150.730 Methods in the History of Medicine, Fall 2020

Mary E. Fissell, PhD
mfissell@jhu.edu

In this course we will explore how historians write history, and the varieties of methods historians of medicine have employed. We start by looking at three major types of history-writing: intellectual; social; and cultural; and thus re-trace the history of the discipline over the past 40 years or so. Then we move to a series of topics that showcase a range of themes and approaches. The readings include classic essays and recent works, building upon introductory work accomplished in IHOM. The course develops specific skills, such as note-taking and “gutting” a book. Weekly discussions alternate between Voice Thread and Live Talks on Zoom, and assignments include short papers and Voice Thread assignments.

Learning Objectives:
— Build breadth of knowledge of key scholarship in the history of medicine.
— Recognize the ongoing and provisional nature of knowledge and engage the past on its own terms.
— Develop skills in note-taking and summarizing books and articles.
— Understand multiple tools, methods, and perspectives used to investigate and interpret materials from the past.
— Deploy secondary sources to build an historiographic argument.

The health and wellness of students are of utmost importance to us here at Johns Hopkins. If you are struggling with anxiety, stress, depression, or other wellbeing-related concerns, please consider contacting the Johns Hopkins Student Assistance Program (JHSAP). If you are concerned about a friend, please encourage that person to seek out counseling. JHSAP can be reached at 443-287-7000 or jhsap.org. Additional resources are available at https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/getting-help.

If you have a disability or any health issue and may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator for graduate students in the School of Medicine: Kristina Nance, GradDisabilityOffice@jhmi.edu, 410-614-3385) to discuss your specific needs.

Course Assessment:
Discussion: Every week we will meet for discussion, either asynchronously on Voice Thread or synchronously in a Live Talk via Zoom. Such discussions are a crucial part of the course; should you need to miss a Live Talk, there is always a make-up assignment available.
Course work: A few short assignments will be posted to Voice Thread; other written assignments will be submitted to Drop Box. Students will read two paired books from a
short list of recent significant works and write a 5-7 page essay comparing and contrasting their methods.

->Weekly office hours will be via Zoom; the time will vary to accommodate schedules.

**Week 1: Intellectual History (Aug. 29)**
You may wish to re-read the classic Temkin article we read in Survey 1:

Assignments:
Select a book from the list at the end of syllabus and order it/borrow it; start reading (you’ll be reporting on it in Week 4, and using it for the final paper). Select a (paired) second book for the comparative essay for Week 8; see list; obtain it.
Live Talk Discussion of the readings, Thursday Sept. 3, 7 pm EDT.

**Week 2: Social History (Sept. 5)**

Assignments:
Note-taking: See handout on a one-page method of taking concise notes on an article or book. Submit 1 page notes in this format on the Reagan and the Walton essays to Drop Box by 11:59 pm EDT Saturday Sept. 12, and prior to that, post one or the other of your one page notes to the relevant Voice Thread by 11:59 pm EDT Wednesday Sept. 9; then comment on those of your classmates.

Voice Thread discussion of the readings.

**Week 3: Cultural History (Sept. 12)**


**Assignment:**

Write a 2 page paper comparing and contrasting the methods used in the White and the Ruggiero papers. Submit to Drop Box 11:59 pm EDT Saturday Sept. 19.

Live Talk discussion of the readings, 7 pm EDT Thursday Sept. 17.

**Week 4 Point/Counterpoint: Disease (Sept. 19)**


**Assignments:**

In pairs/groups, explore the histories of the major English language journals in our field: *Medical History; Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences; Bulletin of the History of Medicine*; and *Social History of Medicine*. 
Look at 3 years’ worth tables of contents (the time interval will obviously vary according to the journal’s age) and build a VT slide characterizing each year; if, in the case of more recent journals, 2 slides or even 1 are adequate, that’s fine too. Look at what chronological periods, geographical areas, and types of topics and methods are covered in the journal. Please post by midnight Wednesday Sept. 23 so that you can comment on others’ slides during the rest of the week. You may choose to do bullet points or to post a “typical” table of contents from a single issue and contextualize it in your comments. Discussion of the readings will be via a separate Voice Thread.

**Week 5: Knowledge in Motion (Sept. 26)**


**Assignments:**

VT: Summarize “your” book on a single slide; I suggest you use the note-taking format discussed in Week 2. Post by midnight Wednesday Sept. 30; comment on your classmates’ posts.

Start reading Book 2 for your final paper. Begin by reading just the introduction and the notes. What can you learn from just these parts of the book? Make a mental roadmap of which chapters seem most important to you. We’ll discuss on the VT. Discussion of the readings will be via Live Talk, 7 pm EDT, Thursday. Oct. 1.

**Week 6: Visual Cultures (Oct. 3)**


**Assignments:**
Compare and contrast Bylebyl’s and Whiteley’s methods in a 2-3 page paper. What are their interpretive goals? Why do they analyze images? Submit to Dropbox by 11:59 pm EDT Saturday Oct. 10.

Discussion of the readings will be via Voice Thread.

**Week 7: Technologies (Oct. 10)**

**Assignments:**
If you haven’t finished it yet, get reading Book 2 done for the final paper!
Discussion of the readings will be via Live Talk, 7 pm EDT Thursday Oct. 15.

**Week 8: Cases (Oct. 17)**

**Assignments:**
Final Paper: In a 5-7 page essay, compare and contrast the methods used by the book you chose for Week 4 and a second book from the list. Submit to Dropbox by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday Oct. 25.
Discussion of the readings will be via Voice Thread.
Books for Weeks 4 and 8 assignments (pairs are for final essay):


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