

Biomedical Humanities 480
Spring 2012
Course Syllabus

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Class: Friday 4:15 – 5:15

Course Goals and Expectations:

This course serves as a capstone experience for the Biomedical Humanities major, and the two required formal public presentations reflect a student's portfolio of educational experiences in and out of the classroom. The first presentation is a demonstration of the student's command of her or his research project, and the second reflects the student's integration of academic and experiential learning in the medical humanities. Students completing the minor are only responsible for composing and presenting the medical humanities presentation. The professors in Biomedical Humanities will be evaluating your two presentations.

As part of the capstone core of the Biomedical Humanities major, the goals of the senior seminar are to:

- Integrate experiences in and out of the classroom
- Provide evidence that learning has progressed from initial to final study within the medical humanities
- Present and defend the results of your research and demonstrate its relevance to your peers and faculty members
- Demonstrate depth of knowledge in the humanities

Grading:

Research Presentation:	45%
Abstract	
Seminar	
Power Point	
Medical Humanities Presentation:	45%
Abstract	
Presentation	
Paper	
Participation:	10%

The Research Presentation:

Abstract

Each senior will provide an abstract for the research presentation. This abstract (1 to 2 paragraphs maximum) must be submitted via the Sakai drop box to the seminar leaders one full week before the student is scheduled to present.

Seminar

The expectations for the research seminar are as follows (this presentation closely follows the APEX format for Biology):

- demonstrate an understanding of the basic science behind your project
- articulate how your research fits into the larger scheme of science
- address any ethical concerns raised by your project, by the research on which your project builds, or by the intended outcomes of your research
- effectively communicate your science topics to a broad audience
- demonstrate an advanced understanding of your topic
- satisfactorily answer questions from your mentors and peers

Presentations should last no more than 12 minutes, leaving 3 minutes for questions and discussion. Students are expected to present their research in Power Point, and will be required to submit an electronic copy of their Power Point presentation to the Sakai drop box following the seminar.

Along with the Power Point, you must also submit an electronic document to the Sakai drop box containing:

- a list (with mentor's names & addresses) of the research you've conducted outside of the classroom
- a bibliography of relevant sources

The Medical Humanities Presentation:

This component of the senior seminar requires you to generate a thesis-driven, first-person argument about a particular health care-related issue/problem/topic/question that you have encountered *through your shadowing or service experiences* while at Hiram. In this presentation, we are looking for you to demonstrate your ability to think critically and communicate effectively while using the tools of analysis you've learned in the major's humanities courses.

By asking for a "thesis-driven" argument, we are indicating that your essay should have a clearly identifiable main claim which all the other sub-claims of your essay support in some way. By requiring you to write in the first person ("I") and to generate your topic from your personal experiential learning encounters, we are asking you to reflect on your own role or responsibilities in relation to the issue on which you are focusing.

Your essay needs to persuade your reader—with evidence-based claims and illustrative examples—of the soundness of your thesis. It is expected that you will draw on (and responsibly cite) authoritative sources and will engage with diverse viewpoints for the purposes of presenting a reasoned argument about your chosen issue.

While the format for this presentation is specific (see below), the issue you address will inevitably vary widely from your peers, as each of you has had unique experiences both in the classroom and in your shadowing and service work. Given that expected variation, we offer a few possible approaches below that you might find helpful as you consider possible topics.

Sample Approaches Include:

- Based on health care encounters you have observed, critique the systemic factors that impact the time and quality of physician-patient interactions and make suggestions for how individuals (like yourself) and institutions might positively alter these factors.
- Based on a particular ethical problem that you have encountered in a health care setting, make a nuanced argument about how one might most ethically respond to that dilemma and reflect on your own actions at the time of your encounter.
- Based on a critical analysis of your personal experiences interacting with groups of people who are different from yourself or who are marginalized, identify the various ways that identity issues or health care policies impact the delivery of health care to particular populations and suggest how such health care might be better facilitated.
- Based on a particular health care interaction or event that you have personally witnessed and of which you have also read or seen a fictional representation, critique the value of fictional accounts for conveying particular health care experiences or issues, reflecting critically on the universality (or lack thereof) of your own experience.

Abstract:

Each senior will provide an abstract conveying the topic and argument of their medical humanities presentation. This abstract (1 to 2 paragraphs maximum) must be submitted via the Sakai drop box to the seminar leaders one full week before the student is scheduled to present.

Presentation and Paper:

In keeping with the formal presentation style of the humanities, you will be required to produce a written presentation, and then to deliver that presentation to your peers and professors. The medical humanities presentation should run for a full 15 minutes. This is the equivalent of reading aloud from ~6-7 pages of double-spaced, 12-point font text.

The written presentation should thus be ~6-7 typed, double-spaced pages. In addition to those pages, it should include a bibliography for any works cited, as well as a list (including mentor's names and addresses) of the shadowing and service learning you have completed as part of your degree. These materials must be submitted to your Sakai drop box following the presentation.

The spoken presentation will consist of you delivering your written presentation to an audience. You should practice delivering your talk to make sure that what you're reading sounds more like natural speech and will make sense to your audience. Time will be allotted for questions and discussion at the end of each presentation.

Participation:

Seniors participating in the seminar are expected to attend all of the scheduled presentations. Attendance will be taken and absences will negatively affect a student's overall seminar grade.