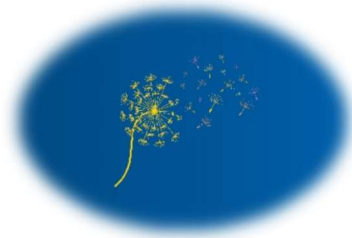




School of Medicine & Dentistry
Department of Health Humanities & Bioethics

MS in Health Humanities & Bioethics Graduate Student Handbook



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Overview

Medicine is a science and an art. Caring for a patient is a professional and scientific practice; it is also a personal and profoundly human relationship for both the patient and the practitioner.

The practitioner must be able to understand the science of diseases and treatments, and attend to each patient's personal experience of illness as it is informed by unique values, beliefs and feelings within broader socio-cultural contexts. Further, the practitioner must also be able to consider his/her own personal values, beliefs, feelings regarding the patient and the broader context of the health professions.

The field of *Health Humanities and Bioethics* uses the perspectives and tools of humanities and arts disciplines to study the human contexts of healthcare. In the biopsychosocial tradition of healthcare education at Rochester, the program provides foundational training in this field. Students study humanities to consider interpersonal perspectives and sociocultural contexts of patients and caregivers, and to develop skills that can be applied directly to the practice and teaching of healthcare.

The program is administered through the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. This is a full-time one year Master's in Science degree program (end of August – end of May) and is intended for students, trainees, professionals and scholars in:

- **Healthcare Disciplines** - medicine, nursing, dentistry, social work, and pastoral care, in allied health sciences occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistants to develop humanities-based knowledge and skills that can be applied to their clinical practice.
- **Humanities and Social Science Disciplines** - literature, history, visual arts, anthropology, performing arts, gender, cultural and religious studies who want to integrate aspects of medicine and patient care into their academic work and teaching.
- **Gap Year or Bridging Year Students**

Incoming Students

Congratulations on being accepted into the Master's in Health Humanities and Bioethics! Be sure to review the [incoming graduate student checklist](#) to ensure that you've filled out the appropriate paper work.

General Information

Hours and University Holidays: The Department offices are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. These hours remain the same during all University breaks, except UR-observed holidays (New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (2 days; Thursday and Friday), and Christmas Day).

Location: The Department is located in the University of Rochester Medical Center. Classes are located in various rooms throughout the School of Medicine & the Medical Center.

Web Pages

University of Rochester:

<http://www.rochester.edu>

School of Medicine & Dentistry Graduate Education: <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/education/graduate>

Department of Health Humanities & Bioethics: <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/medical-humanities>

MS in Health Humanities and Bioethics: <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/education/graduate/masters-degrees/medical-humanities>

Master's Program

This is a full-time, one year Master's in Science degree program administered through the School of Medicine and Dentistry at the University of Rochester. It is for students in medicine, nursing and other healthcare disciplines, and students in humanities and social sciences. The program starts at the end of August and ends in mid-May.

Program Highlights

- Identify and develop narrative skills and techniques essential to clinical practice.
- Using real cases, you will examine the principles of clinical ethics, with an emphasis on issues that arise in clinical practice. Specific topics include informed consent, organ transplantation and death and dying.
- Explore theories on treatment in different centuries and different perspectives in the humanities to see how the body has been conceptualized in Western culture and medicine, and the implications of these concepts in the 21st century for the patient, and for the scientists and clinicians who provide treatment and care.
- Focus on observational skills. Experiential sessions at the University's Memorial Art Museum and classroom discussions will emphasize key philosophical, historical, clinical, and cultural issues in Western medicine around "looking." Students will apply skills and concepts learned to contemporary issues in healthcare for patients, providers, and for the profession.
- Each student will arrange a supervised independent study to apply the knowledge and methods of a humanities discipline to a healthcare issue.

Program Requirements

The MS degree requires at least 30 credit hours of graduate 400-level course work. These 30 credit hours are divided into:

- (i) 15 credit hours of required courses
- (ii) 12 credits of concentration electives
- (iii) A 3 credit Capstone Practicum

Core Courses

Each MS candidate, must complete the following required courses (15 credits):

- MHB 420: Stories in Healthcare (Fall or Spring)
- MHB 430: Visual Arts, Values and Healthcare (Spring)
- MHB 440: History of the Body
- MHB 450: Master's Research Methods
- MHB 472: Philosophical Foundations of Bioethics

Concentrations

Each MS candidate must also complete at least 12 credits from a list of area courses. A candidate may optionally declare a concentration of study if they earn 9 or more credits in a single area. The areas of concentration are:

- Clinical & Translational Research Ethics

- Medicine, History & Culture

The following is a comprehensive list of courses in each concentration. Students may petition to have a course added to these concentration lists, if they believe it would complement their desired career. Please see the Graduate Advisor if you wish to do so.

Clinical & Translational Research Ethics Concentration Electives

- MHB 401: Data Ethics For Healthcare
- MHB 482: Clinical Ethics and the Law
- MHB 431: Clinical and Translational Research Ethics
- MHB 410: Clinical Bioethics

Medicine, History and Culture Concentration Electives

- MHB 473: Unsafe America: Accidents, Disasters, & Society, 1800-2020
- MHB 480 The Disabled Body in Modern Medicine and Culture
- MHB 400: History of Modern Medicine, Eighteenth Century to Present
- HIS 473: American Health Policy & Politics
- HIS 474: Pandemics, Politics, & Policies in the US, 1918-2020

Capstone

All health humanities and bioethics master's students are required to take a practicum course (MHB 497 – Capstone Practicum). Students identify a topic of research or scholarship, and work with an advisor from the department to develop a project plan that culminates in a presentation to the department, including their peers in the program.

Students are expected to complete all components for the Capstone Practicum:

1. Week 1: Meet with Capstone advisor and confirm the project topic area and methodology.
2. Week 3: Due at this time will be -
 - a. Learning Objectives for the Capstone Project.
 - b. Review of primary and secondary sources.
 - c. Detailed outline of intended project.
 - d. A revised annotated bibliography and literature review was developed in MHB450 Research Methods course for this project.
 - e. Confirm methodology specific to the project.
3. Week 4: Present Capstone project proposal to faculty and students.
4. Week 10: Submit first written/creative draft of project to Capstone advisor for discussion and review.
5. Week 14: Present final Capstone Project to faculty and students at the formal end of semester presentations.
6. Week 15: Submit final Capstone Project to advisor and Capstone Course Director.
Students will need to submit a final Capstone Project final paper regardless of whether they complete a creative, research, educational or scholarly project.

General Program Policies

Master's Program of Study

Each full-time master's student must submit a proposed program of study (POS) at the beginning of the second semester. The program of study should be completed and signed by your faculty advisor before submitting to the Education Manager for approval. Once approved at the department level it will be to the associate dean.

The POS is expected to form a consistent plan of work to complete the required 30 credit hours. Up to 10 credit hours of graduate level credit from an undergraduate-graduate degree program can be included with an approved Transfer Credit form.

Attendance, Class Participation & Absences

The Medical Humanities Program courses are exclusively taught through seminar classes.

A substantial portion of the final grade is determined by active participation in class activities.

Attendance and informed participation in discussions and group work provide the instructors with evidence that you completed assigned readings, watched movies or videos, and examined artwork in advance, and are engaged with the materials.

Class participation includes:

- Regular attendance
- Being thoroughly prepared for each class according to the syllabus requirements (e.g. complete readings and study guides, reflect on readings and class topics, bring readings to class if requested)

This is a small group interactive course and all students are required to attend and participate at all sessions. An absence from class requires an explanation.

If a student will not be attending a session, before the session the student must inform the instructor by email, with an explanation. If a student does not attend a session due to unforeseen circumstances, the student must inform the seminar instructor as soon as possible after the missed session. Where appropriate a student who misses a session needs to complete and submit a "make-up" assignment identified by the Instructor within one week of the absence.

Consistent absence from class may determine whether or not students pass a course. Multiple unexplained absences may affect the final grade of a particular course.

Emergency or Temporary Closings and Other Changes in Class Schedules and University Operations. The University plans to commence and conclude classes on the dates indicated in the academic calendars. But unforeseen circumstances or events may occur that require the University to temporarily close or otherwise make adjustments to its student life, residential housing, class schedules and format, method and location of instruction, educational activities, and operations because of reasons beyond the University's control. For example, such circumstances or events may include but are not limited to inclement weather, the onset of public health crises, being subject to government order(s), significant safety or security concerns, faculty illness, strikes, labor disturbances, sabotage, terrorism, war, riot, civil unrest, fire, flood, earthquake, acts of God, malfunction of University equipment (including computers), cyberattacks, unavailability of particular University facilities occasioned by damage to the premises, repairs or other causes, as well as disruption/unavailability of utilities, labor, energy, materials, transportation, electricity, security, or the internet. If any of these or other unforeseen circumstances or events outside of the

University's control occur, the University will respond as necessary and appropriate, and it assumes no liability for any interruption or adjustments made to student life, residential housing, class schedules and format, method and location of instruction, educational activities, and operations caused by these or other unforeseen circumstances or events. And the University shall not be responsible for the refund of any tuition or fees in the event of any such unforeseen circumstances or events, except as may otherwise be expressly provided in the University's Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policy or its published tuition refund schedule ([Payments and Refunds - Office of the Bursar \(rochester.edu\)](https://www.rochester.edu/bursar/Payments-and-Refunds)).

Classroom Decorum

It is the responsibility of each student to be prepared, prompt, attentive and professional in the classroom, and to conform to policies set by the instructor to maintain academic decorum. Please arrive to class on time and do not leave before the class period has ended. Coming late or leaving early are disruptive behaviors and disturb others in the class. If extenuating circumstances necessitate arriving late or leaving early, please inform the instructor prior to class.

Instructor Feedback

Students will receive timely written comments and grades from the instructor after submitting an assignment.

Grading of assignments, and course percentages will be described in the individual class syllabus.

Materials and Access

Reading assignments for individual classes will be available on Blackboard prior to the session.

Listed texts should be obtained well ahead of time to ensure adequate reading opportunity.

Some of the class PowerPoint presentations may be posted on Blackboard following the class. This will be clarified for each course.

Electronic Devices

Use of electronic devices should be appropriate and respectful, recognizing that inappropriate use of electronic devices in the classroom can be disruptive to other students and the instructor.

Phones and pagers should be turned to silent mode during class, and unless necessary remain out of sight for the duration of the class.

Phones, iPads, laptops, and all other similar devices when used are primarily for course-related purposes, essential note taking, and electronic readings for class discussions.

Grading and Academic Status Policy

The Department of Health Humanities & Bioethics abides by the School of Medicine and Dentistry's [grading policy](#) and the [University regulations on Graduate Studies](#).

Academic Honesty Policy

Academic honesty is a fundamental value that must be shared and upheld by all members of the University of Rochester community. Graduate students in the School of Medicine and Dentistry have the responsibility to understand and abide by the University and SMD policies, and suspected infractions of these policies will be treated with the utmost seriousness.

A student remains responsible for the academic honesty of work submitted to the University as part of the requirements for the completion of a degree (or any other coursework taken at the University) even after the work is accepted, the degree is granted, or the student is no longer matriculated at the University of Rochester. Ignorance of these standards is not considered a valid excuse or defense.

Academic honesty resources:

- [Academic Honesty Policy for Graduate Students](#)
- [Process of Review of Academic Misconduct Flowchart](#) (PDF)

Incomplete Grades Policy

A grade of incomplete (I) will be assigned when a student, due to serious illness or other similar incapacitating circumstances, is unable to complete all course requirements within the prescribed period and receives the instructor's permission to complete certain requirements at a later date, **not to extend beyond 60 days after the conclusion of the semester in which the work was due**. The student who receives an incomplete grade is passing the course, and has already completed a substantial quantity of the work required.

Before the end of the examination period of the semester during which the "incomplete" is to be given, the student will negotiate with the instructor a mutually acceptable method for completing the class work, and an [Incomplete Grade Contract](#) signed by the student and the instructor outlining the agreed-upon method must be submitted to the Registrar. The final grade, once recorded by submission of a [Supplemental Grade Change Notice](#), will be preceded by an "I" on the official transcript. For example, a grade of "A" will appear as "IA".

Satisfactory Progress and Academic Probation

All graduate students are expected to maintain high standards of academic performance in their course work and their research. Minimum grades for courses or research work carrying graduate credit are C or S. However, according to the University regulations, a student can receive credit for only one C during the course of their graduate studies.

First Grade Below B-

Upon receiving one grade below B- in any course or research experience:

- The student must meet with the program director for review, to evaluate any necessary supports, and to document a plan intended to enable the student to successfully complete the graduate program.
- The program director will notify the Office for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) and provide a copy of the documented plan to be placed in the student's academic file.
- GEPA will issue a letter to the student notifying them that they have received an academic warning. The letter will be placed in the student's academic file with the improvement plan.

Second Grade Below B-

Upon receiving a second grade below B- in any course or research experience:

- The student must meet with the program director and the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs to evaluate their standing in the graduate program.
- A second grade below B- may result in disciplinary action such as being placed on academic probation or dismissal from the graduate program.
- GEPA will issue a letter to the student notifying them of the final determination. The letter will be placed in the student's academic file along with any associated documentation.

Academic Probation

- A student who receives the grade of C or E in one or more courses will be considered to have an unsatisfactory record and will be automatically placed on academic probation.
- The only exception is students who receive their first and only C in their final semester are not subject to academic probation.
- A student on academic probation cannot be awarded a graduate degree. Students in extenuating circumstances may appeal to the dean of graduate studies.
- During the probationary period, students will remain eligible to receive federal and institutional assistance (except when they have exceeded their degree deadline).
- A student will be removed from academic probation if the student completes 9 semester hours of graduate credit with no grade lower than B-.

Withdrawal / Exclusion

Continuation in any graduate program is subject to the sole discretion of the University. A student who fails to resume satisfactory academic standing during a probationary period after being notified of placement on probation will be excluded from the program. In such cases, there is no process for appeal, and the exclusion will take effect immediately.

Additionally, a student may be excluded from the program immediately if, inter alia:

- The student receives one or more failing grades (i.e. E),
- The student misrepresents their qualifications during the admissions process,
- A violation of the academic honesty policy (subject to the review procedures described above), or
- A committee of program faculty, chaired by the Program Director and including at least one other faculty member, make a decision to exclude the student.

Funding will cease on the effective date of the exclusion unless other arrangements are made. When a student is excluded by the program, the student has an opportunity to appeal the exclusion decision to the SMD GEPA office per [the SMD Grievance Procedure](#). When a student appeals the program's exclusion decision, the exclusion becomes effective after the appeal process has concluded if the appeal is denied.

Notification of Exclusion

When the Department determines that a student is to be excluded the student will be informed in writing (email communication is considered to be "in writing") within 10 business days of the determination. The exclusion (dismissal) notification will include the effective date of the exclusion and a clear statement of the reason(s) for exclusion.

Appeal Process for Exclusions by the Department

Students wishing to appeal the exclusion decision may appeal the final program exclusion decision to the SMD GEPA office. To appeal a program decision, students should submit a request in writing to the attention of the Senior Associated Dean of Graduate Education within 10 calendar days of the date of the program's final written determination of exclusion and include any supporting materials at that time. If no appeal is filed within the 10-day appeal period, the program's decision becomes final and is not subject to appeal.

Grounds for appeal of a program's exclusion decision are as follows:

- Procedural errors in the exclusion process
- New information discovered after the exclusion that was not available at the time of the exclusion and could impact the outcome
- Program's decision to exclude was manifestly contrary to the weight of the information available at the time of the decision (i.e., exclusion is obviously unreasonable and unsupported by the great weight of information)

Appeals of program exclusions are reviewed by the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (or the dean's designee) who may request additional information from, or a meeting with, the student and/or program before making a final decision.

If the dean (or the dean's designee) does not find that any of the aforementioned grounds for appeal are present, the dean will uphold the outcome of the program. If the dean (or the dean's designee) finds that grounds for appeal are valid, they may amend the decision of the program.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University of Rochester is committed to providing equal educational and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1991 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To ensure equality of access for students with disabilities, the University provides reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and modifications to courses, programs, services, activities or facilities. Exceptions will be made in those situations where the accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, cause undue hardship on the school, or jeopardize the health or safety of others. Accommodations must specifically address the functional limitations of the disability.

The process of receiving accommodations begins with self-identification. If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an academic accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the access coordinator for your school to establish eligibility for academic accommodations.

<http://www.rochester.edu/disability/>

Diversity and Inclusion

The Department of Health Humanities & Bioethics actively supports and honors the URMHC institutional commitment to recognize diversity and inclusion as core values. We share the institution's vision of cultivating a diverse and inclusive environment; it guides and transforms our approach to education, healthcare, research and community partnerships. **Our program allows a course of study that meets individual learning needs and students enrolled have access to all URSMD resources dedicated to supporting a diverse and inclusive environment.**

More info, including resources and a list of affinity and networking groups, can be found at: <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/inclusion-culture-development.aspx>

Forms & Policies

Graduate Student Forms

- [Add/Drop Registration Form](#)
- [Audit Fee Waiver for PhD Students](#)
- [Parental Leave Request Form](#)
- [Anticipated Master's Degree Completion](#)
- [Program of Study](#)

Policies

Most of the rules and regulations that govern graduate students at the University of Rochester can be found in the [Trainee Handbook](#). However, there are other policies, listed below, with which you should be familiar.

- [Expectations of Graduate Students Conduct and Expectations Policies Regulations and University Policies Concerning Graduate Studies](#)
- [Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination](#)
- [Generative AI Policy/Guidelines](#)
- [Policy on Research Misconduct](#)
- [Family Friendly Policies Vacation and Holidays](#)
- [Registration for Final Semesters in Master's Degree Programs](#)
- [Grading Policy](#)
- [Credit Hour/Contact Hour Policy](#)
- [Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act](#)
- [Grievance Procedure](#)
- [Incomplete Grade Policy](#)
- [Release of Information Policy](#)
- [Religious Holidays](#)
- [Responsible Conduct of Research \(RCR\) Training Policy](#)
- [Transfer Credit Policy](#)

Data Security Classification Policy:

All students must be committed to upholding the integrity and security of our institutional data. For details please review the [data secure policy](#). This is vital to keeping student, patient, and other University data protected. It is imperative to remember that non-public or sensitive University information should never be uploaded into external AI tools—whether free or paid—unless there is a university agreement with the vendor approved by one of the various AI governance groups. This policy is crucial for maintaining our data security and applies to all members of our community.

We encourage you to take advantage of the University of Rochester secure version of a generative AI chatbot, designed to securely handle medium- and high-risk institutional data. Accessible at chat.rochester.edu, this advanced AI tool is exclusively for our faculty, staff, and students, providing a reliable and secure platform for

managing a variety of inquiries and tasks. Additional features will be introduced soon, further enhancing its capabilities. Please note that while the site is internet accessible, two-factor authentication (Duo) is required when off-network.

To begin using our secure AI chatbot, visit chat.rochester.edu and log in with your UR or URM credential. [Help with logging in is available here.](#)

Should you require any assistance or have questions, the University IT or ISD Help Desk are available to support you at univithelp@rochester.edu (585) 275-2000 or ISDHelpdesk@URMC.rochester.edu (585) 275-3200.

Academic Resources

A complete list of Academic Resources can be found by clicking [this link](#). This includes the following:

- Bookstores
- Enrollment Verification
- Ethics
- Graduate Education
- HIPPA
- Libraries
- Lab Safety
- News and Events
- Registrar
- For Researchers
- Student Support
- Technology
- Tuition & Fees, Stipends

Non-Academic Resources

A complete list of non-academic resources can be found by clicking [this link](#). This includes the following:

- Amenities at the U of R
- Health and Wellness
- Living in Rochester
- Parking/Transportation
- Financial Matters
- Housing Information
- Other Resources
- Security and Facilities

International Student Office

The International Services Office is available for student virtual drop-in hours as well as appointments.
(585) 275-2866
questions@iso.rochester.edu

Career Services - myHub

myHub brings together eight critical areas, including learner life/wellness, writing services, fellowships and grants, career services, internships, graduate student and postdoctoral groups, alumni mentorship, and events.

Amber Rivera – Director of Learner Life/Wellness

Elaine Smolock – Director of Writing Services

Eric Vaughn – Director of Career Services

CARE Network, Mental Health and Student Support

Everyone experiences difficulties throughout their college experience, but speaking up and asking for support can enable you or a fellow peer to build resilience and thrive. CARE is here for all students at the UR. Whether you are seeking support for a friend, or yourself, we encourage you to [submit a CARE Referral](#) to connect with appropriate forms of support and resources to maintain wellness and achieve goals.

In addition, the University Counseling Center (UCC) provides individualized and group treatment to students with mental health and well-being concerns. Their services are free for full-time students who pay the mandatory health fee. To schedule an appointment, call (585) 275-3113 or visit the center on the second floor of the University Health Service building located at 738 Library Road on the River Campus.

Emergency Contacts

Call the Department of Public Safety at (585) 275-3333 or by picking up a direct dial Blue Light Emergency Phone on campus. For mental health emergencies, call Public Safety or the UCC 24/7 on-call professional at (585) 275-3113.

University Ombudsperson

If you have an academic issue that you are uncomfortable raising with your advisor, you may seek out either the Deputy Director, Ajay Anad, or one of the two university ombudspersons for graduate students:

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/education/post-doctoral/ombudspersons.aspx>

Professor Kara Bren (bren@chem.rochester.edu)

448 Hutchison Hall, Phone: (585) 275-4335

Professor Marie-Joelle Estrada (mestrada@ur.rochester.edu)

402 Meliora Hall, Phone: (585) 275-8685

Academic Planning:

- [Program Curriculum](#)
- [Graduate Bulletin](#)
- [Graduate Academic Calendar](#)
- [Registration](#)
- [Graduate Student Society](#)
- [Graduate Student Guidelines on Research Integrity and Conflict of Interest](#)