

Medicine and the Arts
HON 3397-05 (26622) – Fall 2021

Instructor

Dr. Woods Nash (he)

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University of Houston College of Medicine

Office hours by appointment. Email me to set up a time: mwnash@central.uh.edu

If you email me from Monday to Thursday, I will reply within 24 hours. If you email me on Friday or over the weekend, I will reply on Monday, at the latest. **But if you email me about an assignment that is due within 24 hours, do not expect a reply.** You should begin assignments, and ask questions, much further in advance of the due date. All assignments will be discussed in class and instructions will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Description

To explore connections between medicine and the arts, we will consider how the visual, literary, and performing arts are (1) used in healthcare practice and (2) can represent health-related experiences. We will have guest lectures, visit an art museum, watch movies, see a play, and attend a medical storytelling event. We will also learn about creative arts therapies and other uses of the arts in clinical settings.

Our class is officially scheduled from 5:30 to 8:30 PM, but some sessions will begin at 6 PM or later. See the course schedule and make plans now to attend those sessions. No class session will last longer than 3 hours.

Required Texts

Lucy Grealy, *Autobiography of a Face* (1994)

Katherine Dunn, *Geek Love* (1989)

Nathan Filer, *The Shock of the Fall* (2013)

Other readings will be posted on Blackboard. Students will also be required to rent/buy additional resources, such as movies and a ticket to a play.

Grade

Your final grade will be derived from four areas of your work.

1. Reflection Papers – 100 points

You may write up to 5 RPs. (There are at least 10 RP opportunities on the Course Schedule.) Each RP is worth up to 20 points, and they are always due by 10 PM CST on the Sunday after the class session about which you are writing.

Unless I provide alternative instructions, your RP should be an open-ended reflection on the class session (**not including** our discussion of a required book). It may include some summary of the session, but the *vast majority* of the paper should be your critical response

to the session's content. For example, what did you find valuable and relevant to healthcare, illness, or other experiences? If artistic media were presented, how were healthcare, illness, disability, or related experiences portrayed? To what ideas or practices do you object, and why? What questions do you have?

The paper should be double-spaced and at least 500 words. It must be submitted on Blackboard by 10 PM CST on the Sunday after the class session about which you are writing.

2. Participation – 100 points

Most of our sessions will include opportunities for discussion. To earn full participation credit, you must participate *frequently* (i.e., almost every class). Up to 3 times this semester, you may email me comments for participation very soon after our class session, but only if you did not get a chance to speak during that session. Good comments tend to range from 4-6 sentences.

If you are not participating often enough (and are, therefore, at risk of not earning full credit), I will let you know.

3. Two Critical Papers – 100 points

Each paper is worth up to 50 points. Instructions TBA.

4. Final Paper – 100 points

Instructions TBA.

Attendance Policy

Each student is allowed **two absences**, which I advise you to reserve for an illness or another unforeseen event. However, these absences may also be used for religious observances, university commitments (including travel), or anything else. After two absences, **you will lose 10 points on your final grade** (i.e., a full letter grade) for each additional absence. Furthermore, missing more than 30 minutes of a class session counts as half an absence. If you think you will miss more than two of our class sessions, I suggest you drop the course.

Grading Scale

93-100% (372 – 400 points) = A

90-92% (360 – 371) = A-

87-89% (348 – 359) = B+

83-86% (332 – 347) = B

80-82% (320 – 331) = B-

77-79% (308 – 319) = C+

73-76% (292 – 307) = C

70-72% (280 – 291) = C-

67-69% (268 – 279) = D+

63-66% (252 – 267) = D
60-62% (240 – 251) = D-
0-59% (0 – 239) = F

Late Assignments

Failure to submit an assignment on time will result in no credit for that assignment. The only exception is a documented emergency (e.g., illness, car accident) that is so severe that it prevents you from submitting the paper on time. If you experience such an emergency, I expect you to email me as soon as possible to explain your situation, and I will assign you a new due date. You must also provide documentation of your emergency by email or on the first day that you return to class.

Classroom Conduct

During class, electronic devices may only be used for class-related work. In other words, texting, emailing, etc. are not allowed. Do not sleep or do work for other classes. Avoid talking with classmates unless your discussion is part of a class/group discussion. All of these behaviors distract me and your classmates, reducing the quality of our learning experience.

Violations of this policy will reduce your participation grade.

Accessibility

I will work with the Center for Students with DisABILITIES (CSD) to accommodate "students who have temporary or permanent health impairments, physical limitations, psychiatric disorders, and/or learning disabilities." If you have documentation from the CSD, please share it with me. If you think you might need accommodation, please follow the steps outlined on the CSD website (www.uh.edu/csd/), and the CSD will recommend ways for me to accommodate you.

UH CAPS Statement

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the "Let's Talk" program, which is open to all. More info and the schedule for "Let's Talk" can be found here: [Let's Talk Program - University of Houston \(uh.edu\)](http://www.uh.edu/letstalk)

Academic Honesty

See UH's policy on academic honesty at www.uh.edu/provost/policies/honesty/.

Course Schedule

The dates below include 10 opportunities to submit a Reflection Paper (RP), each marked with an asterisk (*). You may submit no more than 5 RPs, for a total of up to 100 points.

Aug 26 – Introduction to the course. Guest presentation by Mary Manning and Amanda Focke, **Students' Creative Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

*You can receive credit for one RP by submitting to the “UH Students Respond to COVID-19” archive. <https://libraries.uh.edu/locations/special-collections/uh-archives/students-respond-to-covid-19-project/>

For the purposes of our class, the **deadline to submit to the archive is Nov 5**. Also, Dr. Nash must preapprove your submission to ensure that it is substantial enough to receive RP credit.

Email Dr. Nash no later than Oct 28 with a description of what you plan to submit. You must also email him the final submission on the day you submit.

Sept 2 – Aisen Chacin, Introduction to BioArt, Medical Devices, and Digital Tools

- Required reading: George Saunders, “Escape from Spiderhead”
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/12/20/escape-from-spiderhead>

Sept 9 – Andrew Roblyer and Kathleen Gullion, On Theatre Arts in Medical Education, Center for Clinical Arts, Skills, and Experiential Learning, UH College of Medicine

- Required reading, Grealy, *Autobiography of a Face* (Prologue and chapters 1 – 3)
- Required viewing: “The HeART of Medicine”
<https://www.pechakucha.com/presentations/the-heart-of-medicine>
“I’m Proud of Lying to Your Doctor”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toOYraI9dGk&feature=youtu.be>

*This session is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

Sept 16 – Class meets on Teams at 5:30; guest presentation by Paula Summerly, UTMB, Curator, Old Red Medical Museum

*This week is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

- Required reading, Grealy, *Autobiography of a Face* (chapters 4 – 8)

Sept 23 – Movie Night #1: The Elephant Man (1980)

- Required reading, Grealy, *Autobiography of a Face* (chapters 9 – 12)
- Required reading, Rachel Adams, excerpt from *Sideshow, U.S.A.: Freaks and the American Cultural Imagination* (on Blackboard)

Sept 26 – First Critical Paper due by 10 PM CST on Blackboard. Instructions TBA.

Sept 30 – Jennifer Townsend, Introduction to Music Therapy, Center for Performing Arts Medicine, Houston Methodist Hospital

- Required reading: Dunn, *Geek Love* (chapters 1 – 7)
- Required viewing:
[A Day Inside Houston Methodist Hospital's Music Therapy Program - YouTube](#)
[Doctors, nurses, and music therapist help new mom before, after delivery - YouTube](#)

*This session is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

Oct 7 – John Head and Liz Laguaitte, Music Therapy in Diverse Clinical Settings, Center for Performing Arts Medicine, Houston Methodist Hospital

- Required reading: Dunn, *Geek Love* (chapters 8 – 13)

*This session is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

Oct 14 – Brian Ellison, The Black Man Project

➤ Required reading: Dunn, *Geek Love* (chapters 14 – 21)

*This session is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

Oct 21 – Zach Gresham, Arts in Medicine program at MD Anderson

➤ Required reading: Dunn, *Geek Love* (chapters 22 – 28)

*This session is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

Oct 24 – Second Critical Paper due by 10 PM CST on Blackboard. Instructions TBA.

Oct 28 – “72 Miles to Go...” (Alley Theatre, 7:30 PM)

*This session is an RP opportunity. Instructions TBA on Blackboard.

*You are required to reimburse Dr. Nash \$15 for your ticket. He takes cash or Venmo.

Nov 4 – TBD (maybe an **Art of Observation** session, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston)

➤ Required reading, Filer, *The Shock of the Fall* (through “the magnolia elephant”)

Nov 11 – Andrew Childress, Baylor College of Medicine, Narrative Ethics

➤ Required reading, Filer, *The Shock of the Fall* (through “how best we can support you”)

*This session is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

Nov 18 – Off Script: Stories from the Heart of Medicine (location TBA)

➤ Required reading, Filer, *The Shock of the Fall* (keep reading)

*This session is an RP opportunity. See instructions in the syllabus.

Nov 25 – No Class meeting

Dec 2 – Movie Night #2 (film TBA)

➤ Required reading, Filer, *The Shock of the Fall* (finish the novel)

Dec 5 – Final Paper due by 10 PM CST on Blackboard