

Faculty of Medicine in Rijeka

**Curriculum  
2025/2026**

For course

**An Introduction of Philosophy in Medicine**

Study program: **Medical Studies in English (R)** (elective)  
University integrated undergraduate and graduate study  
Department: **Department of Humanities and Social Sciences in Medicine**  
Course coordinator: **doc. dr. sc. Mijatović Franjo**

Year of study: **1**  
ECTS: **1.5**  
Incentive ECTS: **0 (0.00%)**  
Foreign language: **Possibility of teaching in a foreign language**

## Course information:

Introduce students to the general foundations of conceptual, metaphysical, epistemological, sociological, cultural, and political issues through presentation and active participation in discussions about medicine and healthcare today, based on reflections from the past and challenges for the future.

Analyze and critically interpret key concepts in the study of the relationship between philosophy and medicine: health and illness; three theories of causality in disease; holism and reductionism in medicine; controversial diseases; evidence in medicine; objective and social structures of science and medicine; evaluation of diagnosis and screening; research medical priorities; public health issues; student presentations.

After completing the course, students will be able to:

Identify and explain the main philosophical questions that arise in everyday life, including health, illness, pain, vulnerability, dignity, etc.

Critically evaluate arguments in the philosophy of medicine and healthcare.

Demonstrate a deep and systematic understanding of the philosophical approach to medicine.

Justify professionalism in various healthcare situations.

Write a clear and well-argued seminar paper.

Use relevant terms and argumentation in oral and written forms.

## List of assigned reading:

1. Ortega y Gasset, J., *What is Philosophy*, W. W. Norton & Company, 1964.
2. Wulff H. R., Pedersen SA, Rosenberg R. *Philosophy of medicine—an introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1986. [Google Scholar](#)
3. Lindemann N. J., Lindemann N. H, eds. *Meaning in medicine: a reader in the philosophy of health care*. London: Routledge, 1999. [Google Scholar](#)
4. Grant V. J. „Making room for medical humanities.“ *J Med Ethics: Medical Humanities*2002;28:45–8. [Abstract/FREE Full TextGoogle Scholar](#)
5. Borkan J. M., Weingarten M. A., Schlank E, et al. *A model for educating humanistic physicians in the 21st century: the new medicine, patient, and society course at Tel Aviv University*. *Ed Health* 2000;13:346–55. [CrossRefGoogle Scholar](#)
6. Boorse C., „On the distinction between disease and illness“ In: Lindemann Nelson J, Lindemann Nelson H, eds. *Meaning and medicine: a reader in the philosophy of health care*. London: Routledge, 1999:16–27. [Google Scholar](#)
7. Thompson, R. P., Upshur, E. G. R., *Philosophy of Medicine: An Introduction*, Routledge, 2018., <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40656-019-0257-y>
8. Kingma, E., "What is it to be healthy?" *Analysis* 67 (294):128-133., 2007. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5580664\\_What\\_is\\_it\\_to\\_be\\_healthy](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5580664_What_is_it_to_be_healthy)
9. Ereshefsky, M.. "Defining 'health' and 'disease'." *Stud Hist Philos Biol Biomed Sci* 40, 221-227, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2009.06.005>

## List of optional reading:

1. Nagel, T., "Death." *Noûs* 4(1): 73-80, 1970. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2214297>
2. McMahan, J., "The metaphysics of brain death." *Bioethics* 9(2): 91-126, 1995. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8519.1995.tb00305.x>
3. Broadbent, A., "Causation and models of disease in epidemiology." *Stud Hist Philos Biol Biomed Sci* 40 (4):302-11, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2009.09.006>
4. Worrall, J., "What Evidence in Evidence-Based Medicine?" *Philosophy of Science* 69:S316-S330, 2002. <https://doi.org/10.1086/341855>
5. Pinto, M., "Commercialization and the Limits of Well-Ordered Science." *Perspectives on Science* 23(2): 173-191, 2015. [https://doi.org/10.1162/POSC\\_a\\_00166](https://doi.org/10.1162/POSC_a_00166)
6. Kennedy, A. "Evaluating diagnostic tests." *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice* 22(4): 575-579, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jep.12541>
7. Hacking, I. "Pathological withdrawal of refugee children seeking asylum in Sweden." *Stud Hist Philos Biol Biomed Sci* 41(4): 309-317. 2010. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13752-012-0057-z>

## Curriculum:

### Student obligations:

Regular attendance of lectures / work-hops; 2. Activity in lectures and work-shops; 3. Final (written) exam. During the course of studies, according to lecturer's instructions, students will have to develop and defend their paper (in the form of discussion), based on lectures, practical work and knowledge acquired. A particular attention will be paid to the student's ability to use the acquired knowledge in their work and analysis of the selected topic (problem). In addition, students must prepare a presentation that would reflect a freely chosen question from the area of introduction to the philosophy of medicine. Finally, students will take an exam from the introduction to the philosophy of medicine. The final grade will be graded according to a grading system from 1 to 5. Assessment is carried out in accordance with the Rules of Assessment of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Rijeka: attendance is 10 (%), presentation of seminar paper 40 (%), and final written essay 50 (%).

### Exam (exam taking, description of the written/oral/practical part of the exam, point distribution, grading criteria):

### Other notes (related to the course) important for students:

Students are expected to attend classes regularly, actively participate in seminars and pass the final exam. Attendance records are determined by roll call at the beginning of class. Student absences are justified with a medical excuse. Except during consultations and by appointment, the teacher is also available via e-mail.

## COURSE HOURS 2025/2026

An Introduction of Philosophy in Medicine

---

### List of lectures, seminars and practicals:

### EXAM DATES (final exam):

---