

HLEQ 430  
Spring 2023  
M 6-8:30pm

Dr. Trisha K. Paul  
Office Hours by appt.  
[pault@rhodes.edu](mailto:pault@rhodes.edu)

### ***Narrative Medicine and Health Inequity***

HLEQ 430 introduces the field of Narrative Medicine and the role of narrative in raising awareness of health inequity. Illness narratives illuminate patient experiences with social determinants of health, and clinician narratives provide insight into healthcare perspectives on inequity. Through a close study of medical narratives, we will delve into systems of health inequality, implicit bias, systemic racism and sexism, narrative ethics, death and dying, mental illness, disability, and more. Students will have the opportunity to engage with narrative medicine theory and discourse as well as to create their own forms of narrative. This course is designed for individuals interested in health equity, medicine, nursing, public health, medical anthropology, clinical psychology, other health-related fields to gain an interdisciplinary understanding and humanistic perspective of medicine through the lens of narrative.

Course requirements will include weekly readings and reflections, class participation, a mid-term narrative analysis paper, and a final project of narrative reflection.

### **Course Requirements.**

*Class Participation (10%, 20pts):* I expect everyone to contribute thoughtfully to large and/or small group class discussions by listening and participating. I hope that this will be an open space where everyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and asking questions. Please be respectful of sensitive topics and of diverse perspectives that others may have.

*Interactive Reflections (32.5%, 65pts):* Thirteen weekly reflections due Sundays at midnight will include one Canvas post and a minimum of one response to a classmate's post. These writing exercises are an opportunity to engage with course material and with reflections from your classmates. Individual posts must be about 1 page (about 300-500 words), including something that you find interesting and/or a question that may have arisen. I will provide optional prompts and questions to guide your reading or you may reflect on what intrigues you about the readings. Grading out of 5 points will be based on meaningful completion.

*Mid-term Paper (20%, 40pts):* Analyze an illness narrative or clinician narrative of your choice. Ground your analysis in course readings. 3-4 pages double spaced.

*Final Project (37.5%, 75pts):* Create your own narrative about medicine: an illness narrative, a healthcare narrative, or a health equity narrative. You may use any medium (i.e. essay, short story, poetry, podcast, film), and any non-written work must be accompanied by 1-2 pages of writing that explains artistic liberties. A proposal for your project will be due on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Final projects will be evaluated on thoughtfulness, insight, and effort. We will share the final projects during a showcase on the last day of class.

**Readings.**

Required texts include:

1. Rita Charon, *Narrative Medicine: Honoring the Stories of Illness*
2. Rachel Pearson, *No Apparent Distress: A Doctor's Coming-of-Age on the Front Lines of American Medicine.*
3. Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals.*

Additional readings will be uploaded and made available via Canvas.

**Attendance.** Up to one excused absence is acceptable, but please notify me in advance.

**Accessibility.** The goal is for each participant to meet the course learning goals in a way that is most compatible with their own abilities, inclinations, and interests. Please communicate any established accommodations with Student Accessibility Services with me, and let me know what I can do to best accommodate your learning needs and I will make every effort to do so.

**Technology:**

I ask that we minimize the use of technology during class to encourage active participation and engagement, but feel free to use devices if necessary for your preferred note-taking.

**Academic Honesty.** All work is pledged under the Rhodes College Honor Code. Plagiarism is the unauthorized or uncited use of another's words or ideas. If you are found to have plagiarized, you will fail the assignment and possibly the course. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism or what scholarly etiquette is, I would be happy to discuss this with you.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Safety.** I believe that diversity, equity, inclusion, and psychological safety are important for a productive learning environment. I hope that we can practice kindness when responding to one another's thoughts and ideas as we discuss sensitive topics.

Rhodes faculty are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are required by policy to share knowledge of sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, sexual exploitation, stalking, sexual harassment and sex/gender discrimination with the Title IX Coordinator, Inez Warner (warneri@rhodes.edu). For more information about Rhodes' sexual misconduct policy or to make a report, please see [www.rhodes.edu/titleix](http://www.rhodes.edu/titleix).