



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA  
DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE GIURIDICHE

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**ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/2022**

**PhD Programme in European Law  
PhD Programme in Law, Science & Technology  
PhD Programme in Legal Studies**

**FILOSOFIA E ETICA DEL DIGITALE**

*Prof. Luciano Floridi*

### **Learning outcomes**

The course will enable the students to develop a deeper and more critical understanding of the digital revolution, its impact, and implications, from a conceptual and ethical perspective, by covering key topics such as personal identity, privacy, digital sovereignty, the ethics of AI, the relation between environmental and digital issues, among others (see below for a complete list of topics covered by each lecture). The goal of the course is to understand the epochal transformations affecting human self-understanding, the shaping of information societies, the conceptualisation of reality, and the new forms of interactions among individuals and between humanity and the world, from an ethical, normative, social, and political perspective. The course does not presuppose any previous or specialised knowledge and will provide a clear and straightforward introduction to all fundamental concepts and technical terminology. The lecture will build on earlier lectures to offer a gentle progression from simpler to more complex topics.

### **Course contents**

The course will begin with an outline of the digital revolution. It will conclude with an analysis of what the human project for the twenty-first century could be, understood as a new alliance between the Green of all human habitats (biological, urban, social, political, economic etc.) and the Blue of all digital technologies (from mobile phones to AI, from social platforms to IoT). Each lecture or seminar will last 2 hours.

The lectures will focus on the following topics. The first three lectures will provide the essential background to understand the following nine. The three seminars will provide an opportunity to debate relevant and timely topics. They may involve the presence of a guest.

1. *Methodology: how to do philosophy and develop ethical evaluations*
2. *The digital revolution: time as hyperhistory, space as infosphere*
3. *The age of design: cut & paste*
4. *The fourth revolution in human self-understanding: Copernicus, Darwin, Freud, Turing*
5. *The onlife experience, the construction of personal identity, and the technologies of hope*
6. *Human dignity as a foundation for the right to privacy*
7. *The design of norms and the problem of toleration*
8. *Tolerant paternalism, infraethics, and the right to be left alone*
9. *Artificial Intelligence and its ethical challenges*
10. *The new grey power*
11. *Digital sovereignty and digital citizenship*
12. *The human project: digital utopia or regulative ideal? The Green and the Blue*
13. *Seminar*
14. *Seminar*
15. *Seminar*

Further topics will be discussed and examined during the lectures in collaboration with the participants.

All lectures and seminars will be in Aula 8 “Sala delle Feste” and Aula 9 “Sala delle Armi”, Palazzo Malvezzi, via Zamboni 22.

### **Recommended readings**

The topics of the course are covered in the following books, which are mere suggestions to be used as lecture notes for further studies to be found in the corresponding bibliographies:

1. *Etica dell'intelligenza artificiale – Sviluppi, opportunità, sfide* (Milan: Cortina, 2022).  
English expanded version: *The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).
2. *Intelligenza Artificiale – L'uso delle nuove macchine (the 2021 Martini Lecture)*, (Milan: Bompiani, 2021).
3. *Il Verde e il Blu – Idee Ingenuie per Migliorare la Politica* (Milan: Cortina, 2020).  
English revised version: *The Green and the Blue – Naïve ideas to improve politics* (forthcoming).
4. *The Logic of Information – A Theory of Philosophy as Conceptual Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). Italian translation (abridged): *Pensare l'Infosfera – La filosofia come design concettuale* (Milano: Cortina, 2019).
5. *The Fourth Revolution—How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality* (Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2014). Italian translation: *La quarta rivoluzione – Come l'infosfera sta trasformando il mondo* (Milano: Cortina, 2017).

6. *Information – A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) Italian translation: *La rivoluzione dell'informazione* (Turin: Codice, 2012).
7. *L'Etica dell'Informazione* (Turin: Giappichelli, 2009). Italian translation of a collection of ten articles on information and computer ethics.

### Teaching methods

The course will be taught in a traditional way, with oral, frontal lectures, supported by PowerPoint presentations (PPT). The PPT will be made available in pdf format. However, emphasis will be put on the Q&A section at the end of each lecture, when it is to be hoped that a collegial dialogue and debate will develop. If the COVID-19 emergency persists, lectures will be held in hybrid mode (partly in attendance and partly online). Attendance is not compulsory but strongly recommended and allowed in both modes (in attendance and online), if they are available.

### Assessment methods

There is no exam.

### Auditing

Auditors are welcome.

### Calendar

June	6	7	8	13	14	15	20	21	22	27	28	29
Week	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W
Lectures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10.30	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula	Aula
12.30	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	8
Seminars				1			2			3		
14.00				Aula			Aula			Aula		
16.00				9			9			8		

Virtual room (via Microsoft Teams): available [here](#)