

## Health Humanities in Latin America and Spain WLS 363 001

3 credits

Fall 2021

### Essential Information

Your Instructor:  
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### Course Description

In recent years, health humanities has risen as an exciting field of study at the intersection of the humanities and the health professions. Physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and other health practitioners have reexamined approaches and methodologies commonly used in the humanities, from close reading to narrative writing, to their patients' benefit. In turn, disciplines in the humanities have reassessed their engagement with texts, recognizing in them caregivers and patients attempting to understand each other and learn from each other and revealing often unspoken issues, worldviews, and values. This course will study essential concepts in health humanities, paying particular attention to how the field has evolved, and continues to do so, in Latin America and Spain. Through novels, short stories, and films, we will study topics such as the rhetorics of disease and illness, the body as a discursive space, and the social and scientific construction of disability, aging, gender, and race, among others.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:  
...explain in Spanish basic concepts related to medical humanities.  
...summarize and interpret authentic informational and fictional texts.

...follow ideas and infer meaning from complex language on unfamiliar and abstract topics, particularly those at the intersection of medicine and the humanities.  
...identify and critically analyze in Spanish representations of illness and its effects on those affected by it.  
...describe some examples of how cultural, social, and historical contexts have influenced medical practice in Latin America and Spain.  
...examine issues related to illness and medicine through artistic expressions using the Spanish language.  
...deliver sophisticated and articulate presentations in Spanish on issues related to medicine and illness from a humanistic point of view.

## Required Materials

Films and scanned readings available on theSpring.

## Course Format & Contingency Plan

We will be conducting the course in-person to the best of our ability. However, if there is a change of circumstances that prevents us from meeting in person (e.g., a large number of students in quarantine, instructor in quarantine, etc.), we will pivot our course to online learning.

If we need to move one or more of our class sessions online, we will meet via Zoom, and I will post the link and meeting ID on theSpring.



*Mar adentro* (Dir. Alejandro Amenábar, 2004) invites us to think about bioethics and the representation of illness, medicine, and disability.  
Source: <https://vengonofuoridallefottutepareti.wordpress.com/2018/04/25/mar-adentro-excepcional-en-espanol/>

## Four Ways to Approach This Course

### **If you are here because you are (or are thinking about becoming) a Spanish major/minor**

This course will be a brief but comprehensive introduction to Hispanic medical humanities. You will get to know more about how people in the Spanish-speaking world think about medicine and illness and the artistic products that they have created. In addition, the course will provide you with fundamental tools to critically read and analyze literary and cinematic texts.

### **If you are here to fulfill a requirement in the humanities/humanistic inquiry, Latin American and Latinx Studies, or International Affairs**

This course will provide opportunities to learn about the numerous and diverse Spanish-speaking societies. By examining how they have understood and portrayed issues related to illness and medicine, you will get to know more about the different cultures in the region. You will also become familiar with some of their artistic works, whether in the form of literature, film, painting, or photography.

### **If you are here because you are interested in the topic**

This course will introduce you to basic concepts in the health humanities, a field gaining prominence in the health professions. The analytical tools you will be learning and practicing will be particularly useful if you are considering a career in healthcare. You will learn how people in Spanish-speaking communities have understood and portrayed issues related to health, illness, disease, and medicine, developing cultural awareness and improving your cultural competence as it relates to these communities.

### **If you are here to fulfill the language requirement or to continue practicing your Spanish language skills**

The course will provide a variety of authentic resources, that is, materials made by Spanish native speakers for other native speakers, to help you not only improve, but capture the nuances of the Spanish language, its different varieties, and the changes it has experienced over time.

## Grading Criteria

Preparation/Participation	35 %
Integrative Papers	30 %
Case Study	10 %
Creative Project	25 %

## Grading Scale

A+	99-100	C+	77-79
A	94-98	C	73-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	F	<63



## Preparation/Participation (35%)

This is an advanced reading-intensive course that will be conducted as a seminar. Students are expected to complete all readings (or watch films) before each class, attend our class sessions, and actively participate in discussions.

Discussion Boards (Foros). A large part of our discussions will take place on discussion boards hosted on theSpring. After you finish reading/watching the text assigned for a particular day, you are expected to post a brief reaction to the text on the corresponding discussion board. You can post a written reaction (about 150 words) or a sound recording or video (about 45 seconds long). Then, after class, you are expected to participate again in the discussion board. This time you can respond to a text posted by a classmate, post a reaction to topics discussed during class, or answer one of the questions I will provide. I will be checking all the comments and will participate in the discussion too. Each reading will end up having its own discussion board, so it will be easy to go back and use it as a reference in the future.

We will evaluate preparation and participation with a weekly grade based on points to balance the expectation of active and continuous engagement with much-needed flexibility. This is how you can earn them:

Active participation in class session:	3pts. (6pts. total possible in a week)
A pre-discussion post:	3pts. (6pts. total possible in a week)
A post-discussion post:	2pts. (4pts. total possible in a week)
Presentation of a case study:	6pts. (6pts. possible in the semester)

Your weekly preparation and participation grade will be calculated by adding all the points you earn each week up to 10pts. maximum (you can see that there are many combinations possible to achieve them). You are encouraged to participate in all activities, but this structure offers you flexibility to balance your workload and get full credit depending on your possibilities each week.

## Integrative Papers (30%)

At the end of each module (see Calendar), students will have the opportunity to write an integrative paper. Integrative papers will present the student's perspective on a particular topic covered during the module. Such a perspective must be supported by one or more of the texts we studied in that particular module, and students should include other references as needed. Throughout the semester, students are required to write **two integrative papers** (no less than 1500 words each). Papers should follow the MLA guidelines, be double-spaced, use a font size no smaller than 12, and include the word count. All papers must be submitted within a week of finishing a module. Additional guidance can be found on theSpring.

## Case Study (10%)

Students (in pairs or individually) will be in charge of preparing and presenting a case study related to health, illness, medicine, and culture as indicated in the Calendar of Case Study Presentations. The presentation will consist of a 15-min description and discussion of the particular case, highlighting important points for further discussion and suggesting a path to establish a dialogue between the case at hand and other previously studied texts or topics. Each individual/team needs

to schedule a meeting with the instructor at least one week before the date of their presentation to discuss their case study with me.

### **Creative Project (25%)**

Students (in pairs or individually) will choose a topic related to the class and explore it creatively. The project has two components:

- 1) a deliverable in the form of short documentary film, visual essay, fanzine, short graphic novel, podcast episode, art project, etc. (15% of final grade)
- 2) a final presentation of the project (10% of final grade)

During the fourth week of classes, students have to discuss with the instructor their initial ideas about the topic and the form of the creative project they have in mind. More detailed instructions and rubrics related to this project can be found on theSpring.

## Calendar

We will do our best to follow this plan, but we might make some changes as needed.

Module 1 Foundations		
Date	Topic Read before class	Due
Week 1 W, Sep 8		Introduction to the course
Week 1 F, Sep 10	<b>Narrative Medicine</b> Urday-Fernández y Cuba-Fuentes “Medicina narrativa” (2019) <a href="http://www.scielo.org.pe/pdf/afm/v80n1/a20v80n1.pdf">http://www.scielo.org.pe/pdf/afm/v80n1/a20v80n1.pdf</a>	Questions about the syllabus
Week 2 W, Sep 15	<b>Close Reading</b> Yásnaya Aguilar “Aquí” (2020) <a href="https://www.revistadelauniversidad.mx/articles/fa2c8cea-aecc-474e-a8aa-2831b86f0078/aqui">https://www.revistadelauniversidad.mx/articles/fa2c8cea-aecc-474e-a8aa-2831b86f0078/aqui</a>	
Week 2 F, Sep 17	<b>Metaphors</b> Susan Sontag <i>La enfermedad y sus metáforas</i> (1978), excerpts	
Week 3 W, Sep 22	<b>Visual Representations</b> Dir. Alejandro Amenábar <i>Mar adentro</i> (2004)	
Week 3 F, Sep 24	<b>Indigenous Epistemologies</b> Armando Alfaro Gómez “El sueño de los médicos tojolabales” / “Ja swayiche ja ajnanum tojolab'al jumasa” (1998)	

Module 2 The Body		
Date	Topic Read before class	Due
Week 4, W, Sep 29	<b>Gender</b> Rosario Ferré “La muñeca menor” (1972)	
Week 4, F, Oct 1	<b>Aging</b> Dir. Maite Alberdi <i>El agente topo</i> (2020)	Module 1 Integrative Paper Due

Module 2 The Body		
Date	Topic Read before class	Due
Week 5, W, Oct 6	<b>Race</b> Hilaria Supa “Esterilizaciones: ¡Hasta dónde puede llegar un ser humano con el menosprecio y el racismo!” (2021) from: <i>Perú: Las esterilizaciones forzadas, en la década del terror</i> , edited by Alberto Chirif.	Group 1 Case Study Presentation
Week 5, F, Oct 8	<b>Disability</b> Edelma Zapata Pérez “Frida” (2009) <a href="https://babel.banrepcultural.org/digital/collection/p17054coll7/id/15">https://babel.banrepcultural.org/digital/collection/p17054coll7/id/15</a>	
Week 6, W, Oct 13	<b>Gender Identity</b> Daniel Nizcub <i>Poesía en transición</i> (2017), excerpts <a href="https://pezenelarbol.wordpress.com/2017/08/11/poesia-en-transicion/">https://pezenelarbol.wordpress.com/2017/08/11/poesia-en-transicion/</a>	Group 2 Case Study Presentation
Week 6, F, Oct 15	<b>Mental Health</b> Various authors <i>Diario de la pandemia</i> (2021), excerpts <a href="https://www.revistadelauniversidad.mx/releases/b5012a11-e10c-49bb-8207-dabf9b9ba223/especial-diario-de-la-pandemia">https://www.revistadelauniversidad.mx/releases/b5012a11-e10c-49bb-8207-dabf9b9ba223/especial-diario-de-la-pandemia</a>	
Week 7, W, Oct 20	<b>HIV/AIDS I</b> Mario Bellatin <i>Salón de belleza</i> (pp. 11-38)	Group 3 Case Study Presentation
Week 7, F, Oct 22	<b>HIV/AIDS II</b> Mario Bellatin <i>Salón de belleza</i> (pp. 39-73)	

Module 3 Medicine and Power		
Date	Topic Read before class	Due
Week 8, W, Oct 27	<b>Medicine as a Scientific Discipline</b> Ana Cecilia Rodríguez de Romo “Los médicos como gremio de poder en el Porfiriato” (2002) <a href="https://www.medigraphic.com/pdfs/bmhfm/hf-2002/hf022b.pdf">https://www.medigraphic.com/pdfs/bmhfm/hf-2002/hf022b.pdf</a>	Group 4 Case Study Presentation

Module 3 Medicine and Power		
Date	Topic Read before class	Due
Week 8, F, Oct 29	<b>Medical Pluralism</b> Juana Manuela Gorriti "Yerbas y alfileres" (1876)	Module 2 Integrative Paper Due
Week 9, W, Nov 3	<b>Patient-Doctor Relations</b> Diamela Eltit "Colonizadas" (2009) <a href="https://soundcloud.com/gabyrotten/colonizadas-de-diamela-eltit">https://soundcloud.com/gabyrotten/colonizadas-de-diamela-eltit</a>	Group 5 Case Study Presentation
Week 9, F, Nov 5	<b>Medicine and Social Control</b> Miguel Ángel Fraga "En alguna pared está escrito tu nombre" (2001)	
Week 10, W, Nov 10	<b>Medicalization</b> Orueta Sánchez et al. "Medicalización de la vida" (2011) <a href="https://scielo.isciii.es/pdf/albacete/v4n2/especial6.pdf">https://scielo.isciii.es/pdf/albacete/v4n2/especial6.pdf</a> <a href="https://scielo.isciii.es/pdf/albacete/v4n3/especial1.pdf">https://scielo.isciii.es/pdf/albacete/v4n3/especial1.pdf</a>	Group 6 Case Study Presentation
Week 10, F, Nov 12	<b>The Power of Non-Experts</b> Dir. Eloi Tomas <i>El reto de Eva</i> (2014) <a href="https://tubitv.com/movies/601359/el-reto-de-eva">https://tubitv.com/movies/601359/el-reto-de-eva</a>	

Module 4 Ethics		
Date	Topic Read before class	Due
Week 11, W, Nov 17	<b>Bioethics I</b> Alicia Araujo "El hijo de la ciencia" (1967)	Group 7 Case Study Presentation
Week 11, F, Nov 19	<b>Bioethics II</b> Eva Guillamón <i>Clonación</i> (2010) <a href="http://www.contextoteatral.es/genesixclonacion.html">http://www.contextoteatral.es/genesixclonacion.html</a>	Module 3 Integrative Paper Due
<b>Thanksgiving Vacation Nov 24-28</b>		
Week 12, W, Dec 1	<b>Human Experimentation and Clinical Trials</b> Dir. Lucía Puenzo <i>Wakolda (The German Doctor)</i> , 2013)	Group 8 Case Study Presentation

Module 4 Ethics		
Date	Topic Read before class	Due
Week 12, F, Dec 3	<b>Experts and Social Responsibility I</b> Dir. Felipe Cazals <i>El año de la peste</i> (1978)	
Week 13, W, Dec 8	<b>Experts and Social Responsibility II</b> Dir. Valeria Tucci <i>Andrés Carrasco: ciencia disruptiva</i> (2019) <a href="https://www.mowies.com/creation/cienciadisruptiva/andres-carrasco-ciencia-disruptiva/olalKbSRx">https://www.mowies.com/creation/cienciadisruptiva/andres-carrasco-ciencia-disruptiva/olalKbSRx</a>	
Week 13, F, Dec 10	Final remarks	Creative Project Presentation
Tuesday, December 14, 9 pm Module 4 Integrative Paper Due Creative Project Due		

## Further Reading

### Available online:

El País section on ethics and science: “Ética científica.” El País, <https://elpais.com/noticias/etica-cientifica/>.

Johnson, Antoine S., Elise A. Mitchell, and Ayah Nuriddin Syllabus: A History of Anti-Black Racism in Medicine. <https://www.aaihs.org/syllabus-a-history-of-anti-black-racism-in-medicine/>

Harding, Sandra, Tania Pérez-Bustos, and Manuela Fernández-Pinto. “Thematic Cluster: Entangled Sciences of Gender, Sexuality, Race: Latin American Issues.” *Tapuya*, vol. 2, 2019. <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ttap20/2/1?nav=toCList>

Marks, Jonathan. “History of Scientific Racism.” *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism*. Encyclopedia.com, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/scientific-racism-history>.

Perdiguero-Gil, Enrique, and Carolin Schmitz, “La pluralidad asistencial” (2021) <https://sabersenaccio.iec.cat/es/la-pluralidad-asistencial/>

“The New Science of Sex and Gender.” *Scientific American*, 1 Sep. 2017, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-new-science-of-sex-and-gender/>.

Trans en América Latina: historias desde la diferencia. *El Universal*, 28 Oct. 2019, <https://interactivo.eluniversal.com.mx/2019/transgenero-transfronterizo/index.html>.

### Recommended for research purposes:

Adams, Rachel, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin. *Keywords for Disability Studies*. NYU Press, 2015.

Armus, Diego, editor. *Disease in the History of Modern Latin America: From Malaria to AIDS*. Duke University Press, 2003.

Birn, Anne-Emanuelle, and Raúl Necochea López, editors. *Peripheral Nerve: Health and Medicine in Cold War Latin America*. Duke University Press, 2020.

Charon, Rita. *Narrative Medicine: Honoring the Stories of Illness*. Oxford University Press, 2006.

Charon, Rita, et al. *The Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

Crawford, Paul, Brian Brown, and Andrea Charise, editors. *The Routledge Companion to Health Humanities*. Routledge, 2020.

Cueto, Marcos, and Steven Palmer. *Medicine and Public Health in Latin America: A History*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Donaldson, Elizabeth J., editor. *Literatures of Madness: Disability Studies and Mental Health*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Veronika, Fuechtner, Douglas E. Haynes, and Ryan M. Jones, editors. *A Global History of Sexual Science, 1880–1960*. University of California Press, 2017.

Gullette, Margaret Morganroth. *Aged by Culture*. University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Hilger, Stephanie M., editor. *New Directions in Literature and Medicine Studies*. Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017.

Jones, Therese, Delese Wear, and Lester D. Friedman, editors. *Health Humanities Reader*. Rutgers University Press, 2014. (available online via the Lucy Scribner Library website)

Lora, Pablo de, and Marina Gascón. *Bioética: principios, desafíos, debates*. Alianza, 2009.

Meruane, Lina. *Viajes virales: la crisis del contagio global en la escritura del sida*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2012.

Pérez, Oscar A. “La Montaña Mágica: Representations of HIV/AIDS from the Sanatorium.” *Alternative Communities in Hispanic Literature and Culture*, edited by Luis H. Castañeda and Javier González, Cambridge Scholars, 2016, pp. 37-60.

Wade, Peter, et al., editors. *Mestizo Genomics: Race Mixture, Nation, and Science in Latin America*. Duke University Press, 2014.

## Calendar of Case Study Presentations

Meeting no later than...	Presentation date	Group members
F, Oct 1	W, Oct 6	1a. 1b.
F, Oct 8	W, Oct 13	2a. 2b.
F, Oct 15	W, Oct 20	3a. 3b.
F, Oct 22	W, Oct 27	4a. 4b.
F, Oct 29	W, Nov 3	5a. 5b.
F, Nov 5	W, Nov 10	6a. 6b.
F, Nov 12	W, Nov 17	7a. 7b.
<b>F, Nov 19</b>	W, Dec 1	8a. 8b.

## Additional Resources

### Podcasts

Medical Humanities, <https://soundcloud.com/bmjpodcasts/sets/medical-humanities-podcast>

### Blogs

História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos, <http://www.revistahcsm.coc.fiocruz.br/>  
Nursing Clio, <https://nursingclio.org/>  
Saberes en acción, <https://sabersenaccio.iec.cat/es/>

### Videos and Films

RTVE, [www.rtve.es/documentales/](http://www.rtve.es/documentales/)  
TED en español, [www.ted.com/talks?language=es](http://www.ted.com/talks?language=es)  
Retina Latina, [www.retinalatina.org](http://www.retinalatina.org)  
Tubi, [https://tubitv.com/category/pelculas\\_en\\_espaol](https://tubitv.com/category/pelculas_en_espaol)

### Dictionaries

Diccionario de la Lengua Española, [dle.rae.es](http://dle.rae.es)  
WordReference, [www.wordreference.com](http://www.wordreference.com)  
Linguee, [www.linguee.com](http://www.linguee.com)



Peruvian women demanding justice in the cases of forced sterilizations during the 1990s.  
Source: <https://www.france24.com/es/am%C3%A9rica-latina/20210301-peru-juicio-fujimori-esterilizaciones-forzadas-ddhh>