

Contact Person:
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*All Day I think about it, then at night I say it.
Where did I come from, and what am I supposed to be doing?
I have no idea.
My soul is from elsewhere, I'm sure of that, and I intend to end up there.*

~Rumi

MEDICAL LETTERS – LITERATURE IN MEDICINE: ELECTIVE COURSE

This elective explores medicine in literature including novels, short stories and poetry. This elective directly addresses those areas of the ATSU Mission Statement such as commitment to society's health care needs, enhancement of compassion, professionalism, and comprehensive appreciation of the interaction of mind, body and spirit.

Course Director: Patricia Sexton, DHEd, Associate Professor, Family Medicine
Faculty: Margaret Wilson, DO, Chair and Professor, Family Medicine

Course Goal

The goal of Medical Letters is to expose students to the interaction of physician, patient, caregiver, society and the system of medicine through literary works. It is hoped that examining the writing of others on these topics will increase perspective, deepen understanding, develop a love for the art of medicine and enhance empathy.

Course Objectives

By the end of this elective course, successful students will:

- 1) Be comfortable with discerning the perspective of key players in caregiver – patient relationship.
- 2) Have developed skills associated with the delivery of compassionate care (empathy / altruism).
- 3) Explore the impact of medicine on patients, caregivers and society.
- 4) Create collaborative relationships based on respect for one another.

Course Content

Required Texts: (The texts are available to check out from Dr. Sexton)

Wit by Margaret Edison

A Three Dog Life by Abigail Thomas

Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague by Geraldine Brooks

Learning to Play God by Robert Marion

Short Stories and Poetry (to be distributed during the course / found in Ten Years of Medicine in the Arts. AAMC)

Current Status 1/22/87 by P. Monette

Empty Pockets by K. Pickrel

Breaking by L. Diskin
Tube Feeding by R. Selzer

I Remember Nothing More: A Physician's Memories of the Warsaw Ghetto [excerpts] by A.B. Szwajer

My Own Country [excerpt] by A. Verghese

The Dark Bridal Canopy by J. Borkan. 2006. Annals of Family Medicine 4(1); 75-78.

The Code by K. Treadway. 2007. New England Journal of Medicine 357(13)1273-1275.

All course meetings will be discussion based.

The elective will begin in quarter 3 and will meet approximately monthly for 8 meetings. The elective will be completed by the end of quarter 5. The elective will consist of a total of 16 hours face-to-face plus reading and assessment.

Assessment: Four (4) topic papers will be assigned through the course. These should be 1 – 3 page analyses of the question / topic being explored. A final capstone project will include a Coffee Shop Literary Reading and/or a "published" document.