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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate	DATE	February 12, 2025
FROM	Dilson Rassier, Provost and Vice-President Academic, and Chair, SCUP	PAGES	1/41
RE:	Full Program Proposal for a Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor (SCUP 25-14)		

At its meeting on February 5, 2025, SCUP reviewed and approved the Full Program Proposal for a Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor.

Motion: That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for a Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS) Minor within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

For Information:

Included with the name change and approved at SCUS under delegated authority are the following curriculum revisions, effective Fall 2025:

- Creation of a new acronym: MHSS
- New course proposals
 - MHSS 100 - Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health in the Humanities and Social Sciences
 - MHSS 300 - Medical Legal Studies
 - MHSS 400 - Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Capstone/Professional Colloquium

C: Melek Ortbası, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programming, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Theodore Cosco, Department of Gerontology and Public Policy, Dean's Advisor on Medical Programs, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate Committee on University Priorities	DATE	January 21, 2025
FROM	Paul Kingsbury, Vice-Chair	PAGES	1/1
	Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies		
RE:	Full Program Proposal for the Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS) Minor (SCUS 25- 03)		

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of January 9, 2025 gives rise to the following recommendation:

Motion

That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Full Program Proposal for the Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS) Minor within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

For Information

Included with the name change and approved at SCUS under delegated authority are the following curriculum revisions effective Fall 2025:

- Creation of new acronym MHSS
- New course proposals:
 - MHSS 300, Medical Legal Studies
 - MHSS 400, Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Capstone/Professional Colloquium

The relevant documentation for review by SCUP is attached.



Memo

Attention SFU Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUS)

From Melek Ortabasi, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs, FASS

cc SFU Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

Subject Minor update to MHSS FPP

Date February 3, 2025

To the members of SCUP:

Thank you for your consideration of the Full Program Proposal for the Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor. This memo is to inform you that a minor change to the course description for MHSS 100 in the FPP (in Section 3.2 on p. 15); an updated New Course Proposal Form; and modified course outline are included in the proposal as a result of discussion in the SCUS meeting of December 5, 2024. While the MHSS FPP received a unanimous favorable vote in SCUS, the Faculty of Health Sciences raised some overlap concerns about MHSS 100. After some discussion, SCUS agreed that the FPP could move forward contingent upon a conversation between FASS and HSCI to resolve the concern. Following productive dialogue in December and January, FASS and HSCI agreed that the new proposed course outline eliminates any overlap concerns and in fact complements nicely with HSCI 130, which is now a “recommended” prerequisite to students wishing to take MHSS 100.

I thank the UCIL Office for their willingness to include the updated FPP in the SCUP agenda on such short notice, and the committee itself for their time and attention to this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Melek Ortabasi
Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Associate Professor, World Languages and Literatures
Simon Fraser University



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS) Minor

Full Program Proposal

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

1 Executive Summary

a) An overview of the institution's history, mission, and academic goals:

As Canada's engaged university, Simon Fraser University is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded in 1965 with a mission to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today SFU is consistently ranked amongst Canada's top comprehensive universities and is one of the world's leading teaching and research institutions.

The Minor in Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS) unites a diverse selection of courses from across the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) related to health, medicine, and wellbeing, into a cohesive program centered around a core curriculum. All students in the MHSS will complete a 100-level introductory MHSS course and a 300-level course in medical legal studies that introduce interdisciplinary approaches to health, develop essential communication and problem-solving skills, and foster a deeper understanding of how the experience of health and illness is affected by social and cultural worlds. In addition, students select lower and upper division courses organized into two themes, drawn from various FASS departments: the first emphasizes the relationship between the body, self, and health; the second focuses on the social, cultural and political contexts impacting health and health care. The 400-level required MHSS capstone course culminates the experience, providing experiential learning through group projects and engagement with health professionals, guided by input from an advisory board comprising experts from the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

The minor would add to the skills and knowledge students learn in different programs that focus on social determinants of health by introducing students to emerging and existing challenges that will require knowledge in the social sciences and humanities to provide interdisciplinary and innovative solutions.

b) Credential to be awarded:

Minor in Medical Humanities and Social Sciences in Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

c) Location of program:

Courses will be offered at the Burnaby and Surrey campuses, with occasional courses offered in Vancouver. The minor's administrative home will be on Surrey campus, with the intention to foster connection with SFU's forthcoming medical school.

d) Faculty offering the proposed new program:

This interdisciplinary program will be offered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, with participation from 15 departments and programs — Applied Legal Studies, Cognitive Science, English, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Gerontology, Indigenous Studies, International Studies, Labour Studies, Linguistics, Philosophy, Political Science, Public Policy, Sociology and Anthropology, Urban Studies, and World Languages and Literatures.

e) Anticipated program start date:

Fall 2026

f) Anticipated completion time:

It is expected that students could complete the minor in four to six terms or two years.

g) Summary of the proposed program

- **Aims, goals, and objectives:**

Health research spans many disciplines, methodologies, and conceptual perspectives. The Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS) interdisciplinary minor draws on that broad scope of health research and is designed to give students the communication, problem-based learning, and critical-thinking skills required to be successful in a wide range of care-, health-, and medical-related professions.

It offers students, in various disciplines across the university, to learn that health and wellbeing are not just the absence of disease but are also shaped by, and exist within, the social and structural environments in which the individual is located (as that location changes over the life course). FASS is proposing offering three mandatory interdisciplinary courses as part of the completion of the minor to support the aim of a team-based and community approach to health care, an aim also mandated for the new SFU Medical School curriculum, and which is common in a range of care-, health-, and medical-related professions.

The mandatory interdisciplinary courses provide students with opportunities to draw together disciplinary subject matter from the electives and apply it to practical assignments. Further, FASS offers a robust selection of courses across the liberal arts, social sciences, and interdisciplinary studies, which will be central to the MHSS minor. The diversity of electives, from fifteen different departments and programs, offers students a range of options to develop their understanding of health and health systems.

Focused study on health, medicine, and wellbeing from humanities and social sciences perspectives is necessary to ensure that medical practitioners can respond ethically, compassionately, and thoughtfully to their patients. It is also essential that health care providers understand the legal frameworks applying to their practice, and how the provision of health care in Canada generally is structured. The MHSS minor will prepare students planning on applying to medical school or intending to pursue further training in health-related fields such as nursing, counselling, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, optometry, and psychology, among others.

- **Contribution to the mandate and strategic plan of the institution:**
The proposed minor aligns with two priority areas in SFU's [Strategic Research Plan](#), which identifies health and wellbeing and strengthening democracy, justice, equity and education as research and teaching priorities. The program will achieve the university's goal of supporting "socially accountable" education in the health professions by examining the structural and contextual factors impacting the wellbeing of individuals and communities, as well as teaching about the history of diseases and medicine. The program contributes to FASS's academic plan, which highlights the linkage between student learning pathways and careers; the development of high quality and innovative academic programming; interdisciplinarity research and teaching across the social sciences and humanities; and building principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation and decolonization.
- **Linkages between program outcomes and curriculum design:**
The program will deliver a coherent credential by bringing together interdisciplinary courses focusing on critical approaches to health and wellbeing from the perspective of the humanities and social sciences. The required curriculum (core courses and electives) is based on already existing courses drawn from a range of critical perspectives on health, medicine and wellness. Graduates of the program will learn to:

- Understand the social, political, economic, and policy contexts of health and healing in historical and contemporary societies;
 - Understand how health and wellbeing have been practiced in British Columbia;
 - Understand how patients and health practitioners have been trained and mobilized at local and global levels either to eradicate diseases or to address crises;
 - Draw on the arts and humanities to understand the relationship between health and culture to develop clinical and critical thinking skills of observation, analysis, communication, and self-reflection;
 - Critically examine the ethical and bioethical frameworks in health policy and health care;
 - Practice how to problem solve and present ideas within a collaborative and team-work approach; and
 - Understand the legal framework applying to and structuring the delivery of health care in Canada generally, and the various laws applying to different aspects of health and health care in the Canadian context.
- **Potential areas/sectors of employment for graduates or opportunities for further study:**

The MHSS opens up a wide range of employment and further study opportunities for students. This interdisciplinary program is designed to equip students, particularly those intending to pursue careers in medical and health-related fields, with a comprehensive perspective that extends beyond the natural sciences. By integrating knowledge and skills from the humanities and social sciences, the program provides students with critical insights into the socio-cultural, ethical, and systemic factors that influence health and healthcare.

Students aiming to apply for further study in fields such as Medical School, Naturopathic Medicine, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, and Physiotherapy often require some Arts and Social Sciences credits as part of the prerequisites for their applications. The specific courses required vary by institution and program of study. The MHSS minor is broad enough to allow students to complete these prerequisites while gaining a deeper understanding of socio-cultural health factors, which can give them a competitive edge in their applications.

Moreover, the MHSS minor is valuable for students pursuing careers in health-related fields beyond clinical practice. For instance, pairing

the MHSS minor with a major in Business could open up career opportunities in health administration, where an understanding of the interplay between health, policy, and socio-economic factors is crucial. The minor also provides foundational knowledge for careers in health policy, public health, and health communication.

Additionally, this minor is an asset for students interested in careers related to recreation, home care support, childcare, paramedicine, or other health-related fields (including allied health professionals such as hospital based social work practice). The interdisciplinary approach of the program equips students with the critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills necessary to address complex health issues from multiple perspectives. This broadened skill set is increasingly valuable in a healthcare landscape that requires professionals to navigate the ethical, cultural, legal, and social dimensions of health and wellbeing.

Graduates of the MHSS minor will be well-prepared to pursue various career paths, including but not limited to:

- **Health Administration:** Managing healthcare facilities, programs, or systems with an informed perspective on the social determinants of health.
 - **Health Policy and Advocacy:** Developing and advocating for policies that address health disparities and promote equitable access to care.
 - **Public Health:** Working on initiatives that improve community health, prevent disease, and promote healthy lifestyles, with a focus on the socio-cultural aspects of health.
 - **Medical and Health Communication:** Engaging in roles that involve communicating complex health information to diverse audiences, including patients, healthcare providers, and the public.
 - **Patient Care Navigation:** Assisting patients in understanding and navigating the healthcare system, with an emphasis on cultural competence and empathy.
 - **Education and Training:** Teaching or training future healthcare professionals to approach health from an interdisciplinary and socially informed perspective.
- **Delivery methods:**

The program will be delivered in a range of face-to-face, blended, and online course offerings. Lower Division will be mostly larger lecture-based courses. Upper Division will be smaller, seminar-based courses.

- **Program strengths:**

The MHSS Minor aligns with SFU's commitment to interdisciplinary teaching and learning, bridging the gap between the natural sciences and the humanities and social sciences. It equips students with a comprehensive understanding of how social, economic, political, and cultural factors influence well-being and the delivery of care. This interdisciplinary approach enriches their scientific knowledge with critical insights, preparing them for the complexities of modern healthcare.

The MHSS Minor offers a coherent curriculum within FASS, complementing health-related studies in the Faculties of Science or Health Science. Students gain not only a broad perspective on health but also essential skills like critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural competence. These skills are crucial in today's healthcare landscape, where the ability to analyze challenges from multiple angles and work collaboratively is in high demand.

The program emphasizes practical, real-world application through team-based projects and reflective practices, ensuring students develop the capacity for critical self-reflection; strong interpersonal skills such as communication, empathy, and leadership; and tolerance of ambiguity. These qualities are vital for success in various health-related fields, from clinical practice to health policy and administration.

The MHSS Minor is a robust, interdisciplinary program that equips students with the knowledge and skills to excel in diverse health-related careers. It prepares them to be thoughtful, compassionate professionals, with the ability to understand complexity and human variability, capable of making meaningful contributions to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

- **Level of support and recognition:**

Provide a brief explanation of the nature of the consultations that have occurred in the development of this program. Summarize comments received from other post-secondary institutions, potential employers, any regulatory or professional bodies where applicable, advisory committees, and experts in the field of study. In the appendices, attach any supporting documents.

The development of the MHSS minor program at SFU has been shaped by a series of insightful consultations with experts across various fields internal and external to SFU, including post-secondary institutions, potential employers, and professional bodies. These discussions have emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, flexible curriculum design, and innovative assessment approaches, all aimed at integrating humanities into medical education. The feedback has provided both critical insights and strong support for the program, affirming the necessity of incorporating humanities to cultivate well-rounded, empathetic healthcare professionals.

Extensive external consultation was integral to the development of the MHSS minor program at SFU, involving key stakeholders from medical admissions personnel, medical school instructors, and leaders in the healthcare industry. These discussions provided critical insights into how the MHSS program could better prepare students for the evolving demands of healthcare professions and align with the needs of medical schools and healthcare organizations.

One of the central themes that emerged from discussions with external entities, is the need for interdisciplinary collaboration to enrich students' understanding of healthcare. The inclusion of subjects such as ethics, social determinants of health, and critical race theory is seen as crucial for developing critical thinking, empathy, and communication skills in future healthcare providers. Interviewees from medical humanities programs, such as Dr. Sneha Mantri, (Associate Professor of Neurology, Duke Movement Disorders Center of Excellence; Director of Medical Humanities, Trent Center for Bioethics, Humanities, and History of Medicine) underscored that a comprehensive education in healthcare must extend beyond medical knowledge to address the societal and cultural contexts that influence patient care.

However, ensuring the success of the MHSS program will require significant faculty and leadership support. Many participants stressed the importance of securing buy-in from various departments and faculties, fostering collaboration across disciplines, notably Sarah de Leeuw (Research Chair in Humanities and Health Inequities, University of Northern BC).

This support is necessary to create a sustainable program that can have a meaningful impact. Some contributors pointed to challenges

like faculty resistance to online teaching and potential scheduling conflicts as obstacles that need to be managed. These concerns highlight the need to design a curriculum that accommodates faculty preferences and makes course offerings as accessible as possible for students.

These external consultations also focused on the design of the MHSS curriculum. Experts highlighted the importance of creating a flexible, well-rounded curriculum that offers a variety of humanities and social science courses. The program must be tailored to meet the needs of both pre-med and pre-healthcare students, ensuring that courses fit within their rigorous schedules while maintaining the academic depth required to explore critical topics like ethics, public health, and social justice.

Measuring the impact of the MHSS program was another key area of discussion. Traditional metrics, such as career outcomes or GPA, were seen as inadequate for capturing the full influence of a humanities-based education. Contributors recommended using alternative methods such as reflective essays, exit interviews, and qualitative assessments to evaluate how the program shapes students' critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and career aspirations. These assessments would provide a more nuanced understanding of the program's broader impact on students.

The importance of effective program branding and marketing was also emphasized, with suggestions to use the term "health humanities" rather than "medical humanities" to appeal to a broader range of health professionals, not just those pursuing medicine. Drawing from successful models at institutions like Vanderbilt University and the University of Kansas, participants noted that a well-branded program could attract a diverse student body and address the growing demand for healthcare professionals equipped with both scientific knowledge and a deep understanding of social and ethical issues.

Throughout the consultations, there was significant enthusiasm and support for the MHSS program. Contributors expressed a willingness to assist in various capacities, including providing letters of support and collaborating on perspective pieces that could further establish the program's importance within academic and healthcare communities. The integration of humanities into healthcare education was universally seen as essential for cultivating future professionals who are not only skilled in their fields but also deeply engaged with the social dimensions of healthcare.

In conclusion, these consultations have reinforced the need for the MHSS program at SFU and provided valuable insights into its development. The program's focus on interdisciplinary education, flexible curriculum design, and innovative assessment methods will ensure that it meets the growing needs of healthcare students and professionals alike. By fostering critical thinking, empathy, and ethical awareness, the MHSS program will play a vital role in shaping a new generation of healthcare professionals who are equipped to address the complexities of modern healthcare with both competence and compassion.

Participating Departments and Programs in the MHSS Minor have been consulted and support the minor. These include: Applied Legal Studies, Cognitive Science, English, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Gerontology, Indigenous Studies, International Studies, Labour Studies, Linguistics, Philosophy, Political Science, Public Policy, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, Urban Studies, and World Languages and Literatures.

The NOI for the MHSS minor was approved by the FASS UCC and SCUS in October and December 2023, respectively.

- **Related programs:**

This program is unique to Simon Fraser University and is distinct from existing Health-related programs at SFU and other provincial post-secondary institutions.

According to the Canadian Association for Health Humanities there are no undergraduate medical humanities or medical humanities and social sciences credentials in British Columbia. Outside of British Columbia, a number of institutions, including the University of Calgary, University of Manitoba, the University of Northern British-Columbia, and the University of Toronto-Scarborough offer research clusters in humanities, social sciences, and health. Numerous medical-doctoral institutions offer medical humanities clusters for medical students, including the University of British Columbia, in recognition that clinicians benefit from creative and critical approaches to understanding how individuals and communities have understood, interpreted, represented, and experienced health, medicine, wellness, and body over time and place. York University delivers an interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts in Health and Society BA, UBC-Okanagan offers a Bachelor of Health and Exercise Science, which focuses on interdisciplinary approaches to movement and health, and Dalhousie University offers an undergraduate certificate in Medical Humanities.

This program will complement but not replicate existing degree options (BA and BSc) in Health Science at SFU. It will not overlap with the BA in Health Sciences, which requires courses in biology, epidemiological research, ecological determinants of health, and statistics, and which requires only one social science course (first-year sociology or anthropology). This program does not require similar courses, relying instead on already existing courses in the humanities and social sciences. A small number of interdisciplinary MHSS courses will be taught by FASS CFLs from various departments in order to bring together existing expertise in cultural representations of health; medicine, illness and wellbeing; mental health and wellbeing; and historical perspectives of medicine, illness, and health. Courses are delivered by faculty members with expertise in cultural anthropology, sexuality and gender studies, cultural studies, history, legal studies, criminology, gerontology, psychology, public policy, literature, and performance studies.

Supporting documents in the Appendix include letters from: Wendy Stewart, Director of Medical Humanities at Dalhousie University; Andrea Charise, faculty in the Department of Health & Society at University of Toronto Scarborough, Graduate Department of English, Associate Professor in Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Cross-Appointed Scientist at The Wilson Center for Medical Education, and Core Faculty in the Collaborative Graduate Program in Women's Health at the University of Toronto; Sneha Mantri, Associate Professor of Neurology at Duke Movement Disorders Center of Excellence and Director of Medical Humanities at the Trent Center for Bioethics, Humanities, and History of Medicine at Duke University; Bernice Hausman, Chair of the Department of Humanities at Pennsylvania State University; Joyce Zazulak, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Family Medicine, and Nicole Knibb, Senior Educator in Academic & Professional Engagement at McMaster Museum of Art and Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at McMaster University; and Todd Meyers, Professor and Marjorie Bronfman Chair in Social Studies of Medicine and Acting Department Chair in the Department of Social Studies of Medicine at McGill University.

h) Contact information:

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2 Credential Recognition and Nomenclature

2.1 Post-secondary recognition

The design and naming of the program is consistent with developments in the medical and related fields, and innovative in the sense that few universities offer programs specifically for undergraduates seeking to enter medical school or allied health professions. While an increasing number of medical schools “are placing a growing emphasis on the humanities,” they are belatedly trying to fit minimal training into the medical school curriculum:

“69 of 133 accredited schools in the US now require that medical students take a course in the medical humanities, says Terri Cameron, program manager for the curriculum inventory portal at the Association of American Medical Colleges. By contrast, while a few Canadian medical schools are making exploratory forays into medical humanities courses, those are primarily electives or if mandatory, typically have very minimal time requirements.”

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3091916/>

The proposed minor would address this growing awareness in the medical profession by giving undergraduate students exceptional training in this growing field before they get to medical school. Beyond simply offering one course, the minor offers students a solid and broad introduction to the interdisciplinary nature of health care, as well as sub-specialties in the medical humanities and social sciences from narrative medicine (see for example a program at Columbia University here <https://www.mhe.cuimc.columbia.edu/division-narrative-medicine>) to gerontology and more. Some medical schools have even recognized that the humanities and social sciences are better suited to providing students with this background, since some of them now have a medical humanities prerequisite (ibid.).

As is apparent above, the phrase “Medical Humanities” and other similar/related terms such as “Health Humanities” and “Medical Social Sciences” are already well established concepts, adopted as the name of international journals like *Medical Humanities* (<https://mh.bmj.com>) and as a designation for undergraduate and graduate programs worldwide, such as the Medical Humanities Program in Dalhousie University’s Faculty of Medicine (<https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/cpd/programs/humanities.html>) or the Social Studies of Medicine Program at McGill University

(<https://www.mcgill.ca/ssom/message>). Students who complete the minor will have no difficulty in explaining the value of the credential to potential employers or other educational institutions in the medical field.

2.2 Industry/employer recognition

Interviews with medical admissions personnel highlighted the increasing value of applicants with interdisciplinary backgrounds that go beyond the traditional sciences. They emphasized the growing importance of ethical reasoning, empathy, and an understanding of social determinants of health—skills often cultivated through humanities-based education. This feedback reinforced the program’s focus on ethics, social justice, and critical race theory, which aim to equip students with the holistic perspective required to thrive in healthcare professions.

Consultations with medical school instructors confirmed the need for humanities education to foster critical thinking and communication skills, both of which are essential for future healthcare providers. Instructors stressed that medical students benefit from exposure to humanities coursework, which enhances their ability to understand the patient experience and navigate the ethical complexities of healthcare. This input supported the MHSS program’s interdisciplinary approach and its inclusion of alternative assessment methods, such as reflective essays and exit interviews, to capture the broader impact of humanities education.

Healthcare industry stakeholders provided valuable perspectives on how the MHSS program could address real-world challenges faced by professionals in the field. They advocated for a curriculum that emphasizes not only scientific and technical competence but also the social and ethical dimensions of healthcare. This aligns with the broader goal of the program to prepare students to engage with patients and communities in a compassionate and culturally sensitive manner, an area of increasing importance in modern healthcare.

Letters of support were received from the following individuals and are attached in the appendices.

Institution	Name	Title
Dalhousie University	Wendy Stewart	Director, Medical Humanities

University of Toronto	Andrea Charise	Department of Health & Society, University of Toronto Scarborough Faculty, Graduate Department of English, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine Cross-Appointed Scientist, The Wilson Center for Medical Education and Core Faculty, Collaborative Graduate Program in Women's Health
Duke University	Sneha Mantri	Associate Professor of Neurology, Duke Movement Disorders Center of Excellence Director of Medical Humanities, Trent Center for Bioethics, Humanities, and History of Medicine
Pennsylvania State University	Bernice Hausman	Chair, Department of Humanities
McMaster University	Joyce Zazulak & Nicole Knibb	Professor Emeritus, Department of Family Medicine Senior Educator in Academic & Professional Engagement at McMaster Museum of Art and Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine
McGill University	Todd Meyers	Professor and Marjorie Bronfman Chair in Social Studies of Medicine, Department of Social Studies of Medicine (Acting Department Chair)

3 Curriculum/Program Content

3.1 Program structure

The MHSS minor requires students to complete 25-28 units. Students must complete the required MHSS courses (13 units) and have a choice of 2 courses from the Health and the Body theme and 2 courses from the Health and Society theme; one course must be a Lower Division elective, and one course must be an Upper Division elective in each theme. The elective structure is designed to ensure a breadth of knowledge. Electives have been selected for relevancy and minimal prerequisites to ensure access to MHSS minor students.

Students are evaluated through their course work, culminating in the capstone project/colloquium.

3.2 Core courses

Required Courses: 13 units

Lower Division:

MHSS 100-3: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Explores how health and wellbeing are influenced by cultural, ethical, and historical factors, encouraging students to examine health beyond the biological model. Through critical analysis and engagement with social sciences and humanities disciplines, students will develop a nuanced understanding of how art, literature, philosophy, and cultural narratives shape our experiences of health and illness. This course introduces students to interdisciplinary approaches for understanding health by exploring how literature, art, film, and philosophy influence our conceptions of illness and healing, as well as how these representations intersect with ethical and cultural considerations. No prior knowledge of the topic is required. Recommended: HSCI 130.

FASS 223-1: Special Topics in the Arts and Social Sciences: Working with Others

Introduces the basic concepts and skills of teamwork and negotiating ideas with others. Topics vary with instructor expertise. No prior knowledge of the topic is required. Suitable for students across all disciplines. Students may take this course for credit up to three times if a different topic is taught. Prerequisite: 15 units. Students with credit for FASS 204 or FASS 206 may not take this course for further credit unless a different topic is offered.

FASS 224-1: Understanding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Arts and Social Sciences

Introduces the basic concepts of equity, diversity and inclusion as subjects of study, normative framework and set of methodological practices in the arts and social sciences. Explores options for continuous work to remove

barriers to equity-seeking groups. Students may take this course for credit up to three times if a different topic is taught. Prerequisite: 15 units. Students with credit for FASS 207 or FASS 212 may not take this course for further credit unless a different topic is offered.

Upper Division:

MHSS 300-4: Medical Legal Studies

Examines the intersection of medicine and law, focusing on introducing students to the legal framework of the Canadian medical system; laws regulating medical practice; specific subject areas engaging individual rights and the legal/ethical intersections between private, public, and community-based interests in medical contexts. Topics include medical ethics, healthcare regulations, and the legal responsibilities of medical professionals. No prior legal knowledge is required. Suitable for students across disciplines interested in the legal dimensions of healthcare.

MHSS 400-4: Medical Humanities and Social Sciences

Capstone/Professional Colloquium

Serves as a culminating experience where students integrate and apply their knowledge from the MHSS minor. Through interdisciplinary projects and professional discussions, students will critically examine contemporary health issues, collaborate on real-world challenges, and reflect on their learning journey. This course is designed to prepare students for professional careers or further study in health-related fields.

3.3 Existing and new courses

Courses marked by † indicate courses that will help prepare students for entry into health-related programs at several other Canadian institutions, which require them of applicants.

New courses marked by *. New course proposals will be submitted concurrently with FPP.

Sample course outlines for all required courses are found in the Appendices.

Required Courses: 13 Units

Lower Division:

MHSS 100-3: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health in the Humanities and Social Sciences*

FASS 223-1: Special Topics in the Arts and Social Sciences: Working with Others

FASS 224-1: Understanding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Arts and Social Sciences

Upper Division:

MHSS 300-4: Medical Legal Studies*

MHSS 400-4: Medical Humanities and Social Sciences

Capstone/Professional Colloquium*

Elective Courses: 12-15 Units

Lower Division: 2 courses (6-7 units)

One course from Health and the Body Theme (3 units)

This stream broadens students' understanding of health by exploring the neurological, psychological, and communicative dimensions of human functioning, emphasizing that health is shaped by the complex interaction of mind, body, and language, rather than merely the absence of illness.

- COGS 100-3: Exploring the Mind *or* COGS 110-3: Learning in Everyday Life: The art and science of hacking your brain
- GSWS 103-3: Body Talk
- LING 190-3: The Science of Speech
- PSYC 100-3: Intro to Psychology I *or* PSYC 102-3: Intro to Psychology II

One course from Health and Society Theme (3-4 units) [highlighted courses are often pre-requisites in other health-related programs]

This stream introduces students to the social, cultural, political, and economic aspects of health, emphasizing how factors such as poverty, systemic racism, and social inequality influence disparities in health and wellbeing across the lifespan.

- ENGL 111W: Literary Classics in English† *or* ENGL 204-3: Reading Sexuality and Gender *or* ENGL 209-3: Race, Borders and Empire *or* GERO 101-3: Aging and Society
- GSWS 101-3: Gender Talk *or* GSWS 100-3: Sex Talk
- INDG 101-3: Introduction to Indigenous Studies *or* INDG 211-3: Researching Residential Schools: An Analysis of RS in North America *or* INDG 286-3: Indigenous Peoples and British Columbia
- LBST 203-3: Work and Health

- PHIL 144-3: Introduction to the Philosophy of Science *or* PHIL 120W-3: Moral and Legal Problems *or* PHIL 221-3: Ethical Theory *or* PHIL 270-3: Data, Ethics and Society
- PLCY 200-3: Introduction to Public Policy
- POL 150-3: Science, Technology and Innovation *or* POL 151-3: Justice and Law
- SA 101-4: Introduction to Anthropology† *or* SA 150-4: Introduction to Sociology *or* SA 218-3: Illness, Culture and Society

Upper Division: 2 courses (6-8 units)

One course from Health and the Body Theme (3-4 units)

This stream broadens students' understanding of health by exploring the neurological, psychological, and communicative dimensions of human functioning, emphasizing that health is shaped by the complex interaction of mind, body, and language, rather than merely the absence of illness.

- COGS 300-3: Selected Topics in Cognitive Science
- GERO 302-3: Health Promotion and Aging
- GSWS 316-4: Disciplining Sex: Feminist Science and Sociobiology
- INDG 329-3: Sexuality and Gender: Indigenous Perspectives

One course from Health and Society Theme (3-4 units)

This stream introduces students to the social, cultural, political, and economic aspects of health, emphasizing how factors such as poverty, systemic racism, and social inequality influence disparities in health and wellbeing across the lifespan.

- GA 301-3: Asia-Canada Identities: Experiences and Perspectives
- GERO 406-3: Death and Dying
- GERO 413-3: Sexuality and Aging
- GSWS 414-4: Dude, Where's My Body?: Biopolitics, Biotechnologies, Bioecologies
- INDG 422-3: Special Topics in Indigenous Studies (when taught as Indigenous Health)
- IS 307-4: International Ethics: Poverty, Environmental Change & War
- PHIL 327-3: Global Health Ethics
- PLCY 300-4: Applied Public Policy Analysis
- SA 318-4: Technologies of Health and Expectation
- SA 418-4: Global Health: Humanitarian Encounters
- URB 463-4: Diversity and Equity in Cities

3.4 Curriculum and program goals

In line with the interdisciplinary focus of the MHSS minor, the program is structured to equip students with essential soft skills, health-related methodologies, and a historical understanding of how social, economic, and political factors shape health and wellbeing, alongside knowledge and understanding of the laws structuring and applying to medical structures and practices in Canada. Recognizing that students will gain foundational knowledge in their major disciplines, the introductory course MHSS 100 introduces the core concepts and frameworks of the medical humanities and social sciences. This course deepens students' understanding of how health is influenced by social factors and provides insight into the structural and systemic forces that affect individual and community health. MHSS 300 introduces students to fundamental ethical and legal principles engaged in the health care context, and how the various laws applying in these contexts seek to apply those sometimes competing principles. The course also introduces students to the legal framework that structures the nature and delivery of health care in Canada. MHSS 400 serves as a capstone, where students engage in group-based, project-oriented research addressing real-world health issues, collaborating with professionals and applying the critical thinking and methodological skills they have developed.

The MHSS minor ensures that students interested in pursuing careers in healthcare, public health, or policy have a solid grounding in the social and cultural contexts of health. The lower division courses introduce core concepts and methodologies, emphasizing applied exercises that encourage critical engagement with health topics. As students progress into the upper division courses, they delve deeper into specialized areas, such as bioethics, mental health, or the socio-economic determinants of health, offering a more focused examination of complex issues. These courses are designed to further enhance analytical skills, with opportunities for in-depth research and critical discussions that prepare students for real-world applications. The capstone course then brings together these lessons, guiding students through practical exercises centered around a health-related project. Working closely with professionals, students will develop policy recommendations, improve project management and research skills, and enhance their ability to analyze and communicate health issues from multiple perspectives. Throughout the core and upper division courses, students refine their critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, enabling them to

navigate the complexities of healthcare and health policy with a comprehensive and specialized knowledge base.

3.5 Work experience/field/practicum placement

Input from the program's steering committee and advisory board, including representatives of the public, private, and non-profit sector as well as prominent SFU and future MHSS alumni will help enhance learning and future employment opportunities for MHSS students.

4 Program Resources

4.1 Target audience and enrolment plan

We anticipate an initial cohort of 100 students, coming from students in FASS and across the university. The required lower division courses have no specific pre-requisites and the required upper division course pre-requisites are based on number of units completed rather than the completion of discipline specific courses. This allows for greater flexibility for students, regardless of their discipline or faculty, to complete the minor in a timely fashion.

With the launch of the SFU Medical School in fall of 2026, we expect great interest in the MHSS minor, which has been favorably received by the SFU Medical School organizing committee as part of a beneficial pathway for the type of socially conscious students they wish to attract. Support from the Faculties of Science and Health Sciences in promoting the minor will also ensure that their students view the minor as a good option to pair with their major. The minor is an attractive and convenient option for Science and Faculty of Health Science students to complete their elective credits.

4.2 Resources

All listed electives are taught by regular continuing faculty. The FASS Dean's Office will oversee the management of the three new interdisciplinary MHSS courses (MHSS100, 300, and 400). These courses will also be taught by existing faculty.

The MHSS minor requires one course release for the Director per year and additional part-time resources for student advising and administration, to be administratively housed in Arts Central (Surrey) and the Dean's Office. A director is needed for oversight because the minor coordinates with several departments across FASS, and with an external advisory board. The director

will also serve as liaison with the upcoming medical school regarding prerequisites and other concerns, to ensure the minor supports students seeking admission there.

The minor will also require a small operating budget for advertising, and events connecting students and health professionals. The operating budget for the program (outside of the course release) is initially estimated at \$3000/year, to be added to the overall operating budget for FASS Surrey specifically for support of the MHSS program.

5 Program Review and Academic/Administrative Oversight

The program will be assessed every 7 years in a normal external academic review cycle, but informal mid-term assessment will include the advisory committee and qualitative review of student facility in competencies achieved, as well as alumni information as it accrues.

MHSS has a Director, Steering Committee (SC), and Advisory Committee (AC).

The Steering Committee normally consists of 7 voting members—5 faculty

representatives drawn from participating departments; the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs in FASS; and the MHSS Director. Committee members will serve a three-year term. The Steering Committee elects the Director, subject to majority support via a ratification vote organized by the Dean's Office. The Director serves a three-year term and must be a continuing Simon Fraser University faculty member. The director may apply for renewal (one additional term). The Director will usually come from one of the participating FASS departments and is ineligible to participate in the ratification vote.

The MHSS Program will be governed by its own Steering Committee, comprised solely of SFU faculty, and will take advice from its Advisory Committee, comprised of mainly of members of community and industry organizations. As a non-departmentalized Program, it has autonomy in matters pertaining to requests for MHSS-related instructional positions, secondments, and future teaching appointments explicitly affiliated or housed within the MHSS, whether part- or full time.

The Director is responsible for the everyday running of the minor, including course scheduling, program curriculum review, representation on the FASS Curriculum

Committee, budget, and other administrative responsibilities. The director sits on the monthly DAC in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The Director works collaboratively with the assigned manager regarding course scheduling. The Steering Committee is the primary governing body. It selects the Director, approves changes to the program requirements, and approves the budget. Steering Committee members are also expected to assist in the effective administration and promotion of the minor. Responsibilities include representing the program's concerns on their respective undergraduate curriculum committees, ensuring that courses in support of the program are offered regularly and in a way that allows students to complete the program in a timely way, periodically reviewing the program to ensure that it continues to realize its objectives, and bringing together faculty teaching medical humanities and social sciences-related courses. The Steering Committee will meet at least twice per year (once in fall and spring terms).

The founding Steering Committee is made up of representatives that reflect both Humanities and Social Sciences approaches to health and well-being. Members are Henny Yeung (Linguistics), Stacy Pigg (Anthropology), Coleman Nye (Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies), Vaibhav Saria (Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies), Molly Cairncross (Psychology), Theodore Cosco (Public Policy and Gerontology), Margaret Hall (Applied Legal Studies), Azadeh Yamini-Hamedani (World Languages and Literatures) and Melek Ortabasi (FASS Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs).

The Academic Advisory Committee consists of 10-15 representatives drawn from the public, non-profit and private sector who advise the Director on curriculum planning, experiential learning, and planned capstone projects. Committee members will be nominated by the sitting advisory board at a strategic planning meeting and will be affirmed by the advisory committee by a simple majority. Term limits will be 5 years.

The Advisory Committee will meet at least twice per year (once in fall and spring terms).

Current members of the advisory committee include:

1	Wendy Stewart (Director, Medical Humanities)	Dalhousie University
2	Todd Meyer (Professor, Chair - Social Studies of Medicine)	McGill

3	Nicole Knibb (Senior Education Officer)	McMaster
4	Joyce Zazulak (Professor, Dept of Family Medicine)	McMaster
5	Pamela Brett-MacLean (Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry & Director, Arts & Humanities in Health & Medicine)	University of Alberta
6	Andrea Charise (Director of Professor of Psychiatry and Family Medicine)	University of Toronto
7	Eileen Anderson (Director, Medicine Society and Culture track, Bioethics and Medical Humanities)	Case Western Reserve University
8	Sneha Mantri (Director, Program in Medical Humanities Trent Center for Bioethics, Humanities & History of Medicine)	Duke University
9	Bernice Hausman (Chair, Dept of Humanities)	Penn State
10	Kathryn Rhine (Director of the Center for Bioethics and Humanities)	University of Colorado

6 Program Consultation

Initial study of the feasibility of offering the MHSS minor began in Fall 2021, with the announcement of the potential of a medical school. In Fall 2022, the Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs (Catherine Murray) undertook extensive analysis of existing FASS course offerings to find out how many departments offered courses on topics connected to health, wellbeing, and the body.

The NOI was submitted to the FASS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in October 2023. All members of the committee received the NOI in advance of the meeting and were provided with an opportunity to provide verbal and/or written feedback. The motion to approve the NOI in Medical Humanities and Social Sciences passed unanimously. The NOI subsequently passed Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies on October 5, 2023. The NOI was approved by SCUP on December 6, 2023.

A meeting of the founding Steering Committee was held on August 7, 2024, to discuss the course list and curriculum structure. A further STC meeting was held on September 16, 2024, at which the revised curriculum and course structure were approved. Participating departments were consulted regarding the chosen courses at the October 3 meeting of the FASS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

In the spring of 2024 Dr. Cosco conducted interviews with the following external stakeholders to gather insights for the successful launch and sustainability of the MHSS Minor at SFU. These discussions addressed critical aspects, including:

1. **Initial Pitch and Faculty Buy-In:** Stakeholders shared strategies for introducing the program concept and securing enthusiasm across departments, emphasizing the value of interdisciplinary health education aligned with SFU's mission.
2. **Program Utility and Marketability:** Discussions focused on highlighting the MHSS minor's role in preparing students for diverse health-related fields, underscoring its interdisciplinary skills in ethics, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. Stakeholders also advised on positioning the minor as a distinctive credential for a range of professional paths.
3. **Student Experience and Program Navigation:** Advice was given on supporting students' progression through the program, such as offering dedicated advising and mentorship, to maximize their experience and understanding of potential career pathways.
4. **Tracking Program Popularity and Student Outcomes:** Stakeholders recommended using enrollment data, exit surveys, and alumni feedback to measure program demand and effectiveness.
5. **Metrics for Success and Ensuring Longevity:** Successful programs assess their impact through qualitative measures, like reflective essays and alumni surveys, to capture broader educational outcomes. Stakeholders emphasized maintaining adaptability through regular program evaluation and alignment with evolving healthcare needs.

Institution	Name	Title
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Dalhousie University	Wendy Stewart	Director, Medical Humanities
Simon Fraser	Valerie Crooks	Associate Vice-President, Research (AVPR)
McGill University	Todd Meyer	Professor and Marjorie Bronfman Chair in Social Studies of Medicine
University of Alberta	Pamela Brett-MacLean	Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry & Director, Arts & Humanities in Health & Medicine
University of Northern BC	Sarah de Leeuw	Research Chair in Humanities and Health Inequities
McMaster University	Joyce Zazulak	Professor Emeritus, Department of Family Medicine
McMaster University	Nicole Knibb	Senior Educator, Academic & Professional Engagement, McMaster Museum of Art Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine
University of Toronto	Andrea Charise	Department of Health & Society, University of Toronto Scarborough Faculty, Graduate Department of English, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine Cross-Appointed Scientist, The Wilson Center for Medical Education and Core Faculty, Collaborative Graduate Program in Women's Health
Case Western Reserve University	Eileen Anderson	Director of Educational Programs, Bioethics & Medical Humanities Director, Center for Medicine, Society & Culture Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychiatry School of Medicine
Duke University	Sneha Mantri	Associate Professor of Neurology, Duke Movement Disorders Center of Excellence Director of Medical Humanities, Trent Center for Bioethics, Humanities, and History of Medicine
Michigan State University	Sean A. Valles	Director and Professor
Pennsylvania State University	Bernice Hausman	Chair, Humanities
University of Colorado	Kathryn Rhine	Director of the Center for Bioethics and Humanities

Birbeck, University of London	Jo Winning	Director, Medical Humanities Program
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7 Evidence of Student Interest and Labour Market Demand

Student Interest

A Biology student in one of the FASS health-related courses had this to say to their professor, Dr. Stacy Pigg:

“Thank you for teaching me to think about health and disease in a deeper manner, especially as I come from a biological background. I learned a lot this semester even with the ups and downs in my life. It’s a shame, courses like these truly ought to be taught to biological sciences majors. I wish courses like these were part of our required courses, fortunately I did a dual degree in biology and criminology that privileged me to such knowledge. The weeks we spent on epidemics in India allowed me to have deeper conversations about health with my family. And so, I truly appreciate your time and effort you put into this course for us!”

While this is anecdotal evidence, it reflects our work to determine student demand for this program, which we expect to be high amongst undergraduate students interested in attending medical school and pursuing other health related professions.

Current enrolment data indicates strong demand for health-related curriculum and programs in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. A review of existing courses undertaken in 2021 revealed there are approximately seventy-two permanent courses in FASS related to aging, gender, sexuality, culture, biology, mental health, and neuroscience. The majority of the courses are taught by continuing faculty. In a sample one-year period (2021-22), registration data indicates that approximately 5,300 students were enrolled in courses related specifically to health in the departments of Criminology, Cognitive Science, Economics, Gerontology, Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies, Labour Studies, Indigenous Studies, Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology and Anthropology. The departments with the heaviest investment in health-related curriculum (as measured by course topic and continuing faculty appointments) are Cognitive Science, Gerontology, Psychology, Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies, and Sociology and Anthropology. Enrolment in these

departments is anticipated to stay the same or grow in the future. While many of these courses could not be included in the minor due to prerequisites, it is clear that what attracts students is the courses' connection to health and medicine.

The minor also recognizes that the acceptance rates into medical schools across Canada hovers around 10%. This means that the vast majority of students who are preparing to attend medical school throughout their undergraduate degree will be unsuccessful in securing a spot and will need to pivot into other health-related fields. The soft skills acquired in the minor support students pursuing a range of health-related occupations, whether it is clinical or administrative in practice.

Further proof of student interest was demonstrated in a March 2024 survey we conducted of undergraduate students across the university. Students were asked 11 questions about their views on the proposed minor. The response rate was 711 students. FASS undergraduates represented 63.6% of the respondents. Faculty of Science undergraduates represented 32.2% and Faculty of Health Sciences represented 5.3%. 90% of the responses were from domestic students. 56% of respondents stated that they were "interested" or "very interested" in the minor.

Survey results are included in the Appendices.

Labour Market Demand

Currently, there is a critical shortage of healthcare and allied health professionals (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/health-care-partners/health-newsletter/enews-allied-health-summer-2022.pdf>) in both British Columbia and across Canada, affecting a wide range of roles such as general practitioners, physician's assistants, patient care navigators, nurse practitioners, policy experts, and allied health professionals. This shortage extends beyond clinical roles, reflecting the growing complexity of healthcare, where interdisciplinary approaches are vital. Pharmacists, nutritionists, physiotherapists, massage therapists, and occupational therapists are increasingly integrated into interdisciplinary healthcare teams. With healthcare employment in British Columbia now accounting for 11% of the workforce, the demand for qualified professionals is expected to rise as the population grows and ages.

While technical and clinical skills are essential to addressing this workforce gap, the expertise provided by the humanities and social sciences is equally critical in responding to the evolving needs of healthcare systems. Graduates of programs like the MHSS minor bring valuable insights into how social, cultural, political, and economic factors influence health outcomes. These disciplines teach students to critically analyze complex societal structures and engage with issues such as health inequity, systemic racism, and engage with the broader social context - skills and knowledge that are increasingly necessary as healthcare moves towards a more holistic and person-centered approach. Humanities and social science graduates are trained in critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural competence, allowing them to contribute to areas like health policy development, health communication, and patient advocacy. Their ability to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue, understand the lived experiences of diverse patient populations, and critique the social systems that shape healthcare delivery makes them invaluable members of healthcare teams. They can address not just "soft skills" but the core challenges of healthcare by understanding the deeper societal forces that drive health disparities and working to create more equitable and just healthcare systems.

In response to growing shortages in clinical care, these graduates will play pivotal roles in shaping policies, improving patient care pathways, and contributing to public health initiatives that are rooted in a comprehensive understanding of human wellbeing. Their critical analytical skills, informed by the humanities and social sciences, allow them to tackle the ethical, communicative, and systemic challenges that are essential to the future of healthcare.

8 Appendices

8.1 Calendar entry

A complete proposed Calendar entry is attached in the Appendices.

8.2 New Courses

Sample course outlines are attached. New course approval forms are being submitted concurrently with the FPP.

8.3 Market analysis – student interest and labour market demand

Student survey data and letters of support from relevant university experts are included in the appendices.

8.4 Consultation comments and letters of support

Pennsylvania State

University of Toronto

McGill University

Dalhousie University

Duke University

McMaster University

8.5 Attach any written endorsements or comments, from both internal and external sources.

Penn State (Dr. Bernice L. Hausman)

Dr. Hausman emphasizes the program's value in helping students explore healthcare careers, stating it will "clarify their intentions and ground their understanding of health and illness in its appropriate sociocultural context(s)," fostering a "holistic approach to healthcare" that views "patients as persons."

University of Toronto (Dr. Andrea Charise):

Dr. Charise calls the MHSS minor "timely, distinctive, and robust," highlighting its ability to exemplify the "vital role of arts, humanities, and critical social science thinking in the context of medicine and healthcare." She reflects on the benefits of similar programs in developing "meaningful intellectual and professional opportunities" and anticipates SFU's program will likewise foster

"intellectual and affective resources" crucial for navigating complex healthcare environments.

McGill University (Dr. Todd Meyers):

Dr. Meyers offers "unqualified support" for the minor, acknowledging how it meets "urgent concerns of the moment" while addressing "lasting questions about human experience."

Dalhousie University (Dr. Wendy A. Stewart):

Dr. Stewart commends the humanities' ability to "help students see things through a different lens," enhancing critical skills like "observation, communication, active listening, and teamwork" essential in modern healthcare. She further supports the program's potential to foster "critical thinking," reduce "medical error," and address "ethical dilemmas and challenges," making it a valuable addition to students' healthcare education.

Duke University (Dr. Sneha Mantri):

Dr. Mantri highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the program, noting it prepares students for "the complexity of caring for patients in an increasingly challenging environment." She appreciates the program's local connections to healthcare, which she sees as encouraging students "to contemplate how the communities they serve exist outside the narrow scope of the academic medical center."

McMaster University (Dr. Joyce Zazulak and Nicole Knibb):

They describe the MHSS minor as inspiring, akin to McMaster's own "The Art of Seeing" program, which fosters "empathetic, holistic, and humanistic thinking." Emphasizing collaboration, they praise SFU's proposal for intending to build partnerships across university faculties and programs, mirroring the "collaborative practice of healthcare" they find essential

8.6 Resources

There are no new instructional resources required.

The FASS Dean has agreed to allocate staff support (e.g. 0.5 FTE staff position or equivalent support) to support the overall administration, recruitment, coordination and advising as this becomes necessary. For example, student advising will not be necessary before there are students associated with the program. The specifics of any support will be assessed based on the various stages of the program's operations as well as contingent upon the broader budgetary environment, but the Dean's office recognizes that additional support is needed to make this program successful.

FASS Communications will collaborate with the program on marketing and communications and provide guidance on promotions.

The Dean has approved an additional \$3000 for expenses related to program recruiting (travel, conference registration, etc.) and promotion (brochures, advertising, giveaways, etc.), to be added to the FASS Surrey operating budget.

8.7 Abbreviated curriculum vitae for faculty

CVs for all seven members of the Steering Committee, which includes the faculty who will teach the required courses, are included in the appendices.

MHSS Calendar Entry

Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor

The minor in medical humanities and social sciences is an interdisciplinary program that offers students the opportunity to learn how the experience of health and illness is affected by social and cultural worlds. The program provides diverse, interdisciplinary, analytical and applied approaches designed to give students the communication, problem-based learning, and critical-thinking skills required to be successful in a wide range of care-, health-, and medical-related professions. Beyond the core courses in medical humanities and social sciences, students choose electives from a variety of complementary courses organized into two themes: the relationship between health and the body; and the societal and cultural aspects of health.

Program Declaration

A CGPA of at least 2.0 is required to declare the minor.

Course Information

For a course to be accepted in the minor, a grade of C- or higher must be obtained.

Program Requirements

Lower Division Requirements

Students complete all of:

MHSS 100-3: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health in the Humanities and Social Sciences

FASS 223-1: Special Topics in the Arts and Social Sciences: Working with Others

FASS 224-1: Understanding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Arts and Social Sciences

And one of:

- COGS 100-3: Exploring the Mind *or* COGS 110-3: Learning in Everyday Life: The art and science of hacking your brain
- GSWS 103-3: Body Talk
- LING 190-3: The Science of Speech
- PSYC 100-3: Intro to Psychology I *or* PSYC 102-3: Intro to Psychology II

And one of:

- ENGL 111W: Literary Classics in English *or* ENGL 204-3: Reading Sexuality and Gender *or* ENGL 209-3: Race, Borders and Empire
- GERO 101-3: Aging and Society
- GSWS 101-3: Gender Talk *or* GSWS 100-3: Sex Talk
- INDG 101-3: Introduction to Indigenous Studies *or* INDG 211-3: Researching Residential Schools: An Analysis of RS in North America *or* INDG 286-3: Indigenous Peoples and British Columbia
- LBST 203-3: Work and Health

- PHIL 144-3: Introduction to the Philosophy of Science *or* PHIL 120W-3: Moral and Legal Problems *or* PHIL 221-3: Ethical Theory *or* PHIL 270-3: Data, Ethics and Society
- POL 150-3: Science, Technology and Innovation *or* POL 151-3: Justice and Law
- PLCY 200-3: Introduction to Public Policy
- SA 101-4: Introduction to Anthropology *or* SA 150-4: Introduction to Sociology *or* SA 218-3: Illness, Culture and Society

Upper Division Requirements

Students complete both of:

MHSS 300-4: Medical Legal Studies

MHSS 400-4: Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Capstone/Professional Colloquium

And one of:

- COGS 300-3: Selected Topics in Cognitive Science
- GERO 302-3: Health Promotion and Aging
- GSWS 316-4: Disciplining Sex: Feminist Science and Sociobiology
- INDG 329-3: Sexuality and Gender: Indigenous Perspectives

And one of:

- GA 301-3: Asian Canadian Culture and Activism Across Borders
- GERO 406-3: Death and Dying
- GERO 413-3: Sexuality and Aging
- GSWS 414-4: Dude, Where's My Body?: Biopolitics, Biotechnologies, Bioecologies
- INDG 422-3: Special Topics in Indigenous Studies (when taught as Indigenous Health)
- IS 307-4: International Ethics: Poverty, Environmental Change & War
- PHIL 327-3: Global Health Ethics
- PLCY 300-4: Applied Public Policy Analysis
- SA 318-4: Technologies of Health and Expectation
- SA 418-4: Global Health: Humanitarian Encounters
- URB 463-4: Diversity and Equity in Cities

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Degree Requirements

For all bachelor of arts (BA) programs, students complete 120 units, which includes

- at least 60 units that must be completed at Simon Fraser University
- at least 45 upper division units, of which at least 30 upper division units must be completed at Simon Fraser University
- at least 60 units (including 21 upper division units) in Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences courses
- satisfaction of the writing, quantitative, and breadth requirements
- an overall cumulative grade point average (CGPA) and upper division overall CGPA of at least 2.0, and program CGPA and upper division program CGPA of at least 2.0 on the course work used to satisfy the minimum program requirements. FASS departments may define additional GPA requirements for their respective programs.

For students in other faculties, please check your faculty's overall degree requirements: <https://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/faculties-research.html>

Writing, Quantitative, and Breadth Requirements

Students admitted to Simon Fraser University beginning in the fall 2006 term must meet writing, quantitative and breadth requirements as part of any degree program they may undertake. See [Writing, Quantitative, and Breadth Requirements](#) for university-wide information.



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Memo

Attention Tom Nault, SFU Registrar
From Melek Ortabasi, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs, FASS
cc Kris Nordgren, Assistant Registrar

Subject New course acronym for MHSS
Date December 17, 2024

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences would like to propose the new course acronym MHSS for the proposed Minor in Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS). The Full Program Proposal for the Minor was approved by the FASS UCC on November 28th, 2024.

While the acronym will be limited to the three core courses of the Minor, it is important for giving clarity to this interdisciplinary credential. MHSS 100, 300, and 400 provide a theoretical and applied framework that binds together the diverse electives drawn from fourteen departments and programs across the Faculty, allowing students to conceptualize the growing field of Medical Humanities and Social Sciences. This field, widely recognized in the medical profession, will help prepare students who wish to apply for medical school and other health professions. The acronym would thus also clarify public and student perception of the credential's value for those aspiring to enter health-related careers.

We propose a motion for the creation of the new acronym as follows:

That SCUS approve the creation of the new acronym MHSS (Medical Humanities and Social Sciences) effective Fall 2025.

Please be in touch if you require further information regarding the proposed new course acronym.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melek Ortabasi".

Dr. Melek Ortabasi
Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

/sf

COURSE SUBJECT MHSS

NUMBER 100

COURSE TITLE LONG — for Calendar/schedule, no more than 100 characters including spaces and punctuation

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health in the Humanities and Social Sciences

COURSE TITLE SHORT — for enrollment/transcript, no more than 30 characters including spaces and punctuation

Approaches to Health

CAMPUS where course will be normally taught: ☒ Burnaby ☒ Surrey ☒ Vancouver ☐ Great Northern Way ☐ Off campus

COURSE DESCRIPTION — 50 words max. Attach a course outline. Don't include WQB or prerequisites info in this description box.

Explores how health and wellbeing are influenced by cultural, ethical, and historical factors, encouraging students to examine health beyond the biological model. Through critical analysis and engagement with social sciences and humanities disciplines, students will develop a nuanced understanding of how art, literature, philosophy, and cultural narratives shape our experiences of health and illness. No prior knowledge required; suitable for students across all disciplines.

REPEAT FOR CREDIT ☐ YES ☒ NO Total completions allowed 1 Within a term? ☐ YES ☐ NO

LIBRARY RESOURCES

NOTE: Senate has approved (S.93-11) that no new course should be approved by Senate until funding has been committed for necessary library materials. Each new course proposal must be accompanied by the email that serves as proof of assessment. For more information, please visit www.lib.sfu.ca/about/overview/collections/course-assessments.

RATIONALE FOR INTRODUCTION OF THIS COURSE

MHSS 100 is the first-year introductory course for the new Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor. It forms part of a core suite of three new MHSS courses required for the minor, including MHSS 300 (Medical Legal Studies) and MHSS 400 (Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Capstone/Professional Colloquium). These three courses serve to anchor the minor and provide a clear pathway for students to develop their critical thinking in this area and make interdisciplinary connections among the health-related elective courses in the humanities and social sciences they select to complete the minor. For more details please see the Full Project Proposal.



SCHEDULING AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Effective term and year (e.g. FALL 2016)

Term in which course will typically be offered ☒ Spring ☐ Summer ☒ Fall

Other (describe)

Will this be a required or elective course in the curriculum? ☒ Required ☐ Elective

What is the probable enrollment when offered? Estimate:

UNITS

Indicate number of units:

Indicate no. of contact hours: Lecture Seminar Tutorial Lab Other; explain below

OTHER

FACULTY

Which of your present CFL faculty have the expertise to offer this course?

WQB DESIGNATION

(attach approval from Curriculum Office)

PREREQUISITE AND / OR COREQUISITE

EQUIVALENT COURSES [For more information on equivalency, see Equivalency Statements under [Information about Specific Course components.](#)]

1. SEQUENTIAL COURSE [is not hard coded in the student information management system (SIMS).]

Students who have taken (*place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100)*) **first** may not then take this course for further credit.

N/A

2. ONE-WAY EQUIVALENCY [is not hard coded in SIMS.]

(*Place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100)*) will be accepted in lieu of this course.

N/A

3. TWO-WAY EQUIVALENCY [is hard coded and enforced by SIMS.]

Students with credit for (*place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100)*) may not take this course for further credit.

N/A

Does the partner academic unit agree that this is a two-way equivalency? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Please also have the partner academic unit submit a course change form to update the course equivalency for their course(s).

4. SPECIAL TOPICS PRECLUSION STATEMENT [is not hard coded in SIMS.]

N/A

FEES

Are there any proposed student fees associated with this course other than tuition fees? ☐ YES ☒ NO

COURSE – LEVEL EDUCATIONAL GOALS (OPTIONAL)

The objectives of MHSS 100 are to:

1. Explore the role of the social sciences and humanities in understanding health and illness.
2. Analyze cultural narratives and their influence on medical and public health practices.
3. Critically evaluate ethical dilemmas through philosophical and historical lenses.
4. Engage with artistic representations of health and illness to deepen cultural and emotional understanding.
5. Encourage interdisciplinary thinking by integrating insights from literature, art, and philosophy into health-related discussions.
6. Foster critical writing and discussion skills through analysis and creative inquiry.



RESOURCES

List any outstanding resource issues to be addressed prior to implementation: space, laboratory equipment, etc:

None

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Final exam required ☐ YES ☒ NO

Criminal Record Check required ☐ YES ☒ NO

OVERLAP CHECK

Checking for overlap is the responsibility of the Associate Dean.
Each new course proposal must have confirmation of an overlap check completed prior to submission to the Faculty Curriculum Committee.

Name of Originator

Theodore Cosco

COURSE SUBJECT **MHSS**NUMBER **300****COURSE TITLE LONG** — for Calendar/schedule, no more than 100 characters including spaces and punctuation

Medical Legal Studies

COURSE TITLE SHORT — for enrollment/transcript, no more than 30 characters including spaces and punctuation

Medical Legal Studies

CAMPUS where course will be normally taught: ☒ Burnaby ☒ Surrey ☒ Vancouver ☐ Great Northern Way ☐ Off campus**COURSE DESCRIPTION** — 50 words max. Attach a course outline. Don't include WQB or prerequisites info in this description box.

Examines the intersection of medicine and law, focusing on how legal frameworks impact healthcare practices and patient rights. Topics include medical ethics, healthcare regulations, and the legal responsibilities of medical professionals. No prior legal knowledge required. Suitable for students across disciplines who are interested in the legal dimensions of healthcare.

REPEAT FOR CREDIT ☐ YES ☒ NO Total completions allowed **1** Within a term? ☐ YES ☐ NO**LIBRARY RESOURCES**

NOTE: Senate has approved (S.93-11) that no new course should be approved by Senate until funding has been committed for necessary library materials. Each new course proposal must be accompanied by the email that serves as proof of assessment. For more information, please visit www.lib.sfu.ca/about/overview/collections/course-assessments.

RATIONALE FOR INTRODUCTION OF THIS COURSE

MHSS 300 is a third-year course for the new Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor. It forms part of a core suite of three new MHSS courses required for the minor, including MHSS 100 (Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health in the Humanities and Social Sciences) and MHSS 400 (Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Capstone/Professional Colloquium). These three courses serve to anchor the minor and provide a clear pathway for students to develop their critical thinking in this area and make interdisciplinary connections among the health-related elective courses in the humanities and social sciences they select to complete the minor. For more details please see the Full Project Proposal.

Medical legal studies introduces students to the legal framework of the Canadian medical system; the legal regulation of medical practice; specific subject areas where medical issues impact individual rights; and the intersections between private, public, and community-based interests in medical contexts (including the medical system's evolving relationship with Indigenous communities).


SCHEDULING AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Effective term and year (e.g. FALL 2016)

Fall 2025

Term in which course will typically be offered

☐

Spring

☐

Summer

☒

Fall

Other (describe)

Will this be a required or elective course in the curriculum?

☒

Required

☐

Elective

What is the probable enrollment when offered? Estimate:

50

UNITS

Indicate number of units:

4

Indicate no. of contact hours:

2

Lecture

☐

Seminar

1

Tutorial

☐

Lab

☐

Other; explain below

OTHER
FACULTY

Which of your present CFL faculty have the expertise to offer this course?

Theodore Cosco, Margaret Hall

WQB DESIGNATION

(attach approval from Curriculum Office)

None

PREREQUISITE AND / OR COREQUISITE

45 units or permission from the instructor.

EQUIVALENT COURSES [For more information on equivalency, see Equivalency Statements under [Information about Specific Course components.](#)]

1. SEQUENTIAL COURSE [is not hard coded in the student information management system (SIMS).]

Students who have taken *(place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100))* **first** may not then take this course for further credit.

N/A

2. ONE-WAY EQUIVALENCY [is not hard coded in SIMS.]

(Place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100)) will be accepted in lieu of this course.

N/A

3. TWO-WAY EQUIVALENCY [is hard coded and enforced by SIMS.]

Students with credit for *(place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100))* may not take this course for further credit.

N/A

Does the partner academic unit agree that this is a two-way equivalency? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Please also have the partner academic unit submit a course change form to update the course equivalency for their course(s).

4. SPECIAL TOPICS PRECLUSION STATEMENT [is not hard coded in SIMS.]

N/A

FEES

Are there any proposed student fees associated with this course other than tuition fees? ☐ YES ☒ NO

COURSE – LEVEL EDUCATIONAL GOALS (OPTIONAL)

The objectives of MHSS 300 are to:

- Provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework underlying the Canadian medical system.
- Introduce students to the evolving relationship between Indigenous communities and the Canadian medical system.
- Explore the ethical and philosophical principles that shape medical law, including autonomy, vulnerability, and decision-making.
- Familiarize students with specific areas of medical law, including medical negligence, consent, mental health, and medical assistance in dying.
- Develop students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills through analysis of case law and hypothetical fact patterns.

**RESOURCES**

List any outstanding resource issues to be addressed prior to implementation: space, laboratory equipment, etc:

None

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Final exam required ☒ YES ☐ NO

Criminal Record Check required ☐ YES ☒ NO

OVERLAP CHECK

Checking for overlap is the responsibility of the Associate Dean.

Each new course proposal must have confirmation of an overlap check completed prior to submission to the Faculty Curriculum Committee.

Name of Originator

Margaret Hall

COURSE SUBJECT NUMBER **COURSE TITLE LONG** — for Calendar/schedule, no more than 100 characters including spaces and punctuation**COURSE TITLE SHORT** — for enrollment/transcript, no more than 30 characters including spaces and punctuation**CAMPUS** where course will be normally taught: ☒ Burnaby ☒ Surrey ☒ Vancouver ☐ Great Northern Way ☐ Off campus**COURSE DESCRIPTION** — 50 words max. Attach a course outline. Don't include WQB or prerequisites info in this description box.

Culminating experience of the MHSS minor. Integrates interdisciplinary knowledge from the humanities and social sciences to critically examine contemporary health issues and challenges. Through collaborative projects, reflective exercises, and professional discussions, students will explore the practical implications of their studies and prepare for future careers/advanced study in health-related fields.

REPEAT FOR CREDIT ☐ YES ☒ NO Total completions allowed Within a term? ☐ YES ☐ NO**LIBRARY RESOURCES**

NOTE: Senate has approved (S.93-11) that no new course should be approved by Senate until funding has been committed for necessary library materials. Each new course proposal must be accompanied by the email that serves as proof of assessment. For more information, please visit www.lib.sfu.ca/about/overview/collections/course-assessments.

RATIONALE FOR INTRODUCTION OF THIS COURSE

MHSS 400 is the capstone course for the new Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor. It forms part of a core suite of three new MHSS courses required for the minor, including MHSS 100 (Interdisciplinary Approaches to Health in the Humanities and Social Sciences) and MHSS 300 (Medical Legal Studies). These three courses serve to anchor the minor and provide a clear pathway for students to develop their critical thinking in this area and make interdisciplinary connections among the health-related elective courses in the humanities and social sciences they select to complete the minor. For more details please see the Full Project Proposal.

MHSS 400 is the capstone course of the MHSS minor. It provides students with an opportunity to synthesize and apply the interdisciplinary knowledge gained throughout their studies. The course emphasizes real-world challenges in health, with a focus on professional development and reflection. Through guest speakers, critical inquiry, and collaborative projects, students will develop professional skills, including communication, teamwork, empathy, and critical thinking. The course is designed to help students reflect on their preparation for health-related careers and explore various professional pathways. Guest speakers from health-related fields will regularly contribute to the colloquium discussions.

**SCHEDULING AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

Effective term and year (e.g. FALL 2016)

Fall 2025

Term in which course will typically be offered ☒ Spring ☐ Summer ☐ Fall

Other (describe)

Will this be a required or elective course in the curriculum? ☒ Required ☐ Elective

What is the probable enrollment when offered? Estimate:

50

UNITS

Indicate number of units:

4

Indicate no. of contact hours: 2 Lecture ☐ Seminar 1 Tutorial ☐ Lab ☐ Other; explain below**OTHER****FACULTY**

Which of your present CFL faculty have the expertise to offer this course?

Theodore Cosco, Margaret Hall

WQB DESIGNATION

(attach approval from Curriculum Office)

None

PREREQUISITE AND / OR COREQUISITE

Successful completion of MHSS 100 and MHSS 300 or permission from the instructor.

EQUIVALENT COURSES [For more information on equivalency, see Equivalency Statements under [Information about Specific Course components.](#)]

1. SEQUENTIAL COURSE [is not hard coded in the student information management system (SIMS).]

Students who have taken (*place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100)*) **first** may not then take this course for further credit.

N/A

2. ONE-WAY EQUIVALENCY [is not hard coded in SIMS.]

(*Place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100)*) will be accepted in lieu of this course.

N/A

3. TWO-WAY EQUIVALENCY [is hard coded and enforced by SIMS.]

Students with credit for (*place relevant course(s) in the blank below (ex: STAT 100)*) may not take this course for further credit.

N/A

Does the partner academic unit agree that this is a two-way equivalency? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Please also have the partner academic unit submit a course change form to update the course equivalency for their course(s).

4. SPECIAL TOPICS PRECLUSION STATEMENT [is not hard coded in SIMS.]

N/A

FEES

Are there any proposed student fees associated with this course other than tuition fees? ☐ YES ☒ NO

COURSE – LEVEL EDUCATIONAL GOALS (OPTIONAL)

The objectives of MHSS 400 are to:

- Provide students with a capstone experience where they synthesize and apply interdisciplinary knowledge.
- Enable students to critically analyze contemporary health challenges from multiple perspectives.
- Foster students' readiness for health-related careers or advanced study through professional development.
- Encourage reflection on the role of the MHSS minor in their personal and professional growth.
- Enhance students' communication, teamwork, and empathy through reflective and experiential learning activities.
- Introduce students to diverse career paths in the health sector beyond traditional medical roles.
- Help students build a critical reflection portfolio to integrate their learning and work/volunteer experiences.

**RESOURCES**

List any outstanding resource issues to be addressed prior to implementation: space, laboratory equipment, etc:

None

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Final exam required ☐ YES ☒ NO

Criminal Record Check required ☐ YES ☒ NO

OVERLAP CHECK

Checking for overlap is the responsibility of the Associate Dean.

Each new course proposal must have confirmation of an overlap check completed prior to submission to the Faculty Curriculum Committee.

Name of Originator

Theodore Cosco