I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: From the use of the Hippocratic Oath in the Nuremberg trials to William Harvey's engagement with the "divine Galen" in his monumental study of the circulation of blood, it is quite clear that ancient Greek medicine has had a profound influence on Western medicine and society. To gain a better understanding of this relationship, this course thematically examines the historical reception of the theories and practices of Greco-Roman physicians. By examining ancient Greek medicine in light of the modern fields of pathology, surgery, pharmacology, therapy, obstetrics, psychology, anatomy, medical science, ethics, and education, the student will gain not only a better understanding of the foundations of Western medicine but also an appreciation for how medical terms, theories, and practices take on different meanings with changes in science and society. Course material will be a combination of primary and secondary readings.

How did western medicine begin? What led the Greeks and Romans to “invent” medical theories and practices, and how effective were their treatments? How did the Greeks and Romans understand the complex relationships between mind, body, and spirit? What led them to prescribe regular exercise, healing baths, special diets, the use of specific herbal remedies, and healing ointments? In the ancient world, where few people had access to “rational” or “scientific” medicine, how do we separate medicine from other healing methods such as folk medicine, magic, and the cult of the god Asclepius? What does it mean to be cured? How did ancient prayer, purges, cold baths, and prayers to the gods affect health and well-being? During the course, we will examine these practices as well as the tense and sometimes fraught relationship between medicine and traditional healing.

II. COURSE GOALS

- Learn how gender, ethnicity, and social order influenced medical knowledge
- Learn about ancient notions of health, disease, and healing that may still have relevance to contemporary medical practices.
- Explore ancient attitudes towards the body and disability; the relationship between medical theory and medical practice; and Greek and Roman reactions to bodily
suffering, healing, illness, injury, and those occasional catastrophic epidemics that swept (and still sweep) across whole populations.

- Understand how ancient medicine fit into the larger cultural context of antiquity, and how medical theory and practice changed over time.
- Improve written communication skills by composing essays with succinct, well-supported theses; learn how to use primary & secondary sources to make arguments about the past.

**III. REQUIRED TEXTS**

These books are available on course reserve in Bass Library.


**BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (MANY AVAILABLE ON CLASSESV2):**

**Primary Sources**

- *The Edwin Smith Papyrus*

**Secondary Sources (selections from)**

- Kleiman, A., *Writing at the Margin. Discourse Between Anthropology & Medicine*, Berkeley,
1997.


**Newspaper Articles**

Khullar, D., ‘“Good” Patients, “Bad” Patients,’ NYT 4/11/13


Stanley, B. J., “I Am Not This Body,” NYT 5/6/13

**Additional Resources:**

- **Yale Classics Library:** http://www.library.yale.edu/arts/classics.html
  Located on the 5th floor of Phelps Gate. Regular hours are Mon.–Thur. 8:30am–9:00pm, Fri. 8:30am–5:00pm, and Sun. 5:00pm–9:00pm; closed Saturdays. A Yale ID is required for access. If you have any questions about the library or need assistance with research contact the Classics Librarian, Colin McCaffrey (colin.mccaffrey@yale.edu, 203-432-0854.)

- **The Perseus Digital Library:** www.perseus.tufts.edu
  A wealth of information relevant to our subject: Ancient texts, translations, photo archives of an impressive range of sites, and plenty of secondary material.

- **Yale Writing Center:** http://www.yale.edu/writing
  All students are also encouraged to take advantage of the free writing services offered by the Yale College Writing Center, especially before turning in a paper.

**IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:**
Class and section attendance and participation is extremely important for working through this complex material (10%). Over the course of the semester, you will be responsible for a project aimed to assist in mastering a concept explored in this course; this will take the form of a 9-10 page final paper (25%). More information on your project will follow, though you are free to choose any topic that interests you. In addition, there is a midterm examination (20%), and one short paper (3 pages, see information below). In short, grades are determined as follows:

Attendance & Participation: 10%
Short 3-page paper (MARCH 8): 20%
Mid-Term Exam (FEB 27): 20%
Final Paper (MAY 5): 25%
Final Exam (TBA): 25%

Writing Assignments:

There will be one short critical reaction paper (due MARCH 8), and a longer final paper (May 5). For the critical reaction essay (3 pages), you will write a 1 page summary of a piece of modern scholarship on ancient medicine, followed by a 2 page reaction exploring connections between that piece of modern scholarship and one of the primary texts from the course. On the day these critical reaction essays are due, we will have a “symposium” in which you will share some of your reactions with the class; participation in these sympotic exercises is important. For the final paper (9-10 pages), you will perform a comparative analysis of two primary texts, making use of at least three works of modern scholarship in your analysis.

The purpose of the writing assignments is to improve your analytical writing skills (your use of appropriate diction and grammar), as well as your ability to write persuasive and well-argued essays. Since you may not be accustomed to writing papers of this nature, you are encouraged to organize your thoughts beforehand, ideally with an outline. Choose words with meaning to make your point, and cite examples carefully. There will be no room for “filler” if you are to write the papers completely. The writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced, use Cambria or Times New Roman font, size 12 font, and have one-inch margins on all sides. Each Writing Assignment must be printed out and handed in at the beginning of class on the day it is due. Please make sure that your work is stapled together when you hand it in. Absolutely no extensions will be granted. Late papers are subject to being downgraded 5% per day they are overdue. Papers more than one week late will not be accepted, and a grade of 0% will be recorded for any missing work. To help improve your work for each of the writing assignments, you are encouraged to make use of The Writing Center.

Assessment Details for Tests:

Midterm (20%): There will be one midterm scheduled on Feb. 27. The midterm will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions, along with a choice of essay questions (of which you must respond to one).

Final Exam (25%): The final exam will be a cumulative test of material from the entire semester, but with a greater focus on material from the second half of the term. It will consist of a variety of questions, including multiple choice, short answer, passage identifications, and an essay.
V. Academic Honesty
Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. When writing papers, students are expected to write the paper by themselves, using their own words and ideas or otherwise attributing them to the writer from whom they borrow. Students are asked to use MLA standards for proper citation and attribution: http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism

VI. Readings
Readings should be completed before the class day on which they are listed in the syllabus. Students are responsible for all material for the week in question during class. In preparing for meetings, students should read carefully, paying attention both to detail (objects, places, names, dates) and to the broader picture (trends, developments).

VII. SCHEDULE: Topics & Readings
Assignments to be read before class session

PART I: Defining, Situating, and “Inventing” Medicine

Week 1
W, Jan. 18: Introductions, Syllabus
Introduction: Syllabus, Course Structure, Sources, Background

**FRIDAY, Jan. 20: Why Study Ancient Medicine? The Nature of the Historical Record; Ancient Definitions of “Health”

Readings (Classes V2):

Week 2
M, Jan. 23: Health Conditions. Historical Overview; Population structure and life expectancy in the ancient world; the use of model life tables; major causes of illness; disease and the urban city.

Readings (Classes V2):
- Ignatiadou, D., “Derveni Healer”

- Oppenheim, “Mesopotamian Medicine”
- Wilson, “Medicine in Ancient Egypt”
The Edwin Smith Papyrus (extracts).

- Optional: Biggs, “Medicine ... Mesopotamia”

**Week 3**

M, Jan. 30: *Disease and Healing in Early Greece: the Evidence from Homer, Empedocles, and the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*

Readings:
- Nelkin & Gilman, “Placing Blame for Devastating Disease”
- Pre-Socratics: [http://www.indiana.edu/~ancmed/foundations.htm](http://www.indiana.edu/~ancmed/foundations.htm)
- Empedocles, article and fragments: [https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/empedocles/](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/empedocles/)

- Optional: *Early Greek Philosophy*, chapters 6, 12, 21, 22 (esp. pp. 111-122, 151-9, 203-210)

**W, Feb. 1**: *The Hippocratic Corpus*: Nature of the corpus; problems of authorship; biographical myths, the papyrus, *Anonymus Londinensis*.

Readings:
- King, *Greek and Roman Medicine*, pp.9-17

**PART II: Hippocratic Medicine: Theory and Practice**

**Week 4**

M, Feb. 6: *Tradition in Medicine & The Hippocratic Oath*. Is medicine a science? Medicine, religion, & philosophy; contests over the nature of medical knowledge; medicine as techne; distance between ideals and reality in the Oath; modern adaptions of the Oath.

Readings:
- *Tradition in Medicine* (Lloyd, pp.70-86)
- *The Oath* (Lloyd, p.67)
- Nutton, V., pp. 53-71: “Hippocrates, the Hippocratic Corpus, and the defining of medicine”
- [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/body/hippocratic-oath-today.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/body/hippocratic-oath-today.html)


Readings:
- *The Nature of Man* (Lloyd, pp.260-271)
- *Regimen for Health* (Lloyd, pp.272-276)
Nutton, pp. 78-86 (from beginning of first paragraph on p. 78)
H. King, “Introduction: What is Health?”

Week 5
Readings:
- Byrd & Clayton, "Race, Medicine, Health Care in the United States"
- Malaria clinical presentation: http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/about/disease.html

W, Feb. 15: Doctors & Patients in Hippocratic Medicine. The 42 surviving case histories in the Hippocratic corpus; the case history as a paradigm of knowledge; “Technical Writing” as literature; identities of patients and doctors; medical decorum
Readings:
- Epidemics I, III (Lloyd, pp.87-112; 127-138)
- Decorum (Classes V2)
- Nutton, V., pp. 87-103, “Hippocratic Practices”

Week 6
M, Feb. 20: Religion, Medicine, and the “Sacred Disease”
Readings:
- The Science of Medicine (Lloyd, pp. 139-147)
- Power and Rasko, “Whither Prometheus’ Liver?...”
- The Sacred Disease (Lloyd, pp. 237-251)
  - In Class: excerpts from Euripides’ Heracles

W, Feb. 22: Diet and Dreaming. The concept of “regime” (diaita); seasonal change and “treatment by opposites”; Hippocratic medicine and dreams
Readings:
- A Regimen for Health (Lloyd, pp.272-276)
- Dreams (Regimen 4) (Lloyd, pp.252-259)
PART III: Gender & Sexuality in Ancient Medicine

   Readings:
   - The Seed & Nature of the Child (Lloyd 317-346)
   - King, H., “Women’s Health and Recovery in the Hippocratic Corpus”, in H. King

Week 8
M, Mar. 6: Birthing & the Midwife
   Readings:
   - On the Excision of the Foetus
   - Superfetation
   - Soranus’ Gynecology (Soranus, Gynecology, 3-7, 8-79, 128-154)
   - King, H. “Imaginary Midwives”, pp.172-187
   - King, H. “Motherhood and health in the Hippocratic corpus: does maternity protect against disease?”

W, Mar. 8: Wandering Wombs & Ill Virgins I
   Readings:
   - HC: Diseases of Women
   - HC: Illnesses of Maidens
   - Plato Timaeus 91b-e
   - Dean-Jones, L. “The Wandering Womb”

SHORT PAPER DUE IN CLASS!

Week 9-10: SPRING BREAK (woohoo!)

Week 11
M, Mar. 27: Wandering Wombs & Ill Virgins II
   Readings:
PART IV: Disease, Society, and the Body

W, Mar. 29: Representations of Plague in Ancient Literary Sources
Readings:

- Septuagint, Book of Samuel 2.24
- Homer's Iliad Bk. 1 lines 1-100, 303-317
- Sophocles' Oedipus the King, lines 1-101
- Burkert, "Guilt and Causality", pp.102-128

Week 12
M, Apr. 3: Disease, Morality, and Social Order: The Athenian Plague
Readings:

- Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, "The Athenian Plague," 151-6
- Longrigg, "Death and Epidemic Disease in Classical Athens," 55-64
- Cunha, "The Cause of the Plague of Athens," 29-43
- Leven, “... Retrospective Diagnosis and Ancient Medical History,” 369-86

W, Apr. 5: Ancient & Modern Plagues Compared
Readings:

- E.A. Poe, "The Masque of the Red Death"
- "Ancient Plagues" article in Cell
- Hays, Burdens of Disease, chap. 12: "Disease and Power," 290-303 (on AIDS)
- Soupios, "Impact of the Plague," 45-51

PART V: Religious Healing

Week 13
M, Apr. 10: Religious Healing I: Divine Healers
Readings:

- Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Sorcerer and his Magic"
- NatGeo December 2016 article, “The Healing Power of Faith”, start on pp.48-9:
  - [https://issuu.com/muhammadosamaoh/docs/national_geographic_-_the_healing_p](https://issuu.com/muhammadosamaoh/docs/national_geographic_-_the_healing_p)
W, Apr. 12: *Religious Healing II: Healing Sanctuaries*

Readings:
- Petridou, Georgia. “‘Healing Shrines” in G. Irby (ed.), *Companion to Greek Science, Medicine, and Technology*, Wiley–Blackwell.
- Aristophanes, *Plutus* (“Wealth”), lines 633-747
- Pausanias, *Description of Greece II.*27.1-28.2
- *Aelius Aristides, Sacred Tales, excerpts*
- Moerman, “Anthropology of Symbolic Healing,” 59-66

Optional:

**PART VI: The Hellenistic World & Beyond**

**Week 14**

M, Apr. 17: *Hellenistic Science and the Rise of Anatomy: Medical science in Alexandria; the evidence for human dissection; Herophilus and Erasistratus.*

Readings:
- "Alexandria, anatomy and experimentation" (Nutton, 130-141)
- Celsus, *De Medicina* Preface secs. 1-56 (pp. 1-11)
- Von Staden, *Herophilus*, 35-43 (life), 138-161 (anatomy), 242-262 (pathology and physiology)

W, Apr. 19: *Greek Medicine at Rome.*

Readings:
- King, Ch. 5: Greek Medicine at Rome, pp. 32-37
- Nutton, Ch. 11: Rome and the Transplantation of Greek Medicine, pp. 157-170
- Ralph Jackson, “Holding on to Health? Bone Surgery and Instrumentation in the Roman Empire”, in *H. King* ed.

**Week 15**

M, Apr. 24: *Greek Medicine in the Roman World.* From Galen to Galenism; bloodletting; diet and the humors.

Readings:
- Galen—“On Treatment by Venesection”
- Galen—“On the Humors”
- Galen—“The Best Doctor is Also a Philosopher”
- “The Life and Career of Galen”; “Galenic Medicine” (Nutton 222-243)
W, Apr. 26: Arabic translations of Galen; medieval humorism; William Harvey and the end of Ancient Medicine.

Readings:

FINAL PAPER DUE: FRIDAY May 5 at NOON (12 PM)
- Hard copy in my mailbox, Phelps 4th floor