hotly debated issues.
- (LO3) Become aware of how different solutions to bioethical dilemmas are related to social, political, and religious beliefs.
- (LO4) Propose and discuss their personal views on the issues discussed in class.

Indicative Content

1. Methods in bioethics
2. Abortion
3. Euthanasia
4. Human genome research
5. Experimentation with humans and animals
6. Procreation and future generations
7. Bioethics and armed conflict
8. Human enhancements and life-extending technologies
9. Distributive justice in health care

Teaching Method

Lectures and seminar discussions.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Students will take/write:

- (1) Short in-class quizzes, in which they will have to answer short questions on the various concepts and theories discussed in class (to assess LO1, LO2, and LO3);
- (2) A final exam, in which they will have to write long essay questions on the content of the course. Students will have to elaborate their views on the theories discussed in class (to assess LO1, LO2, LO3, and LO4);
- (3) A term paper (1500-2000 words) on a topic of the course (to assess mainly LO4). The students will be provided with a list of readings related to the specific topic they choose to write about.

Assessment

Participation and in-class discussion (10%)

In-class quizzes (20%)

Paper (30%)

Final exam (40%)

Required Readings

Selections from:

Caplan, A. & Arp, R. *Contemporary Debates in Bioethics*. John Wiley, 2014.

DeGrazia, D. *Human Identity and Bioethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Kuhse, H. & Singer, P. (Eds.) *Bioethics: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.

Steinbock, B. (Ed.) *Oxford Handbook of Bioethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Other material (papers, lecture notes, etc.) will be available on moodle.

Supplementary Readings

Beauchamp, T. & L. Walters (eds.), *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1994.

Engelhardt, H. *The Foundations of Bioethics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Kuhse, H. & Singer, P. (Eds.), *A Companion to Bioethics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

Important Notes

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>