SENIOR ELECTIVE LISTING: Pediatrics, Internal Medicine and Surgery

Course: Law, Medicine, and Literature (PED1619, IMED1619, SUR1619)

Departments: Surgery, Medicine & Pediatrics, UT Southwestern Medical School, School of Law, Southern Methodist University
Course: Law, Medicine and Literature (16-19)
Faculty Coordinator: Thomas Wm. Mayo, JD, Adjunct Associate Professor of Medicine, UT Southwestern; Associate Professor of Law, Southern Methodist University
Hospital: None (although a field trip is usually made to Children's Medical Center).
Periods offered: 7-10 (14 weeks of classes from early January to the end of April); class meets on Fridays from 3-5pm at SMU
Length: 14 days (across 16 weeks): 28 hours of in-class participation plus approximately 70 hours of outside reading, occasional short writing projects, and class participation, plus substantial time on the final project.
Max. no. of medical students: 10 WAIT LIST OF 10 IS MAINTAINED – LISTING IS ENCOURAGED DUE TO CHANGES IN STUDENT SELECTION
First Day Contact: Prof. Mayo. 214.768.3767, tmayo@smu.edu
Initial Contact: Prof. Mayo
Prerequisites: Completion of third-year curriculum (special consideration may be given to MS2's and MD/PhD candidates in graduate school research)
NOTE: This course may be taken concurrently with other courses.

I. Description

Students will participate in a reading seminar with approximately equal numbers of third-year law students from SMU/Dedman School of Law. Classes consist of discussions of readings (poems, plays, short stories, and novels), with frequent presentations by students. Currently the readings consist of the following: (1) The Cider House Rules (John Irving); (2) On Doctoring, 3rd ed. (Stone & Reynolds, eds.); (3) Wit (Edson); (4) Whose Life Is It, Anyway? (Clark); (5) Limitations (Scott Turow); (6) Literature and the Law (Morawetz); and (7) Poetry of the Law (Kader & Stanford). Students are encouraged to keep a journal throughout the course and to submit occasional brief writings on issues related to the readings and class discussion. Students also create a final project, which is required for an honors grade.

Final projects may consist of one or more types of creative writing consistent with the readings and class discussions or other projects with the approval of the course director.

II. Course Goals and Objectives:

A. Goal: to enhance the insight of future physicians (and attorneys) into one another's profession, as well their own, and to give them a chance to develop their own ways of talking to one another.

Students are expected to:

- Participate in discussions in a respectful and constructive manner.
• Formulate questions for law students that enhance the medical students' understanding of and appreciation for the ethical and societal goals and limitations of law practice.
• Respond thoughtfully and helpfully to the questions of law students concerning the ethical and societal goals and limitations of medical practice.
• Prepare and present one class presentation with a law student.
• Prepare one or more short written pieces during the course of the semester demonstrating an understanding of the issues and techniques studied during the course of the semester.
• Demonstrate a willingness and ability to work constructively within a group to promote understanding and to enhance the group's ability to achieve a common learning goal.

B. Goal: to deepen students' understanding of the study of literature as a way of gaining exposure to human experience and response and to the ethical dilemmas of daily practice through the writings of master storytellers.

Students are expected to:
• Read approximately 1600 pages of literary texts.
• Be prepared before class to discuss each week's readings in a manner that illuminates the connection between the readings and a clinical situation or dilemma.
• Present and discuss ethical problems addressed or suggested by the readings and to work toward a methodology for identifying and dealing with such issues in a clinical setting.

C. Goal: to develop an understanding that most of the information that physicians will deal with in their professional lives is gathered, organized and transmitted in narrative form - client and patient histories (in the form of complaints, histories, etc.) and practical clinical information (e.g., what worked last time).

Students are expected to:
• Sharpen their narrative skills by reading and analyzing great literature.
• Develop their communication skills.
• Increase their empathetic abilities and clinical sensitivities by promoting an understanding of a wide range of personalities and cultures.

D. Goal: to develop a greater understanding of narrative ethics and casuistic (case-based) reasoning.

Students are expected to:
• Formulate paradigmatic cases that illustrate foundational moral principles or approaches to clinical situations.
• Explore variations on these paradigmatic cases, many of which will be suggested by the readings, and to develop moral reasoning skills based upon important differences between and among different narratives.
• Develop and appreciation of the strengths of narrative ethics and the relative strengths of alternative ethical methodologies and traditions, including principalist, religious, consequentialist, or virtue-based ethics.

II. Methods of instruction:

A) Didactic: The course will be led by Professor Mayo and Dr. Robert McClelland, Prof. (ret.) of Surgery. Students will be intensively involved in a seminar-based discussion of a wide range of literary materials (described above).

B) Clinical: During the course, students will participate in a walk-through of the CMC PICU, led by one of the PICU’s senior attendings, followed by a discussion of clinical and ethical issues raised by the observed cases.

III. Method of Evaluation of the Student:

The course will be graded based on a pass-fail basis; there is no written examination. Professor Mayo will evaluate each student's performance to determine the extent to which the student achieved the course goals. Student evaluations of the course will likewise include the question whether the stated course objectives were achieved.

IV. Course Web Site:

Detailed information about the course can be viewed at http://tom.mayo.googlepages.com/lawlitmed01. Students are encouraged to visit the web site and to contact Prof. Mayo if they want more information about this elective.

For More Information Please Contact Student Affairs

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