Medical Humanities Lab: Re-envisioning library services to foster the growth of medical humanities in education and healthcare

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Medical Humanities Lab: Re-envisioning library services to foster the growth of medical humanities in education and healthcare

Tess Grynoch, Lisa Palmer, and Regina Raboin
Lamar Soutter Library
UMass Chan Medical School, Worcester, MA, USA
Presenters

**Tess Grynoch**  
Research & Scholarly Communications Librarian

**Lisa Palmer**  
Institutional Repository Librarian

**Regina Raboin**  
Associate Director
Overview

• Background on the UMass Chan Medical Humanities Lab partnership
• Projects supported
• Facilitators of success
• Challenges
• Brainstorm ideas for supporting humanities at your institution
Fun Poll

• See our padlet: padlet.com/tessgrynoch/fn8ionqnc4yr6egf

• Choose one picture that best describes medical humanities at your institution

• Vote!
  • In the padlet, click on the heart under the picture
  • Or, in the Zoom chat, type the letter of the picture
Background – UMass Chan

• Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Biomedical Sciences
• Ranked top 10 in the U.S. for primary care education
• Offers Population-based Urban & Rural Community Health (PURCH) track at Baystate campus in Springfield, MA
• Major center for research (more than $400 million in federal and private research grants in FY2021)
• Lamar Soutter Library serves as the regional medical library for Region 7 of the Network of the National Library of Medicine (New England states and New York)
Before the Medical Humanities Lab

- Humanities in Medicine Committee
- "Artists in Residence" Series
- Graphic Medicine Collection
- Capstone Projects and faculty with humanities interests
- Humanities Optional Enrichment Electives
- Med Moth
- Gerald F. Berlin Creative Writing Award
- Streams of Consciousness
An Idea is Realized: Medical Humanities Lab

Mission
The mission of the Medical Humanities Lab at UMass Medical School is to integrate the arts and humanities into medical education and healthcare through student, faculty, and staff collaborations fostering humanism in medicine.
Library Support for the Lab

- Leadership and administrative support
- Technology expertise
- Space for in-person meetings
- Hosted virtual meetings
- Promotional assistance
# Medical Humanities Lab

## TIMELINE

<table>
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<th>Event</th>
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<td>First Meeting</td>
<td>January 16, 2019</td>
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<td>Inventory of Medical Humanities Activities</td>
<td>January 16 - February 20, 2019</td>
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<td>Website Launch</td>
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<td>Humanities Lab Logo</td>
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<td>Meetings Suspended</td>
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<tr>
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<td>June 17, 2020</td>
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Typical Medical Humanities Lab Meeting

• Presentation by a member of the group or invited speaker
• Project updates from members that are at the meeting
  • Brainstorming solutions to pain points or answering questions

March 17, 2021 Meeting
Website: libraryguides.umassmed.edu/Humanities_lab
Facilitators of Success

- Library is well respected on campus and connected to medical humanities and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts on campus
- Range of expertise available across campus
- Existing medical humanities efforts at UMass Chan to build on
- Interdisciplinary nature of librarianship
- Deep interest on campus

Lathyrus sylvestris major = Ciccheria salvatica. [flat peavine; narrow leaved everlasting pea], The Anatomy of Plants (1890)
Challenges

• Developing clarity of purpose
• Collaborating and supporting very busy faculty-clinicians and students
• Student and staff turnover
• Keeping momentum going for all-volunteer effort
• Limited funding and resources
• Appealing to all three schools on campus (T.H. Chan School of Medicine, Morningside Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and the Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing)
• Limited integration in curriculum
• Raising awareness about the lab
Projects Supported by the Lab
Murmurs: Stories from Our Journey in Medicine

- Narrative medicine podcast launched by 2 medical students in June 2020
- Library uses Otter.ai to transcribe each episode
- All 14 episodes streamed and archived in our institutional repository: https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/murmurs/
- Over 17K downloads and streams to date from the repository
- Listen on Anchor: https://anchor.fm/murmurs-podcast
Streams of Consciousness

- Online literary and visual art journal for UMass Chan community
- Published through institutional repository
- Challenge: student turnover and interest
- On hiatus as we seek new student editors

https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/soc/
Med Moth

• Established 2016 by medical students
• Adapted from The Moth storytelling radio show and podcast
• Hold about 2 sessions per year
• Project supported by the library prior to the formation of the Medical Humanities Lab
• Resulted in a published article, “Med Moth: A Storytelling Platform for Improving Wellness in Medical Education”, by Michelle Silver, Sarah Ohnigian, Hugh Silk, Michael Ennis, and Judith Savageau (2022)
Clinical Anthology

Created by Dr. Dave Hatem, Tess Grynoch, and the Gold Humanism Society

- Previously a physical book handed out to 3rd-year medical students
- Created the first digital edition in 2020, now in its 2nd edition as digital
- Library support to build site, copy content from physical book, and consult on copyright
2020 Hindsight
Compiled by Megan Hansen and Bronwyn Wada-Gill

ABOUT  POETRY & REFLECTION  GALLERY  SOUND OF 2020

2020 HINDSIGHT

When a Man Loves a Woman
When a man loves a woman he

Dave Wang 2 min

reflections on a new garment
My short white coat is too big. I

Anonymous 2 min

A Hospital Room
Here I am again, holding your hand in this cold hospital room where

https://2020hindsightproje.wixsite.com/umms/about
Art Walks at UMass Memorial

- Walks designed by Hillary Mullan in consultation with the art curator for UMass Memorial
- Collaboration with physical therapy
- Walks with map and art information in the form of a pamphlet
THE HUMAN SIDE (OF MEDICINE)

By Rose Schutzberg

• Blog and podcast
• Profiles of health professionals
• Created by Marya Pulaski. Current editor is Megan Hansen.
• Multi-media blog
• Reflections from all UMass Chan community members accepted
• Library support to advertise the blog and solicit submissions

theinterstitium.home.blog
Family Medicine Moments

• Organized by Dr. Hugh Silk
• Previously called the Thursday Morning Memo
• Reflections on meaningful moments in care of patients, teaching, or life from Family Medicine & Community Health students, residents, and faculty.
• Library provides support for archiving the memos and moments.
WAM Rx

Objectives

• Implement a pilot museum prescription (Rx) program as a collaboration between primary care physicians at UMass Chan and the Worcester Art Museum (WAM)

• Program provides physicians the ability to prescribe free museum visits to patients who may bring with them a caregiver or family member. These social prescriptions may be written as adjunctive non-medical therapy for patients experiencing chronic pain, cognitive decline, or who broadly may benefit from activities which serve to promote health and wellbeing.

• Encourage patients to participate in arts-based programing and decrease barriers for sustained cultural engagement as means to enhance health, well-being, flourishing.

• Encourage local arts and cultural organizations in Worcester to make health and well-being an integral part of their work and to promote awareness of arts and health.

• Strengthen the line of referral and communication between physicians and arts programs in Worcester.
Gerald F. Berlin Prize

- Established in 2005
- Award is for creative writing as prose or poetry.
- Submissions are accepted from students from across the institution.

Measures of Success

“While as leaders, we can be idea people, the library staff has been invaluable in their support, their leg work and their investment in these projects—promoting them, providing technical skills for establishing SharePoint sites, helping to track our tasks, and helping to organize our work.”

David Hatem, MD, UMass Chan Medical School

“The librarians have been very dedicated to our efforts adding a level of organization, promotion, and support that makes the work possible. Students are the ultimate beneficiaries - they have created Capstone projects that are meaningful to them and their colleagues including a student blog, a podcast, A Caring Committee, an annual Anthology of writing - all of which are directly affected by the efforts of the library and the Humanities Lab.”

Hugh Silk, MD, UMass Chan Medical School
Acknowledgements

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References


Questions?

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Brainstorm

• Which ideas in the presentation resonate with you?

• Do you have additional ideas for the UMass Chan Humanities Lab?

• How does your library support medical humanities?

• What initiatives do you support that works well for incorporating medical humanities into the curriculum?

• What library services or skills are currently untapped opportunities to support medical humanities at your institution?