GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid in the academic year 2023-2024

Bioethics (C002865)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 3.0 **Study time 80 h**

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2023-2024

A (semester 1)	English	Gent	seminar lecture independent work
B (semester 1)	English	Gent	lecture seminar independent work

Lecturers in academic year 2023-2024

Debrabander, Jasper	LW01	staff member
Focquaert, Farah	LW01	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2023-2024	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biotechnology	3	B
Master of Science in Teaching in Science and Technology(main subject Biochemistry and Biotechnology)	3	A
Master of Science in Teaching in Science and Technology(main subject Biology)	3	A
Master of Science in Biochemistry and Biotechnology	3	A
Master of Science in Biology	3	A
Exchange programme in Biochemistry and Biotechnology (master's level)	3	A
Exchange Programme in Biology (master's level)	3	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Bioethics, Applied Ethics

Position of the course

The aim of this course is to introduce fundamental ethical approaches and common arguments in bioethical debate, and to encourage students to identify and critically analyse ethical questions related to the life sciences.

Contents

An overview will be given of common approaches in ethical argumentation and of the most important theories in normative ethics: consequentialism / utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics.
Starting from concrete ethical issues related to the students' research interests, the students will learn to identify and analyse controversial ethical questions arising from developments in the life sciences. During the lectures students will be encouraged to think critically about ethical issues and to develop well argued positions.
Part of the course will involve discussion on recent discoveries/technologies/developments that raise ethical concern. These discussions provide an opportunity for the students to apply the skills that are acquired during the lectures.
Examples of topics included in the lectures and discussions:
• Introduction to bioethics

- Ageing - prolonging life
- Research animals
- Human research subjects
- GMO's
- Dual use dilemma
- Stem cell research and patents
- Neuromodulation and enhancement
- Genomics

Initial competences

- Good knowledge of English is required
- Analyse abstract and concrete problems
- Reflect critically
- Communicate a personal stance

Final competences

1 Have an insight in the crucial differences between the most important argumentation frameworks in normative ethics.
2 Discuss ethical issues from different perspectives and advance a well-argued position on these issues.
3 Develop and communicate well-argued ethical analyses regarding the impact of innovations in biology, biochemistry and biotechnology on society and the global world.
4 Develop and communicate a well-argued ethical view regarding the value of the life sciences and scientific and technological developments for society.
5 Act in accordance with ethical research principles and internationally accepted ethical guidelines while engaging in research and associated professional activities.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

- texts in preparation of class (individual work)
- lectures (on campus or online)
- guided discussions in group (seminars)

Learning materials and price

Philosophical articles, scientific publications related to the discussed topics;
extracts of reports from bioethics committees, slides
Cost: 0 EUR

References

- Kuhse H, Singer P. A companion to Bioethics. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Professional (Reprint edition), 2001.
- Rachels J. The Elements of Moral Philosophy. McGraw-Hill College, 2003.
- Stanford Encylopedia of Philosophy http://plato.stanford.edu/

Course content-related study coaching

By lecturer, after appointment or via email.

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Calculation of the examination mark

written exam: 100%