

## Epidemiology, Public Health and Bioethics

Code: 101901  
ECTS Credits: 6

**2025/2026**

Degree	Type	Year
Biomedical Sciences	OB	3

### Contact

Name: Marta Martin Flix

Email: marta.martin@uab.cat

### Teachers

Irma Casas Garcia

### Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

### Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for taking this subject, but it is recommended that students have basic prior knowledge of basic and advanced research and techniques in the field of biology, biosciences and biomedicine. It is also important that students have a good level of English that allows them to take advantage of the bibliography, websites and reports provided in this language. Finally, it is important that students in this subject show an open, participatory, dialogic, respectful and curious disposition during learning activities.

### Objectives and Contextualisation

The subject consists of two well-defined modules: a) epidemiology and public health (4 credits) and b) bioethics (2 credits). The first module is given to the UUDD of Can Ruti, Sant Pau, Vall d'Hebrón and Hospital Parc Taulí, concentrating the activity conducted in a single UUDD in a rotating manner every year. The second one is given to Bellaterra campus.

1- The Epidemiology and Public Health module aims to deepen the knowledge of methodological and analysis aspects, as well as to know the determinants of health and preventive interventions.

Epidemiology is the science that studies the distribution and the determinants of diseases in the population. The purpose of the program is to understand the fundamentals of the epidemiological reasoning, to know how to apply the epidemiological methodology to the problems of public health, clinical and community medicine, and to research, as well as understand health and disease as a result of biological processes, social and cultural paying a special attention to gender perspective. Its main objectives are to observe, define and quantify the health problems of the community, to know the causes of illnesses, to explain the local patterns of the

disease, to describe the natural history of the disease, to design and evaluate action measures for reduce the burden of health problems, and evaluate the (etiological, preventive and therapeutic) evidence of health problems. The objectives of this part of the course focus on the acquisition of skills and abilities on epidemiological measures and designs, and on the learning of scientific and epidemiological reasoning (through exercises for critical reading of scientific articles, and the approach and the resolution of clinical, research and public health problems).

The Public Health part of the subject reviews the most current aspects related to the prevention of illness in modern society. In particular, the maintenance and promotion of the health of individuals requires both the functioning of public health and healthcare programs, and the daily work of healthcare professionals in the development of preventive and health promotion activities. The remarkable longevity of the population, the high prevalence of chronic diseases, and the persistence of transmissible diseases, require continued activity in preventive actions, immunizations, screening, health education and preventative advice.

During the course, the application of the epidemiological method in applied research in the field of Public Health will be reviewed and upon finishing the student should know the fields of application of epidemiological research, as well as having acquired the basic skills for Do a review of a scientific publication and integrate into a multidisciplinary team to support biomedical research projects.

The two distributive blocks incorporate:

#### 1.1- Distributive blocks. Epidemiology.

Health demography

Epidemiological method.

Main epidemiological designs.

Introduction to the analysis of data in epidemiology.

Evidence-based medicine

Applied Epidemiology

#### 1.2- Distributive blocks. Public Health

Introduction to Preventive Medicine and Public Health.

Health protection: Environmental Health and Food Safety.

Health problems and specific preventive actions in communicable diseases.

Health problems and specific preventive actions in chronic diseases.

Promotion of health.

Sanitary system Health management and evaluation.

International health

**2- The Bioethics module** is complementary to the degree and with it, it is intended that the student acquires knowledge about the ethical and legal aspects related to the Biomedical Sciences and the associated research.

The training objectives are for students to be able to:

- Understand and apply the basic principles of bioethics.

- Explain the social perception of science and technology and its importance in adequately communicating the achievements and risks associated with biomedical advances.
- Identify the problems arising from the progress and application of technology in human beings, genetics, and the beginning and end of life.
- Create an appropriate discussion space to facilitate the adoption of well-founded personal positions and possible consensus that allow for the evaluation of existing social conventions and their own moral convictions.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Apply theoretical knowledge to practice.
- Assume an ethical commitment.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to environmental, health, social, and gender issues.

## Competences

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Apply knowledge acquired to the planning and implementation of research, development and innovation projects in a biomedical research laboratory, a clinical department laboratory or the biomedical industry.
- Make changes to methods and processes in the area of knowledge in order to provide innovative responses to society's needs and demands.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
- Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Work as part of a group with members of other professions, understanding their viewpoint and establishing a constructive collaboration.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
2. Apply legislation in force and the principles of bioethics to biomedical research.
3. Apply the basic principles of bioethics to the design of experiments in biomedicine.
4. Make changes to methods and processes in the area of knowledge in order to provide innovative responses to society's needs and demands.
5. Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
6. Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.

7. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
8. Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
9. Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
10. Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
11. Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
12. Work as part of a group with members of other professions, understanding their viewpoint and establishing a constructive collaboration.

## Content

### Module of Epidemiology and Public Health\*:

#### ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT. CLASSES (1h)

##### EPIDEMIOLOGY

1. Introduction to Epidemiology and Public Health.
2. Frequency and effect measurements.
3. The study of the health of the populations. Demographic and health indicators.
4. Descriptive and observational epidemiological designs
5. Epidemiological intervention designs.
6. Molecular epidemiology.
7. Evidence Based Medicine
8. Assessment of diagnostic tests.
9. Validity. Errors and bias.

##### PUBLIC HEALTH

10. Bases of Preventive Medicine. Determinants of health. The promotion of health. Primary prevention.
11. Secondary prevention: screening
12. Environmental factors and health
13. Food safety. Nutrition and health
14. Prevention and control of transmissible diseases
15. Immunopreventable diseases. Preventive vaccines
16. Chronic illnesses. Aging and health
17. Epidemiology and cancer prevention
18. Epidemiology and prevention of cardiovascular diseases

19. Global health. Sexual and reproductive health

20. Health system. Health Management and Evaluation

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT. SEMINARS (1h)

1. Information systems in Public Health

2. The research protocol.

3. The analysis of data

4. Stratification and standardization

5. The measure of survival

6. Critical reading of a scientific article: controlled clinical trial

7. Systematic reviews and meta-analysis

8. Grading of the evidence. Elaboration and quality of clinical practice guides.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT. DIRECTED EXERCISES (1h + self-employed)

1. Design and evaluation of an observational study

2. Design and evaluation of an intervention study

3. Assessment of diagnostic tests

4. Measure of survival

5. Study of an outbreak of food poisoning

Bioethics module\*

PART I. PRINCIPLES OF BIOETHICS

-Analysis in Bioethics

-Basic Principles in Bioethics

-Other Relevant Principles in Bioethics

PART II. ETHICS IN RESEARCH

-Ethical Principles in Scientific and Biomedical Practice

-Obligations of Researchers

-Codes of Good Practice in Research

PART III. THE ETHICAL DESIGN OF ANIMAL RESEARCH

-Ethical Aspects of Animal Research

-Basic Principles: The 3Rs

-Legal Aspects of the Use of Experimental Animals: Royal Decree 53/2013

PART IV. THE ETHICAL DESIGN OF HUMAN RESEARCH

-Ethical principles

-Subjects

-Legal aspects of research on human subjects, embryos, and reproductive cells: Law 3/2018, RD 1716/2011, Law 14/2007 and 14/2006

**PART V: ETHICAL ASPECTS OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES**

-Genetics, Genetic Engineering, and Biotechnology

-Reproductive medicine (Law 14/2007 and 14/2006)

-Research on embryos and reproductive cells

-Ethical dilemmas of donors, newborns, and parents

-New motherhood and parent-child relationships

-Embryo selection

-Gene editing

-Bioethics and genetic and health data (15/1999, Law 3/2028, Regulation 2016/679, Art. 5 Law 14/2007)

-Databases, wearables, applications, artificial intelligence

-Use of data: privacy and confidentiality

**Activities and Methodology**

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
<hr/>			
Type: Directed			
Practical seminars	12	0.48	1, 11, 10, 3, 2, 4, 7, 5, 6
Seminars	10	0.4	11, 10, 4, 7, 6, 12
Theoretical sessions	32	1.28	1, 11, 10, 3, 2, 9, 8, 5
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Type: Autonomous			
Case analysis: group discussion	5	0.2	9, 7, 5, 6, 12
Case analysis: preparation of discussion papers	5	0.2	9, 7, 5, 6
Individual study and text reading	63.5	2.54	3, 2, 4, 8, 7, 5, 6

The subject is based on teaching activities in collaboration with the teaching staff and with the student's own work, both individually and in groups.

Module of Epidemiology and Public Health:

The directed activities consist of the theoretical classes where the teacher will review a previously scheduled topic and the seminars where analyzed subjects of more important analytical content and will require the active participation of the student to solve questions and exercises during the class. For directed activity, information will be given during the class or previously the same.

The supervised activities will be supervised by the teacher, but the students will be led by them. They will be made of two types, the practical seminars where practical cases will be solved and exercises that previously will be distributed and the comments to scientific articles, also previously distributed. In both cases students' work groups may be made to handle specific parts of the work.

### **BIOETHICS MODULE**

The subject consists of theoretical classes and analysis and comments on proposed cases in a Seminar format.

**THEORY:** The content of the theory program will be taught mainly by the professors in the form of lectures with audiovisual support. The presentations used in class by the professors will be previously available on the Virtual Campus of the subject.

Although it is not essential to expand the contents of the classes taught by the professors, unless they expressly request it, it is advisable for students to regularly consult the documents referenced in the theory classes (which will be available on the virtual campus), as well as the bibliographical material recommended in this teaching guide, in order to consolidate and clarify the contents explained in class.

On the other hand, students will have to work individually on the content of the legal texts to which this guide refers. In order to facilitate this task, students will be provided with documents where the full text will appear and also a summary of the regulatory text (Virtual Campus).

In addition to attending classes, the correct functioning of the subject depends on students taking an active role, participating in the resolution of the cases and practical exercises that arise related to the contents of the theory program. This type of work will be done in small groups in order to promote cooperative and thought-based learning.

**SEMINARS:** There will be 2 seminar sessions throughout the course and, in each session, half of the class will attend. At the beginning of the course, students must form groups of 4 to 6 people. It is important that all members of the group can attend the seminars on the same day, since collaborative and face-to-face activities will be carried out during the seminars. The cases that will be worked on during the seminars will be previously available on the Virtual Campus.

**ATTENTION:** Attendance at the seminars is mandatory and essential to pass the subject.

Each group will work on two practical cases from the bioethical field throughout the course. These cases must be submitted in writing before the date of the corresponding seminar. During the seminar, a joint correction and discussion of the case will be carried out. Each group will receive two works from other groups -anonymized- to correct. The evaluation will be done using a common rubric and will include a numerical grade and a justified comment. This comment will be reviewed by the teaching staff and valued as part of the grade of the evaluating group, with the aim of promoting a rigorous, critical and constructive evaluation.

**USE OF AI:** In this subject, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is allowed as an integral part of the development of the work, provided that the final result reflects a significant contribution of the student in the analysis and personal reflection. The student must clearly identify which parts have been generated with this technology, specify the tools used and include a critical reflection on how these have influenced the process and the final result of the activity. The lack of transparency in the use of AI will be considered a lack of academic honesty and may lead to a penalty in the grade of the activity, or greater sanctions in serious cases.

**Note:** 15 minutes of a class will be reserved, within the calendar established by the center/degree, for students to complete the surveys to evaluate the performance of the teaching staff and the evaluation of the subject.

**Annotation:** Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

### **Assessment**

## Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Bioethics practical case	5%	1	0.04	3, 2, 5, 6
Bioethics seminars	6,7%	2	0.08	1, 11, 3, 2, 5, 6, 12
Bioethics theory exam	21,6%	2	0.08	1, 3, 2, 9, 8, 5, 6
Specific exercises associated to seminars Epi & SP	20%	15	0.6	1, 11, 10, 3, 2, 4, 7, 5, 6, 12
Theoretical and practical assessment Epi & SP	46,6%	2.5	0.1	1, 11, 3, 2, 9, 8, 7, 6

This subject does NOT include the single assessment option. The modules evaluation, which will be a continuous evaluation throughout the semester, will consist of the following evaluation activities:

### 1- Epidemiology and Public Health Module (67% of the subject grade):

1. Assessment type: An assessment exam will be held to assess theoretical and practical knowledge.
2. Exam review system. Exams will be reviewed individually with students, upon written request within the established deadlines.
3. Attendance and participation in classes and seminars may be assessed with a maximum score of 10%.
4. Retake exam: students who have obtained a final grade of failed, as well as those who wish to improve their grade, may take the retake exam; in the latter case, the grade from the retake exam will prevail. The examination methodology may be different from that used in the previous assessment
5. Not assessable: Students who do not appear for the assessment of theoretical knowledge, the practical exam or the remedial exam will be considered as "Not assessable".

### 2- Bioethics module (33% of the subject grade):

**THEORY** (65% of the module grade): To assess the theoretical content of the subject, an exam of short questions and/or multiple-choice questions will be held. In order for the theory grades of the 2 modules to be averaged between themselves and with the rest of the subject grades, a minimum grade of 3.5 points must be obtained in each theory test.

**PRACTICAL CASE** (15% module grade): On the day of the theory test, each student, individually, will have to solve a practical case in the field of bioethics. The grade obtained in the resolution of the case will represent 15% of the subject grade.

**SEMINARS** (20% module grade; 10% each seminar): The evaluation of the seminars is based on prior preparation, the quality of the work presented and active participation during the sessions. The three works presented by each group will be evaluated. Compliance with the deadlines will be taken into account, so that works presented after the discussion of the cases in the seminars will not be valid. All members of the group will have the same grade.

Each group must previously submit the written resolution of two bioethical cases. The cases will be anonymized and, on the day of the seminar, will be evaluated by two different groups using a common rubric. Each evaluation group will issue a numerical grade and a justified comment, which will be reviewed by the teaching staff. This comment will be valued as part of the evaluation group's grade, with the aim of guaranteeing a rigorous and constructive co-evaluation. Therefore, for each group, the seminar grade will be the numerical average of the grades they have received from the evaluation groups weighted by the grade that the teaching staff gives to the evaluations they have given to other groups.

The aim of these tests is to evaluate, not only that the students have acquired the conceptual knowledge but, more importantly, that they have understood it and know how to integrate and relate it to each other. On the other hand, the students' use of the appropriate terminology when dealing with the questions raised during the evaluation will also be assessed, as well as the ability to work in a group and to argue and discuss the topics covered in a critical and rational way.

#### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- In order to pass the subject, students must take all the theory content tests. A score of 3.5 must be achieved in each of the theory content tests in order to consider the score obtained to calculate the average of the module grade. To pass the subject, an overall grade equal to or greater than 5 points must be achieved. Students who obtain a grade lower than 3.5 in any of the tests may retake the contents on the day of the final retake test.
- Students who, after having taken the retakes, do not achieve the minimum grade of 3.5 points in any of the partial tests will not be able to pass the subject and will receive a maximum final grade for the subject of 4 points.
- Students who cannot attend an individual assessment test for a justified reason (such as a health problem, death of a relative up to the second degree, accident, enjoying the status of elite athlete and having a competition or sports activity with mandatory attendance, etc.) and provide the corresponding official documentation to the subject teaching staff and the degree coordination (official medical certificate explicitly stating the inability to take an exam, police report, justification from the competent sports organization, etc.), will have the right to take the test on another date. The degree coordination will ensure that this is done, after consultation with the subject teaching staff.
- Students who have passed the theory exams, the practical case and the seminars will be able to take the retake exam to IMPROVE their GRADE, and will be examined in theory and will solve a new practical case. In order to be able to take the exam to raise their grade, they must renounce in writing (email) the grade previously obtained, notifying the professor responsible for the subject at least three days before the retake exam. The grade that will be taken into account will be that of the last exam/practical case they have taken.
- NOT EVALUABLE: Students will receive the grade of not assessable when they have taken less than 67% of the scheduled assessment activities, considering as assessment activities: i) each assessment test of the theoretical contents; ii) each of the seminars.

## **Bibliography**

#### Module of Epidemiology and Public Health:

#### Specific bibliography

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- Departament de Salut. Pla de salut de Catalunya a l'horitzó 2010. Informe de salut a Catalunya. Avaluació dels objectius de salut. Barcelona; Generalitat de Catalunya, 2007.
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#### Consultation bibliography

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- Wallace RB, Doebbeling BN, eds. Public Health & Preventive Medicine. Stamford: Appleton & Lange, 2008.

#### Internet resources

- Departament de Salut, Generalitat de Catalunya: <http://www.gencat.cat/salut/>
- Pla de salut: <http://www.gencat.cat/salut/depsalut/html/ca/plasalut/index.html>
- Salut materno-infantil: <http://www.gencat.cat/salut/depsalut/html/ca/infantil/index.html>
- Vacunes: <http://www.gencat.cat/salut/depsalut/html/ca/vacunes/index.html>

#### Bioethics module:

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Enllaços web:

Boletín Oficial del Estado: <http://www.boe.es/>

Berman Institute of Bioethics: <http://www.bioethicsinstitute.org/>

Clinical Trials: <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov/>

Comissió d'Ètica en Experimentació Animal i Humana de la UAB: <http://www.recerca.uab.es/ceeah/>

Observatori de Bioètica i Dret: <http://www.pcb.ub.es/bioeticaidret/>

Comité de Bioética de España: <http://www.comitedebioetica.es/>

Institut Borja de Bioètica: <http://www.ibbioetica.org/es/#&panel1-1>

Council of Europe. Steering Committee on Bioethics:

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/healthbioethic/cdbi/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/healthbioethic/cdbi/default_en.asp)

Fundació Grífols: <http://www.fundaciogrifols.org/es/web/fundacio/home>

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.science.uva.nl/%7Eseop/>

The European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies:

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/ege/index.cfm>

The Hasting Center: <http://www.thehastingscenter.org/>

The Hinxton Group: <http://www.hinxtongroup.org/>

The Nuffield Council: <http://www.nuffieldbioethics.org/>

UNESCO. International Bioethics Committee:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/bioethics/international-bioethics-committee/>

## Software

Not applies

## Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	301	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed
(SCC) Clinical case seminars	301	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed
(SCC) Clinical case seminars	302	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	531	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	532	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	53	Catalan/Spanish	annual	morning-mixed