

Degree programme	Type	Course
History of Science: History, Heritage and Scientific Communication	OP	1

Contact lecturer

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Group languages

You can consult this information at the [end](#) of the document.

Prerequisites

There is none

Objectives

In 2019, the global health crisis caused by COVID-19 profoundly transformed everyday life around the world. In a context of widespread uncertainty, the pandemic and the public health measures implemented to manage it fundamentally challenged conventional ways of understanding health and disease, exposing the limitations of the dominant biomedical paradigm. This experience demonstrated that health-related issues cannot be

understood independently of the social dynamics that shape them. It is therefore hardly surprising that, within this context of systemic crisis, the history of medicine and health has experienced a renewed academic and public interest.

Taking this development as a starting point, this module examines the collective dimensions of health and disease, with particular emphasis on the relationships between medical and health-related discourses and practices and the major historical processes that have shaped human societies, including colonialism, migration, urbanization, industrialization, and environmental change. Another objective of the module is to provide students with the conceptual and methodological tools necessary to engage with a historiographical renewal that can at times be difficult to navigate due to overproduction of scholarly publications in the field.

Learning outcomes

- CA27 (Explain to specialised and non-specialised audiences the role of public health in the policies of European states in the context of the change of vision on subjectivity and the possibility of a science of the mind in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.) Explain to specialised and non-specialised audiences the role of public health in the policies of European states in the context of the change of vision on subjectivity and the possibility of a science of the mind in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- CA28 (Explain to specialised and non-specialised audiences the characteristics and consequences of the processes of medicalisation and psychopathologisation in relation to the mechanisms of legitimisation of social control, the perception of health and disease, and self-perception.) Explain to specialised and non-specialised audiences the characteristics and consequences of the processes of medicalisation and psychopathologisation in relation to the mechanisms of legitimisation of social control, the perception of health and disease, and self-perception.
- CA29 (Explain to specialised and non-specialised audiences the historical role of medicine in the configuration of systems of gender, class, and race relations.) Explain to specialised and non-specialised audiences the historical role of medicine in the configuration of systems of gender, class, and race relations.
- KA27 (Accurately describe the historical development of the human and health sciences, as well as the practices of psychology, throughout history.) Accurately describe the historical development of the human and health sciences, as well as the practices of psychology, throughout history.
- KA28 (Describe how to make history of the subject and of physical and mental illnesses in relation to the change of vision on subjectivity and the possibility of a science of the mind in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.) Describe how to make history of the subject and of physical and mental illnesses in relation to the change of vision on subjectivity and the possibility of a science of the mind in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- KA29 (Describe gender biases in Western medicine and scientific psychology and how these disciplines have contributed to shaping systems of gender relations.) Describe gender biases in Western medicine and scientific psychology and how these disciplines have contributed to shaping systems of gender relations.
- SA25 (Identify stages, transformations, actors, spaces, objects, theories, experiments, practices and discourses of the history of medicine in the problematisation of the current processes of medicalisation and psychopathologisation as a fundamental part of broader processes of civilisation, rationalisation and social discipline.) Identify stages, transformations, actors, spaces, objects, theories, experiments, practices and discourses of the history of medicine in the problematisation of the current processes of medicalisation and psychopathologisation as a fundamental part of broader processes of civilisation, rationalisation and social discipline.
- SA26 (Investigate how the history of the subject and of physical and mental illnesses has been made and how to be made in relation to the historical processes of medicalisation and psychologisation (material and symbolic), and how these processes have contributed to the development of modernity.) Investigate how the history of the subject and of physical and mental illnesses has been made and how to be made in relation to the historical processes of medicalisation and psychologisation (material and symbolic), and how these processes have contributed to the development of modernity.
- SA27 (Analyse the characteristics and consequences of the processes of medicalisation and psychopathologisation in relation to the mechanisms of legitimisation of social control, incorporating the dimensions of gender, race, class, materiality and power.) Analyse the characteristics and consequences of the processes of medicalisation and psychopathologisation in relation to the

mechanisms of legitimisation of social control, incorporating the dimensions of gender, race, class, materiality and power.

Contents

The course is organised into ten consecutive sessions. Following an introductory session, which presents the course objectives, assessment methods, and an overview of the relevant historiography, the module is structured around a series of thematic sessions. Each session is centred on a specific case study, enabling students to engage with primary sources and documentary evidence used in writing and reinterpreting the history of health. Building on these case studies, each session broadens the discussion through a wider historiographical perspective.

The selected case studies have been selected to reflect, albeit not exhaustively, the diversity of approaches and perspectives that characterise the history of health. These include the social and cultural history of medicine; the interactions among human and non-human actors within and beyond the healthcare sphere; the study of everyday life; the spatial dimensions of health; the linguistic turn; and decolonial, environmental, and gender perspectives.

The history of health has also been reshaped through contributions from other disciplines and fields of inquiry. Accordingly, the case studies demonstrate how health discourses and practices applied to large populations cannot be understood without considering their complex entanglements with biology, the social sciences, and anthropology, as well as with multidisciplinary anthropotechnical projects such as eugenics.

1. Introduction: The collective dimensions of health
2. The other histories of health: Biology, ecology and culture in epidemics, 15th-18th centuries.
3. Epidemics and health campaigns through the lens of everyday life
4. Anthropotechnics beyond public health: evolution, degeneration and eugenics.
5. Medical colonialism and global health 1: other medicines and other 'public health' systems.
6. Medical colonialism and global health 2: Medicine, war, gender and transnational humanitarian action in historical perspective.
7. The business of health: technology, pharmaceuticals and hospitals.
8. Patient activism and the struggle for health rights
9. Human health through the study of animals.
10. Environmental health: nuclear contamination and irradiated bodies.

Learning activities and methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Analysis of primary sources	20	0.8	CA27, CA28, CA29, KA27, KA28, KA29, SA25, SA26, SA27
Lectures and practical classes	30	1.2	CA27, CA28, CA29, KA27, KA28, KA29, SA25, SA26, SA27
independent work	75	3	CA27, CA28, CA29, KA27, KA28, KA29, SA25, SA26, SA27

The teaching methodology is designed to enable students to acquire and apply a basic understanding of historiographical developments that have shaped the history of medicine and public health over recent

decades. To this end, the module draws on a wide range of primary sources-including official documents, press archives, correspondence, Indigenous codices, visual materials, literary works, and chronicles-which illustrate how these historiographical approaches have emerged and evolved.

Although the course is delivered primarily through classroom-based teaching, the UAB Virtual Campus will be used to facilitate communication, encourage interaction among participants, and provide access to course materials and bibliographic resources.

Annotation: within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous assessment activities

Title	Weight	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Class participation	10%	0	0	CA27, CA28, CA29, KA27, KA28, KA29, SA25, SA26, SA27
Individual oral presentation	45%	0	0	CA27, CA28, CA29, KA27, KA28, KA29, SA25, SA26, SA27
Essay	45%	0	0	CA27, CA28, CA29, KA27, KA28, KA29, SA25, SA26, SA27

The final mark for the module will be calculated on the basis of the following components:

1. Individual oral presentation (45%): students select a source, in agreement with the teaching staff, and analyse it in relation to one or more of the module sessions and their Master's thesis (TFM). The source may be textual, visual, oral, or another relevant format.
2. Written assignment (45%): Following the oral presentation, students will submit a short essay based on the material presented, incorporating the feedback and recommendations provided during the assessment process.
3. Participation in class discussions: 10%.

This subject entirely prohibits the use of AI technologies in all of its activities. Any submitted work that contains content generated using AI will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade will be awarded a zero, without the possibility of reassessment. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

Bibliography

Barona, Josep Lluís, ed. *Manual de Historia de la Medicina*. Valencia: Tirant lo Blanch, 2023.

Campos, Ricardo, Enrique Perdiguer Gil, y Eduardo Bueno Vergara, eds. *Cuarenta historias para una cuarentena: Reflexiones históricas sobre epidemias y salud global*. Sociedad Española de Historia de la Medicina, 2020.

Cueto, Marcos. *El regreso de las epidemias: Salud y sociedad en el Perú del siglo XX*. 2.^a ed. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2019.

Jackson, Mark, ed. *A Global History of Medicine*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Jones, Lori, ed. *Materialities of Disease across the Medieval World: Images, Objects, and Remains*. York, UK: Arc Humanities, 2025.

Lock, Margaret, y Vinh-Kim Nguyen. *An Anthropology of Biomedicine*. United States of America: John Wiley &

Sons, 2010.

López Piñero, José María. *La medicina en la historia*. Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2002.

Monnais, Laurence. *Médecine(s) et santé : Une petite histoire globale - XIXe et XXe siècles*. Montréal : Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2016, 258 p

Porras Gallo, María Isabel, María José Báguena Cervellera, Mariano Ayarzagüena Sanz y Noelia María Martín Espinosa, coords. *La erradicación y el control de las enfermedades infecciosas*. Madrid: Libros de la Catarata, 2018.

Software

not necessary

Course groups and languages

The information provided is provisional until November 30. After this date, you will be able to consult the language of each group through this [link](#). To access the information, you will need to enter the course CODE

Type of teaching	Group	Language	Semester	Shift
(TEm) Theory (master)	1	Catalan/Spanish	second semester	afternoon