

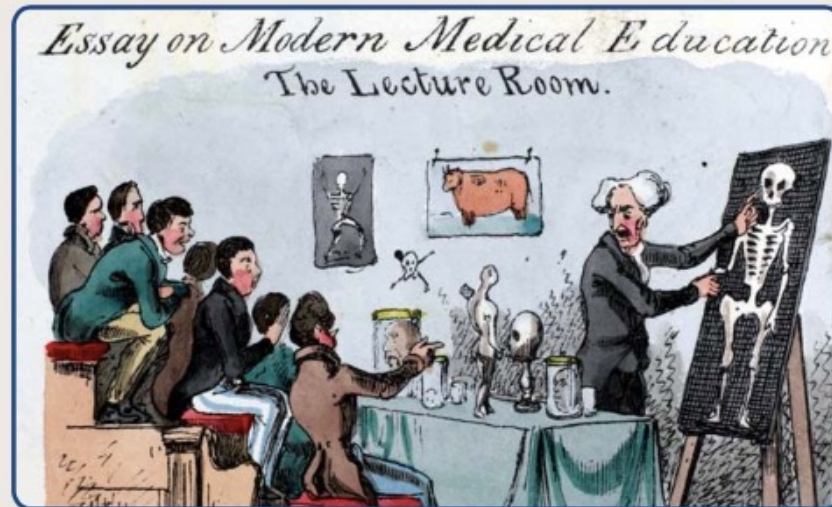
# Teaching Medical Humanities to the Medical Students in Europe – Current Situation, Formats, Future Developments, Obstacles

Fribourg University, Campus Pérolles  
(Pavillon vert/Botanic Garden)

October 3rd, 2024

10H-17H

Organized by  
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## Key words for all presentations

Institutional setting, modules (permanent or changing, optional or compulsory), basic education or masters, or intercalated degrees; students' response, acceptance, motivation, maturity

Travel expenses and accommodation will be reimbursed, hotel reservations by: yvette.jenny-isler@unifr.ch

## Time plan

10:00-10:15 **Martina King:** Welcome

10:15-10:30 **Neil Vickers:** Teaching medical students at the Centre for the Humanities and Health, KCL

10:30-10:45 **Sheila Dickson:** Teaching medical students at Medical Humanities Research Centre, Glasgow.

10:45-11:45: Discussion

11:45-12:00: **Céline Lefève:** Teaching medical students at L'Institut la Personne en médecine, Paris Cité

12:00-13:00: Discussion

13:00-14:00: Lunch break

14:00-14:15: **Heiner Fangerau:** Medical Humanities courses at the Institut für Geschichte, Theorie und Ethik der Medizin, Düsseldorf

14:15-14:30: **Mariaca Gadebusch-Bondio:** Medical Humanities courses at the Institute for Medical Humanities, Bonn

14:30-15:30: Discussion

15:30-16:00: Coffee Break

16:00-16:15: **Hubert Steinke:** Medical Humanities courses at the Institut für Medizingeschichte, Bern

16:15-16:30: **Martina King:** Medical Humanities teaching program at the Chair of Medical Humanities, Fribourg

16:30-17:30: Discussion

19:00 : Dinner, Café du Midi

## Abstract

Teaching Medical Humanities to medical students seems to be an important opportunity, even if not a necessity, to respond to the growing challenges facing the medical profession. What does it mean to be a physician in the present, contending with technization and specialization, anonymous hospitals and sparse time, globalized health and health injustice, pandemic threats and gender inequalities, ageing societies and ever-growing mental health issues? Future doctors should be taught courses in Medical Humanities in order to be able to reflect on their role and professional identity, on communication and interaction, their relationship to patients and colleagues, on ethical principles, and last but not least on the essential role language plays in all these processes. However, Medical Humanities modules for medical students – especially compulsory ones – are rather rare within the Medical Humanities community in Europe. There is no general consensus yet on what the Medical Humanities are; so there is neither a consensus on what should be taught, what serves reflexive capacities and is tailor-made for future physicians – reading illness narratives? the phenomenology of embodied existence? exemplary ethical conflicts? patient history, concept history, institutional history? Nor is there a consensus on to what extent and how Medical Humanities teaching should be firmly implemented in the Medical curriculum. These are the questions we want to discuss – in order to promote the Medical Humanities teaching to medical students across Europe.

## Possible questions for presentations and discussion

- Who uses the concept 'Medical Humanities' and in which way, what does it include? Where are the intersections between denominations such as Geschichte, Theorie und Ethik der Medizin and La Personne En Médecine and Medical Humanities?
- Are medical students taught on a compulsory or optional basis? How many hours, in which year(s)?
- Are these intercalated courses/degrees, or modules integrated in the ordinary medical curriculum? Do they change or are they fixed?
- What are your subjects – multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, focused on literature/critical theory/cultural studies?
- How do medical students respond to Medical Humanities courses, do they accept them, see their value?
- How is the interaction with the Medical Faculty, with clinicians, curriculum administrators?
- What are the modes of teaching and assessment – lectures or small group teaching? Do students write dissertations or are there exams?
- How can the Medical Humanities be better implemented within medical curricula, should courses run across the whole medical curriculum, how can they be tailor-made for the needs of future doctors?

## Participants

- Prof. Raphael Bonvin** (Medical Education, Fribourg)  
**Prof. Sheila Dickson** (German Literature/ Medical Humanities, Glasgow)  
**Prof. Heiner Fangerau** (History, Theory and Ethics of Medicine, Düsseldorf)  
**Prof. Mariacarla Gadebusch-Bondio** (Medical Humanities, Bonn)  
**Prof. Martina King** (Medical Humanities, Fribourg)  
**Prof. Céline Lefève** (Medical Humanities, Paris Cité)  
**Prof. Hubert Steinke** (History of Medicine, Bern)  
**Prof. Neil Vickers** (Medical Humanities, KCl London)  
**Prof. Yvonne Wübben** (History of Medicine, HU Berlin)  
**Dr. Isabelle Charrière** (MedOffice, Fribourg)  
**Dr. Emily Eder** (MedOffice, Fribourg)