



# MEDICAL HUMANITIES

Academic year  
2022-2023



Une belle fistule.

LE 8. — *Jamais on a si bien parlé sur moi!*

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Cover: Thomas Eakins, Portrait of Dr. Hayes Agnew (The Agnew Clinic), 1889, oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art, on loan from the University of Pennsylvania Art Collection, Philadelphia, 445-2000-1

Back cover: Rudolf Virchow observing an operation on the skull in a Paris clinic, Historischer Bilderdienst, Berlin, Wellcome Collection

# Administration

**Head of Programme:** Prof. Dr. habil. Dr. habil. **Martina King** [martina.king@unifr.ch](mailto:martina.king@unifr.ch)

**In collaboration with:** Dr. **Johannes Görbert** [johannes.goerbert@unifr.ch](mailto:johannes.goerbert@unifr.ch)  
PD Dr. **Daniela Kohler** [daniela.kohler@unifr.ch](mailto:daniela.kohler@unifr.ch)

**Administration and contact:** Ms. **Elise Meyer** [elise.meyer@unifr.ch](mailto:elise.meyer@unifr.ch)

University of Fribourg / SCIMED  
Medical Humanities  
Chemin du Musée 18  
CH-1700 Fribourg/Freiburg  
+41 (0)26 300 81 79

For further, up-to-date information, please visit us on:

[www.unifr.ch/mh](http://www.unifr.ch/mh)

## Teaching staff

**Prof. Dr. Jean-Marie Annoni** (Neurology, University of Fribourg) [jean-marie.annoni@unifr.ch](mailto:jean-marie.annoni@unifr.ch)  
**Prof. Dr. Sandra Bärnreuther** (Medical Anthropology, University of Lucerne) [sandra.baernreuther@unilu.ch](mailto:sandra.baernreuther@unilu.ch)  
**Prof. Dr. Vincent Barras** (History of Medicine, University of Lausanne) [vincent.barras@chuv.ch](mailto:vincent.barras@chuv.ch)  
**PD Dr. Christian Budnik** (Applied Ethics, University of Zurich) [christian.budnik@philos.uzh.ch](mailto:christian.budnik@philos.uzh.ch)  
**Dr. Pascal Germann** (History of Medicine, University of Berne) [pascal.germann@img.unibe.ch](mailto:pascal.germann@img.unibe.ch)  
**Dr. Johannes Görbert** (Medical Humanities, University of Fribourg) [johannes.goerbert@unifr.ch](mailto:johannes.goerbert@unifr.ch)  
**Dr. Stéphane Guéard** (Institute for Ethics, History and the Humanities, University of Geneva) [stephane.guerard@outlook.com](mailto:stephane.guerard@outlook.com)  
**Dr. Benedikt Huber** (Paediatrics and Youth Medicine, University of Fribourg) [benedikt.huber@unifr.ch](mailto:benedikt.huber@unifr.ch)  
**Prof. Dr. Daniel Hürlimann** (Legal Informatics, Bern University of Applied Sciences) [daniel.huerlimann@bfh.ch](mailto:daniel.huerlimann@bfh.ch)  
**Prof. Dr. Samia Hurst** (Biomedical Ethics, University of Geneva) [samia.hurst@unige.ch](mailto:samia.hurst@unige.ch)  
**Prof. Dr. Ralf Jox** (Clinical Ethics, University of Lausanne) [ralf.jox@chuv.ch](mailto:ralf.jox@chuv.ch)  
**Prof. Dr. Dr. Martina King** (Medical Humanities, University of Fribourg) [martina.king@unifr.ch](mailto:martina.king@unifr.ch)  
**PD Dr. Daniela Kohler** (Medical Humanities, University of Fribourg) [daniela.kohler@unifr.ch](mailto:daniela.kohler@unifr.ch)  
**Jasmine Lovey** (Medical Humanities, University of Fribourg) [jasmine.lovey@unifr.ch](mailto:jasmine.lovey@unifr.ch)  
**Dr. Angela Martin** (Practical Philosophy, University of Basel) [angela.martin@unibas.ch](mailto:angela.martin@unibas.ch)  
**Dr. Sebastian Muders** (Practical Philosophy, Paulus Academy in Zurich) [s.muders@paulusakademie.ch](mailto:s.muders@paulusakademie.ch)  
**Prof. Dr. Gregor Rainer** (Neurophysiology, University of Fribourg) [gregor.rainer@unifr.ch](mailto:gregor.rainer@unifr.ch)  
**Dr. Linda Ratschiller** (Contemporary History, University of Fribourg) [linda.ratschiller@unifr.ch](mailto:linda.ratschiller@unifr.ch)  
**Dr. Corina Salis-Gross** (Medical Anthropology, University of Zurich) [corina.salisgross@isgf.uzh.ch](mailto:corina.salisgross@isgf.uzh.ch)  
**PD Dr. Benjamin Specht** (Modern German Literature, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg/ Medical Humanities, University of Fribourg) [benjamin.specht@fau.de](mailto:benjamin.specht@fau.de)  
**Prof. Dr. Dr. Hubert Steinke** (History of Medicine, University of Berne) [hubert.steinke@img.unibe.ch](mailto:hubert.steinke@img.unibe.ch)  
**Dr. Nina Streeck** (Medical Ethics, University of Zurich) [nina.streeck@uzh.ch](mailto:nina.streeck@uzh.ch)  
**Dr. Paul-Arthur Tortosa** (History of Life and Health Sciences, University of Strasbourg) [patortosa@unistra.fr](mailto:patortosa@unistra.fr)

# MEDICAL HUMANITIES

## Overview

First year (34h)	Second year (40h)	Third year (34h)
Lecture (2h) <b>Introduction to the medical humanities and the programme of year 1</b> (M. King)	Lecture (2h) <b>Introduction to the programme of year 2</b> (M. King)	
<b>Language, culture &amp; medicine 1</b>	<b>Language, culture &amp; medicine 2</b>	<b>Language, culture &amp; medicine 2</b>
Lecture (4h) <b>On the history of epidemics: politics, media and literary representations</b> (M. King)	Lecture (2h) <b>History of madness</b> (J. Görbert)	Lecture (4h) <b>Disability in the present and history</b> (J. Görbert)
Seminar (6h) <b>accompanying the lecture on the history of epidemics</b> (M. King, J. Görbert, D. Kohler, J. Lovey, L. Ratschiller, B. Specht)		
Seminar (4h) <b>Metaphors of medicine</b> (B. Specht)	Seminar (12h) <b>What is a doctor? Historical and contemporary reflections</b> (M. King, J. Görbert, D. Kohler, L. Ratschiller, P. Tortosa)	Seminar (2h) <b>Introduction to the essay</b> (M. King, J. Görbert, D. Kohler, B. Specht)
		<b>Essay (10h)</b> (M. King, J. Görbert, D. Kohler, B. Specht)
<b>History of medicine 1</b>	<b>History of medicine 2</b>	<b>History of medicine 3</b>
Lecture (6h) <b>Introduction to the history of medicine</b> (H. Steinke)	Lecture (6h) <b>Central topics in the history of medicine with a view to the present</b> (P. Germann)	Lecture (4h) <b>Topics in the history of medicine</b> (V. Barras)
<b>Medical ethics 1</b>	<b>Medical ethics 2</b>	<b>Medical ethics 3</b>
Lecture (8h) <b>Introduction to the basic principles and concepts of medical ethics</b> (C. Budnik)	Lecture and seminar (8h) <b>Applied medical ethics: discussing clinical cases</b> (R. Jox, S. Hurst, E. Malbois, A. Martin, S. Muders, N. Streeck)	Lecture (6h) <b>Research ethics</b> (J.-M. Annoni, B. Huber, G. Rainer, N. Streeck)
	<b>Healthcare law</b>	
	Medical Law Lecture (6h) <b>Introduction to healthcare law</b> (D. Hürlimann)	
<b>Medical anthropology 1</b>		<b>Medical anthropology</b>
Seminar (4h) <b>Introduction to medical anthropology: transcultural competence</b> (C. Salis-Gross)		Seminar (4h) <b>Advanced medical anthropology: humanitarian medicine</b> (S. Bärnreuther)
	<b>Health management and economics 1</b>	<b>Health management and economics 2</b>
	Lecture (6h) <b>Diagnosing healthcare systems</b> (St. Guérard)	Lecture (4h) <b>Management mechanisms of the Swiss healthcare system</b> (St. Guérard)





Carl Wilhelm Hübner, *Der Landarzt*, 1864. oil on canvas., wikimedia

# Introduction

**Head Prof. Martina King, in collaboration with Dr. Johannes Görbert and PD Dr. Daniela Kohler**

What is medicine? Is it a scientific discipline? Is it an activity concerned with healing and caring for the sick? There are no easy answers to these questions. Our programme sets out to address them. Medical Humanities is not an independent subject, but rather the conception of a curricular reform drawing on various humanities and social sciences: ethics, history, literature, anthropology, sociology, as well as economics and law. These disciplines all contribute to a critical examination of medicine as a complex system. After all, 'medicine' does not only consist of objective knowledge, but it also constitutes a space of social relationships where people meet and communicate. It involves happiness and suffering, death and birth, i.e. major questions of human existence. Dealing with these issues places high demands on young doctors, which is why we want to think together about what being a doctor

means in our society and how the medical system functions as a space of interaction.

Moreover, medicine not only provides healthcare to individuals but to entire groups and nations. Its scope is truly global: if a pandemic breaks out or waves of refugees from war-torn countries need medical care, we are all responsible. But what does that actually mean? A mere glimpse on foreign cultures, on the present situation and on history teaches us that medicine is never universally applicable but depends on a multitude of cultural parameters: for instance, political power constellations have ramifications – an extreme example are the medical crimes perpetrated by the Nazis – that could be studied during the Corona pandemic. We have all seen that questions of health care and health protection can tear whole societies apart.

Furthermore, medicine depends on religions, philosophies, ideologies and norms, on legal and financial systems and finally on media and artistic means of expression of the respective society.

### In the first year,

students are introduced to the core concepts and critical perspectives of the humanities and social sciences contributing to the medical humanities. There are elementary courses on the **history of medicine** and on **medical anthropology**, an introductory lecture on the basic principles of medical ethics as well as several courses in the field of **'language, culture & medicine'**, including a seminar on the power of metaphors in medicine and a lecture with an accompanying seminar portraying epidemics as cultural and media events.

### In the second year,

the lectures in the **history of medicine** will deal with topics that are highly relevant for our present: the hospital, clinical drug trials and public health. Moreover, we will apply our basic knowledge of **medical ethics** to specific case studies. In the field of **'language, culture & medicine'**, a lecture will navigate the cultural history of madness and an interactive seminar is designed to stimulate critical reflection on the doctor's role and its cultural relativity. Introductory lectures on healthcare law and health economics round off the programme for this year.

### In the third year,

the **history of medicine** lectures address further topics particularly relevant to the present, such as the question 'what is a patient?' and the increased role of technology in medicine. In **healthcare economics**, a lecture on the Swiss healthcare system follows on from the second year's lecture on health-

care systems. The **medical ethics** course is complementary to ethics in the second year: it tackles core issues of research ethics such as the ethics of animal research and the ethics of clinical trials. The same applies to the second teaching unit in medical anthropology, which focuses on inequality in global medicine and on 'medical tourism' into developing countries; this lecture complements our reflections on interculturality in the first year. In the field of 'language, culture & medicine', we have another lecture: it introduces students to the concept of 'disability' in history and present. Finally, there is a practical exercise where students write an essay; it builds on previous courses on verbal communication and language in medicine.

The **'objectives' of our programme** cannot be summarised in a "nutshell", but are no less important for future physicians. The programme aims to develop capacities of (self-)reflection and critical awareness, judgement, skills of interpretation and communication as well as a general awareness of language and history.



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DÉPARTEMENTS.....	2 fr.	4 fr. »
ÉTRANGER.....	2 50	5 fr. »

**First year**  
(34 hours)



**LE CHOLÉRA**



## Introduction to medical humanities and the programme of year 1

# LECT

🕒 2h

🍂 Autumn

👤 KING

This lecture clarifies what exactly is meant by medical humanities, i.e. the idea of applied humanities in medicine: this internationally established reform programme in medical teaching adopts a complementary view of medicine and understands it not as a technical, but rather as a communicative and social practice. Students will be provided with a summary of the first-year courses.

## LANGUAGE, CULTURE & MEDICINE 1

### On the history of epidemics: politics, media and literary representations

# LECT

🕒 4h

🍂 Autumn

👤 KING

The focus of this lecture lies on the cultural significance of epidemics, which was proved by the recent pandemic to be extremely important to all medical professionals. What it demonstrated clearly was that epidemics are not merely medical phenomena, but can also become landmarks of cultural, political, social and media events. In fact, a large part of the fight against Covid has been a cultural battle, since public discourse in television, newspapers and social media frequently proved decisive in determining how the pandemic was to be combatted. However, none of this is unique to Covid, and, in fact, it mirrors events in past epidemics. From the plague outbreaks of the early modern period, over cholera and yellow fever in the 19th century, all the way to the Spanish flu outbreak of 1918, large waves of disease are always landmark cultural events. In doing so they both promote social division and the prosecution of minorities, but also social and scientific progress, a dichotomy which will be explored in this lecture series.

### Seminar accompanying the lecture on the history of epidemics

# SE

🕒 6h

🍂 Autumn

👤 KING  
GÖRBERG  
KÖHLER  
LOVEY  
RATSCHILLER  
SPECHT

👥 In small groups  
of 20

This six-hour seminar accompanies the lecture on the history of epidemics and has a more practical focus. In the first part of the course, we will discuss the lecture and questions arising from its content, while the second part will be devoted to selected questions relating to historical and present epidemics. These include Nazi propaganda relating to typhus as a “Jewish” disease, chauvinist depictions of syphilis, and AIDS-related discrimination against homosexuals in the 1980’s. Students will work on one of these questions in small groups and give their presentations in the second session.

## Metaphors of medicine

- # SE
- 🕒 4h
- 🌱 Spring
- 👤 SPECHT
- 👥 In small groups of 30

Metaphors shape our thinking and behaviour in many different ways and the field of medicine is no exception. The way in which medical processes are explored is often determined by linguistic images (e.g. the genome as 'code'). Repeatedly, public 'images' of certain diseases are created and may even influence concrete therapeutic decisions: one example is the commonly used 'war on cancer' metaphor, leading us towards the most invasive forms of cancer treatment, even in instances where long-term observation would be sufficient or where palliative care is the only sensible option. Metaphors also affect the way society deals with a disease (cf. the AIDS hysteria of the 1980s). On the other hand, diseases repeatedly serve 'as' metaphors of social denigration. The seminar aims to raise awareness of disease metaphors and their potential consequences.

## HISTORY OF MEDICINE I

### Introduction to the history of medicine

- # LECT
- 🕒 6h
- 🌱 Spring
- 👤 STEINKE

This lecture consist of three sessions that provide a basic understanding of the historical perspective on medicine and an awareness that we are in the midst of ongoing processes shaping the world of medicine on several levels. The first session tackles the question of how the history of medicine is of most use to us. The subject is introduced as a critical discipline that goes hand in hand with medicine. It highlights the constant evolution of medicine using the example of the changing body image. The second session addresses the changeable nature of definitions of illness and focuses on the evolution of concepts ('paradigm shifts') which led to the transition from ancient humoral theory to modern pathology. The third session examines the three 'cultures of knowledge' in medicine (medical experience, basic research and clinical research) through the lens of their historical development and their significance in the present.

## MEDICAL ETHICS 1

### Introduction to the basic principles and concepts of medical ethics

- # LECT
- 🕒 8h
- 🍂 Autumn
- 👤 BUDNIK

Not all decisions doctors have to take are purely medical or subject to regulations. Even in situations where you can follow a certain protocol, as a doctor you still want to know precisely why a decision is the right decision to take. The first part of this lecture illustrates the three most important approaches to the question of what makes a decision morally right. Students are supposed to learn how to reflect independently on the morally problematic issues that they are likely to encounter in their professional life. The second part addresses the three basic concepts of medical ethics that are essential to a careful consideration of specific moral questions, namely the concepts of autonomy, dignity and care.

## MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY 1

### Introduction to medical anthropology: transcultural competence

- # SE
- 🕒 4h
- 🍃 Spring
- 👤 SALIS-GROSS
- 👥 In small groups of 30

This seminar introduces students to the basic concepts of medical anthropology from the viewpoint of clinical everyday life as characterised by socio-cultural diversity. Due to the recent influences of globalisation and migration, the doctor-patient relationship has become more socially and culturally heterogeneous and now requires specific medical skills. Using case studies, we will approach the basic principles of transcultural competence in a medical context. In the first session, we will use the patient-centred approach to medical record taking in the concrete situation of a GP's practice; and we will develop together the illness-perspective of a patient with a refugee background. In the second session, we will take a closer look at the hospital context and work through the various elements of a "migrant-friendly hospital" based on watching the documentary "Verstehen kann heilen" (comprehension can cure).

# Second year

(40 hours)



177. ROYAL ACADEMY AND PARIS SALON.  
1897/1908/02

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HON. JOHN COLLIER.

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Sentence of death. Hon. John Collier. No. 177. Royal Academy and Paris salon, 1908. Colour photogravure. Wellcome collection



## Introduction to the programme of year 2

# LECT

🕒 2h

🍂 Autumn

👤 KING

The lecture deepens our understanding of the aims and principles of medical humanities by exploring the field's two basic concepts: the critical-analytical and the empathetic approach. It gives an explanation of why the critical-analytical approach prevails at the University of Fribourg and provides a summary of the second-year courses.

## LANGUAGE, CULTURE & MEDICINE 2

### History of madness

# LECT

🕒 2h

🍂 Spring

👤 GÖRBERT

From chained maniacs to anti-psychiatry and from the theory of the soul to neuroscience: this course examines how our approach to and concepts of mental illness and health have changed over the past three centuries. It highlights the close relationship between society and medicine while investigating how political, social and cultural circumstances have shaped our understanding of the normal and the pathological. The topics addressed include the emergence of the madhouse and psychiatric hospitals, the birth of "scientific psychiatry", the rise and crisis of psychoanalysis, the introduction of psychotropic drugs, the significance of the anti-psychiatry movement and the emergence of the neurosciences.

### What is a doctor? Historical and contemporary reflections

# SE

🕒 12h

🍂 Autumn

👤 KING  
GÖRBERT  
KÖHLER  
RATSCHILLER  
TORTOSA

👥 In small groups  
of 30

What does it mean to be a doctor? The characteristics of our profession are neither self-evident nor historically stable, but depend on a multitude of parameters. This twelve-hour seminar aims to train the ability of critical self-reflection on our role as doctors and therefore requires the students' active participation. On the basis of five selected topics, we will examine how physicianship is framed by politics and society as well as by the media. Our central focus will be the history and evolution of medical authority:

1. The doctor as a laughing stock or as a scientific hero? Changing roles from the 18th to the 19th century.
2. What does being a doctor mean within an authoritarian political regime? Medicine in Nazi Germany.
3. Deprofessionalisation of the role of the doctor and interprofessional collaboration
4. Particularities of high-tech-medicine in hospitals – depersonalisation, problems with communication, specialisation.
5. Doctor's role and newly emerging diseases with a high impact on society – the case of LongCorona

## HISTORY OF MEDICINE 2

### Central topics in the history of medicine with a view to the present

# LECT

🕒 6h

🍂 Spring

👤 GERMANN

This lecture series focuses on three aspects of the modern history of medicine.

1. Hospitals: how did they come about, how have they changed in the 20th and 21st centuries, and why were they so vital to the project of creating scientific medicine?
2. Public Health: How have life expectancies, causes of death and the frequencies of diseases changed since the 18th century? How did securing the health of the population become a function of the state? How does public health relate to social in- and exclusion? What new challenges to public health need to be addressed in the present age of individualisation and globalisation?
3. Pharmaceuticals: How have the uses and testings of pharmaceuticals changed since the 19th century? How did the present ethical and legal regulation of pharmaceuticals research develop?

## MEDICAL ETHICS 2

### Applied medical ethics: discussing clinical cases

# SE

🕒 8h

🍂 Autumn

👤 JOX

HURST

MARTIN

MUDERS

STRECK

The second-year ethics course builds on the first-year lecture by PD Dr. Budnik. It demonstrates that the acquired basic concepts have immediate practical relevance for everyday clinical practice. After a two-hour introduction (in German) by Prof. Jox the course will continue in the form of a bilingual seminar. A range of selected clinical cases will be discussed in three seminar sessions. Particular emphasis will be placed on the basic principles addressed in year 1, namely autonomy, care and dignity; and we will additionally discuss justice. The weight that is to be attached to each of these principles depends on the individual case. The contradictions and conflicts that can arise as well as possible solutions will be examined and discussed. This seminar aims to raise the students' awareness of the multiple moral problems that exist in technology-driven contemporary medicine. The seminar also seeks to provide the foundations from which independent and considerate moral decisions can emerge through a dialogic process. The case studies will be sent to all participants in advance so that possible questions and arguments can be prepared.

## HEALTHCARE LAW

### Introduction to healthcare law

# LECT  
🕒 6h  
🌱 Spring  
👤 HÜRLIMANN

The lecture series “healthcare law” focusses on the most important legal topics for physicians, which will be discussed in the same order in which you will be confronted by them in your daily lives as doctors. The first topic will be the basis and development of the ‘contract of treatment’ between doctor and patient. Subsequently, we will discuss the informed consent. The lecture will be structured both around criminal and legal decisions to which doctors are beholden, as well as discussions of the legal architecture surrounding confidentiality, prescriptions and insurance. Finally, we will come to topics around end-of-life, including the patients’ legal prerogatives, palliative care, refusal of treatment and assisted suicide.

## HEALTH MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS 1

### Diagnosing healthcare systems

# LECT  
🕒 6h  
🌱 Spring  
👤 GUÉRARD

Healthcare systems are particularly difficult to manage and healthcare costs are exploding. The asymmetry of power and interests of those holding their respective stakes in the system can partly explain this difficulty. Historically, the interaction between these stakeholders gave rise to three outcomes: quality (of care), access to care (health insurance) and efficiency (of management). With the emergence of mandatory health insurance and the acceleration of medical innovations, healthcare systems have produced a situation of continually rising costs due to a cocktail of factors – linked to the supply and demand of healthcare. The lecture introduces students to a variety of contemporary topics of economic, managerial, sociological and political aspects of healthcare systems.

# Third year

(34 hours)



Medecins sans frontieres / Doctors without borders, [www.msf.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.msf.org.uk/get-involved)



## LANGUAGE, CULTURE & MEDICINE 3

### Disability in the present and history

# LECT  
 ⌚ 4h  
 🍂 Autumn  
 👤 GÖRBERT

What does the term “disability” actually mean? Does it refer to bodily defects, damage, or deviation? What do we mean by mental and physical disability, and why are the two terms even distinct from one another? Most importantly: how does society deal with disability, and how can we avoid being either discriminatory or patronising? These crucial and unavoidable questions are the focus of this lecture. We will start with a look at the contemporary treatment of disability, from where we will work backwards to examine its historical development. Is standardising disability, as the UN and WHO attempt to do, even possible? We will attempt to answer this particular question by taking a look at different models of disability which coexist. The most important aim of this lecture series is to give prospective doctors the tools necessary to develop a responsible and empathetic approach towards disability for their professional contact with it.

### Introduction to the essay

# SE  
 ⌚ 2h  
 🍂 Autumn  
 👤 KING  
 GÖRBERT  
 KOHLER  
 SPECHT  
 👥 In small groups  
 of 30

Illness is not just a pathophysiological fact, but it is also relative to the individual experiential perspective: for the doctor, the course a disease takes may be a sequence of symptoms and diagnostic steps. For the patient, however, the same sequence may be one of confusing panic which can be hard to articulate. The question is: do we deal with one course of illness but two medical histories? The essay that has to be written this year has the purpose to familiarise students with these two contrasting perspectives. During this preparatory class, we will discuss two famous literary stories of illness that are written from two extreme perspectives: David Wagner’s autobiography *Leben* (2013) and Arthur Schnitzler’s novella *Sterben* (1894). They introduce the principle of our essay: a radical change of perspective.

### Essay

⌚ 10h  
 🍂 Spring  
 👤 KING  
 GÖRBERT  
 KOHLER  
 SPECHT

During the GP internship each student chooses a patient whose history is of particular interest to him or her. Together with this patient, he or she takes a detailed medical history and, based on his or her notes, writes a three-page essay consisting of two parts. The first part describes the course of the illness in the so-called medical ‘jargon’. The second part recounts the same medical history from the patient’s perspective, as a first-person narrative. The purpose of this exercise is, firstly, to be able to adapt in a flexible way to different perspectives of health and illness; and secondly, to practice linguistic capacities that are required in medical practice every single day.

## HISTORY OF MEDICINE 3

### Topics in the history of medicine

# LECT

🕒 4h

🍂 Autumn

👤 BARRAS

This lecture on the history of medicine examines two issues at the heart of contemporary medical debates: the question of the patient on the one hand, the technology on the other. It explores current questions surrounding the patient (autonomy, shared decision-making, personalised medicine...), technology/ surgery (origins of technicisation in medicine, importance of the hospital as a technical platform, changes to the clinical relationship,...). The lecture will analyse the historical origins of these subjects, the key stages in their evolution, disruption and continuity over the long-term, right up to the present day. It will emphasise the importance of historically informed reflection to enable students to take and defend a stance in contemporary debates.

## MEDICAL ETHICS 3

### Research ethics

# LECT

🕒 8h

🍂 Autumn

👤 ANNONI  
HUBER  
RAINER  
STRECK

Medical research involving animals or human beings raises a series of ethical questions. How can we be sure that consent is given freely, especially when the subjects are, for example, children or people suffering from dementia? When is it morally permissible to experiment on animals? From a more practical perspective: what do you have to do to get a study approved by the Kanton's ethics commission? This lecture series of the 3rd year deals with such questions by referring to the introductory ethics' lecture of the 1st year and the seminar on clinical case studies of the 2nd year. In the first lecture of this year, we will be looking whether or not using animals in clinical trials is morally permissible, even when those animals suffer as a result of their use in those trials. The second lecture will cover why ethics commissions need to approve studies before they can be conducted. The subsequent seminar session will then be devoted to discussing the place which ethical questions occupy within daily life as a medical researcher. By consistently bringing together perspectives from the worlds of ethics and medical research, this series aims to prepare students for their own work with both people and animals.

## HEALTH MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS 2

### Management mechanisms of the Swiss healthcare systems

# LECT  
🕒 4h  
📅 Spring  
👤 GUÉRARD

This course builds on the general introduction to health care systems in year 2: Now, students are introduced to the means available in Switzerland that can shape the development of its health care system and regulate the rising costs of the said system. The core issues of the course are the governance structure, the health insurance, the 'Managed care' (HMO, POS, Telmed) and the systems of payment of doctors (Tarmed) and of hospitals (DRG). Since all these instruments and structures occur specifically within the hospital, the lecture will also explain in what sense the latter consists of a network of alliances.

## MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY 2

### Advanced medical anthropology: humanitarian medicine

# SE  
🕒 4h  
📅 Spring  
👤 BÄRNREUTHER  
👥 In small groups  
of 30

Globalisation is rapidly changing medicine. In this seminar, we study social mobility within the healthcare industry through two examples: firstly, medical tourism to India on the part of first-time mothers, secondly, the migration of caretakers out of India. Why do people travel to poorer countries for medical care, and what ethical questions does this raise? Why do caretakers migrate in the other direction, and what does this mean for local healthcare? We will use various textual and audio-visual sources in our attempts to answer these questions. The final aim is to gain an understanding of modern global political, economic and social inequalities and how these shape access to medical care.

