

Preliminary syllabus
Biogality: Human Bodies and the Law
(STO, Justice and Human Rights, 3-credit semester elective)

Faculty: Polina Smiragina-Ingelström

Prerequisites: no

Major Discipline(s): Criminology, Ethics, Legal Studies

Time: 3 hours once a week (preferably Tuesday or Friday)

Course Description

This research course takes its point of departure from the intersection between bioethics, law, sociology, and social policy. Students are introduced to the controversies in biopolitics and the legal and ethical frameworks that govern the human body. Discussion topics range from reproductive technologies and organ transplantation to forensic medicine and crime. The course aims to promote dialogue and collaboration by bringing together students and instructors from different academic backgrounds. The course is divided into three modules: concepts and theories, methods and ethics, and research. In the first module, students learn about the central conceptual and theoretical frameworks of biogality. Students then explore various methodological approaches to studying the social problems they are interested in as well as learn about the importance of ethical considerations in science. The final module is dedicated to individual and group work, where the student(s) are required to develop a research plan and carry out their study, which will be presented at the research symposium at the end of the semester.

Course structure

Module 1 (1/4 of the course): Concepts and theories

Module 2 (1/4 of the course): Methods and ethics

Module 3 (2/4 of the course): Research

Learning objectives

- Investigate the regulatory frameworks governing the human body: students will explore the regulatory frameworks at the international, national, and regional levels, examining the roles of governments, research ethics committees, international and professional organizations in shaping policies related to biogality.
- Learn to critically analyze the ethical and legal implications of the structures that govern the human body through critical engagement with the relevant literature, field studies and guest lectures: students will develop the ability to assess how legal and ethical frameworks as well as cultural, social, economic and political factors shape policy. Students will consider issues of equity, justice, and access to healthcare, as well as the influence of public attitudes and perceptions on bioethical debates.
- Reflect on personal and professional ethical responsibilities and engage in ethical decision-making processes: students will develop the ability to analyze ethical dilemmas, evaluate potential solutions, and make informed decisions aligned with ethical principles.

- Collaborate in interdisciplinary research teams: students will engage in collaborative research projects, working alongside peers with diverse backgrounds and expertise to address biolegality challenges, developing skills in teamwork, communication, and interdisciplinarity to achieve common research goals.
- Learn and apply research methodologies to study biolegality issues: students will acquire research skills (including literature review, data collection, and analysis) to investigate specific biolegality topics.
- Learn to identify relevant legal and ethical considerations to develop evidence-based arguments and scientifically communicate research through papers, student conferences and research poster presentations.

Main readings (preliminary ideas)

Books (specific chapter will be chosen):

- "Biopolitics and Biopower" by Michel Foucault
- "The history of sexuality" (vol. 1) by Michel Foucault
- "Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases" by Lewis Vaughn
- "Law and Bioethics: An Introduction" by Jerry Menikoff:
- "Regulating Reproduction: Law, Technology, and Autonomy" edited by Emily Jackson and John Keown
- "The Common Law Inside the Female Body" by Anita Bernstein
- "The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics" edited by Leslie Francis

Articles:

Riederer, B. M., Bolt, S. H., Brenner, E., Bueno-López, J. L., Circulescu, A. R., Davies, D. C., ... & Moxham, B. J. (2012). The legal and ethical framework governing body donation in Europe: 1st update on current practice.

Jones, M., & Salter, B. (2003). The governance of human genetics: policy discourse and constructions of public trust. *New Genetics and Society*, 22(1), 21-41.

McGovern, T., Schaaf, M., Battistini, E., Maistrellis, E., Gibb, K., & Casey, S. E. (2020). From bad to worse: global governance of abortion and the Global Gag Rule. *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, 28(3), 54-63.

Singer, E. O. (2018). Lawful sinners: reproductive governance and moral agency around abortion in Mexico. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 42, 11-31.

Scott, J. (2011). Governing prostitution: Differentiating the bad from the bad. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 23(1), 53-72.

Crowhurst, I., Outshoorn, J., & Skilbrei, M. L. (2012). Introduction: prostitution policies in Europe. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*

Scoular, J., & O'Neill, M. (2007). Regulating prostitution: Social inclusion, responsabilization and the politics of prostitution reform. *The British journal of criminology*, 47(5), 764-778.

Blazier, J., & Janssens, R. (2020). Regulating the international surrogacy market: the ethics of commercial surrogacy in the Netherlands and India. *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy*, 23(4), 621-630.

Pol, R. (2016). Proposing an international instrument to address issues arising out of international surrogacy arrangements. *Geo. J. Int'l L.*, 48, 1309.

Assignments

- Research plan
- Journal club presentations: Literature review
- Student Conference: presenting preliminary findings.

- Research poster presentations: DIS Stockholm Festival
- Final paper

Examples of hands-on activities, field studies, etc.

(Potential) guest lecture options:

- “Human anatomy for dummies” by a professor from KI (potentially Chenhong from DIS)
- Expert on ethics from the Swedish research ethics board
- Male sex worker from the Netherlands (zoom)

Field studies:

- Scandiatransplant representatives in Sweden (either through the organization “Mer Organ Donation” or the KI Transplantation unit)
- RFSU (Swedish NGO working in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights)