

## IDS 2935 Quest 1: The Anatomy of a Story



Image: <https://www.cuanschutz.edu/centers/bioethicshumanities/education/certificate-program>

“Medicine is the most humanistic of the sciences and the most scientific of the humanities.”  
Edmund Pellegrino

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**Office:** Turlington 2215

**Office Hours:** MW 4

**Class Meetings:** MWF Period 5 (11:45-12:35)

**Website:** [elearning@ufl.edu](mailto:learning@ufl.edu)

**Quest I Theme:** Identity/The Examined Life

**General Education:** H, D, 2,000 words

### Course Description

In his book, *When Breath Becomes Air*, physician and patient, Paul Kalanithi writes, “Science may provide the most useful way to organize empirical, reproducible data, but its power to do so is predicated on its inability to grasp the most central aspects of human life: hope, fear, love, hate, beauty, envy, honor, weakness, striving, suffering, virtue.” The humanities provide the link between the experiences of human life and science, and storytelling is fundamental to the human experience. Through storytelling we share our own experiences and hear the experiences of others, those like us and those who are very different. Storytelling, too, is fundamental to medicine as it tells of the intersections of illness, race, gender, and class. Many health professionals and patients share their stories to connect the practice with the need to understand what it means to be sick, and by putting experiences into words, we learn about the human condition. In this course, rather than learning the anatomy of a body, we will learn the anatomy of stories about medicine in film, literature, non-fiction, poetry, music, and art to answer the following essential questions: How is our understanding of the human condition constructed through and by the stories that we hear and tell, and how can these stories help us understand health, suffering, illness, disability, or disease?

Because future medical professionals need to be creative and analytical, empathetic and intuitive, and ultimately skilled critical thinkers and communicators, immersion in the humanities will foster these abilities. To do this we will explore what medicine means from the experience of the patient and the experience of the health professional. To add to our understanding, we will have guest lectures with practicing physicians, artists, therapists, and other health professionals who will share their own stories of health and healing. We will also visit exhibitions that exemplify medicine and the body. Ultimately,

instead of focusing on the illness and the treatment, we will use the humanities to help us comprehend the emotional experience of the world of medicine. Through these stories that address diversity through the topics and through the voices of diverse authors, we will discover just what it means to be both a patient and a health professional, what it means to be human.

## Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- Identify, describe, and explain the methodologies used across humanities disciplines to examine essential questions about the storytelling, identity, and the examined life.
- Analyze how texts across disciplines and genres and diverse populations represent the relationships between storytelling, medicine, culture, and identity.
- Develop and present clear and effective oral and written work that demonstrates critical engagement with course texts, films, and experiential learning activities.
- Connect course content with their intellectual, personal, and professional lives at UF and beyond.
- Reflect on their own and others' experience with medicine in Think Pieces and a final analytical essay.

## Required Texts

### Required Purchases

Kalanithi, Paul. *When Breath Becomes Air* (Memoir)

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein* (Available on *Project Gutenberg* for free)

Small, David. *Stitches* (graphic novel)

*The following articles, excerpts, films, and short stories for the class will be made available on Canvas or in class:*

### Articles

Cole, Thomas, and Ronald Carson, "Introducing Medical Humanities" *Medical Humanities: An Introduction* (20 pp.)

Davis, Lennard J. "Constructing Normalcy." (15 pp.)

Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics* (selections) (16 pp.)

Lewis, B. "Narrating Our Sadness with a Little Help from the Humanities." (9 pp.)

### Non-Fiction

Gottlieb, Lori. *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone* (excerpts: "The Beginning of Knowing" and "Snapshots of Ourselves" (11 pp.)

Skloot, Rebecca. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (nonfiction)

### Short Stories

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. "The Yellow Wallpaper" (10 pp.)

Jamison, Leslie. "The Empathy Exams" (26 pp.)

Selzer, Richard. "Imelda" (14 pp.)

Williams, William Carlos, "The Use of Force" (3 pp.)

### Poetry

McManus, James, "Spike Logic"

Hieu Minh Nguyen, "Type II"

Kenyon, Jane. "Having it Out with Melancholy"

### Art

Kahlo, Frida. "Broken Body" and "Without Hope"

Munch. Edvard. *The Scream* and *Death in the Sickroom*

### Videos

*Wit* (2001)

*Star Trek: The Next Generation: "Ethics"*

"Surviving a Lynching" *The New Yorker*, 2021.

"The Problem with Race-Based Medicine" Dorothy Roberts (Ted Talk)

"How Racism Makes Us Sick" David R. Williams (Ted Talk)

"A Doctor's Touch" Abraham Verghese (Ted Talk)

Recommended writing guide: Williams, Joseph: *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*

## Experiential Learning Activities

For experiential learning opportunities, we will visit the Arts in Medicine Program's music program at Oak Hammock and the Harn Museum to look at images of the body in medicine, sickness, and health. We will also have classroom visits from practicing medical professionals, such as therapists and physicians, who will share their own stories and the importance of stories in their careers.

## Assignments and Grading

The table below provides descriptions of all major assignments.

	Description	Points
<b>Exams</b>	Three in-class written examinations to demonstrate knowledge of humanities methodologies and engagement with course materials (100 points each)	300
<b>Think Pieces</b>	Engagement with readings, self-reflection, and questions relating to the texts, storytelling, and medicine. (200+ wds) (4 x 50 points)	200
<b>Interview</b>	Interviewing a person with a physical, emotional, learning, or psychiatric disability, includes reflection.	100
<b>Experiential Learning Activity</b>	A Harn museum visit with activity.	75
<b>Final Analytical Essay</b>	Research-based analysis essay that explores the concepts of storytelling, narratives, and medicine. (2000 wds) Peer review (25 pts) <i>Essay feedback provided before the end of finals week</i>	25 175
<b>Quizzes</b>	Ten unannounced reading quizzes that demonstrate a close reading of the assigned texts. (10 x 10)	125
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>1000</b>

Successful assignments will illustrate a careful regard for spelling, grammar, and formatting and citation guidelines. Do not rely on your instructor for copy-editing, even on first drafts.

To receive a passing grade in the course, **every** assignment's word count minimum must be met. Submitted assignments short of the minimum word count will receive a 0.

### Rubric for Grading Think Pieces (ThP)

Think Pieces are an opportunity for students to synthesize, reflect upon, and begin to analyze materials and experiential activities assigned for this class. They also provide an opportunity to engage with the materials in a personal way. **Do not** use any outside help or sources for this assignment. You should write in first person and make connections between your life, the sources, and what is happening to the way your thinking might be changing. The following rubric will be used for grading ThPs.

Rubric	Points
Thorough on-point, thoughtful take on the materials.	Full credit (45-50)
Competent and complete but may lack clarity, specific detail, and/or development of thoughts.	Partial credit (15-45)
Incomplete, poorly written, shows little involvement with the materials.	Some credit (1-15)
No submission	0

### Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	4.0	94-100	940-1000	C	2.0	74-76	740-769
A-	3.67	90-93	900-939	C-	1.67	70-73	700-739
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	84-86	840-869	D	1.0	64-66	640-669
B-	2.67	80-83	800-839	D-	0.67	60-63	600-639
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

### Writing Requirement (WR 2,000)

For courses that confer WR credit, the course grades now have two components: To receive writing credit, a student must receive a grade of "C" or higher. You **must** turn in all assignments totaling 2,000 words to receive credit for writing 2,000 words. The writing requirement ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

PLEASE NOTE: a grade of "C-" **will not** confer credit for the University Writing Requirement.

The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Conferring credit for the University Writing Requirement, this course requires that papers conform to the following assessment rubric. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

### General Education Writing Assessment Rubric

More detailed evaluative rubrics will be provided in the prompt for each assignment.

	<b>SATISFACTORY</b>	<b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>
<b>CONTENT</b>	Papers exhibit at least some evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide at least an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
<b>ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE</b>	Documents and paragraphs exhibit at least some identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement but may require readers to work to follow progression of ideas.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
<b>ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT</b>	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the Satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
<b>STYLE</b>	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical sentence structure. At a minimum, documents will display a less precise use of vocabulary and an uneven use of sentence structure or a writing style that occasionally veers away from word choice or tone appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
<b>MECHANICS</b>	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

### Weekly Schedule

*The schedule is tentative and subject to change. Check Canvas for any updates.*

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Introduction to the Quest, Narratives, and the Medical Humanities An introduction to the Quest program and an introduction to what it means to study the humanities. The readings and the poem introduce the importance of narrative in medicine			
1		8/2 Introduction to the course and activity	8/25 In class activity and discussion Reading Due: "What Value Do the Humanities Have?"- Butler
2	8/28 In class activity and discussion	8/30 In class activity and discussion	9/1 In class activity and discussion

	Reading Due: “Introducing the Medical Humanities” – Cole and Carson	Reading Due: “Spike Logic” – McManus “Type II” – Nguyen Due: “Getting to Know You”	Reading Due: “Imelda” – Selzer  <b>Think Piece 1 Due</b>
<b>Module 1: Bodies</b> An exploration of Kalanithi’s story of his life as a doctor and his illness. What happens when a doctor becomes ill? The study of the importance of seeing bodies, are introduced to art and arts in medicine and an introduction to the theory of narrative structures.			
3	9/4 Labor Day: No Class	9/6 Zoom activity and discussion  Reading Due: Kalanithi Prologue – Page 54 (end at “The first birth I witnessed”)	9/8 Out of Class Activity (Canvas)
4	9/11 Out of Class Activity: Harn Museum	9/13 Zoom activity and discussion  Reading Due: Kalanithi Page 54 – Part II – 166 (end at “On a crystalline spring morning”)	9/15 Out of Class Activity (Canvas)
5	9/18  In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: “The Empathy Exams” – Jamison	9/20  In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Kalanithi— remainder of book	9/22  Arts in Medicine Presentation  <b>Think Piece 2 Due</b>
6	9/25 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Costello – “The Implications of Plot Lines in Illness and Memoir”	9/27  Examination Preparation-- Review	9/29  Module 1 In-Class Examination
<b>Module 2: Minds</b> What does it mean to be “normal”? When we talk about mental health, what do we mean? Mental illness is, quite often, an invisible and highly stigmatized disease, so how can stories help us change that? Gottleib introduces the power of communication and our own stories in order to heal. How can sharing stories help ourselves and others? Why do stories matter?			
7	10/2 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: “Constructing Normalcy” – Davis	10/4 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: “The Yellow Wallpaper” – Gilman	10/6 Homecoming: No Class
8	10/9 Introduction to graphic novels	10/11	10/13

	Reading Due: Small – “I Was Six”	In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Small – “I Was Eleven”	In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Small – “I Was Fourteen and Fifteen”
9	10/16 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Gottleib – “The Beginning of Knowing and Snapshots of Ourselves”	10/18  In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Kenyon – “Having it Out with Melancholy”	10/20  Guest Lecture: Dr. Hahn (UF Medical School)  <b>Think Piece 3 Due</b>
10	10/23 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: “Narrating Our Sadness” – Lewis	10/25 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Hawkins – “Reconstructing Illness” Watch: “Surviving a Lynching”	10/27  Module 2 In-Class Examination
Module 3: Ethics			
What is the morality and the ethics of experiments and patients as subjects? What can <i>Frankenstein</i> and <i>Henrietta Lacks</i> tell us about science experiments and how we treat people? Are there disparities in healthcare? How can diverse stories help us make the right decisions as health care professionals?			
11	10/30 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Williams – “The Use of Force” and Webb & Brawley – “Chief Complaint” <b>Interview Due</b>	11/1 Reading Due: Shelly – <i>Frankenstein</i> 1-46  Watch: “Ethics” <i>Star Trek</i>	11/3 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Shelly – <i>Frankenstein</i> 47-98
12	11/6 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Shelly – <i>Frankenstein</i> 99-149	11/8 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Skloot – 1-55	11/10 Veteran’s Day: No Class
13	11/13 In class activity and discussion  Reading Due: Skloot – 56-104	11/15 In class activity and discussion	11/17  Watch <i>Wit</i>

		Reading Due: Reading Due: Skloot – 105-151	<b>Think Piece 4 due</b>
14	11/20  Module 3 In-Class Examination	11/22  Thanksgiving: No Class	11/24  Thanksgiving: No Class
Module 4: My Contribution How is a selected story (art, film, fiction, non-fiction, graphic novel, or video game) a representation of the types of medical narratives introduced in the class?			
15	11/27  Writing Workshop	11/29  Writing Workshop	12/1  <b>Peer Review Due</b>
16	12/4 Reflections  <b>Final Paper Due</b>	12/6 Evaluations and Final Wrap Up	

## Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) learning outcomes as follows:

**Content:** *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline(s).*

- Identify, describe, and explain the methodologies used across humanities disciplines to examine essential questions about the storytelling, identity, and the examined life.
- Identify, describe, and explain the ethical and empirical issues related to experiences in health, (dis)ability, mental illness, and access to health care through the lens of stories shared in art, literature, nonfiction, and film.
- Identify, describe, and explain the ethical and empirical issues related to experiences in health, (dis)ability, mental illness, and access to health care and how those are seen through intersections of gender, race, and identity with other identity categories such as (but not limited to) class, ethnicity, race, age, and disability.

**Critical Thinking:** *Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the discipline(s).*

- Analyze how texts across disciplines and genres and diverse populations represent the relationships between storytelling, medicine, culture, and identity.
- Analyze and evaluate diverse stories in the medical humanities, identity, and the examined life through diverse texts, images, and films by using close reading, critical analysis, and reflection.
- Analyze and evaluate texts, film, and art by and about a diverse group of healthcare professionals, patients, and artists that depict how social inequities are constructed and affect the opportunities and constraints of the US population in regard to medicine.

**Communication:** *Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline(s).*



- Develop and present clear and effective oral and written work that demonstrates critical engagement with course materials

**Connection:** *Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.*

- Connect course content with their intellectual, personal, and professional lives at UF and beyond.
- Connect own experiences with those of others, examine the intellectual development and reflect on the implications of the course materials, and reflect on the implications for future professions.

## Quest Learning Experiences

### Experiential Learning Component

For experiential learning opportunities, students will visit the the Harn Museum to look at images of the body in medicine, sickness, and health. Students will also have classroom visits from practicing medical professionals, such as therapists and physicians, who will share their own stories and the importance of stories in their careers. Finally, students will have the opportunity to interview an individual who works in healthcare or has engaged with healthcare.

### Self-Reflection Component

Self-reflection is built into the core assignments in the class. Students will have reflections in Think Pieces and following after the interview assignment and the final paper for the course.

## VI. Required Policies

### Attendance Policy

**Attendance is required.** Students are allowed two unexcused absences without penalty. On the third and subsequent absences, 25 points per absence will be deducted from the final grade in the class.

With a valid excuse, students can arrange to complete missing work. Without a valid excuse, assignments will receive a 10% per day deduction on the final grade of the assignment. Quizzes will only be given in class.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

### UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

### The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.