



Scholarly Concentration in Medical Humanities and Ethics

Revised January 20, 2022

Overview

McGovern Medical School at UTHealth, through the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics, offers a Concentration in Medical Humanities (“The Medical Humanities Concentration”) for students enrolled in McGovern Medical School who have demonstrated substantive scholarship in Medical Humanities through course work, participation in the Medical Humanities community, a final research project, and relevant volunteer or leadership experience. The award of the certificate for the Medical Humanities Concentration is noted on the student’s final transcript and, near graduation, a banquet for students is held celebrating this accomplishment.

Number of Students

No more than 30 students per class year may be enrolled in the Medical Humanities Concentration.

Admission to the Concentration

Applications for admission can be submitted beginning the Spring of the student’s MSI year. Second-year applicants are encouraged to apply as well. These applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Students wishing to gain admittance to the Medical Humanities Concentration are encouraged to attend either Introduction to Medical Humanities course (i.e., History and Literature or Philosophy, Religion, and Ethics) during their first year of medical school.

Students must submit their application for admission to the Concentration through the Scholarly Concentrations website:

<https://apps.uth.edu/scholarlyconcentrations/>

The application includes a personal statement section asking students to explain why they wish to pursue the Medical Humanities Concentration as well as a description of their future goals.

Core Requirements

The requirements of the program may be found here: <https://go.uth.edu/humanities-requirements>

Core Courses

Introduction to Medical Humanities: History and Literature* (taught each Fall)

Introduction to Medical Humanities: Philosophy, Religion, and Ethics* (taught each Spring)

Summer Humanities Seminar (MSI Summer)

One McGovern Center-sponsored blue book elective (during MSI and MSII years)

Humanistic Elements of Medicine (Block 6, 8, or 11 of MSIV year)

***Note:** Students may take these courses in either the MSI or MSII year and in any order.

Required Concentration Activities and Events

Students are expected to attend 4 Medical Humanities Activities and Events in each year during their MSII, MSIII, and MSIV years. Of the 4 required, 2 must be dinners hosted by the McGovern Center, and the remaining 2 events should be selected from Center-sponsored or other outside activities. Center events include Grand Rounds in Clinical Ethics, Poetry or Film Nights, and Book Clubs. Virtual events are also eligible for credit. Various opportunities are posted to the Center's [Events Calendar](#) and [Community Events Calendar](#). *Note: "Events" are Center-sponsored and "Community Events" are across the broader humanities and ethics communities.* Students are encouraged to follow the McGovern Center on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@McGovernCenter](#) to receive notifications of upcoming events.

Service Requirement

The service experience may consist of either volunteer work, such as through the Day of Service or other volunteer opportunities available through McGovern Medical School, or leadership efforts for an activity or experience approved by the Director, including developing blue book (or extracurricular) electives, workshops, and more. In order to receive credit, students must submit a brief description of their service experience.

Writing Requirements

Students pursuing the Concentration are expected to demonstrate reflection and an interest in sustaining self-knowledge sufficient to promote their own growth as humanistic physicians. During students' MSIII year of the Concentration, students keep a journal of personal reflections of their experiences and feelings during their clinical rotations. Students also attend a writing workshop aimed at developing and refining their reflective writing skills.

Students enrolled in the Medical Humanities Concentration must (1) complete a scholarly research project on a subject related to the Medical Humanities or Ethics; or (2) produce a substantial work of interpretive content under the direction of a member of the McGovern Center's faculty. A paper will be written about either the research findings or the interpretive content. The scholarly research paper must be 10-12 pages in length, double-spaced, and in 12-point font with one-inch margins and must include a minimum of 10 sources. Students who opt to complete an interpretive project must obtain approval from the Director during the Humanistic Elements of Medicine course block in which they are enrolled. An additional 5-page paper is required for interpretive projects.

Optional Third-Year Elective

Students may optionally enroll in SCHO 3030: Student Research (formerly Scholarly Concentrations) during the MSIII year. The course is an independent study wherein the student works with the program director or other McGovern Center faculty mentor to begin developing their final project. The course is pass/fail. The primary focus is to create, at minimum, a bibliography (minimum of 10 sources) to use for their final project. Check-in dates are decided between the student and mentor, with three established deadlines serving as general guides. Students who enroll in this elective in fall should submit their bibliography by December 15, those in spring by May 15, and, those in summer by July 15. Exceptions to these deadlines due to block schedules are to be negotiated between the student and faculty mentor. Students interested in enrolling in the MSIII elective must first contact the program director and coordinator.

Make-Up Credit

If a student cannot complete one or more program requirements, credit may be obtained each missed requirement by successfully completing a make-up assignment. To replace a missing event, students complete a two-page, single-spaced paper (1,000 words) on an assigned reading; the assigned reading will relate to the missed event. "Missed event" refers to Concentration-sponsored activities and events, such as Grand Rounds in Clinical Ethics, Dinner Lectures, Special Lectures, etc. If a student is admitted to the Concentration during their MSII year, and

they missed the Summer Humanities Seminar, the student may substitute two additional blue book electives sponsored by the McGovern Center in its place. The deadline for make-up work is one month after notification of the deficiency. If a student must complete multiple make-up assignments to account for missing program requirements, all make-up work must be submitted no later than September 30 of the student's MSIV year (prior to taking Humanistic Elements of Medicine and completing their final project).

Good Academic Standing Requirement

The student must maintain good academic standing with McGovern Medical School. If a student does not meet this requirement, the Office of Student Affairs may limit their participation in the Scholarly Concentrations.

Reporting of Completed Requirements

Canvas is the official site for the Medical Humanities Concentration. A new course is launched annually by August 1. Past completion of requirements is entered into the new Gradebook for tracking purposes, where applicable, and new assignments are created to enable students to report their progress. The program coordinator enters students' completion of selected items, such as the Introduction to Medical Humanities courses (2 total), writing workshops attended during MSIII year, the Humanistic Elements of Medicine MSIV course, and final project. However, it is incumbent upon the student to submit completion details for blue book electives, volunteer or leadership service, events, dinners, and journals. Although students may email the program coordinator, Canvas is the preferred method for reporting completed activities.

Completion of the Concentration

No student may complete the Concentration without the approval of the Director, and the Director retains the discretion to drop a student from the Concentration for failure to comply with any of the requirements or for other good cause. The Director shall also have authority to modify, waive, or reconfigure the Concentration Requirements, where necessary, to promote equity and fairness in the event of unforeseen complications or exigent circumstances.

Withdrawal or Leave from the Concentration

A student who is withdrawing or will be on leave for an academic year or more, for instance, to complete another educational program (e.g., MPH, PhD, fellowship) or research, should notify the Director and program coordinator. It is recommended such notification be made before the start of the next academic year to ensure accuracy of student rosters and records.

For more information: Please contact the Program Director, Keisha Ray, PhD, at Keisha.S.Ray@uth.tmc.edu or the program coordinator, Angela Gomez, EdD, MBA, at Angela.P.Gomez@uth.tmc.edu.

MEDICAL HUMANITIES SCHOLARLY CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

MS1

Humanities Seminar
Summer before MS2 year
(2 additional blue books may be substituted)

Core Courses
2 required by end of MS2 year:

- Introduction to Medical Humanities: History and Literature (Fall of MS1 or MS2 year)
- Introduction to Medical Humanities: Philosophy, Religion, and Ethics (Spring of MS1 or MS2 year)

Optional

Blue Book Elective

- At least 1 McGovern Center-sponsored blue book (by end of MS2 year)

Events

- 2 dinners (fall, spring, banquet)
- 2 events of your choice

Service Activity

- 4 hours volunteer or leadership service
- Complete by end of MS3 year

MS2

Core Courses
2 required by end of MS2 year:

- Introduction to Medical Humanities: History and Literature (Fall of MS1 or MS2 year)
- Introduction to Medical Humanities: Philosophy, Religion, and Ethics (Spring of MS1 or MS2 year)

Blue Book Elective
At least 1 McGovern Center-sponsored elective (by end of MS2 year)

Events

- 2 dinners
- 2 other events

Optional

Service Activity

- 4 hours volunteer or leadership service (by end of MS3 year)

MS3

Journal Orientation & Writing Workshop

- Orientation in August/September
- Attend at least 1 workshop

Journal Entries
3 journals per 5 rotations of your choice
(15 entries minimum)

Events

- 2 dinners
- 2 other events

Service Activity
4 hours volunteer or leadership service
(by end of MS3 year)

Optional

Elective Course

- SCHO 3030: Student Research (director approval required)

MS4

Fourth-Year Elective
Humanistic Elements of Medicine
(choose from Blocks 6, 8, and 11)

Research Project
10- to 12-page research paper
(or an approved artistic or interpretive project with 5-page paper)

- Abstract and PowerPoint also required

Events

- 2 dinners
- 2 other events

Optional

Karff Awards for Final Projects

- 3- to 5-minute elevator speech (video-recorded)
- Required for entry to win an award
- Prize of \$250 offered