The Culture of the Medical Profession  
EN 661.317.01

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Required Texts:


In addition, the short readings listed in the syllabus will be on reserve in the library or on blackboard.

**Course Overview:** The Culture of the Medical Profession is designed to engage you in thinking critically and empathetically about key issues encountered by healthcare professionals. The course, taught in seminar style, explores topics ranging from ethics, politics and cost to communications and the socioeconomics of health care by examining cases and readings that highlight problems doctors, administrators, researchers, nurses and other healthcare practitioners face on a daily basis.

Content is focused around three specific course goals: teaching you to consider the culture of the medical profession in general as well as the culture of specific institutions and disciplines; equipping you with the framework to understand healthcare from diverse socioeconomic and cultural contexts; and providing you
the communication skills to convey your ideas and findings to various professional audiences.

In addition, course activities revolve around several specific objectives that apply to all assignments. You will learn to

- recognize and understand indicators of organizational culture and how they affect the decision-making;
- apply the appropriate ethical standards for actions in the healthcare environment;
- select and use evidence compellingly in making the case for an argument or idea;
- identify the characteristics of different audiences and use appropriate strategies to meet the needs and desires of each target audience;
- work with others as colleagues to complete, improve and present ideas and findings; and
- use best practices for a variety of writing and oral communication issues, including visuals, internal reports, writing for more than one audience and oral presentations.

Assignments: You will complete four (4) written assignments during this semester. Expect to produce at least 20 pages of final copy as well as several presentations (all assignments included) for class. Written directions for each assignment will be distributed and discussed in class. Each assignment sheet includes information about due dates, product specifications, grade value of products, and grading criteria. You will complete at least one assignment as a collaborative project as explained on the assignment sheet for that work.

While your instructor reserves the right to adjust assignments and their values, you may expect the assignments and their value to be as follows:

Ethics case analysis
10%

Two reflection essays
15% each

Team project comparing healthcare cultures
20%

Team Article discussion
10%

Creation of role-play
10%

Class participation
10%

Take Home Final
10%
Grades: Grades are assigned for class participation (exercises, assignment activities, workshops, and discussion), presentations, draft copy, editorial comments, revision, and final copy. Further, the final semester grade is influenced by evidence of growth, based on written work. Expect some in-class writing, especially in response to draft copy from classmates.

You may re-write any assignment in an effort to improve the grade you earned; your final grade for that assignment becomes the higher of the two marks. Re-write means major revision and involves rethinking and reworking papers rather than just correcting grammar mistakes. Re-writing activities include meeting with your instructor, preparing a written plan for the revision and producing final copy. Note that your instructor reserves the right to substitute an alternative assignment as your rewrite opportunity. Rewrites are due not later than two weeks after the original paper has been returned. Rewriting is not an option for the final paper.

Normally a grade of "Incomplete" is not available; if a problem arises, please see me and we will work on the issues.

The penalty for plagiarism is an automatic "F" and possible dismissal from the University.

Academic Integrity: The strength of the University depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty and unfair competition.

You will complete some assignments with a colleague. Other assignments you must complete independently. Most “final copy” of papers must be completed independently. However, on several assignments, part of your grade is determined by the quality of feedback you provide to another classmate. You need not accept the feedback another classmate gives you on the draft, but you must consider it as well as provide written feedback on another student’s paper. The expectations for different assignments are explained on the Assignment Sheets.

You must reference sources of information in your papers. We will discuss guidelines for references in class.

Report any violations of academic integrity that you witness to your instructor. You may consult the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and/or the chairperson of the Ethics Board beforehand. See the guide on “Academic Ethics for Undergraduates” and the Ethics Board Web site (http:ethics.jhu.edu) for more information.

Conferences: Informal or scheduled visits are welcome anytime during office hours.

Papers: Papers must be printed by laser or inkjet and submitted on appropriate paper for the kind of product you are writing. Most copy will be submitted on 8 1/2" x 11" paper with 1" margins on all sides. Place your name and appropriate identification on each page. Staple pages together rather than use a binder.
Back up your work and keep a copy of each paper for your records. Your graded papers will be returned for your examination and as part of a general class discussion. Note on the Assignment Sheets how many copies of any given assignment you must submit; expect to submit more than one copy of some draft materials.

**Due Dates:** Writing products and presentation materials are due as class begins on the date indicated on the assignment sheet. Unless you have prearranged an extension with me, late (which means anytime after class activities have begun) papers will be marked down one letter grade for each missed class. Draft materials also are required for several assignments; appropriate information is noted on individual Assignment Sheets and discussed in class.

**Writing Assistance:** You will find a tutor to help you with a specific skill, a grammatical problem, or provide a general reaction to your draft at the JHU Writing Center. The phone number is (410) 516-4258 or via email at writingcenter@jhu.edu. If you request or your instructor determines that you need ESL assistance, you will be referred to an ESL tutor provided by the CLE.

**Attendance and Participation:** Class attendance and participation are required. If you are late to class, please enter quietly. Also remember to turn off cell phones until class is over. During class, please participate in the discussions and exercises.

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities:** The University and your instructor are committed to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Turn in documentation and register with the Associate Director for Disability Services, Garland Hall, Suite 130, and (410) 516-8949. Notify me of your special needs early in the semester. If issues occur during the semester, please bring information within two weeks.
Class Schedule: The following class schedule describes how we will spend our time together this semester. Note the due dates for assignments. While the schedule may change due to class dynamics and your instructor reserves the right to change this schedule, use the draft to plan your semester activities.

Week One (9/4 - 6)
Introduction: So, You want to be a Doctor?

Defining the culture of the medical profession in the context of organizational culture - semester plans, assignments, expectations, etc.

Readings: C.M. Christensen, What is Organizational Culture, Harvard Business School, 9-399-104.206.
A Life, Introduction, pp. xvii - xxi
Bowe, Bowe and Streeter, Gig, Three Rivers Press, 2000; pp. 613-36.

Assigned: 2 page reflection paper – due 9/11 – Where do you see yourself in the culture of medicine and why

Week Two (9/11 - 13)
Introduction to the culture of medicine, cont.


Workshop on oral presentation, including how to create effective visuals
Guest speakers: Macie Hall and Reid Sczerba: presentation and design skills

Assigned: First Reflection paper: first draft due 9/20 – bring in three copies of your essay; Final draft due 10/2
Respond to the new med school requirements in the context of issues raised by Gawande and Gladwell. What do you need to do to prepare yourself to practice
medicine amid increasing complexity in treatment options and confusion in public policy?

**Week Three (9/18 - 20)**
Socioeconomics and Access to Care

Watch parts of ABC documentary series *NY MED* in class

**Resources:** Cross-Cultural Healthcare – Case Studies


**Week Four (9/27- 27)**
Socioeconomics and Access to Care, con’t.

Introduction to collaborative team project exploring medical cultures – choose teams and sites to explore

**Week Five (10/2 – 4)**
Empathy


**Assigned:** Create and Present Empathy Role Play

**Week Six (10/9 - 11)**
Empathy, con’t.


**Present Empathy Role-Plays**
Assigned: Reflection on Role-Plays, Due 10/18

Week Seven (10/16 – 18)
Medical Ethics
No class 10/16 – fall break Monday schedule


Reading: Atul Gawande, Letting Go, (The New Yorker: August 2, 2010)
Andrew Malcolm, The Fate of the 20 ounce Baby is Test of Medical Ethics, (New York Times, November 13, 1984)

Assigned: Ethics Case Analysis, Due 11/1

Week Eight (10/23 – 25)
Medical Ethics, con’t.


Week Nine (10/30 – 11/1)
Cultural Differences among Institutions and Disciplines

Assigned: Team Project; Due as presentation 11/13 – 15 (submit 2 page briefing paper after presentation)

Discuss guidelines and procedures for interviewing subjects; create scripts/models to be used in interviews; review rules for contacting organizations and techniques for gathering data.
Finalize choice of organizations to study
Review draft interview guides and finalize list of elements to investigate

Week Ten (11/6 – 8)
Cultural Differences, con’t.
Work on culture project

Week Eleven (11/13 – 15)
Present culture project
Assigned: Team Article Discussion (Choose two/three articles from A Life and/or BAMW as the basis of your discussion)

Week Twelve (11/20)
The Cost of Care – What if Your Hotel Bill was like a Hospital Bill?
(www.youtube.com)
Resources: www.costsofcare.org; http://costsofcare.blogspot.com/

Atul Gawande, Failure and Rescue (The New Yorker, June 4, 2012)
Laura Landro, The Secret to Fighting Infection (Wall Street Journal, March 27, 2011)

First Team Discussion

Week Thirteen (11/27 - 29)
Cost of Care, Con’t.

Second and third Team Discussion

Week Fourteen (12/4 – 6)
The Future of Health Care and the ACA
   Reading: Atul Gawande, Getting There From Here, (The New Yorker: July 16, 2010)

Fourth Team Discussion, if necessary

Take Home Final Due 12/14 by noon