

COURSE OUTLINE

Illness Narratives and Soft Skills in the AI era: Digital Medical Humanities and Narrative Medicine

(1) GENERAL

SCHOOL	PHILOSOPHY		
ACADEMIC UNIT	PHILOLOGY		
LEVEL OF STUDIES	UNDERGRADUATE		
COURSE CODE	DH 153	SEMESTER	FALL 2026
COURSE TITLE	Illness Narratives and Soft Skills in the AI era: Digital Medical Humanities and Narrative Medicine		
INDEPENDENT TEACHING ACTIVITIES <i>if credits are awarded for separate components of the course, e.g. lectures, laboratory exercises, etc. If the credits are awarded for the whole of the course, give the weekly teaching hours and the total credits</i>		WEEKLY TEACHING HOURS	CREDITS
Lectures		3	5
<i>Add rows if necessary. The organisation of teaching and the teaching methods used are described in detail at (d).</i>			
COURSE TYPE <i>general background, special background, specialised general knowledge, skills development</i>	Specialised general knowledge, skills development		
PREREQUISITE COURSES:	None		
LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and EXAMINATIONS:	Greek/English		
MODE OF TEACHING <i>in-person (%) synchronous distance learning (%) asynchronous distance learning (%) (In the case of synchronous distance learning, the total weekly duration of teaching is recorded)</i>	Synchronous Distance Learning (100%; 180 minutes per week)		
IS THE COURSE OFFERED TO ERASMUS STUDENTS	Yes		
COURSE WEBSITE (URL)	elearn.uoc.gr		

(2) LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes

The course learning outcomes, specific knowledge, skills and competences of an appropriate level, which the students will acquire with the successful completion of the course are described.

Consult Appendix A

- Description of the level of learning outcomes for each qualifications cycle, according to the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area
- Descriptors for Levels 6, 7 & 8 of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and Appendix B
- Guidelines for writing Learning Outcomes

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence highlights the need to cultivate humanistic-oriented skills beyond specialized knowledge (hard skills), which are becoming increasingly unstable and

subject to change. This course focuses on the development of soft skills such as empathy, communication, critical thinking, ethical judgment, narrative competence, cultural sensitivity, and interdisciplinary collaboration, through the field of Digital Medical Humanities and Narrative Medicine.

Digital Medical Humanities is a rapidly evolving field, which connects the Humanities with Medicine and digital tools through interdisciplinary digital narratives of illness. Within this framework, particular emphasis is drawn to Narrative Medicine (which explores the role of storytelling in the multifaceted understanding of human nature and suffering, as well as the experience of illness, by analyzing literary texts), particularly in the era of Artificial Intelligence.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will have achieved the following:

1. Knowledge and familiarity with the concept of soft skills and an understanding of the necessity of cultivating them in the digital age.
2. Specific knowledge of widely discussed and disputed philosophical issues regarding what it means to be human in the AI era and the limits of human nature (such as illness and death).
3. Skills and competences in the interdisciplinary approach of the Humanities and Medicine (Medical Humanities), as well as digital technology within the new field of Digital Medical Humanities, with particular emphasis on the role of digital narratives.
4. Skills and competencies, such as the development of narrative competence, self-reflection, understanding of the self and others, and cultural sensitivity, within the context of Narrative Medicine and Digital Narrative Medicine.
5. Specific knowledge of literary theories and their application in a broad interdisciplinary context of illness narratives from various scientific fields, with an emphasis on literature and its evolving and expanded meaning in the age of AI. In this framework, forms of digital storytelling which broaden and transform traditional illness narratives will also be discussed, along with the critical use of AI as a tool for narrative analysis and creation (e.g., Voyant, AI text generators).

General Competences

Taking into consideration the general competences that the degree-holder must acquire (as these appear in the Diploma Supplement and appear below), at which of the following does the course aim?

Search for, analysis and synthesis of data and information, with the use of the necessary technology
Adapting to new situations
Decision-making
Working independently
Team work
Working in an international environment
Working in an interdisciplinary environment
Production of new research ideas

Project planning and management
Respect for difference and multiculturalism
Respect for the natural environment
Showing social, professional and ethical responsibility and sensitivity to gender issues
Criticism and self-criticism
Production of free, creative and inductive thinking
.....
Others...
.....

Search for, analysis and synthesis of data and information, with the use of the necessary technology.
 Adapting to new situations.
 Team work.
 Working in an interdisciplinary environment.
 Production of new research ideas.
 Respect for difference and multiculturalism.
 Showing social, professional and ethical responsibility and sensitivity to gender issues.
 Criticism and self-criticism.
 Production of free, creative and inductive thinking.

(3) SYLLABUS

The course includes:

1. Introduction and lectures regarding the following topics:

A. Introduction to the concept of soft skills and the need to cultivate them in the era of Artificial Intelligence.

B. Exploration of the concept of human nature and consciousness, as well as its limits in the ever-evolving digital age, with emphasis on the opportunities and challenges posed by the rapid advancements in AI.

C. Analysis of the field of Digital Medical Humanities and its interdisciplinary framework, with particular reference to the various ways in which illness narratives are influenced, enriched or viewed from a completely new perspective in digital contexts. Within this context, emphasis will be placed specifically on literature and its evolving and expanded meaning in the AI era, the concept of empathy, and the new ethical dilemmas emerging from the advancements of AI.

D. Examination of Narrative Medicine, its limitations and emerging trends (such as Digital Narrative Medicine), as well as interdisciplinary literary narratives of illness and marginalization due to medical stigma. Analysis of literary theories underpinning Narrative Medicine, with reference to both traditional and contemporary literary narratives, such as pathographies and digital storytelling.

E. Discussion of examples of interdisciplinary narratives (e.g. pathographies from antiquity to the present, e-literature, multimodal works) through experiential approaches aimed at fostering soft skills such as empathy, ethical reflection, collaboration, cultural sensitivity, and creative imagination.

F. Introduction to digital tools for the creation and analysis of narratives.

2. Group discussions and (oral and written) reflection on the aforementioned topics.

(4) TEACHING and LEARNING METHODS - EVALUATION

DELIVERY <i>Face-to-face, Distance learning, etc.</i>	Synchronous Distance learning
MODE AND FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE STUDENTS	Through email and the elearn platform (daily)
ENSURING THE MODE OF COMMUNICATION AMONG STUDENTS <i>Team assignments and discussions, collaborative learning platforms with the use of AI, video conference, QA sessions, κ.α.</i>	Group assignments and discussions; collaborative learning platforms incorporating Artificial Intelligence (AI).
USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY <i>Use of ICT in teaching, laboratory education, communication with students</i>	• Use of databases • Use of digital tools • Presentations-teaching with specified software (ppt etc.) • Teaching Material, announcements and contact through the platform of elearn • Contact via email

TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS	Familiarity with the Zoom platform.	
PLAGIARISM POLICY/ PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOLS	Zero-Tolerance Policy on Plagiarism. All submitted assignments must constitute the students' original work and must include appropriate citation and documentation of sources, in accordance with the applicable standards of academic integrity. Submitted assignments are subject to plagiarism detection using approved plagiarism-detection tools.	
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY <i>(1) The use of Artificial Intelligence is prohibited in all circumstances</i> <i>(2) The use of Artificial Intelligence is allowed only with the permission of the instructor</i> <i>(3) The use of Artificial Intelligence is allowed only with an explicit reference to the literature</i> <i>(4) Students are free to use Artificial Intelligence</i>	The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools is permitted for language editing and proofreading of assignments, provided that their use is explicitly acknowledged. The use of AI for the authorship or writing of assignments is not permitted.	
ORGANISATION OF TEACHING <i>The mode and methods of teaching are described in detail.</i> <i>Lectures, seminars, laboratory practice, fieldwork, study and analysis of bibliography, tutorials, work placements, clinical practice, art workshop, interactive teaching, educational visits, project, essay writing, artworks, etc.</i> <i>The student's study hours for each learning activity are stated, as well as the hours of independent study, according to the principles of the ECTS.</i>	Activity	Semester workload
	Lectures	39
	Individual Study for the essay preparation and writing, team work, and oral examination	86
	Course total	125
STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION <i>Description of the evaluation procedure</i> <i>Language of evaluation, methods of evaluation, summative or conclusive, multiple choice questionnaires, short-answer questions, open-ended questions, problem solving, written work, essay/report, oral examination, public presentation, laboratory work,</i>	Language of evaluation: Greek/ English Written essay of 2500-3500 words on given topics and oral presentation- examination.	

clinical examination of patient, art interpretation, other

Specifically-defined evaluation criteria are given, and if and where they are accessible to students.

(5) RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Suggested bibliography

Bates V., Bleakley A. and S. Goodman (eds). *Medicine, Health and the Arts: Approaches to the Medical Humanities*, 1st ed. Routledge, 2014.

Bleakley Alan. *Medical Humanities: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics*, 1st ed. Routledge, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003383260>

Charon Rita. *Narrative medicine: honoring the stories of illness*. Oxford University Press, 2006.

Charon Rita et al. *The principles and practice of Narrative Medicine*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

Dalrymple-Fraser, C. Expanding Narrative Medicine: Four Notes. *Canadian Journal of Bioethics / Revue canadienne de bioéthique*, 7(1), 2024, 29–33. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1110326ar>

Hayes Paul and Noel Fitzpatrick. Narrativity and responsible and transparent AI practices. *AI and Society* 40, 2025, 605-625. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-024-01881-8>

Hermann Isabella. Artificial intelligence in fiction: between narratives and metaphors. *AI and Society* 38, 2023, 319–329. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-021-01299-6>

Kampourelli Vassiliki. Historical empathy and medicine: Pathography and empathy in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*. *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 25, 2022, 561–575. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11019-022-10087-y>

Klugman Craig M., Erin Gentry Lamb, and Kirsten Osther, Digital Health Humanities, in Craig M. Klugman and Erin Gentry Lamb (eds), *Research Methods in Health Humanities*, online ed. Oxford Academic, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1093/med/9780190918514.003.0012>.

Matthews Nicol and Naomi Sunderland. *Digital storytelling in health and social policy: listening to marginalised voices*. Routledge, 2017.

Montemayor Carlos, Halpern Jodi and Abrol Fairweather. In principle obstacles for empathic AI: why we can't replace human empathy in healthcare. *AI and Society* 37, 2022, 1353–1359. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-021-01230-z>

Park E., Forhan M. and C.A. Jones. The use of digital storytelling of patients' stories as an approach to translating knowledge: a scoping review. *Res Involv Engagem* 7, 58 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40900-021-00305-x>

Rodosthenous George and Angeliki Poulou (eds). *Greek Tragedy and The Digital*. Bloomsbury, 2022. <https://www.bloomsbury.com/au/greek-tragedy-and-the-digital-9781350185869/>

Simou E. The Growing Importance of Soft Skills in Medical Education in the AI Era: Balancing Humanistic Care and Artificial Intelligence. *International Medical Education* 4(4), 2025, 50.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ime4040050>

Topol Eric. Machines and empathy in medicine. *Lancet* 402: 10411, 21 Oct. 2023, 1411.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(23\)02292-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)02292-4)

<https://eliterature.org>

- *Related academic journals*

Ars Medica, <https://ars-medica.ca>

Intima: a Journal of Narrative Medicine, <https://www.theintima.org>

Literature and Medicine, <https://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/literature-and-medicine>

Synopsis: a health humanities journal, <https://medicalhealthhumanities.com>

Stimulus: A Medical Humanities Journal, <https://mavmatrix.uta.edu/stimulus>