



Professional Enrichment Course

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Office of Medical Education

PEC Registrar – Denise Downs d downs@pitt.edu 412-648-8749

Course Name: Narrative Medicine

Enrollment Period:	Spring 2023
Course Dates:	April 7, 14, 21, 28, May 12
Student Max:	10
Class Year:	MS1
Course Director:	Chelsea Cockburn, MD PhD chelsea.cockburn@chp.edu
Course Administrator:	Chelsea Cockburn, MD PhD chelsea.cockburn@chp.edu
Location:	Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh
Registration:	Via Amp Up – You will receive an email with enrollment info
Course Description:	<p>As physicians, we have the privilege of hearing many different stories from our patients, ranging from the everyday to some of the most significant experiences of people’s lives. Sometimes, we are able to intervene in these stories, but more often than not, our role is to bear witness to them. Narrative medicine provides us with a new framework for understanding patients’ experiences as well as our own experiences as health care providers. It teaches doctors to listen to patient’s stories, to translate them into written or oral forms, and in doing so, to establish personal connections to these patients.</p> <p>This course will allow medical students to practice the skills of narrative medicine while interacting with real patients and families. They will first be introduced to history-taking skills from the perspective of a journalistic, rather than a medical, interview. In the following sessions, they will meet with patients and families and have the opportunity to practice these interviewing skills. Students will then write a narrative medicine piece based on their conversations with patients and families. The goal of this course is for the practice and appreciation for storytelling to be integrated into students’ history-taking skills as they progress in their medical education.</p>
Objectives:	1) To introduce students to the principles of narrative medicine

	2) To complete a patient interview with a narrative framework 3) To produce a short write-up of the interview and share the interview experience with others in the course
Pre-Requisites:	None. No prior experience in narrative writing is required.
Requirements:	Attend all sessions and participate in patient interviews.
Texts:	Articles provided

NARRATIVE MEDICINE COURSE OUTLINE

Course Director(s):

Chelsea Cockburn, MD PhD Allyson Zabell, MD Aditi Jain, MD

Participating Faculty:

Ben Miller, MD

Texts/Required Reading:

No required reading, but the following narrative medicine pieces will be provided as examples.

- “The Importance of Being” by Abraham Verghese from *Health Affairs*
- “Abraham Verghese, Author of ‘Cutting for Stone’ describes his writing life” from *The Washington Post*
- “Close Calls” by Perri Klass from NEJM
- “When a Patient is dying, Food Appears” by Daniela Lamas in the New York Times Well column
- “The Lost Mariner” by Oliver Sacks from *The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat*
- “Nourishment” by Ranjana Sristave in *NEJM*

Session One – The first session will be an introduction to narrative medicine. We will review several narrative medicine pieces. We will also discuss the basics of conducting and writing an interview. We will then complete an interviewing practice session and compare journalistic interviewing techniques with those used in the medical interview.

Session Two – Students will be paired with a patient or family at CHP and will conduct a brief interview in person. We will then gather to debrief about these conversations.

Session Three – Students will conduct a prolonged interview with a different patient or family at CHP. The goal of the interview will be to gain an understanding of the patient’s experience of their illness or hospitalization, without necessarily obtaining the details of their medical history.

Session Four – Peer-editing/workshop session. We will have a group session in which students can help one another workshop written accounts of their patient interview.

Session Five – In the last session, students will share excerpts from their writing with the group. We will have a wrap-up discussion about how this experience will affect future patient interactions.