Welcome to the History of Medicine, Survey 1. In this course we will explore health and healing from Classical Antiquity into the Early Middle Ages. Ancient Greece has long been thought of as a place where Western medicine has its roots. In this course we will explore the plurality of healing practices in Ancient Greece, and their subsequent translation to the Roman world. We will read some of the best-known physicians of the ancient world, such as Hippocrates and Galen, but also examine the varieties of religious healing that flourished in antiquity. The course concludes by examining the impact of the fall of the Roman Empire on medical learning and practices as they become institutionalized in Christian monasteries. The course focuses upon the organization of health-care and the circulation of medical knowledge, and seeks to relate forms of healing to their social and cultural contexts.

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Learning Objectives

• Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:
  • Analyze ancient medical practices in historical context
  • Describe the evolution and theory of humoral medicine
  • Describe the basic principles of Hippocratic medicine
  • Utilize the concept of the medical marketplace to analyze ancient medicine
  • Compare and contrast forms of religious healing in ancient and early medieval Europe
  • Interpret a variety of types of primary sources

Course structure:

Every week you will watch a few short lectures that provide a narrative overview of themes in ancient and early medieval medicine; these lectures provide essential context for understanding the assigned readings. The readings form the basis for the discussions via Voice Thread and Live Talk conversations. There are also short skills lectures that introduce specific historical practices; if you have taken IHOM you will have seen these already, and can re-view them.

Prof. Fissell and Ms Cummiskey will be holding "virtual office hours" (live video) every week via Adobe Connect, the same technology you'll use for the Live Talks. Office hours are completely optional! You can stop by with a question (there are no stupid questions, just un-asked ones), or ask us to explain something in greater detail that you didn't quite get, or just chat about course material. If I feel we are having a chat that
really should be on Voice Thread for all to see, I'll say so and we can move over to that modality. Adobe Connect has the potential to have video chats with multiple people at the same time, so if you need to talk about a private issue, please let us know and we can make other arrangements.

Assessment:
Your progress in the course will be assessed in four ways:

1. Mini-quizzes. Every week there will be a quick online mini-quiz (3-4 questions) covering the previous week’s material. The quiz is designed to help you see if you are understanding the material in sufficient depth; you will not be graded on correct or incorrect answers. Just taking the quiz is all that’s required. You can check your progress by reading the explanations of the correct/incorrect answers. 20%

2. Online participation. Each week there will be either a Voice Thread or a Live Chat discussion. Successful completion of the course requires that you participate online; if the scheduling of the Live Talks does not work for you, you can do an optional writing assignment based upon the Live Talk discussion. 30%

3. Brief writing responses. Every week you will be asked to write a brief (usually 1 page) response to some aspect of the readings -- formats will vary. 25%

4. Short paper. You will write one short (5-6 page) paper analyzing a particular case of Galen’s; details below. 25%

Like all of our graduate courses, this one is graded Pass/Fail, with a narrative evaluation at the end.

Overview texts (purchase used or new in paperback from Amazon or other):


The remainder of the readings can be accessed on Course Plus or on the Welch Library eReserves (see link on Course Plus).

**Week 1, Jan. 23: Introduction: Health and Healing in Pre-Modern Societies**

Why do we study medicine in the pre-modern world? Few of the practices make sense to us, and some seem outlandish or just plain disgusting. This week we ask how and why we study ancient medicine, and explore how a single primary source can reveal much about medical practices and beliefs.

Lecture 0: Introduction
Lecture 1: Why Study Pre-Modern Medicine?
Lecture 2: The World of Ancient Greece
Lecture 3: Religious Healing in Ancient Greece

If you have not taken IHOM, please watch the toolbox lecture “Reading a Primary Source”.

Please subscribe to the course Voice Thread here: GET URL and join our “Get to Know You” Voice Thread before we do the Live Talk. Introduce yourself and try out this technology, especially the video comments feature to introduce yourself. New to Voice Thread? You can watch an intro to Voice Thread that lays out the basics; it’s included with the course VTs.

Live Talk, Wed. Jan 25:


Nutton, Ancient Medicine, 104-115.

You may want to explore a website about healing votives: https://thevotivesproject.wordpress.com/2015/04/19/votives-on-display-part-1/

Learning Objectives:
— Describe how historians approach past medical knowledge that seems very alien to us.
— Characterize a primary source.
— Analyze how the genre of a primary sources shapes the information it contains.

Response: After watching the toolbox lecture, characterize the LiDonnici primary source, using the worksheet on Course Plus. What questions about the source did this exercise solve for you, and what ones did it raise, or leave unsolved? Please try to do this assignment before our Live talk Wednesday evening. We’ve put a short guide “How to Write a Response Paper” in the Online Library for this week.

Week 2, Jan 30: The Hippocratics

Hippocrates and the texts associated with him represent some of the most significant developments in ancient medicine. Many of these works advocate for a naturalistic account of illness and close observation of the course of disease. This week, we investigate a number of Hippocratic texts as well as exploring how and what Hippocratic physicians knew about their female patients.
Lecture 4: Hippocrates and Rational Medicine
Lecture 5: The Hippocratic Corpus

Voice Thread:


Nutton, Ancient Medicine, 53-103.

Response: Lesley Dean-Jones talks about making medical knowledge using “autopsia” and “historia”. In your response, briefly define each concept, and then choose an example of each from the selections from Epidemics. Be sure to quote from Epidemics, and explain why you see your examples as autopsia or historia.

Learning Objectives:
— Analyze how Hippocratic medicine made new claims about rational causes.
— Describe the relationship between the body and its environment in Hippocratic medicine.
— Use a series of cases to characterize the social and epistemological relations of medical practice.

Week 3, Feb 6: The Medical Marketplace in Antiquity

In the ancient world, there were many kinds of healers. This week we examine the range of healers and healing practices in Ancient Greece, and analyze the relationships between healers and their patients.

Lecture 6: Medical Practice in Ancient Greece
Lecture 7: Greek Therapeutics

Voice Thread: Group projects: we will break you into small groups; each group should choose an aspect of ancient medicine that Jouanna discusses. In your group, compare this aspect with medicine today. Make and post a slide with bullet points that summarize
your thinking, and add video comment about your choice and about the discussions you've had (you can use VT to hold those discussions, and then erase them if you wish – or discuss via email or other). Want to illustrate your slide? You can find images that are free to use on the Wellcome Images website: https://wellcomeimages.org/ or a site of your choosing. See the VT on how to upload on the class VT page. Your VT Page is due Wednesday; please then comment on pages built by your classmates. NOTE: there will also be a regular VT with discussions on it; please contribute to those as well!


Response: Take one of the 2 assigned excerpts from Aphorisms (section I or section VI). If this text were all that we had of ancient Greek medicine, what could you infer about it from this fragment?

Learning Objectives:
— Describe the range of healers in Ancient Greece.
— Analyze how the social conditions of practice (such as its public nature) shaped medical encounters and expectations.
— Explain the role of prognosis in ancient medicine.

Week 4, Feb 13: Alexandria and Anatomy

Alexandria in the 2nd century BCE is unique in the ancient world: scholars performed human dissections in order to better understand anatomy. This week we explore both the taboos that made such dissection impossible in much of the antique world, and the unique aspects of Alexandrian society that made it possible for a brief period. Then we jump ahead a few centuries to look at Galen's anatomical work in Rome, exploring how and why his dissections of animals were significant.

Lecture 8: Aristotle and Hellenistic Medicine
Lecture 9: Alexandria and Anatomy

Voice Thread:


**Learning Objectives:**
— Explain the social factors that made Alexandrian anatomy unique in the ancient world.
— Analyze anatomical thinking in cross-cultural perspective.

**Response:** What were the key factors that von Staden argues enabled scholars to perform human dissection in Alexandria? Which of these do you consider to be the most significant? When you have submitted your response, I will pair you with another student, and ask you to comment upon each other’s response paper in a Peer Assessment, which will be due at the end of next week. Please be supportive, and offer one positive comment (“I liked the way you…”) and one constructive criticism (“I think the paper could be stronger if…”).

Please go to the Midterm Survey and answer a couple of quick questions on how the course is going so far.

**Week 5, Feb 20: Roman Medicine**

Lecture 10: The Roman Empire and Medicine
Lecture 11: Galen in Rome

Much Roman medicine was, in essence, Greek medicine. This week we explore how the imperial context created innovation in Roman medicine. We also look at Galen, the most famous Roman physician of all, and use his career to explore the nature of medical practices in Rome itself.

**Live Talk, Wed. Feb. 23:**


Learning Objectives:
— Interpret how Rome’s imperial mission shaped the production of natural knowledge.
— Compare and contrast Galen’s anatomical practice with Alexandrian anatomy
— Analyze what was distinctive and innovative about Roman medicine.
— Develop the skill of close reading a case to understand the social and intellectual dimensions of medical practice.


Response: Choose one case of Galen’s, and analyze the social relations of medical practice in it. Who are the healers? how do they relate to the patient? how do they create authority in the sickroom?
Don’t forget to complete the Peer Assessment of your classmate’s work by the end of the week, Sunday Feb. 26!

**Week 6, Feb 27: Humoral Bodies**

Humoral medicine was codified in the Roman era, and became one of the most long-lasting ways of understanding the workings of the human body. This week we cut across time and place to investigate how a humoral account of the body worked in theory and practice.

Lecture 12: Galen’s Physiology
Lecture 13: The Four Humors

Voice Thread:


Cecil Helman, “Feed a Cold, Starve a Fever” — Folk Models of Infection in an English Suburban Community, and Their Relation to Medical Treatment”, *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 2, (June 1978): 107-137.

**Learning Objectives:**
— Describe humoral physiology.
— Analyze why and how humoral physiology enjoyed such a long life.
— Explain different models of disease.

**PAPER: DUE MIDNIGHT SUNDAY MARCH 5**
In a short (5-6 page) analyze a theme in a case history in Galen’s *On Prognosis*, excerpt cited below, texts on CoursePlus. For example, you might choose to examine sources of authority, or diagnostic practices and what they reveal of the social interactions between patient and practitioner, or some other such theme. Feel free to check in with the instructors about your chosen theme before you write.


— no response paper this week —

**Week 7, March 6: Bodies and Souls 1**

The advent of Christianity changed healing practices in a number of ways. This week we look at healing in the late antique world, both in terms of everyday domestic healing practices, and the impact of Christianity on medicine.

Lecture 14: The Varieties of Religious Healing in Ancient Rome
Lecture 15: The Advent of Christianity and Medicine

**Live Talk, Wed. March 9:**


**Learning Objectives:**
— Describe the ways that various religions shaped healing practices in late antiquity.
— Analyze domestic healing practices.
— Trace continuities between pagan and Christian healing practices.

**Response:** What might have been the purposes of Severus’s description of healing miracles? How do those purposes shape his accounts of ill health?

**Week 8, March 13: Bodies and Souls 2**

Christianity continued to shape healing practices profoundly into the Middle Ages. This week we look at the development of healing in early monasteries and in vernacular practices. We also explore the role of monasteries as centers of learning.

Lecture 16: Monastic Learning
Lecture 17: Monasteries and Healing

**Voice Thread:**


**Learning Objectives:**
— Describe the epistemological features of monastic medicine.
— Analyze relationships between religious and lay healers.
Response: no formal response paper, but please go to the Survey and complete the Course Reflection.