



The Fundamental Role
of the Arts and Humanities
in Medical Education



February 2024 FRAHME Newsletter

This bi-monthly newsletter is designed to keep you up to date on news from the [AAMC's Fundamental Role of Arts and Humanities in Medical Education \(FRAHME\) initiative](#). If you know others who are interested in learning more about integrating the arts and humanities into medical education, please forward this email to them. To subscribe, they can [sign up here](#).

Using the Arts and Humanities with Medical Learners to Understand the Implications of Race in Medicine

As Black History Month gets underway, below are some arts and humanities resources for learning and teaching about the difficult history African-American people have had with the United States medical system. Learning how race has affected medical care in both the past and the present is critical to reducing disparities in the future.

[On the Front Lines](#) is a collection of 3-5 minute videos produced in a partnership between the AAMC and StoryCorps Connect. Many of the interviews feature prominent Black physicians addressing topics such as historically-black colleges and universities and assuming pioneering roles in medicine, as well as issues of underrepresentation and racism.

[The FRAHME Getting Started Guide](#) provides specific ideas and examples for integrating the arts and humanities into teaching the ACGME competency "Systems-Based Practice." Activities include working with materials from the "1619 Project" to help learners understand the history of systematic denial of health care to the Black community.

[The LitMed Database](#) is a collection of annotations of literature, fine art, visual art and performing art annotations created as a dynamic, comprehensive resource for scholars, educators, students, patients, and others interested in medical humanities. Explore 134 annotated works about the African-American experience for use in teaching.

Recording available: An Educational Roadmap from The Lancet Commission on Medicine, Nazism, and the Holocaust



"The past of medicine is about the future of medicine," declared Hedy Wald, PhD, in her introduction to the third annual AAMC webinar recognizing International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The webinar was presented as part of the AAMC's FRAHME initiative and included an overview of the recently released report [The Lancet Commission on Medicine, Nazism, and the Holocaust: Historical Evidence, Implications for Today, Teaching for Tomorrow](#).

In addition to Dr. Wald, speakers included AAMC President and CEO David J. Skorton, MD, *The Lancet's* Editor in Chief. Richard Horton, OBE, FRCPCH, FMedSci, and Sabine Hildebrandt, MD, chair of *The Lancet* Commission on Medicine, Nazism, and the Holocaust. Several student members of *The Lancet* Commission also shared their experiences with new pedagogic initiatives in Kenya, Canada, and the United States.

The recording of this webinar is now available to view; free registration is required.

[View Recording](#)

FRAHME grantee receives additional funding from National Endowment for the Humanities

In 2021, [AAMC awarded eight \\$25,000 grants](#) to U.S.-based member medical schools and teaching hospitals who would go on to design new methodology, or enhance existing methodology, to evaluate the impact of integrative arts and humanities programs or curricula across the developmental spectrum. This work was partially funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

One grantee team, led by Kamna Balhara, MD, MA, of The Center for Medical Humanities and Social Medicine at Johns Hopkins and Health Humanities at Hopkins EM (H3EM), has received further funding from the NEH to support a faculty development opportunity titled

"Health Humanities: Dismantling Structural Injustice in Healthcare."

This virtual longitudinal institute will empower health professions faculty to leverage the health humanities in their educational and scholarly practice, while creating a unique community of practice at the forefront of a cutting-edge movement to meaningfully integrate humanities in health professions education. Designed for physicians or nurses involved in health professions education, this course will provide an introduction to the health humanities, structural competency, history and theories of racism in health care, and health humanities-based approaches to addressing injustice.

Applications are due by March 5. There is no cost associated with attending this institute, and participants will receive a stipend of \$1,100. More information is available here: <https://hopkinsmedicalhumanities.org/structuraljustice/>

San Juan Bautista School of Medicine hosts creative exhibition



Diagnostic error is one of the most prevalent safety problems in health care today. Becoming a strong diagnostician is an art as well as a science. In 2023, the AAMC, the Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine (SIDM), and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation awarded five grants to AAMC member institutions to host "Art of Diagnosis" events. Grant winners designed events with the purpose of displaying or presenting creative works of undergraduate medical students related to their experiences with diagnosis, diagnostic error, or learning the diagnostic process.

Starting in July 2023, San Juan Bautista School of Medicine hosted "Untold Stories of Health Professions Students," a series of virtual and in-person initiatives designed to create a safe space to share stories. More than 150 attendees took part in the events, sharing deeply personal narratives of lived experiences and poignant diagnoses that led

them to pursue medicine.

Martha Eugenia Garcia-Osorio, MD, MSc and medical student Andrea Gelabert-Mora, who organized the events, stated "By hearing stories that tied diagnoses to individual life journeys and aspirations, students have gained a deeper understanding of the holistic nature of diagnosis and recognize the importance of empathy, patient-centered care, and the human dimension of medical practice." A permanent gallery of artwork will open in early 2024.

Both Garcia-Osorio and Gelabert-Mora received complimentary travel, airfare, and lodging to present their work at the 2023 SIDM conference. **The 2024 call for proposals for "Art of Diagnosis" events will open in March.**

Arts and humanities articles in *Academic Medicine* and *MedEdPORTAL*

- [Learning Pelvic Anatomy and Pathology Through Drawing: An Interactive Session in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Clerkship](#)

Elisabeth N. Adkins, MD, MBA, Elizabeth Barrett, MD, Josette D'Amato, DO, Rose A. Maxwell, PhD, Marilyn Kindig, DO. *MedEdPORTAL*, December 5, 2023.

Third-year medical students participated in an interactive, 1.5-hour session requiring them to draw pelvic anatomy, present their work, and explain topics related to pelvic surgery and pathology to the other clerkship students. 84% reported that the anatomy interactive session prepared them for the surgical portion of the OB/GYN clinical rotation; 80% reported that drawing the pelvic structures helped their understanding of pelvic pathology; and (75% reported they had a thorough understanding of pelvic anatomy after taking the OB/GYN anatomy interactive educational session ($p < .001$).

- [Medical Spanish Graphic Activity: A MeGA Deliberate Practice Approach to Reducing Jargon Use With Spanish-Speaking Acute Care Patients](#)

Pilar Ortega, MD, MGM, Rafael Cisneros, MD, Yoon Soo Park, PhD. *MedEdPORTAL*, January 2, 2024.

Researchers developed a Medical Spanish Graphic Activity (MeGA) for medical student deliberate practice of patient-centered verbal communication focused on three aspects: diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care. Twenty-nine fourth-year students with intermediate or greater Spanish skills participated in a series of 10 MeGA activities over four months. Researchers found that unexplained jargon use and problem words progressively decreased for all transcripts (diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up; all $ps < .001$). All students agreed that MeGA helped them enhance communication skills applicable to patient care and self-identify strengths and limitations.

[Fostering Wonder Through the Arts and Humanities: Using Visual Thinking Strategies in Medical Education](#)

Philosophers and scientists alike argue that wonder—that emotion or state of consciousness in which one’s attention is fixed on phenomena beyond one’s comprehension—is the central virtue and driving force of all education. As in general education, wonder is central to all aspects of academic medicine’s tripartite mission; a sense of wonder fuels the delivery of humanized patient care, sparks scientific discoveries, and supports engagement in lifelong learning. In this article, the authors explore how one of the most widely used and studied arts-based learning activities in medical education, Visual Thinking Strategies, can help develop a capacity for wonder among physicians.

What else we're reading

- [Defunding Liberal Arts Is Dangerous For Health Care](#), *STAT*
President of the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation, Holly Humphrey, MD, argues that the liberal arts are critical to the future of health and health care in America.
 - [How To Save A Sad, Lonely, Angry And Mean Society](#), *New York Times*
Op-Ed writer David Brooks describes how engaging with arts and humanities deepens our understanding of the wide variety of human experiences.
 - [Auschwitz](#), *The Lancet*
Hedy Wald, PhD, daughter of a Holocaust survivor, recounts her trip to teach reflective writing to medical students studying at Auschwitz.
 - [Narrative Medicine: The Power of Shared Stories to Enhance Inclusive Clinical Care, Clinician Well-Being, and Medical Education](#), *The Permanente Journal*
Authors review the benefits of narrative medicine and present methods for integration into medical education and clinical care.
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Featured artwork from AAMC constituents



Contractions by Phoebe L. Cohen, EMT-P, paramedic and an RN student at Northern Essex Community College, freelance writer/illustrator

Artist's Statement

It is easy as someone who is a nervous student in the Emergency Medical Services field (EMS) to disregard a patient's humanity. When I was studying to be a paramedic, we were actively discouraged from becoming too emotionally involved. Emotion interfered with doing our jobs. A good EMT kept her mind on her work and did not weep with the patient's family.

Emotional emergency workers made mistakes.

As a paramedic student, I was told to assist an incarcerated woman who was in active labor. The woman was forced to have a miserable childbirth while handcuffed to a stretcher. Everyone in the ambulance had to concentrate on following childbirth protocols and not question the law enforcement officer who handcuffed the woman to the stretcher. The woman groaned with each contraction. I still regret not speaking up on her behalf. I was a student then and I did not want to annoy my preceptor or the police officer and have them complain to the school. To this day I still wonder about the gap between students in the medical field who wish to competently do their job and at the same time recognize the humanity of patients in the moment.

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