UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

History of Medicine

2526-3-I0101D018-I0101D057M

Aims

The module aims to provide students with:

- knowledge and understanding of the historical and epistemological evolution of medicine, with particular attention to the cultural and social aspects that have shaped its development, and recognise the contribution of history in efining the current context of the nursing profession.
- ability to apply the acquired knowledge to contextualise nursing practice in the contemporary socio-cultural landscape, critically analysing historical influences on medical and nursing practice.
- autonomy in making judgements regarding cultural and social aspects of medicine, critically evaluating the role of history in the construction of current healthcare practices
- ability to communicate clearly and coherently one's knowledge and reflections on historical and socio-cultural aspects of medicine, using language appropriate to the academic and professional context
- ability to learn independently and to critically update one's own knowledge on the evolution of medicine and the nursing profession, promoting a conscious and continuous reflection on the relationship between history, culture and healthcare practice.

Contents

The course provides an overview of the historical and epistemological pathway that led to the birth and development of medicine, with particular reference to the Italian and European context. Through the analysis of key moments, concepts and figures, the cultural, social and scientific aspects that have contributed to shaping modern medicine will be explored, offering students useful tools to understand the evolution of the nursing profession in its historical context.

Detailed program

Evolutionary medicine and the origin of diseases. The birth of rational medicine in the classical era (Theurgical medicine and religious practices, Hippocrates and the birth of rational medicine, Hellenistic medicine and Roman medicine, Galen and the synthesis of classical medicine, Byzantine medicine) Medieval Medicine and the Risk of Charity (Christianity in Medicine, Monastic Medicine and Arab Medicine, Salerno Medical School, origin and development of hospitals, universities and medical training, Black Plague and health transformations); Renaissance Medicine (Renaissance hospital reform, the rediscovery of the human body, Vesalius and the anatomical revolution, the development of surgery) Baroque medicine (Galileanism in medicine, William Harvey and the discovery of the blood circulation, Malpighi and the microscope, iatrophysics, iatrochemistry and neo-Hippocratism); 18th century medicine between reforms, utopias and new theories (Social medicine and the Enlightenment, political revolutions and medicine, theories of systems, Morgagni and pathological anatomy, mesmerism, phrenology and homeopathy, Jenner and vaccination); 19th century (The birth of the modern clinic, Nightingale and the foundations of contemporary nursing, Biochemistry, Physiology and Pathology, Anaesthetic Gases and Antisepsis: Towards a New Surgery, Germ Theory and the “hunters” of microbes, the birth of radiology); medicine in the twentieth century (antimicrobial therapies, serotherapy, chemotherapy and antibiotic therapy, medicine between the two World Wars, eugenics, Nazi experiments and Nuremberg, the birth of the English NHS, medicine in the economic boom years, the Italian SSN and health reforms, the new challenges of contemporary medicine).

Prerequisites

Defined in the Degree Course Regulations.

Teaching form

The course is conducted through lectures, during which the lecturer promotes discussion and critical reflection on topics related to nursing and contemporary medicine. Students will be actively involved in the analysis of historical changes in the relationship between the assisted person and the health professional, as well as in the understanding of the development of the concept of health.
Teaching activities are divided into 8 lessons of 2 hours each, delivered in presence at the Monza site, with synchronous telededidactics for the Lecco, Faedo Valtellino (SO) and Bergamo sites.
The language of delivery is Italian.

Textbook and teaching resource

Cesana G, Riva M.A. (2017) Medicina e Società. Firenze: Società Editrice Fiorentina

Semester

2nd Semester 3rd academic year

Assessment method

Final examination of History of Medicine: Written examination with multiple-choice closed questions and single correct answer (10 questions) to assess basic knowledge. These are supplemented by synthetic open-ended questions (3 questions) designed to assess the student's understanding of the topics covered and interpretative ability. Each closed multiple-choice question is awarded 2 points, each open synthetic question is awarded 3 to 4 points depending on the complexity of the question. The overall mark is 30/30.

Office hours

By appointment, by writing to michele.riva@unimib.it

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING