

4th YEAR ELECTIVE TITLE Literature and Medicine – IV		COURSE NUMBER MDC 9060	LOCATION RWJMS
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PRE-REQUISITE ROTATIONS N/A	DURATION/WEEKS 8 months (meeting min 7 times and max 8 times)	HOURS PER WEEK Meeting 2 hours each month for 8 months with ~20 hours reading per month	STUDENTS MAX 21
LECTURES/SEMINAR Yes	OUTPATIENT NO	INPATIENT NO	HOUSESTAFF NO
NIGHT CALL NO	WEEKENDS NO	LAB NO	EXAM REQUIRED NO

OVERALL EDUCATIONAL GOAL OF ELECTIVE:

The overall aim of this elective is to improve the students' ability to read and discuss with other students and faculty member(s) a literary work which encompasses medical, socio-cultural and/or historical issues. Goals of the elective include to improve cooperation, interaction, and introspection skills through the use of small group discussion and narrative analysis. This elective will be open to all participants. Various Rutgers RWJMS core competencies of patient care, interpersonal skills, practice-based learning and professionalism will be addressed.

OBJECTIVES

The following core competencies mentioned in the curriculum goals of RWJMS will be addressed by the Literature and Medicine Elective: (taken from <http://rwjms.umdnj.edu/education/competencies/all.html>)

- I. Patient care: Student will address such core competencies as using techniques which foster effective communication, discussing the importance of family dynamics, and interacting effectively with others.
- II. Medical knowledge
- III. Practice-based learning and improvement: Student will develop effective reflection habits, will demonstrate self-directed learning, will work collaboratively in small groups, and will participate in teaching activities.
- IV. Interpersonal and communication skills: Student will communicate respectfully, work effectively in small groups and learn to maintain appropriate boundaries. In addition, students will address such core competencies as, working collaboratively with other students, sharing and elucidating information, fostering effective communication including active listening, and other interpersonal communication skills.
- V. Professionalism: Student will engage in truthful interaction with peers and faculty, will demonstrate preparedness for class, and will demonstrate attitudes and behaviors which convey respect for other students and faculty.
- VI. Systems-based Practice: Student will address such core competencies as the use of effective communication strategies and participating effectively in small groups.

OVER

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES (include special requirements):

This course will meet once a month for 2-hours and will require preparation in the form of a reading (usually a 300 page literary work) – an average of a 20 hour prep/book. (About 160 hrs / year.). Students will be expected to arrive prepared having read required reading, and willing to actively reflect on the reading in seminar format. Reading may consist of poetry, essays, short stories, novels, and/or excerpts from all of the above. We may discuss themes such as suffering, barriers to good health care, intimacy, and making sense of illness.

Readings will come from a variety of sources. Students will be required to buy or borrow the materials. Student will also make recommendations for readings to the group.

METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:

Students will be expected to attend 7/8 seminars to receive 2 weeks of credit. If more than one session is missed, the student will be allowed to remediate with a two to three page reflection on the work that was discussed at the missed session. Active participation and a completion of the reading will be required at 7/8 sessions for attendance to count, and to receive a “**Pass**” for the course. In order to be considered for a grade of “**Honors**,” a student must submit a ten page scholarly paper on the concept of literature in medicine, an extensive reflection on one of the readings, or a discussion of one of the themes present in the readings for the year.

Samples of Past Readings:

- Heaven’s Coast – Mark Doty

Mark Doty is one of the most famous American Poets and winner of the National Book Award. This memoir tells the story of Doty’s partner’s death from AIDS.

- Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down – Anne Fadiman

Anne Fadiman, A National Book Critics Award recipient, traces the struggles of a Hmong family with an epileptic daughter in the American healthcare system. It is an inquiry into cultural divides, the barriers that inevitably separate two cultures, and the consequences this separation can sometimes necessarily cause.

- The Elegance of the Hedgehog – Muriel Barbery

This novel by French novelist and professor of philosophy, Barbery, tells a narrative thread from multiple points of view, all bound by a certain Parisian apartment. The novel is saturated with literary and philosophical allusions and raises important cultural questions without necessarily demanding the subsequent answers.

- Waiting for the Barbarians – J.M. Coetzee

This is one of the first major works by Coetzee (Nobel Prize in Literature, 2003). Coetzee took the title from the poem "Waiting for the Barbarians" by Greek-Egyptian poet Constantine P. Cavafy.[1][2] It may also be an allusion to Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. The book is one of Penguin’s “Great Books of the 20th century”. Narrated by the magistrate of a nameless town in a nameless empire, this novel is an allegorical inquiry into oppression, individuality and social injustice.

- *Love* – Toni Morrison

Love is the story of Bill Cosey, a charismatic but dead hotel owner. Or rather, it is about the people around him, all affected by his life — even long after his death. Toni Morrison is the winner of the Pulitzer and Nobel Prize in Literature.

- *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* – Salman Rushdie

This Rushdian work of magic realism is a variation on the famous myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is set in a modern-day recording industry. It is an earlier work by Salman Rushdie, winner of dozens of awards, including the Booker Prize, Booker of Bookers and James Joyce Award.

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