History 461/561: American Medical History

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 – 11:20 in PLC189

Professor: James C. Mohr
Office: 383 McKenzie Hall
Hours: T, R 11:30 to 12:30, and by appointment
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Required texts:

1. Leavitt and Numbers, eds., Sickness and Health in America (LN below)
3. Mohr, Licensed to Practice: The Supreme Court Defines the American Medical Profession

This course is designed to offer a fundamental knowledge of American medical history and a chance to think about the role and the place of medicine and health in our society. The course presupposes no prior knowledge of medicine or medical history and does not involve “hard science.” The course does presuppose a basic prior knowledge of American history in general, and does presuppose a willingness to read thoroughly in areas that might not be immediately familiar. This will be primarily a lecture course, so good note taking will be essential. Students are expected to do the assigned reading in advance, and there will be time to discuss the day’s reading at the end of each lecture.

In addition to a mid-term exam and a final exam, the course will also require a seven-page research paper. The paper assignment follows the syllabus below and will be further discussed in class during the first week of the quarter.

For graduate students enrolled in this course as History 561: You will fulfill all of the undergraduate requirements (including the exams and research paper), and in addition you will meet for discussion with Professor Mohr and turn in one other paper. That other paper will address a medical history subject related to your larger interests.

During the course you will:

* gain experience analyzing and synthesizing complex materials at a details and sophisticated level.

* gain experience in determining degrees of importance and levels of significance with regard to various sorts of evidence.
*gain experience writing an original research paper from original sources (including conceptualization, structure, and writing skills).

*gain experience discussing and assessing arguments and interpretations made by others.

Those are skills that will be useful to you for the rest of your lives.

All UO policies regarding academic misconduct will be in effect in this course, especially including those pertaining to all forms of cheating and plagiarism. No recordings of any sort will be permitted without explicit permission.

Grading:

For undergraduates: Mid-term exam 33%; research paper 33%; final exam 34%.

For graduate students: Mid-term exam 25%; research paper 25%; additional graduate paper 25%; final exam 25%.

A syllabus with lecture topics and reading assignments follows.

Week I.
Jan. 05: Lecture: Introduction, and the European Medical Heritage
Reading: obtain the books

Jan. 07: Lecture: Colonial Medicine and the Boston Inoculation Debate
Reading: WT, 30-41, 48-54; LN, 407-417

Week II.
Jan. 12: No class. Work on the paper assignment.

Jan. 14: Lecture: Medicine and Health in the Early Republic
Reading: WT, 57-69, 93-99, 108-124; LN, 72-83, 351-368

Week III.
Jan. 19: Lecture: Regulars and Irregulars in the Nineteenth Century
Reading: WT, 71-73, 129-130, 135-136, 143-149

Jan. 21: Lecture and Video: The Triumph of Scientific Medicine, Part 1: Surgery
Reading: WT, 176-178

Week IV.
Jan. 26: Lecture: The Triumph of Scientific Medicine, Part 2: General Practice
Reading: WT, 198-233; LN, 87-101, 115-142
Jan. 28: Lecture and Discussion: Regulating Medical Practice  
Reading: LN, 225-236; and Mohr, Licensed to Practice, entire book

Week V.
Feb. 02: Lecture: The Triumph of Scientific Medicine, Part 3: The Rise of New Problems  
Reading: WT, 264-274, 327-329, 409-41; LN, 309-333, 543-554

Feb. 04: Lecture and Discussion: The Tuskegee Syphilis Study  
Reading: WT, 390-408, 416-423; LN, 392-404

Week VI.
Feb. 09: **Mid-Quarter Exam**

Feb. 11: Lecture: Epidemics and US History  
Reading: LN, 418-433

Week VII.
Feb. 16: Lecture and Video: The Great Influenza Epidemic of 1918  
Reading: No additional assignment; work on your paper

Feb. 18: Lecture: Women and American Medicine  
Reading: WT, 136-143, 149-157, 339-347, 372-379; LN, 237-265

Week VIII.
Reading: LN, 309-322, 437-493, 531-542

Feb. 25: Lecture and Video: The Problem of Mental Health  
Reading: LN, 334-348  
**Research Papers Due**

Week IX.
Mar. 01: Lecture: Historical Origins of the Current Crisis, Part 1, Funding and Organizational Issues  
Reading: WT, 435-441, 485-489; LN, 269-283

Mar. 03: No class: catch up on any back reading, begin reading for next week, and begin reviewing for the final exam

Week X.
Reading: WT, 451-484, 489-498; LN, 284-294.
Mar. 10: Lecture: Overview, Review, and Discussion
Reading: WT, 524-539

Week XI.
Mar 16: FINAL EXAM (note: this will take place at 8:00AM on a Thursday – please make any travel plans accordingly)

Paper assignment:

The UO library system allows you access to long runs of several nineteenth-century medical journals. You are to choose any medical journal published between 1835 and 1899, and peruse all of the issues of that journal for one year (you may choose whatever year you wish). Your assignment will be a 7-page paper based on what you find in the journal for year you chose. There is no right or wrong approach to this paper. You could write about what seemed to interest physicians writing in that journal during your year. You might want to consider how well the articles in your journal corresponded with, or contradicted, what you expected to find on the basis of the materials we are covering in class. You could reflect upon the state of medicine or medical practice as reflected in your journal for that year. You could comment on anything that surprised, disappointed, shocked, or embarrassed you. You could comment on what the journal articles or case studies revealed about physician attitudes toward patients; or toward the public; or toward racial minorities; or toward one another. You could analyze the advertisements if the journal published advertisements. Regardless of the approach you take, however, the paper MUST be based on the original material you find in the journal you read, not on secondary sources.

You would be wise to do some preliminary scanning of various possible journal choices before committing to a specific journal for a specific year. That way you are likely to find a journal and a year with material of interest to you, though an arbitrary choice is also perfectly acceptable for this assignment. Identify both your journal and your year at the top of your paper.