CCTS 21004 / RLST 26315
Christian Traditions and Medicine in the Late Modern World

Winter 2018 (Mon/Wed 10:30am-11:20am), Jan 3-March 7
W300 Conference Room (Section of Hospital Medicine), Mitchell Hospital
(Enter through the Ellis Ave entrance near bookstore and work your way South, then West to the “A West” elevator to the 3rd floor. To your right, the conference room will be at the end of the hallway).

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Office hours: By appointment, but generally Mon/Wed after class, Office W314 (Mitchell Hospital)

Course Description: What is the meaning of medicine in our contemporary world? How has it changed over time, and what are its normative conditions and challenges? What religious and spiritual resources might Christian traditions bring to bear on such questions? This course rests on the assumption that contemporary challenges in medicine stem from a moral pluralism reflecting the cultural conditions of late modernity, as well as from a growing inability to maintain clinical excellence in an increasingly complex and bureaucratic health care system. We will first examine this assumption and its sociological, historical, and theological significance. In parallel, we will engage guest speakers throughout the course who will help us comparatively explore several Christian responses to modernity and to diverse domains of medicine. Lastly, we will critically explore James Hunter’s constructive proposal of “faithful presence,” and what that might mean in the context of medicine. Our goal, ultimately, will be to reflect on the conditions and challenges of modern medicine and to appraise the historical and theological resources that the Christian traditions may offer.

Learning Objectives:
Students will be able to

- identify and analyze salient aspects of the culture of modern medicine—its institutional parameters, self-understanding as a practice, and conditions of practice—and the ways in which it reflects modernity more broadly;
- describe and comparatively appraise several Christian responses to modernity and their implications for medicine and its various domains of practice;
- critically evaluate the possibilities of James Hunter’s idea of “faithful presence” with respect to modern medicine, and do so in light of historical and theological resources.

Course Materials:
All readings are journal articles or book excerpts and are available through the university library’s electronic resources or on Canvas. These readings will provide sociological, historical, and theological analyses of medicine, modernity, and diverse Christian responses to them, as well as historical and theological accounts of the ways in which Christianity intersects with medicine. We will also engage guest speakers throughout the course who will share from their subject expertise and day-to-day experiences of health and healthcare.
**Course Requirements and Grading:**

Students must have already completed the SOSC sequence.

1. Reflective participation. Students may choose only one of two options to complete their reflective participation component (40%):
   a) Option #1: Weekly Abstracts. Students will write one reflective abstract (2–3 paragraphs; max 500 words total) per week based on one or more of that week’s readings. Abstracts (9 total) must be submitted through Canvas by 11:59pm, the day prior to the scheduled discussion. The goal is to facilitate reflective engagement with the readings in advance of class discussions. [0 points if no abstract is turned in; 1 point if only a summary without response, or response without thoughtful summary; 2 points for summary and response.]
   b) Option #2: Appreciative Inquiry (AI) sessions. Students will participate in small group appreciative inquiry sessions (3 total) throughout the quarter (schedule TBD). First students will write 1–1.5 page personal responses (max 1500 words total) to any key idea in the course (drawn either from the readings, group discussions, or guest speakers) that is having a formative influence on your vocational aspirations or personal perspectives toward medicine and health. Students will then gather with instructors in a 1-hour session to share and discuss their reflections. These three AI sessions will be scheduled according to the time availability of all those who choose to participate. [0 points if no personal response is turned in; 2.5 points if a personal response is given that exhibits very little integration with course content; 5 points if personal response is given that effectively integrates course content]. 1 point will also be given for attendance of each of the three in-person AI sessions.

2. Midterm/Final. Students will write a mid-term paper (5-6 pp. double-spaced) (20%) and a final paper (10-12 pp. double-spaced) (40%) that synthesize and evaluate ideas discussed in the course. Students may expand on a previous abstract or address a new question of their own. The final paper may expand on or be related to the mid-term, but it also need not be. Regardless, each paper should have a clear thesis and develop key arguments around it, drawing on readings from the course as well as from outside resources as appropriate.

**Guest Speakers**

Engagement with guest speakers is an important component of this course. Guest speakers will represent various Christian traditions and/or areas of medical practice. They will share their theological or experiential insights, deepening our understanding of particular religious traditions and the everyday challenges of modern medical practice or their approach to health. Guest speakers will co-facilitate discussions together with the Course Instructors.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker and Topic Theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed Jan 10th</td>
<td>Fr. Elijah Mueller, Orthodox Christian Fellowship, “Eastern Orthodoxy and Medicine”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Jan 17th</td>
<td>Bing Nieh, Holy Trinity Church, <em>Imago Dei</em> and Human Flourishing in Relationships</td>
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<td>Wed Jan 24th</td>
<td>Lauris Kaldjian, MD, MDiv, PhD “A Protestant Perspective on Medicine and Medical Ethics”</td>
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<td>Wed Feb 7th</td>
<td>Michelle Harrington, PhD candidate, University of Chicago Divinity School “St. Francis and End of Life care”</td>
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<td>Wed Feb 14th</td>
<td>Herbert Lin, PhD candidate, University of Chicago Divinity School “Kierkegaard, Christian Existence, and Health”</td>
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<td>Wed Feb 21st</td>
<td>Barnabas Lin, Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, Topic: TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Feb 28th</td>
<td>Mic Altena, MDiv, L’Arche Chicago “A Christian Perspective on Disability and Human Flourishing”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon Mar 5th</td>
<td>Fr. Andrew Liaugminas, Calvert House “St. Aquinas and a Catholic Perspective on Health and Human Flourishing”</td>
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COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS

WEEK 1: Introduction: what is this course about?

Wed Jan 3rd
Assigned Readings:
- Review Course Syllabus
- Read James Davison Hunter’s *TCTW* (*To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010)): essay I, ch. 1 (pp. 3-5).
- Read “Fidelity” by Wendell Berry
- Watch: Wendell Berry, "The Objective" (4 min video)

WEEK 2: On the nature of culture: how should it be engaged?

Mon Jan 8th
Assigned Readings
- Read *TCTW*: essay I, chs. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 (pp. 6-47, 79-96)

Wed Jan 10th
Guest Speaker: Fr. Elijah Mueller, “Eastern Orthodoxy and Medicine”
- Speaker Bio:
- Assigned Reading:

WEEK 3: The making of modern medicine: how did we get here?

Mon Jan 15th
Assigned Readings

Wed Jan 17th
Guest Speaker: Bing Nieh, *Imago Dei* and Human Flourishing in Relationships
- Speaker Bio:
- Assigned Reading:
WEEK 4: Science and modern medicine: is medicine “disenchanted”? 

Mon Jan 22nd
Assigned Readings

Wed Jan 24th
Guest Speaker: Lauris Kaldjian, MD, MDiv, PhD, “A Protestant Perspective on Medicine in the Late Modern World”
- Speaker Bio:
- Assigned Reading:

WEEK 5: Moral pluralism in modern medicine: can we agree on its goals?

Mon Jan 29th
Assigned Readings
- Read Farr Curlin, “What is Medicine For?” (prepublication manuscript used with permission)

Wed Jan 31st
Guest Speaker: Matt Podszus, The Navigators, Topic: TBD

MIDTERM DUE FRIDAY Feb 3rd (noon)
WEEK 6: “Faithful presence”: is it an adequate Christian response to modernity?

**Mon Feb 5**
Assigned Readings
- Read *TCTW*: essay III, chs. 1-5 (pp. 197-272)
- 1 Corinthians 12: 12-20

**Wed Feb 7**
- Michelle Harrington, PhD candidate, University of Chicago Divinity School “St. Francis and end of life care”
- Speaker bio:

WEEK 7: “Faithful presence” in medicine: what are the theological resources?

**Mon Feb 12**
Assigned Readings
- Ephesians 4:1-16

**Wed Feb 14**
Guest Speaker: Herbert Lin, PhD candidate, “Kierkegaard, Christian Existence, and Health”
- Speaker bio:

WEEK 8: “Faithful presence” in medicine: are there historical resources?

**Mon Feb 19**
Assigned Readings

**Wed Feb 21**
Guest Speaker: Barnabas Lin, Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, Topic: TBD
- Speaker Bio:
- Assigned Reading:
WEEK 9: “Faithful presence” in medicine: what would it look like in practice?

Mon Feb 26th
Assigned Readings
- Read Vocation and Common Good Report: *Improvisations in Love*

Wed Feb 28th
Mic Altena, MDiv, L’Arche: A Christian Perspective on Intellectual Disability
- Speaker bio:

WEEK 10: Concluding Thoughts and Class Review

Mon Mar 5th
Guest Speaker: Fr. Andrew Liaugminas, Calvert House
St. Aquinas and a Catholic Perspective on Health and Human Flourishing
Speaker Bio:
Assigned Readings

Wed Mar 7th
- Class Review and Debriefing
- Class Reading: On Being a Doctor: “Communion”

FINAL PAPER DUE: FRIDAY MARCH 16th (noon)