

### **Course Description**

This course explores, through canonical and contemporary texts, the relationship between literature and medicine. In this course, we will explore how literature reflects upon and offers insight into issues of health and illness, mind and body, the roles and relationships between medical practitioners and patients, and the broader social significance of medicine in literature.

### **Course Outcomes**

The course will:

- 1) familiarize students with the interdisciplinary field of literature and medicine;
- 2) increase a student's aesthetic sensitivity to literary depictions of medicine across genres;
- 3) encourage students to write clearly about complex issues related to literature and medicine;
- 4) further understand the dynamic relationship between literature and medicine.

### **General Education Outcomes**

Aligned with its course outcomes, this course satisfies general education outcome #8: Knowledge of the Principles of Aesthetics. It also counts as an elective for the English majors and minors. It is a required course for Medical Humanities minors.

### **Required Texts**

Anne Boyer, *The Undying*  
MK Czerwiec, *Taking Turns*  
Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*  
Paul Kalanithi, *When Breath Becomes Air*  
Kwoya Fagin Maples, *Mend*  
Ottessa Moshfegh, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*  
William Styron, *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness*

### **Format**

The majority of class will be devoted to the discussion of assigned texts. All students are required to participate in class and your participation will be evaluated. My classes are discussion-driven. You should come to class prepared to engage with the materials under discussion and to take notes about the texts and our discussions of them.

### **Evaluation**

Your grade will be determined by the following:

		<i>Final Grade Scale</i>
40%	Two Papers	A = 92—100%
10%	Illness Narrative	B = 82—91%
30%	Examinations	C = 72—81%
10%	Participation	D = 66—71%
10%	Preparation	F = lower than 65%

### *Papers*

There will be two 8-9 page papers in this course. Each paper will be worth 20%, for a total of 40% of your overall course grade. I will provide a brief overview handout for each paper assignment.

### *Illness Narrative*

To better understand the principles of narrative medicine and to better understand how narratives are produced, students will be tasked with writing an illness narrative. I will provide a brief overview of this assignment one week before it is due. The assignment is worth 10% of your overall grade.

*Academic Dishonesty:* The University expects its students to conduct themselves in a dignified and honorable manner as mature members of the academic community and assumes that individually and collectively they will discourage acts of academic dishonesty. The University also expects cooperation among administrators, faculty, staff, and students in preventing acts of academic dishonesty, in detecting such acts, reporting them, and identifying those who commit them, and in providing appropriate punishment for offenders. The University Code of Academic Student Conduct is found in Appendix C of the Student Handbook:

[http://www.onu.edu/student\\_life/student\\_conduct/student\\_handbook](http://www.onu.edu/student_life/student_conduct/student_handbook)

### *Examinations*

There will be two examinations that will ask you, in an essay format, to perform critical analysis that synthesizes readings from throughout the course. Each exam will be worth 15%, for a total of 30% of your overall grade.

### *Preparation*

*Discussion Questions:* Students are required to e-mail me once a week with a question they would like answered about the assigned reading. Questions should reach me (at the latest) by 6:00 PM the evening before the assigned reading will be discussed in class. Questions submitted after that deadline will not receive credit. Take the time to mark in your planners the specific day on which your question is expected.

*Last Name*

A-M

N-Z

*Submit Questions by 6:00 PM*

Monday Evening

Wednesday Evening

Your discussion question must include either a direct quote from the text or a page range pertinent to your question: questions lacking quotes will not receive credit. Discussion questions will be worth 10% of the overall grade. If I find class discussion lacking, or discussion questions consistently prepared in haste, I will convert this component of the grade into weekly (and onerous) quizzes.

### *Participation*

Absences will adversely affect your participation grade. I will grade your participation twice (at midterm and finals) in rounds of 10%, for a total of 20% of your overall grade. In determining your participation grade, I will use the criteria below:

A-B= Balances questions with answers, listens to classmates and responds with mature interpretations.

C-D = Imbalance between question and answers, dominates class discussion, aspires towards mature interpretations.

F = Contributes infrequently to class, does not seem engaged with material or issues, immature interpretations.

You should come to class prepared to ask questions, answer the questions of others, offer new ideas, and willing to produce a meaningful and enjoyable atmosphere. Just “showing up” is not

participation, and those who do just “show up” should expect lower-than-average participation grades. Finally, instances of students falling asleep in class, or texting, or doing homework for other courses during class will be documented and chronic instances of this will be factored into your overall participation grade.

### **A&S COVID Accommodations**

Given the additional stress that COVID is causing us all, the College of Arts and Sciences has asked faculty to seek ways to adjust student work in its courses. Accordingly, I have cut two texts, reduced the length of each paper assignment by three pages, and instituted two “breathe” days in which class will meet but there will be no reading assigned.

### **Office Hours**

You are always welcome to meet with me during office hours and by appointment if necessary. I encourage you to let me know in advance — either in-person or via e-mail — of the time you plan to stop by. Office hours for the spring semester are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00-1:30.

### **Campus Resources**

*The Writing Center:* The peer tutors at the Writing Center offer free tutoring to help you work through any stage of the writing process from brainstorming to polishing a final draft. You can schedule an appointment for a 30 or 60-minute one-on-one tutoring session by going to Heterick 209, calling (419) 772-2186, or visiting:

<https://onu.mywconline.com>

For more information about the Writing Center's services, visit:

[https://my.onu.edu/academics/resources/the\\_writing\\_center](https://my.onu.edu/academics/resources/the_writing_center)

### **University Sexual Misconduct Policy and Resources**

Ohio Northern University does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, transgender status, gender identity, or gender expression in its educational, extracurricular, or athletic programs, or in any admission or employment decisions. ONU is committed to promptly and equitably responding to all reports of sexual discrimination with the goal of eliminating the misconduct and/or harassment, preventing its recurrence, and addressing its effects on any individual or the community. To report sexual misconduct (violence) or sexual harassment, students may contact the Title IX Coordinator, Liannie Parahoo, 419-227-0061, [l-parahoo@onu.edu](mailto:l-parahoo@onu.edu) or one of the Deputy Title IX Coordinators: Brian Hofman, 419-772-1878, [b-hofman@onu.edu](mailto:b-hofman@onu.edu) ; or Linda Young, (419) 772-2438, [l-young@onu.edu](mailto:l-young@onu.edu). To confidentially discuss sexual misconduct (violence) or sexual harassment, students may contact University Confidential Resources: Counseling Center, (419) 772-2190; Health Center, (419) 772-2086; or Chaplain, (419) 772-2200. For more information, the University's Sexual Discrimination Policy is available at:

[www.onu.edu/title-ix](http://www.onu.edu/title-ix)

### **Mandatory Reporting**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a mandatory reporter. This means that I am required to promptly report any incidents of sexual violence or sex discrimination against any other member of the ONU community that I become aware of, directly or indirectly, whether those incidents occurred on or off campus. In addition, there may be instances in which I may assist a student in distress by either contacting the Counseling Center, using the online Student of Concern Report, or by contacting Public Safety or 911.

### **Special Accommodations**

Students requiring particular accommodations because of physical and/or learning disabilities should contact their Dean's office prior to or during the first week of classes. For additional information, see:

[http://www.onu.edu/student\\_life/disability\\_services](http://www.onu.edu/student_life/disability_services)

### **Reading Schedule**

1/19 Introduction(s)

#### *Medicine and Narrative*

1/21 Charon, selection from *Narrative Medicine* (Moodle)  
1/26 Jamison, "The Empathy Exams" (Moodle)  
1/28 Czerwiec, *Taking Turns* (first-half)  
2/2 Czerwiec, *Taking Turns* (second-half)  
2/4 Illness Narratives Due (class meets; submit to Moodle by 4:30pm)  
2/9 Selzer, "Imelda" (Moodle)  
2/11 Holt, "When I Was Wrong" (Moodle)

#### *Doctors, Patients, and Bodies*

2/16 Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 1-89  
2/23 Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 90-196  
2/25 Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 197-288  
3/2 Maples, *Mend*, xi-23  
3/4 Maples, *Mend*, 45-58  
3/9 Midterm Examination due to Moodle by 4:30pm  
3/11 First Paper due to Moodle by 4:30pm

#### *Life, Death, and Cancer*

3/16 Kalanithi, *When Breath Becomes Air*, 1-88  
3/18 Kalanithi, *When Breath Becomes Air*, 88-145  
3/23 Kalanithi, *When Breath Becomes Air*, 145-288  
3/25 Breathe Day: No Reading Assigned  
3/30 Boyer, *The Undying*, 1-100  
4/1 Boyer, *The Undying*, 101-200  
4/6 Boyer, *The Undying*, 201-291

#### *Medicine and the Mind*

4/8 Moshfegh, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*, 1-116  
4/13 Moshfegh, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*, 117-214  
4/15 Moshfegh, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*, 215-289  
4/20 Breathe Day: No Reading Assigned  
4/22 Styron, *Darkness Visible* (first-half)  
4/27 Styron, *Darkness Visible* (second-half)  
4/29 Second Paper due to Moodle by 4:30pm; Conclusion(s)  
  
5/6 Final Examination due to Moodle by 4:00pm