Medical Humanities

The minor in medical humanities draws on courses from a variety of departments and programs including art history, classics, history, languages and literature, music, philosophy, and gender and sexuality studies. It is available to undergraduates beginning with the Class of 2018; prospective minors are invited to apply (http://cenhum.artsci.wustl.edu/undergraduate/medical_humanities/application) toward the end of each fall and spring semester. The minor is housed in the Washington University Center for the Humanities.

The minor approaches health, disease and medical care as culturally embedded human experiences that vary across time and place. In addition to exploring health, disease and medical care as core human experiences, the program of study is designed to provide a solid grounding in the textual-historical approach essential to all humanities scholarship. The minor combines disciplinary diversity with thematic unity to engage students with a set of tightly related “big” topics and issues. These include the contested meanings of health and disease; the ethical dimensions of medicine; illness narratives; debates over health and development; the role of medicine in war, empire and nation building; the relationship between religion and medicine; exchange and friction between biomedicine and other healing traditions; and the burden of disease as it relates to gender, race and class.

Medical Humanities aspires to instill values shared by all humanities disciplines: to appreciate multiple worlds and viewpoints, to communicate clearly and gracefully, and to read and think critically. Students will emerge from the minor able to apply the insights and critical methods of literature, philosophy, history and the arts to subjects often left solely to the natural and social sciences. Its goal is to demonstrate the enduring relevance of humanistic inquiry to understanding a basic realm of human experience.

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Faculty

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**Majors**

Medical humanities is an interdepartmental minor; Washington University does not offer an independent major in medical humanities.

**Minors**

The Minor in Medical Humanities

Units required: 18

At least one gateway course (3 units) is required for the minor. These include:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MedH 130</td>
<td>The Art of Medicine</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 1640</td>
<td>Health and Disease in World History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MedH 233F</td>
<td>Biomedical Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
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An additional 15 units of Medical Humanities courses are required to complete the minor: at least 12 of these units must be core courses, designated by the "CFH MH" attribute, while the remaining three credits can come from either the core or affiliate lists (below). At least 9 units of core courses must be at the 300 level or above. Core courses include the gateway courses, as well as:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MedH 126</td>
<td>Chinese for Medical Purposes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hist 2216</td>
<td>Books and Bodies (U16)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil 3001</td>
<td>Philosophy of Medicine</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 301R</td>
<td>Historical Methods  — European History (when offered as The Black Death and the Plague in Europe)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MedH 3031</td>
<td>Music and Healing</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

WGSS 3041 Making Sex and Gender: Understanding the History of the Body 3
MedH 3044 Humors, Pox, and Plague: Medieval and Early Modern Medicine 3
History 3067 Current Topics in the History of Medicine 3
MedH 310 From Hysteria to Hysterectomy: Women's Health Care in America 3
MedH 3112 Exposition: Writing and Medicine 3
IS 326 The Doctor Is In: Anton Chekhov and Narrative Medicine (U43) 3
MedH 353 Medical Spanish 3
MedH 360 Trans Studies 3
Phil 366 Art and the Mind-Brain 3
History 3672 Medicine, Healing and Experimentation in the Contours of Black History 3
ELit 370 The Writing and Representation of Pain (U65) 3
MedH 3801 Ancient Greek and Roman Medicine 3
MedH 391 Literature and Medicine 3
MedH 4033 Culture, Illness, and Healing in Asia 3
MedH 418 Sexuality and Gender in East Asia 3
Classics 4361 Topics in Ancient Studies (when offered as Science and Medicine in Ancient Greek and Rome) 3
French 447 The Medieval Literary Arts (when offered as Body & Disability in Medieval Literature) 3
Drama 456 A Madman in the Theater: The History of Insanity on Stage from Sophocles to Shaffer 3
Classics 4647 Ancient Madness 3
MedH 4885 Advanced Seminar: Medicine, Disease, and Empire 3
MedH 4990 Advanced Seminar: History of the Body 3
History 49CJ Advanced Seminar: Medicine on the Frontiers 3

Please note: The 9 credits of advanced medical humanities core courses (at the 300 level or above) must also come from at least two of six different disciplinary categories: Classics & Art History; History; Languages/Literature/Culture; Performing Arts & Music; Philosophy; and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Core courses may also require additional prerequisites within their home departments or programs.

Up to 3 units of affiliate courses from complementary disciplines in the sciences and social sciences (designated by
the “CFH MHA” attribute) may be applied to the minor. These include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMCS 226</td>
<td>Sociological Approaches to American Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthro 3201</td>
<td>Gender, Culture and Madness</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthro 3283</td>
<td>Introduction to Global Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthro 3310</td>
<td>Health, Healing and Ethics: Introduction to Medical Anthropology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthro 3620</td>
<td>Anthropological Perspectives on the Fetus</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthro 3626</td>
<td>Adventures in Nosology: The Nature and Meaning of Disease</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psych 399</td>
<td>Living, Dying and Death: A Biopsychosocial Approach to Understanding the End of Life</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Additional Information**

The medical humanities minor may be declared beginning with the Class of 2018. Students are invited to apply (http://cenhum.artsci.wustl.edu/undergraduate/medical_humanities/application) at the end of spring semester of their freshman year or any time thereafter. Application deadlines typically fall several weeks before the end of the fall and spring semesters (i.e., mid- to late November and April). Brief, informal interviews with prospective minors will be held at the end of each semester, usually during reading period.

The most up-to-date list of medical humanities courses and medical humanities affiliate courses can be found by searching Washington University Course Listings for the “CFH MH” and “CFH MHA” attributes, or by consulting the lists online (http://cenhum.artsci.wustl.edu/undergraduate/medical_humanities/requirements).

**Courses**

Medical Humanities began listing courses under the L85 MedH designation in spring 2017; we are adding new courses to that designation as they are offered, but many of our core courses are not yet represented in the list below. For a more complete list of Medical Humanities courses, please consult the Minors section of this page or search Course Listings (https://acadinfo.wustl.edu/Courselists/Semester/Search.aspx) for the CFH MH (Medical Humanities) and CFH MHA (Medical Humanities: Affiliate) attributes.

**L85 MedH 126 Chinese for Medical Purposes**

This course is the continuation of Beginning Chinese taught in the fall at the Shanghai Fudan program. The spring course is targeted specifically to pre-medicine and/ or health care students who have studied at the Shanghai Fudan program in the fall. Students without the Fudan experience can also enroll after language evaluation. Prerequisites: L04 101D, L04 117F or the equivalent.

**L85 MedH 130 The Art of Medicine**

This interdisciplinary, cross-school course at the intersection of the humanities and medicine offers students a singular encounter with the changing art and craft of medicine from ancient times to the present day. The course highlights transformational moments in the chronological history of medicine. It engages a variety of texts, including primary works and scholarship in the history of medicine as well as artworks and literary and dramatic narratives that represent the body, disease and healing care. A principal aim is for students to learn to see medicine as a social practice deeply implicated in the beliefs and struggles of particular cultural and historical contexts. Collaborating faculty come from the School of Engineering, the Washington University School of Medicine, the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts and the School of Arts & Sciences. This course is for freshmen only.

Same as L50 InterD 130
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM: H

**L85 MedH 233F Biomedical Ethics**

A critical examination, in the light of contemporary moral disagreements and traditional ethical theories, of some of the moral issues arising out of medical practice and experimentation in our society. Issues that might be discussed include euthanasia, genetic engineering, organ transplants, medical malpractice, the allocation of medical resources, and the rights of the patient.

Same as L30 Phil 233F
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

**L85 MedH 3031 Music and Healing**

In this course, we broadly consider issues of music and healing, drawing from the fields of medical ethnomusicology, medical anthropology, music therapy, and psychology. Our case studies are multi-sited, as we interrogate medical healings and healing music from diverse global and historical perspectives. We approach our study of musical practices with the understanding that the social, cultural and political contexts where “music” and “healing” are themselves created inform the sounds of the music and its various — and often conflicting — interpretations and meanings. We read a variety of academic literature and use media texts and listening examples to develop interdisciplinary and cross-cultural analyses of music and healing. Issues of national consciousness, postcolonialism, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, religion, dis/ability and the role of history/memory remain central to our explorations of music and healing.

Same as L27 Music 3031
Credit 3 units. A&S: CD A&S IQ: LCD BU: BA EN: H

**L85 MedH 3044 Humors, Pox, and Plague: Medieval and Early Modern Medicine**

This course examines how people thought about, experienced and managed disease in the medieval and early modern periods. Students will consider developments in learned medicine alongside the activities of a diverse range of practitioners — e.g., surgeons, empirics, quacks, midwives, saints, and local healers — involved in the business of curing a wide range of ailments. Significant attention will be paid to the experiences of patients and the social and cultural significance of disease. Major topics include: the rise and fall of humoral medicine; religious explanations of illness; diseases such as leprosy, syphilis and
When and why did the category gender emerge? What is the development of the field and the identity in U.S. culture. Same as L22 History 3044
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: BA EN: H

L85 MedH 307 Writing and Medicine
Same as L13 Writing 307
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, WI EN: H

L85 MedH 310 From Hysteria to Hysterectomy: Women’s Health Care in America
This course examines issues surrounding women’s health care in America. While the scope is broad, the major emphasis will be on the 19th and 20th centuries. Through an examination of popular writing, scientific/medical writing, letters, diaries and fiction, we will look at the changing perceptions and conceptions of women’s bodies and health in America. Same as L77 WGSS 310
Credit 3 units. A&S: SS A&S IQ: SSC Art: SSC BU: BA

L85 MedH 3112 Exposition: Writing and Medicine
For students who have a particular interest in health, illness and medical care. Exposition is a course that considers style in relationship to audience and purpose, asking the writer to engage more consciously with writing conventions, and to explore strategies appropriate to various writing situations, from the more experimental and performative to the more formal and scholarly. The course involves frequent practice in analyzing and critiquing, with special attention to techniques of organization, argument and emphasis. Students in this special section of Exposition read essays, journalism and personal narratives about the experience of physicians and patients in the modern health care system. Students use expository writing to think critically and personally about their own experiences with illness and disease. Pre-medical students might use this opportunity to write and think about the anticipated rewards and challenges of the profession they hope to join. Same as L13 Writing 3112
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA, WI A&S IQ: HUM, WI Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

L85 MedH 353 Medical Spanish
Designed for future medical professionals, this course will provide students with a complete vocabulary and cultural sensitivity necessary for treating Spanish-speaking patients. While the main focus is oral/aural, written exams, varied reading and some research are required. Volunteer work recommended for enrolled students. Advanced students will be given priority. Prerequisite: Span 307D.
Same as L38 Span 353
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: LCD BU: HUM

L85 MedH 360 Trans Studies
Trans* Studies is an interdisciplinary course that was previously named Transgender Studies. The new course title represents the development of the field and the identity in U.S. culture. In this course students engage with the following questions: When and why did the category gender emerge? What is the relationship between sex, sexuality and gender? How have the fields of medicine and psychology dealt with gender? How have approaches to “gender dysphoria” changed over time? Why is LGBT grouped together as a social movement? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this grouping? What are the legal obstacles faced by people who resist normative gender categories? What legal obstacles are faced by people who transition from one sex to another? To what extent do U.S. citizens have autonomy over defining their gender or sex? How are trans people represented in fiction? What does it mean to apply transgender theory to interpret fictional accounts of trans? Any of the following are suitable (but not required) courses to take before enrolling in this class: WGSS 100B, WGSS 105, WGSS 205 or WGSS 3091.
Same as L77 WGSS 360
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH, SD A&S IQ: HUM, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: BA EN: H

L85 MedH 3801 Ancient Greek and Roman Medicine
This course introduces the student to the practice and theory of medicine in the ancient Mediterranean, beginning in Egypt and continuing through Greece and Rome. In the end, we will find ourselves in the Middle Ages. Our focus will be on Greco-Roman medicine: how disease was understood; how disease was treated surgically, pharmacologically, and through diet; the intellectual origins of Greek medicine; the related close relationship between Greco-Roman medicine and philosophy; and the social status of medical practitioners. We will also discuss how medicine was written and in what terms its practitioners conceived it.
Same as L08 Classics 3801
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH, CD, SD A&S IQ: HUM, LCD, SD BU: IS EN: H

L85 MedH 391 Literature and Medicine
Same as L14 E Lit 391

L85 MedH 4033 Culture, Illness, and Healing in Asia
This course examines the place of health, illness and healing in Asian societies. We explore how people experience, narrate and respond to illness and other forms of suffering — including political violence, extreme poverty and health inequalities. In lectures and discussions we discuss major changes that medicine and public health are undergoing and how those changes affect the training of practitioners, health care policy, clinical practice and ethics. The course familiarizes students with key concepts and approaches in medical anthropology by considering case studies from a number of social settings including China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Tibet, Thailand, Vietnam and Asian immigrants in the United States. We also investigate the sociocultural dimensions of illness and the medicalization of social problems in Asia, examining how gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability and other forms of social difference affect medical knowledge and disease outcomes. This course is intended for anthropology majors, students considering careers in medicine and public health, and others interested in learning how anthropology can help us understand human suffering and formulate more effective interventions.
Same as L48 Anthro 4033
Credit 3 units. A&S: SS, CD A&S IQ: LCD, SSC Art: SSC EN: S
L85 MedH 418 Sexuality and Gender in East Asia
In this course we explore the role of women in the indigenous religious traditions of China, Japan and Korea (Confucianism, Daoism, Shamanism and Shinto), as well as Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. We begin by considering the images of women (whether mythical or historical) in traditional religious scriptures and historical or literary texts. We then focus on what we know of the actual experience and practice of various types of religious women — nuns and abbesses; shamans and mediums; hermits and recluses; and ordinary laywomen — both historically and in more recent times. Class materials include: literary and religious texts; historical and ethnological studies; biographies and memoirs; and occasional videos and films. Prerequisites: This class is conducted as a seminar, with minimal lectures; substantial reading and writing; and lots of class discussion. For this reason, students who are not either upper-level undergraduates or graduate students, or who have little or no background in East Asian religion or culture, need to obtain the instructor's permission before enrolling.
Same as L23 Re St 418
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH, CD, SD A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

L85 MedH 4885 Advanced Seminar: Medicine, Disease, and Empire
This course examines the history of medicine in connection to the politics of colonialism and empire-building, spanning the 16th century through the 20th century. Topics covered include: epidemic disease outbreaks (e.g., smallpox, cholera, malaria); the role of science and medicine in endorsing the "civilizing missions" of empires; tropical climates and tropical diseases as western constructs; tensions between western medicine and indigenous healing practices and beliefs; ideas of race and racism in science and medicine; modern advancements in sanitation and public health and their implementation overseas; and the historical roots of the modern global health movement.
Same as L22 History 4885
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM

L85 MedH 4990 Advanced Seminar: History of the Body
Do bodies have a history? Recent research suggests that they do. Historians have tapped a wide variety of sources — including vital statistics, paintings and photographs, hospital records, and sex manuals — to reconstruct changes in how humans have conceptualized and experienced their own bodies. We pay particular attention to the intersection of European cultural history and history of medicine since 1500.
Same as L22 History 4990
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH, SD A&S IQ: HUM, LCD, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H