Spring 2019 Course Descriptions

Instructor: Sara DiCaglio
Course: ENGL/COMM/HHUM 107
Title: Introduction to the Health Humanities

Description: How do we think about, write about, read about, draw, and visualize our health? What do these and other humanities-related practices do for larger questions of health-care and ethics? The Health Humanities is a growing, cross-disciplinary field that practices the analysis of health and illness within cultural activities and products. Students of the Health Humanities may use methods of analysis drawn from history, literature, philosophy and bioethics, as well as those social sciences that “employ humanistic methods relevant to medical enquiry and practice, such as sociology, anthropology, and psychology,” in order to better understand the lived experience of health and illness (Jones et al, 4-5). Health Humanities serves to question the “two cultures” thesis that postulates the sciences and humanities are separate, arguing instead that our experience of health and illness is never only biological or cultural, but always both. Students with backgrounds and interests in health, science, medicine, the arts, and the humanities more broadly will benefit from the interdisciplinary skills developed in this course and larger field.

Proposed Readings: Readings may include Health Humanities Reader (Jones), Medical Humanities: An Introduction (Cole et al); Never Let Me Go (Ishiguro); Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me: A Graphic Memoir (Forney); Taking Turns: Stories from HIV/AIDS Care Unit 371 (Czerwiec).