

Medical Humanities (MHUM)

MHUM 1005 Med, Law, Ethics, End of Life 1 Credit

What does it mean to die? What does the end of life look like and who gets to decide? As medical technology encroaches on the thin line between life and death these questions become harder to answer. This course will explore the controversial and challenging questions that arise at the end of life by reviewing the legal, ethical, and medical literature, participating in reflective discussions, and examining real life clinical cases.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

MHUM 1006 Aging and Ageism 1 Credit

By 2025, one in every five Americans will be 65 or older, as the Baby Boomer generation takes over the top of the aging population pyramid. The impact is emerging in areas ranging from housing to healthcare. COVID has brought these issues to light even more. In this seminar, we'll explore how society views aging, and we'll consider how to bring about change. What's the role of media — from old-fashioned television shows to new social media formats and outlets — in shaping our world view? How is the longevity market tapping into and serving the older population? How have our public health policies helped/hindered our elders? How can we foster a culture of respect for our elders, as other cultures have?

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

MHUM 1007 The Problem of Suffering 1.5 Credits

What does it mean to suffer? Why do some recoil from suffering while others cherish it? How do views of suffering vary across culture, religion, or philosophy? While these questions may seem esoteric and unanswerable, they become crucially important in the realm of medicine and healthcare. This course explores the problem of suffering through examination of the medical humanities, participating in reflective discussions, and tying it back to the clinical setting with real life clinical cases.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 1008 Ethics: Research w Human Subj 1 Credit

What makes clinical research ethical? How do we balance protecting research subjects while granting people access to cutting edge therapies? To answer these questions we will examine the history of research with human subjects and the ethical questions that are raised by past mistakes. This course will be sure to touch on timely questions raised by the COVID pandemic such as incorporating investigational therapies into clinical practice and the use of challenge studies for vaccine development. The course instructor and guest lecturers will lead students through examination of the ethical literature, reflective discussions, and analysis of real life clinical cases. The course will culminate in the students conducting a mock institutional review board meeting to evaluate a controversial research protocol. (Course is renumbered from IDST-121; students who took IDST-121 may not take MHUM-008)

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

MHUM 1009 Med Humanities in the Clinic 1 Credit

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

MHUM 1010 Med, Law, Ethics at End of Life 1 Credit

This medical humanities course explores the controversial and challenging questions that arise at the end of life by reviewing the legal, ethical, and medical literature, participating in reflective discussions, and examining real life clinical cases. 1-credit; taught on Mondays second half of the semester; taught by Prof Michael Pottash

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 1011 Public Health Ed Through Media 1 Credit

In an age where false news stories are 70 percent more likely to be retweeted, it takes the truth six times longer to circulate in the online communications ecosystem. Media plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception of health, and crafting compelling narratives infused with science-based educational content that will resonate with diverse audiences is a crucial skill set for health and media professionals. This course is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills to effectively communicate evidence-based health interventions through various media platforms, such as screenwriting, social media, news, and literature.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 1012 Art the Power of Observation 1 Credit

Students critically analyze original works of art to build skills that support visual literacy, communication, and empathy. Working independently and collaboratively in small groups, participants learn to closely examine works of art, articulate and acknowledge their personal preconceived notions, collaborate on problem-solving, and increase communication through analysis and discussion. The course will be completely interactive and largely discussion-based.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate level students.

MHUM 1101 Intro to Medical Humanities 3 Credits

This course introduces students to the dynamic and rapidly evolving field of medical humanities, bridging the gap between science, technology, and human experiences of health and illness. It explores history of medicine, cultural responses, and concepts of disease vs. illness, narrative medicine, philosophical and religious/spiritual approaches, and the role of science and technology upon healthcare practices. Topic: #Medical Detectives: Medicine and Mystery From historical medical breakthroughs to modern-day ethical dilemmas, we'll investigate how medicine and mystery-solving and diagnosis and detective work share surprising similarities. You'll explore why medical dramas captivate audiences and how healthcare challenges reflect broader societal issues. We'll explore through engaging discussions, multimedia content, and hands-on projects: Key Themes -The evolution of medical knowledge and practice through history - The history of diagnosis and the art and science of medical detective work -Narrative medicine and the role of patient stories, literature, and culture in healthcare -Cultural influences on medical perceptions and treatments -The impact of technologies on clinical perception and decision making -Ethical considerations in medicine including AI-assisted diagnostics and clinical decision support In this course you will: -Cultivate a broad understanding of medical humanities and its relevance today -Hone your close reading and critical analysis skills -Develop the ability to construct nuanced arguments and to effectively articulate your viewpoints while managing uncertainty - Cultivate persuasive writing and speaking abilities -Gain insight into the cultural and ethical dimensions of healthcare -Develop creative problem-solving skills through interdisciplinary approaches This course is of interest to aspiring healthcare professionals, future policymakers, journalists and science communicators, social sciences and humanities majors, those exploring careers in public health and health tech, and anyone interested in the complex, messy, human side of medicine. It offers a unique blend of humanities and science, preparing you to engage critically with the rapidly evolving world of healthcare. Bonus: Fulfills Humanities (HALC) and Engaging Diversity requirements.

Level: Undergraduate

Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Mutual exclusion:

MHUM 1103 Literature and Medicine 1 Credit

Open to both undergraduates and med students, the course explores themes in medicine through non-medical fiction. Each class, the students explore a new work. Examples of works used in prior terms include Christy Lefteri's *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*, Ayad Akhtar's *Homeland Elegies*, Maggie O'Farrell's *Hamnet*, and Louise Eldrich's *The Night Watchman*.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

MHUM 1110 War, Death, and Remembrance 3 Credits

War, Death, and Remembrance: The Untold Truth behind DC's Monuments and Memorials Washington D.C. is famous for its monuments, but how did they get here, and what do they mean? Why do we engage in monument-making? This course takes an in-depth look at the creation of Arlington Cemetery, the National Mall and its monuments as well as many lesser-known commemorative works of art, to better understand who controls our national narrative, and how.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 1111 Public Health Ethics 3 Credits

This course introduces students to contemporary philosophical issues in public policy. Students will engage with philosophical ethical theories and case studies to gain familiarity with foundational concepts and topics. Students will learn to use ethical concepts and normative theory to analyze and evaluate cases, to understand, articulate, and defend philosophically and ethically sound positions, and to engage with opposing views.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to students with a minor in Med Humanities,CultureSociety, Med Humanities,CultureSociety, Med Humanities,CultureSociety or Med Humanities,CultureSociety.

MHUM 1112 Clinical Ethics 3 Credits

This course will cover central problems and approaches in the ethics of clinical medical practice. Students will learn about the kinds of ethical problems that clinicians face and how ethical frameworks and concepts can be brought to bear on those problems. The focus will be on real-world application of ethical theories in the context of practicing medicine.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to students with a minor in Med Humanities,CultureSociety, Med Humanities,CultureSociety, Med Humanities,CultureSociety or Med Humanities,CultureSociety.

MHUM 1113 DC Health Histories 3 Credits

This joint Georgetown–Howard course explores Washington, D.C.'s hidden health stories, from the 1918 influenza pandemic to the AIDS crisis, tracing how race, culture, power, and activism have shaped health in the nation's capital from 1879 to the present. Students will investigate disease, demographics, cultural movements, and social forces through a multi-method approach that includes archival research, population health analysis, oral history, GIS, ethnography, and data storytelling. Throughout the semester, guest scholars will introduce a different method, linking it to important aspects of DC's health history. Through hands-on exercises and fieldwork in the city's archives and community institutions, students will critically engage data, narratives, and material culture. The course culminates in the creation of a multi-method, public-facing project.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 1130 End of Life Ethics 1 Credit

This medical humanities course explores the controversial and challenging questions that arise at the end of life by reviewing the legal, ethical, and medical literature, participating in reflective discussions, and examining real life clinical cases.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 1200 Inside/Outside: Anatomy of ID 3 Credits

Insider/Outsider: The Anatomy of Identity in Art and Language
 Explores how personal identity is an unfinalizable process of "becoming" and how identity is creatively expressed through art, symbols, language, and performance. Topics will include empowerment, advocacy, allyship, normativity, accessibility, and counterculture through readings, visits to museums and performances, guest speakers, and student-centered art projects. -Identify and understand how visual and verbal/written language is used to express identity -Critically examine artwork and language use within their historical, cultural, and social contexts -Integrate artistic processes to creatively express aspects of identity as self-actualization and exploration -Examine ways in which systems inhibit and promote full participation of people based on ability, race, gender, identity, neurodiversity, culture

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2040 The Cultural Legacy of Drugs 3 Credits

Over the centuries drug use has been conceptualized in many ways; a spiritual aid, a medicine, a coping mechanism, a disease, even a moral failing. This course seeks to examine the relationship human beings have had with mind-altering drugs, both individually and societally. We will ponder questions such as: Why has there never been a historical "drug-free" society? Is it possible to achieve a drug-free society in modern times? Is it necessary for humans to alter their consciousness.

Level: Undergraduate

Prerequisites: MHUM 1101

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2100 Birth Narratives 3 Credits

Birth trauma is recurrent around the globe with dramatic repercussions on mental health issues, with increasing medical costs in our society and a negative effect on childbirth experiences. It is estimated that one in three childbirths is perceived as traumatic, with adverse outcomes on mothers' mental and physical health (Gamble et al., 2005; Soet et al., 2003; Deforges et al., 2020; COST Action 18211). As usual, society informs literature and vice-versa literature has the potential to bring awareness and change in society and medical practice. In fact, in the last few years, birth narratives have emerged as a new literary genre, and pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum have been investigated from various perspectives and in different languages around the globe. The aim of these stories is multifaced and varied but they all share common goals: breaking uncomfortable taboos and tell personal experiences that had previously been silenced. In the wake of #metoo and other social movements denouncing obstetrical and sexual violence, birthing people have started to tell their experiences to denounce abuse, misinformation, and lack of informed consent. The act of writing helps to process and overcome trauma, inform other people, and provide evidence-based information, or – in the event of positive experiences – inspire readers through empowering birth stories. This one-credit course will address a corpus of contemporary transnational texts published in the last few years by focusing on birth trauma, pregnancy loss, and empowerment through childbirth. By close reading and textual analyses, we will shed new light on how pregnancy, birth, and postpartum shape contemporary literature and investigate how these experiences are conveyed in writing. This course uses the interdisciplinary methods of medical humanities and explores the intersection of medicine, literature, and the social sciences. We will use contemporary sources such as articles, testimonies, and cross-genre texts to investigate how pregnancy, birth, and postpartum are perceived in contemporary society. We will identify key factors for achieving positive and empowering experiences, and pinpoint how trauma could be avoided. We will also determine how birth narratives could bring change in obstetrical care and improve communication between patients and health care providers. Secondary sources introduce students to the fields of narrative medicine (Charon 2001; 2006) and trauma studies (Herman, 1997; Nadal and Calvo, 2014), while selected primary bibliography reveals how birth is experienced in contemporary society. A variety of texts will be discussed by adopting an intersectional approach. Students will analyze excerpts from Angela Garbes' *Like a Mother: A Feminist Journey Through the Science and Culture of Pregnancy*; *Give Birth Like a Feminist* by Milli Hill; Rebecca Dekker's, *Babies are Not Pizzas: They're Born, Not Delivered*; *Unpregnant. An Essay on the Silent, Secret Grief of Miscarriage* by Alexandra Kimball; and Elena Skoko's *Memoirs of a Singing Birth*, among others.

Level: Undergraduate

Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2202 Methods in Medical Humanities 3 Credits

This course will address the interdisciplinary approaches involved in medical humanities studies.

Level: Undergraduate

Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2210 How to End a Pandemic 1 Credit

A story of pandemic response can speak louder than a thousand research studies. Oral histories from public health emergencies can provide crucial insights into the experiences of epidemic response that help us understand public health preparedness, response capabilities, and local, national, and international strengths and vulnerabilities. In this course, students will learn about social science, oral history, and journalistic ethics and research methods that are deployed to learn about disease outbreaks and engage with historians, medical humanities researchers, policy makers, and journalists. Our emphasis is on public health emergency responders from medical, public health, politics, business, research, policy, and community mobilization sectors. During this course, students will have the opportunity to conduct oral history interviews and work with transcripts from the How to End a Pandemic archive. The course will conclude with reflections and plans for future student engagements at the intersection of oral history and medical research.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2220 Pediatric Ethics 3 Credits

Ethics is careful, clear, reflective, and critical thinking about how to lead your life and how to treat others. Clinical ethics is the field of ethics about how doctors should treat patients. Pediatric ethics is about how professionals such as physicians should treat people under 18. It is its own unique field as minors are often seen—by adults, and in the law—as deserving fewer rights and needing more protection than adults. We will probe the validity of that claim, and whether overall it helps or harms minors. We will discuss all stages of a minor's life, from preemies and infants through teenagers. There will also be some discussion of reproductive medicine, fetal medicine, and genetics (medical decisions before birth). Our primary textbook will be Alan Fleischman's *Pediatric Ethics* (Oxford Press, 2016) supplemented by journal articles and chapters from Nortje and Bester's *Theory and Practice in Pediatric Ethics* (Springer 2022). To enhance the humanistic element, we will also read the prize-winning literary work *The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead. This course will be especially helpful for anyone considering becoming a pediatrician, geneticist, pediatric nurse, pediatric social worker, or child psychiatrist or child psychologist. It will also be helpful to anyone with a policy interest in child welfare or education.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2250 War, Medicine, Care 20th21stC 3 Credits

This is an interdisciplinary course blending the study of visual and textual narrative, history, ethics, medicine, and war studies. A survey of how care – medical, psychiatric, and nursing – has been delivered during wartime over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with an emphasis on the narratives written by nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, field medics, orderlies, ambulance drivers, and doctors in the conflicts. We will examine how politics infiltrates the war hospital and affects care; the changing dynamic of women and men in the medical (and battle) field throughout the twentieth century; the innovations that emerged from battle surgery; humanitarian concerns on the front line where friend and foe are blurred; and more. Texts will include but not be limited to film, sitcom, novels, memoirs, letters, diary entries, posters, and poetry. The conflicts we study will be the major conflicts of the last century from an American perspective, and they vary in duration and intensity. They include: World War I (including the 1918 Flu Pandemic and the after-effects of the 1916 Easter Rising), the Spanish Civil War, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm or the First Gulf War, and the current American-led conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Innovations in medical treatments for soldiers and other war injured are often responding to innovations in war technology, and we will trace the changing killing technology that resulted in different injuries that tend to be linked to these conflicts as a result. The focus in this course will be English speaking doctors and nurses in Western conflicts such as World War I or conflicts that involved Anglo-speakers, such as the Korean War and the Vietnam War; however, students are welcome to pursue other conflicts for their final research project. While American doctors and nurses will be centered in our study, I make a concerted effort to include experiences, observations, and perspectives from Irish, Australian, New Zealand, Scottish, Canadian, and other English-speaking medical professionals involved in the conflicts, or stories about them.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2275 Medicine and the Muse 3 Credits

Medicine and the Muse: Writing Through Change Students will examine a variety of contemporary texts including fiction, essay, memoir, and other narratives which deal with themes of change: illness and health, aging, climate change, displacement, employment, and other changed circumstances, ideas, or beliefs. Change is often resisted, but may also be embraced. From the health of our bodies to the borders of our nation-states, change defines the arc of human existence. Coming in the wake of a global pandemic, the worst since the ongoing AIDS crisis, this course contemplates the ways in which change has impacted all our lives. We will consider, too, the role narrative plays in the creation of identity and a person's personal history, and how that self-creation may be suddenly and dramatically reconfigured through change. Most importantly we will write! Creative writing will form a major part of this course. You will be encouraged to mine your own experiences and observations of people and the world around you to find and explore your voice and different styles of writing. Students will be given practical exercises focusing on elements of the craft of creative writing: perspective, point of view, voice, dialogue, and narrative structure. All are welcome, from those who have never written before, to those with some experience and everyone in between. Be prepared to bring your work to the class and to give and receive feedback in classroom workshops. Through this approach, you will hone your close reading abilities and writing skills while analyzing central themes of change in its many forms. This course has been designed in conjunction with the Lannan Medical Humanities Symposium, THE BODY, February 6/7-8, 2023. Student attendance at the symposium is a course requirement.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2300 Sculpture and Health 1 Credit

Sculpture and Health have been related across the millennia as humanity gained understanding about how the body functions. By making three dimensional forms in the likenesses of bodies, human beings find ways to express their knowledge and beliefs about the world in which they live as well as problem solve to advance the health and wellbeing of their communities. This course will explore how sculpture making is related to health and healing both historically and contemporarily. Students will be able to see a vast array of sculptures incorporating images of the body to gain understanding about how gender/race/social status are presented over time and across cultures. Students will meet sculptors and be sculptors themselves through individual and class projects. Clinicians and pre-clinicians will guide health related discussion and inform sculpture designs. The course work will conclude with a class exhibition and a reflective paper describing the sculpture making experience as it relates to health.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

MHUM 2400 Med. the Mythology of Race 1 Credit

Medical institutions have played a principal role in constructing and preserving racial mythologies. Mythologies centered on the false notions of innate biological differences and cultural stereotypes have served to both naturalize racial health disparities and uphold a broader racial hierarchy in society. Despite race being a social and political construct, medical institutions (including medical education) have served to (re)invent and carry forward the false notion that race is a natural, hereditary, taken-granted fact about a person that informs a range of biological and cultural tendencies. Within the culture of medicine, the construction and preservation of racial mythologies occur within every aspect of a clinical encounter including the diagnostic and treatment decisions. Students must develop a structural and historical analysis in order to cultivate a critical awareness of these phenomena in medicine. In this course, students will critically analyze contemporary medical (and research) practices – communication, medical documentation, diagnosis, treatment & level of care decisions – that perpetuate racial mythologies, stereotypes, and other false beliefs. In addition, students will trace the roots of these ideas to their origins within European colonization, enslavement, and eugenics.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2440 Altered States: Drug Culture 3 Credits

Over the centuries drug use has been conceptualized in many ways; a spiritual aid, a medicine, a coping mechanism, a disease, even a moral failing. This course seeks to examine the relationship human beings have had with mind-altering drugs, both individually and societally. We will ponder questions such as: Why has there never been a historical "drug-free" society? Is it possible to achieve a drug-free society in modern times? Is it necessary for humans to alter their consciousness?

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 2500 Plague Punishment 3 Credits

Plague and Punishment: Language, Trauma, and Keywords in Pandemic Discourse: How does religious language affect our perception of disease? How do metaphors clear or cloud our understanding of health? As human societies are confronted with novel contagions, we are also forced to grapple with the psychological and cultural impact that these illnesses have on society. This course uses practices of close reading and philological study to approach texts produced during significant pandemics. Poor understanding of disease causes panic, resulting not only in death and physical consequences, but also in religious intolerance, and discrimination toward the afflicted. We will take an interdisciplinary approach to textual production and genre, putting medical, religious, literary, and historical texts in conversation in order to better understand their reciprocal influences upon each other.

Level: Undergraduate

Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 3200 Hist. of Animals in Sci Med 1 Credit

The History of Animals in Science & Medicine This course will examine and explore the various ways animals have contributed to our medical knowledge and scientific understanding throughout the course of history. Topics will cross time and cultures, including: traditional medicine, folk remedies, and animal healing; historically famous physicians/scientists and their animal assistants/inspirations; animal testing and the anti-vivisection movement; animal models of disease; food animals and zoonotic threats; animal sentience and disability liberation; modern animal medics and animal-assisted therapies; and, companion animals as sentinels of human health, aging, and environmental exposures. Learning in this course will be a collaborative process, including short lectures, expert guest talks, seminar-style discussions, and relevant readings.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 3302 Death in America 3 Credits

Intellectually, we know that, one day, our physical selves will disappear; so will the selves of those we love and the environment around us. Individuals, cultures, and societies alike have ingested and interpreted this knowledge with every possible expression, from fear and anxiety to peace and acceptance. How does our contemporary culture assimilate or confront death and dying? What does our health care system tell us about how we should live our lives? What do our artists and philosophers tell us about how we should end? Through the interdisciplinary lens of the medical humanities, this course explores the subject of death in America (and as a point of reference and discussion, death anywhere). Participants will explore historical, artistic, literary, sociological, and anthropological viewpoints of death and dying through a variety of media generated by scholars, artists, and everyday people. Beginning with a history of the American death certificate and moving through the "Before I Die" global art project, this course will take students through a reflective journey of what it means to die today, and in parallel, what it means to live.

Level: Undergraduate

Course attribute: Core:HALC - Hum, Art, Lit, Cul

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 3310 Literature of AIDS Epidemics 3 Credits

What can the literature/art of previous pandemics tell us about how we will write about future pandemics? Will the writing about the AIDS epidemic be able to shed any light on how we will be writing about Covid-19? What are the differences and similarities? In this course, we will look at various works that deal with AIDS. We will read across genres: fiction and nonfiction, memoir and poetry, film and theater. We'll study Tony Kushner's play, *Angels in America*, Thom Gunn's incredible poems in *The Man with Night Sweats*, Marlon Riggs's film *Tongues Untied*, Susan Sontag's story *The Way We Live Now*, among others. Please be prepared to read, to read more, and then read some more. And then watch some movies!

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 3320 Medicalization of the Mind 3 Credits

Examines the history of psychology as it developed from sad dudes reasoning why they are sad to sad dudes using the scientific method to prove they are sad. In other words, this upper-level seminar will be pairing texts on psychological thought with literary texts in order to trace the intersections between the scientific, medical, and cultural discourses of the nineteenth century. In doing, we will consider the ways in which scientific and medical developments both inform and are informed by arts and culture. What was psychological thought used for? Who did it benefit? Who did it injure? How can we see these intersections between science/medicine and culture today? Some psychologists include: Alexander Bain, Wilhelm Wundt, Edward Titchener, and William James. Some authors include: Harriet Martineau, the Brownings, Tekahionwake/E. Pauline Johnson, and Henry James.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 3330 Laughter is the Best Medicine 1 Credit

This course guides students on an exploration of humor and laughter and their impact on health, society, and the patient-provider relationship. The use of humor to engage and cope with our current, ever-increasingly stressful world can be transformative and life-affirming. Humor in medicine finds its place in discussions about our understanding of different types of people and personalities, end-of-life issues, coping with illness, and as a means to mitigate burnout. From Shakespeare to *Scrubs* and Dr. Patch Adams, the pleasant physical audible reaction (laughter) and its corresponding internal state (emotional joy and happiness) will be explored. The course will be divided into four parts. First, the course will expose students to the current understanding of what laughter is and how it varies from person to person. Humor will be tied to health in terms of research, therapeutics, healing power, and the use of humor in provider-patient encounters. Second, the students will learn: how medical humor and the practice of medicine have appeared in classic literature, movies, television, the arts, and the Internet and how these portrayals may impact the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and the perception of medicine in society. Third, the course will review how humor has both benefits and inherent risks—humor can be used to address stressful situations, a provider's own stress, and to improve workplace culture but humor can have unintended negative ramifications. Fourth the course will address the connection between how psychological traits and certain psychiatric disorders impact creativity and how creativity, humor, and comedy – both in terms of its creation and how it is received – may be impacted by certain psychosocial variables and external influences.

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 33302 Laughter is the Best Medicine 1 Credit

This course guides students on an exploration of humor and laughter and their impact on health, society, and the patient-provider relationship. The use of humor to engage and cope with our current, ever-increasingly stressful world can be transformative and life-affirming. Humor in medicine finds its place in discussions about our understanding of different types of people and personalities, end-of-life issues, coping with illness, and as a means to mitigate burnout. From Shakespeare to Scrubs and Dr. Patch Adams, the pleasant physical audible reaction (laughter) and its corresponding internal state (emotional joy and happiness) will be explored. The course will be divided into four parts. First, the course will expose students to the current understanding of what laughter is and how it varies from person to person. Humor will be tied to health in terms of research, therapeutics, healing power, and the use of humor in provider-patient encounters. Second, the students will learn: how medical humor and the practice of medicine have appeared in classic literature, movies, television, the arts, and the Internet and how these portrayals may impact the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and the perception of medicine in society. Third, the course will review how humor has both benefits and inherent risks—humor can be used to address stressful situations, a provider's own stress, and to improve workplace culture but humor can have unintended negative ramifications. Fourth the course will address the connection between how psychological traits and certain psychiatric disorders impact creativity and how creativity, humor, and comedy – both in terms of its creation and how it is received – may be impacted by certain psychosocial variables and external influences.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 4000 Independent Study 1 Credit

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 4012 Art the Power of Observation 1 Credit

Students critically analyze original works of art to build skills that support visual literacy, communication, and empathy. Working independently and collaboratively in small groups, participants learn to closely examine works of art, articulate and acknowledge their personal preconceived notions, collaborate on problem-solving, and increase communication through analysis and discussion. The course will be completely interactive and largely discussion-based.

Level: Graduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

MHUM 4110 War, Death, and Remembrance 3 Credits

War, Death, and Remembrance: The Untold Truth behind DC's Monuments and Memorials Washington D.C. is famous for its monuments, but how did they get here, and what do they mean? Why do we engage in monument-making? This course takes an in-depth look at the creation of Arlington Cemetery, the National Mall and its monuments as well as many lesser-known commemorative works of art, to better understand who controls our national narrative, and how.

Level: Graduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

MHUM 4300 Sculpture Health 1 Credit

Sculpture and Health have been related across the millennia as humanity gained understanding about how the body functions. By making three dimensional forms in the likenesses of bodies, human beings find ways to express their knowledge and beliefs about the world in which they live as well as problem solve to advance the health and wellbeing of their communities. This course will explore how sculpture making is related to health and healing both historically and contemporarily. Students will be able to see a vast array of sculptures incorporating images of the body to gain understanding about how gender/race/social status are presented over time and across cultures. Students will meet sculptors and be sculptors themselves through individual and class projects. Clinicians and pre-clinicians will guide health related discussion and inform sculpture designs. The course work will conclude with a class exhibition and a reflective paper describing the sculpture making experience as it relates to health.

Level: Graduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

MHUM 4450 Aging and Ageism 1 Credit

By 2025, one in every five Americans will be 65 or older, as the Baby Boomer generation takes over the top of the aging population pyramid. The impact is emerging in areas ranging from housing to healthcare. COVID has brought these issues to light even more. In this seminar, we'll explore how society views aging, and we'll consider how to bring about change. What's the role of media — from old-fashioned television shows to new social media formats and outlets – in shaping our world view? How is the longevity market tapping into and serving the older population? How have our public health policies helped/hindered our elders? How can we foster a culture of respect for our elders, as other cultures have?

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

MHUM 4949 Tutorial: Medical Humanities 1 Credit

Level: Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

MHUM 4960 Senior Capstone Seminar 3 Credits

The culmination of the Medical Humanities minor is the senior level capstone seminar. The seminar allows students to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in their preceding courses to an original, summative project in medical humanities. In this shared learning environment, students will develop peer review and grant writing skills, and will workshop and present their work, bringing their diverse studies into conversation with each other. There will be guest lectures by experts in various content areas, as well as a forum for engagement with student mentors and community partners. Students will attend an 1.5-hour-seminar each week and be expected to complete at least 10 hours of community/service/fieldwork/experiential learning outside the class. We anticipate that many of these Capstone projects will be published in academic or media outlets, presented at conferences, and shared through the Medical Humanities Initiative's own website/digital archive.

Level: Undergraduate

Prerequisites: (MHUM 101 or MHUM 1101)

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)