

## New Brunswick Strategic Planning Proposal

**Proposal Title:** Proposal for a Medical Humanities Program

**Proposal Initiators:**

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**Primary Strategic Priority/Foundational Element/Integrating Theme Addressed (Select one)**

- Envision Tomorrow's University
- Build Faculty Excellence
- Transform the Student Experience
- Enhance Our Public Prominence
- Strong Core of Sciences and Humanities
- Inclusive, Diverse, and Cohesive Culture
- Effective and Efficient Infrastructure and Staff
- Financial Resources Sufficient to Fund Our Aspirations
- Robust Shared Governance, Academic Freedom, and Effective Communication
- Cultures, Diversity, and Inequality—Local and Global
- Improving the Health and Wellness of Individuals and Populations
- Creating a Sustainable World through Innovation, Engineering, and Technology
- Educating Involved Citizens and Effective Leaders for a Dynamic World
- Creative Expression and the Human Experience
- Measuring Progress and Defining Success

**Proposal Abstract:**

With the establishment of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and the merger with the medical school, the university has a unique opportunity to take a leadership role in responding to challenges facing both pre-medical and medical education. We propose to build an interdisciplinary Medical Humanities Program that spans undergraduate, medical, and medical post-graduate education that contributes to the university's goals of *improving the health and wellness of individuals and populations* and *transforming student experience*. The Medical Humanities is a growing field that examines health, medicine, and embodied experience in relation to history, culture, politics, and the arts. The proposed Program has three initial instructional priorities:

- to develop an 18-credit Medical Humanities minor for undergraduates, independent of any single department, that draws primarily on existing courses from a range of fields;
- to pilot a ground-breaking program in reflective practice at RWJMS that responds to the concerns about medical education, patient care, and stress among practitioners raised by a 2010 Carnegie Foundation report;
- to formalize and expand existing humanities electives taught by SAS faculty at RWJMS.

To support the undergraduate minor, the Program will pilot an interdisciplinary Introduction to Medical Humanities, which could become a University-wide general education course. To advance the reflective practice program, we will seek grant funding for a longitudinal study of its educational impact; courses with documented positive effects could be included in the standard medical curriculum. An interdisciplinary colloquium, held at RWJMS, will bring together students and faculty from all units at Rutgers.

### **Full Proposal Description (5-page limit)**

With the establishment of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS), the university now includes a comprehensive center for health care and health education. The merger of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School with Rutgers provides the School of Arts and Sciences with an opportunity to bridge the divide between health care education and the liberal arts and thereby to contribute to the university's integrating themes of *improving the health and wellness of individuals and populations* and *transforming student experience*. There is great enthusiasm among faculty members in SAS and RBHS to develop a Medical Humanities Program that spans undergraduate, medical, and medical post-graduate education to create a distinctive educational experience at Rutgers. The Medical Humanities is a growing field that examines health, medicine, and embodied experience in relation to history, culture, politics, and the arts. The Program will develop and sustain interdisciplinary educational initiatives for Rutgers undergraduates and RWJMS medical students, while also encouraging cross-disciplinary faculty research initiatives, especially those linked to the instructional mission of the program.

The proposal for a Medical Humanities Program was developed by a Center for Cultural Analysis working group that began meeting in Fall 2012. Core members include faculty from SAS and RBHS, including RWJMS:

- Gloria Bachman, Interim Chair, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Services, RWJMS: Professor Bachman is an expert on women's health and renowned as a researcher, educator, and leader.
- Linda Brzustowicz, Professor and Chair of Genetics, Division of Life Sciences: Professor Brzustowicz, a physician by training, is a leader in genetic research on autism and schizophrenia with substantial grant-writing and administrative expertise.
- Susan Sidlauskas, Professor of Art History and Graduate Director, SAS: Professor Sidlauskas, winner of a 2014 Guggenheim Fellowship, has written on medical portraiture and will teach an elective for medical students at RWJMS on The Visual and Narrative Culture of Medicine in Fall 2014.
- Ann Jurecic, Associate Professor of English, SAS: Professor Jurecic, author of *Illness as Narrative* and Associate Editor of the journal *Literature and Medicine*, has consulted with the Program in Narrative Medicine at Columbia and been invited to speak at numerous universities about developing Medical Humanities programs.

This group is committed to working across disciplines and institutions and, over the past two years, has developed a wide base of support throughout Rutgers. (A list of 28 faculty members from SAS, RWJMS, and the School of Social Work who have endorsed this proposal is available on request.) We believe that the recent merger with the medical school gives Rutgers a unique opportunity to take a leadership role in responding to a number of challenges facing both pre-medical and medical education.

1. In 2010, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching issued a report on medical education, "Educating Physicians: A Call for Reform of Medical School and Residency," that argues that medical education should foster practices that are central to the humanities: engagement in inquiry and discovery; the cultivation of humanism and altruism; and communication and interpersonal skills.
2. In 2015, the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) will change substantially as part of a new

effort “to encourage medical schools to embrace a more ‘holistic’ approach to admissions, and to consider new ways to attract students with broader undergraduate training.” Darrell G. Kirch, the President of the American Association of Medical Colleges, says that changes in the test reflect transformations in medicine: “More health issues in the future will require understanding of why people act as they do, of the conditions in which they live, and their behavioral patterns.” Kirch also says that “one of the best ways [students] can prepare for medical school and for being a physician is ‘to read broadly’ and ‘to be knowledgeable about the world at large.’”

Rutgers can respond to these concerns by building a Medical Humanities Program, independent of any single department, that serves as an umbrella organization, coordinating courses and research initiatives from a wide range of fields for the purpose of enhancing the education of Rutgers’ students. Our initial goals are to:

- quickly develop an 18-credit Medical Humanities minor for undergraduates that draws from existing courses offered by a range of departments and schools;
- develop and pilot an interdisciplinary, undergraduate Introduction to Medical Humanities course that could become a University-wide general education course on the integrating theme of “health and wellness of individuals and populations”;
- pilot a ground-breaking program in reflective practice at RWJMS that responds to the concerns raised by the Carnegie Foundation report;
- sponsor humanities electives for RWJMS students taught jointly by SAS and medical school faculty;
- assemble an interdisciplinary Advisory Board with representatives from SAS and RBHS, including RWJMS;
- begin developing an interdisciplinary Introduction to Disability Studies course;
- organize a monthly colloquium to bring together faculty from SAS, RBHS, the Doctoral Program in Social Work, and the School of Social Work, with the inaugural theme of “The Case Study.”

### **Undergraduate Education**

For the 2014-2015 academic year, the Medical Humanities Program will develop an 18-credit Medical Humanities minor available to all undergraduates, though designed to draw pre-med students and students from the Colleges of Nursing and Pharmacy into courses that will teach them to think critically and creatively about health, biomedical knowledge, medical practices, bioethics, and representations of health care and the body. With courses from departments such as Art History, Comparative Literature, English, History, Philosophy, and Women’s and Gender Studies, as well as Anthropology, Economics, Genetics, and Sociology, the Medical Humanities minor will challenge students to think critically about medicine *in* culture and medicine *as* culture, and to ask difficult questions about human experience and ethical decision-making. The new minor will complement and intersect with the existing Health and Society minor in Sociology and include courses in Disability Studies; Art and Medicine; Literature and Medicine; Literature and Psychology; Sexuality in American History; Disease in History; Contemporary Challenges in International Health; Bioethics; Gender and Science; and Social, Legal, and Ethical Implications of the New Genetics. In 2015, the program will pilot an interdisciplinary general education course, Introduction to Medical Humanities, with the goal of developing this course into either a Signature Course or a University-wide “Integrating Themes” course. We foresee the development of additional new courses, such as Narrative Medicine and Introduction to Disability Studies.

We are confident that Rutgers undergraduates will be enthusiastic about a Medical Humanities minor. Many pre-medical students feel that they must focus entirely on the sciences when, in fact, medical schools are increasingly interested in students who major or minor in the humanities or social sciences because such students often communicate better and are more responsive to the whole patient. We have heard from many pre-med students who value the study of the humanities as an essential

element of being fully educated rather than merely trained. We also note that Medical Humanities classes are not exclusively for students entering the health professions; when humanities majors take these classes and see how health and medicine are inseparable from culture, history, politics, and society, they recognize the value of their studies beyond the boundaries of their majors.

### **Medical and Allied Health Professions Education**

At the level of medical and allied health professions education, we propose to develop a program in reflective practice, designed to directly address concerns raised by the Carnegie Foundation report. Programs in reflective practice have been introduced to medical curricula worldwide, with an appreciation for the potential for improved patient care and reduction of stress among practitioners. Despite these benefits, one-size-fits-all, mandatory programs are often met with resistance by learners. Reflective practice can assume a variety of forms, and more enthusiastic participation may be achieved when learners can select a modality that best suits their learning style. While programs generally focus on analysis through writing or small group discussions, triggers for reflection can range from works of literature or art, to experiences on the ward. As it can take time to implement changes to the tightly programmed medical school curriculum, we plan to initially pilot this program with a non-credit medical school elective, run in small sections, each jointly staffed by one faculty member from SAS and one from RWJMS. Longer-term goals include broadening the availability of such electives to students in other allied health professions as well as post-graduate trainees and even interested faculty and staff.

Key to the program would be the inclusion of longitudinal assessments, even at the non-credit stage, to determine educational impact. Experiences with documented positive impact would be considered as candidates for inclusion within the standard curriculum. Meaningful longitudinal assessments of humanistic learning and reflective practice in medical education are needed, so the results of this study will be influential beyond Rutgers. We will seek external funding sources for the program in reflective practice.

In addition to the program in reflective practice, the Medical Humanities Program will coordinate humanities electives taught by SAS faculty for students at RWJMS. In the past year, Dr. Gloria Bachman and Dr. Robert Light, leader of the patient-centered medicine program at RWJMS, worked with Susan Sidlauskas and Kate Ellis, Associate Professor of English, to plan a pilot program of humanities electives at the medical school. These electives are more traditionally academic than the reflective practice electives. Professor Sidlauskas developed a course on “The Visual and Narrative Culture of Medicine” that will run in Fall 2014. Professor Ellis, a memoirist, will teach a writing course, “Creative Nonfiction for Medical Students.”

### **Programming**

The Medical Humanities Program will sponsor a monthly colloquium at RWJMS that will bring together students and faculty from SAS and RBHS. In 2014-2015, Jerry Floersch and Jeffrey Longhofer, Directors in the Doctorate in Social Work Program, will organize a colloquium on the theme of “The Case Study.” Each month, a faculty member will present a famous case study from his or her field and explain its importance within the field, followed by an interdisciplinary discussion of the case study.

### **Plan For Growth**

We envision a program that will grow to involve many units within Rutgers and serve as an interface for students and faculty with diverse interests and backgrounds. Our plans for years 2-5 include:

- securing grant funding for a longitudinal study to assess the impact of electives in reflective practice at RWJMS
- increasing the number of reflective practice and humanities electives taught at RWJMS
- expanding the pilot Introduction to the Medical Humanities course into a Signature Course or a University-wide Integrating Themes Course

- enrolling 10% of pre-med students in the Medical Humanities minor by the third year of the program, while drawing additional minors from across disciplines and schools
- developing an interdisciplinary Introduction to Disability Studies course and a Narrative Medicine course for undergraduates
- considering whether to include reflective practice courses that have demonstrated positive impact in the standard curriculum at RWJMS
- broadening the availability of Medical Humanities electives at RWJMS to students in other allied health professions as well as post-graduate trainees and interested faculty and staff
- making a cluster hire of three Medical Humanities faculty, distributed among Humanities Departments in SAS
- developing an interdisciplinary undergraduate major in Medical Humanities
- supporting research projects and collaborations across departments and schools, perhaps linked to a faculty research seminar
- developing an exportable model for the reflective practice program that could be adopted at other medical schools.

### **Office Space**

The Medical Humanities Program requires space for a Director and an administrator. For AY 2014-2015, the Program Director and administrator could be housed temporarily in adjacent offices in a single Department, presumably the department of the chosen Director. This solution to office space is temporary. Because the Program Director could be a member of any Humanities department and, over time, the program will be run by faculty from a range of departments, office space should be found that is not housed in any single department.

### **Budget**

#### **Program Administration**

- Program Director  
 One course release/ semester. \$5,500/semester = \$11,000  
 2/9 salary for summer work= \$25,000
  - 12-month Assistant Director who teaches a 1:1 load (like the Assistant Directors in the Writing Program, but with more administrative responsibilities). Establishing a new, interdisciplinary program requires staff members who can contribute to community building and collaboration. Given the current job market in the humanities, we want to hire a recent Ph.D. with training in the medical humanities who has Web and social media skills and some administrative experience. During the first year of the Program, the Assistant Director will help to organize the committee that will plan the Introduction to Medical Humanities course, prepare course materials for the curriculum and Core committees, and help to organize cross-departmental staffing.  
 \$60,000 plus fringe = \$88,200.
  - Program expenses = \$10,000
- Subtotal: \$128,700

#### **Instruction and Course Development**

- A non-tenure stream instructor line: 3:3 teaching load, with reduction to 2:2. This instructor's teaching will be divided between SAS and RWJMS. To support the reflective practice arm of the program, we need a specialist in narrative medicine and reflective practice who will: train and support SAS and RWJMS faculty who are teaching in the reflective practice program; teach reflective practice electives in the medical school; teach a narrative medicine course for the English Department; help to coordinate and build the program in reflective practice.

60K+fringe = \$88,200

- Stipends or honoraria for SAS and RWJMS faculty who co-teach reflective practice electives. The stipends include compensation for training in reflective practice pedagogy and participation in course assessment. In the first year, we plan to offer 4 electives/semester, 2 teachers/ per course.

\$1,000/course = \$16,000

- Compensation for SAS faculty members to develop and teach humanities electives at RWJMS could be approached in different ways. In the first year we plan to offer 3-5 of these electives.
  - SAS Faculty are generally in favor of getting course releases. In exchange for one course release a faculty member could teach 2 sections of a humanities elective at RWJMS, or teach one section of an elective in addition to giving a Grand Rounds presentation and organizing additional humanities programming at RWJMS.  
\$5,500 each for 3 course releases/academic year = \$16,500
  - An alternative would be to treat humanities electives like the Byrne Seminars, which are similarly short courses that meet for either ten 80-minute sessions or five 2.5-hour sessions. If SAS faculty do two hours of preparation for each meeting as well as some evaluation (which will be substantial for writing teachers who comment on student work), then the compensation could be comparable to that received for teaching a Byrne Seminar, \$3,000 in research funds/ seminar. \$3,000 for 4 electives/ academic year = \$12,000
  - RWJMS would like to have a medical educator present in each of the humanities seminars and do some of the teaching. We want to respect requests to make compensation equitable while also taking into account that preparing these courses will require more time than other electives. When the SAS faculty member is largely responsible for developing the course and preparing classes, we propose that the RWJMS faculty should receive \$1,000/elective with 4 electives/ academic year = \$4,000. Different divisions of labor will require different distribution of compensation.

Subtotal: Depending on how compensation is configured, the humanities electives at RWJMS could cost between \$16,000/year and \$20,500/year for the first year.

- Research funds to compensate 4-5 faculty to develop the interdisciplinary Introduction to Medical Humanities course in the Fall 2014 semester. Each faculty member will receive \$2,000 in research funds. The Program Director and Assistant Director will contribute to course development, but will not receive additional research funds.

\$10,000

- Research funds to compensate one faculty member to expand the pilot Introduction to Medical Humanities course into an SAS Signature Course or University-wide Integrating Themes Course.  
\$3,000

- Research funds for developing an interdisciplinary Introduction to Disability Studies course.  
\$5,000

Subtotal: \$138,200 – \$142,700

### **Programming**

\$10,000 to support a monthly colloquium at RWJMS that will bring together students and faculty from SAS and RBHS.

**Total Budget:** \$277,400 – \$281,400

### **Proposed Measures to Mark Progress or Determine Success**

The Medical Humanities Program will demonstrate *structural achievement* by showing that we:

1. chose a program Director and assembled an interdisciplinary Advisory Board;
2. established a program office and hired core support staff;
3. established an undergraduate minor;
4. established non-credit electives in reflective practice and the humanities at RWJMS;
5. developed an interdisciplinary Introduction to Medical Humanities course for undergraduates;
6. inaugurated a Rutgers-wide colloquium in the Medical Humanities;

We will demonstrate *educational achievement* by:

1. assessing student learning in courses in the minor by tracking appropriate Core Curriculum learning goals from either Arts and Humanities, Social and Historical Analysis, or 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Challenges;
2. attracting pre-med students to the minor, as well as students from across the disciplines;
3. tracking the rates of medical school admission for students who minor in the Medical Humanities;
4. developing innovative assessment instruments for the pilot program in reflective practice at RWJMS and launching a grant-funded longitudinal study of its effects;
5. developing assessment instruments for humanities electives at RWJMS.

A successful Program will also demonstrate its success if there is interest among students and faculty for its continued growth, including: an undergraduate major, faculty hires in the Medical Humanities, and additional programs that bring together students and faculty from SAS and RBHS.