Health & Society Module at King’s College London

Module code: 6MMMX100

Semester: Semester 1 (autumn); Semester 2 (spring);

**Module description:** The Health and Society module is a compulsory element of the Undergraduate 'Health & Society' Program and cannot be taken outside of this program. It offers a valuable learning opportunity for undergraduate students, interested in studying medicine at the pre-med level. The course is particularly suitable for those registered or thinking of registering for their Medical Degrees and is offered in conjunction with other optional modules.

The Health and Society Program is the first in the U.K. to offer an integrated curriculum including the social, ethical and anthropological perspectives underpinning practice. The course combines an in-class curriculum with a range of shadowing opportunities in different clinical settings.

Credit level: 6

Credit value: 15

**Teaching pattern:** The in-class curriculum consists of interactive lectures and seminars addressing five broad areas:

**National Medical Health Systems:**
Taking a comparative perspective, we address important questions such as how does public and social policy impact on health outcomes and what are the key strengths and weaknesses of the U.S., U.K. and other national medical systems? In similar related seminars, we explore the relationship between the quality of health care, health systems and cost effectiveness.

**Medical practice:**
This series of lectures and seminars addresses an important aspect of medical practice, namely doctor-patient communication and clinical reasoning. Here you will have the opportunity to learn about active listening skills, how to take a case history, as well as the role of deductive and inductive reasoning in diagnosis. You will also have the opportunity to apply these new skills to role playing scenarios with professional actors. Other seminars will address the management of chronic diseases and the care of common illnesses presented in family practice.

**Medicine and Ethics:**
Medicine operates within a wider social, political and ethical context. In this series of seminars, a number of important ethical considerations in medical practice will be addressed. Key topics will include truth-telling and confidentiality, end of life decisions and a critical consideration of the duties of a physician.
Medical Anthropology
In this series of seminars we explore how cultural identity influences health beliefs and illness behaviors. A range of case studies will demonstrate the importance of considering the role that culture has to play in physician-patient interactions. An ethnographic film will also emphasize how doctors may work amongst communities with radically different beliefs about the causes of and treatments of ill health. This will underscore the message of understanding not just organic disease, but also the patient in their wider socio-cultural context.

Medicine, Arts and the Humanities
When patients describe events, feelings and concerns, they set scenes using their own imagery. In turn, doctors listening to patients' stories and descriptions form pictures in their own minds. This is 'visual thinking' and is an important part of communication. The inclusion of the arts and humanities facilitates exploration of both the art and science of medicine and the human condition, providing a valuable means to making sense of doctor-patient interactions, the nature of pain, suffering, illness and healing.

Assessment: coursework, practical/s and oral examination/s;

Course assessment consists of the submission of a learning diary reflecting on clinical shadowing experiences, as well as a systematic literature review of secondary data relating to a particular dilemma or debate in medicine.

The third and final assessment will consist of an oral PowerPoint presentation of the literature review findings. The literature review and presentations are both weighted 50%, with the diary not being officially marked, but regarded as a prerequisite to submission of the remaining assignments.