HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND MEDICINE

Humanities Quadrangle, 203.432.1365
http://hshm.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
Deborah Coen

Director of Graduate Studies
Joanna Radin

Faculty
Sakena Abedin (History of Science & Medicine), Paola Bertucci (History), Deborah Coen (History), Ivano Dal Prete (History), Kelly O’Donnell (History of Science & Medicine), Nana Quarshe (History), Joanna Radin (History of Medicine), Chitra Ramalingam (History of Science & Medicine), Marco Ramos (History of Science), William Rankin (History), Carolyn Roberts (African American Studies; History; History of Medicine), Naomi Rogers (History; History of Medicine; Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), John Harley Warner (History of Medicine; History)

Affiliated faculty
Rene Almeling (Sociology), Toby Appel (Librarian for Medical History), Alexi Baker (Collections Manager, HSI), Marisa Bass (History of Art), Randi Epstein (English), Melissa Grafe (Librarian for Medical History), Dimitri Gutas (Emeritus; Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations), Ann Hanson (Classics), Jessica Helfand (Yale College), Marcia Inhorn (Anthropology), Kathryn James (Curator, Early Modern Books & Manuscripts, Beinecke Library), Amy Kapczynski (Law), Jennifer Klein (History), Stephen Latham (Director, Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics), Lisa Messeri (Anthropology), Joanne Meyerowitz (History), Alan Mikhail (History), Jennifer Raab (History of Art), Ayasha Ramachandran (Comparative Literature), Kevin Repp (Curator, Modern European Books & Manuscripts, Beinecke Library), Paul Sabin (History), Jason Schwartz (Public Health), Gordon Shepherd (Neuroscience), Rebecca Tannenbaum (History), R. John Williams (English; Film & Media Studies)

The Graduate Program in the History of Science and Medicine is a semi-autonomous graduate track within the Department of History. The program’s students are awarded degrees in History, with a concentration in the History of Science and Medicine.

FIELDS OF STUDY

All subjects and periods in the history of science and history of medicine, especially the modern era. Special fields represented include American and European science and medicine; disease, therapeutics, psychiatry, drug abuse, and public health; science and national security; science and law, science and religion, life sciences, human genetics, eugenics, biotechnology, gender, race, and science/medicine; bioethics and medical research; environmental sciences; human and social sciences; physical and earth sciences.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Courses

Students will ordinarily take twelve courses during the first two years. All students will normally take the three core Problems seminars: Problems in the History of Medicine and Public Health (HSHM 701 or HSHM 703), Problems in the History of Science (HSHM 702), and Problems in Science Studies (HSHM 710). These courses are committed to exploring histories of medicine and science alongside the cultural, political, and social forces that shape them. Issues of race, gender, sexuality, disability, class, and religion are integrated into discussions of medical and scientific knowledge production and praxis in Western and non-Western contexts.

In addition to the three core Problems seminars, students are required to take four graduate seminars in the history of science or medicine. Two of the four must be graduate research seminars. The remaining five courses can be taken in history of science or medicine, history, science, or any other field of demonstrated special relevance to the student’s scholarly objectives.

Graduate school grading at Yale follows a qualitative rubric of Honors, High Pass, or Pass. During the first two years of study, students must achieve Honors in at least two courses in the first year and Honors in at least four courses by the end of the second year, with a High Pass average overall. At the end of each term, the director of graduate studies (DGS) will ask faculty members whether they have serious concerns about the academic progress of any first- or second-year students in the Ph.D. program. Faculty members who have such concerns will provide written feedback to the DGS at the DGS’s request. The DGS will use discretion in ensuring that feedback is provided in a clear and effective manner to any students about whom there are concerns.

Students who enter having previously completed graduate work may obtain up to three course credits toward the completion of the total course requirement, the number being contingent on the extent and nature of the previous work and its fit with intended course of study at Yale.

Languages

All students must show proficiency in two languages in addition to English relevant to the student’s research interests and approved by the DGS. Over the years, our graduate students have demonstrated proficiency in a wide range of languages, including American
Sign Language, Bulgarian, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Mandarin Chinese, Norwegian, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish. Students may fulfill the requirement in a variety of ways, including demonstrated command of a native language other than English, graduation from an approved foreign university where teaching is conducted in a language other than English, passing an approved language course for credit, or passing a language test administered by the faculty or by one of Yale’s language departments. Language tests are administered by their respective departments (such as German, Italian, French, East Asian Languages and Literatures). Students should consult the DGS for additional details and options for uncommon languages.

Yale offers classes in a variety of languages, from introductory to advanced levels, as well as special summer courses for targeted reading proficiency. There are also opportunities to study languages outside of Yale’s curriculum, including funding for summer language study, and Directed Independent Language Study (DILS) for individuals who wish to study a language not offered by Yale. For more information on these programs and foreign language tutoring at Yale, please visit the Center for Language Study’s website at http://cls.yale.edu.

Second-Year Review

At the end of the academic year, the HSHM faculty will hold a special meeting to review each first- and second-year student in the program. The purpose of the meeting is to assess students’ academic progress. In order for second-year students to proceed to the third year, they must demonstrate through written work, classroom performance, and participation in departmental activities that they have the ability to: (a) speak and write clearly; (b) conduct independent research at a high level; and (c) develop coherent scholarly arguments.

A faculty vote will be taken at the conclusion of the review meeting to decide whether each second-year student may continue in the program. If a majority of faculty present and voting determine that a student may not continue, the student will be informed in writing and withdrawn from the program. The review meeting must be a full faculty meeting, but faculty members with no knowledge of the students under review may abstain from the vote, and their abstentions will not count in the total. Those members of the faculty who have worked with or know the students being evaluated are required to attend. In the event that any necessary faculty members absolutely cannot be present, they may send their views in writing to the DGS, who will read them at the meeting.

Qualifying Examination

Prior to beginning work on the dissertation, all students are expected to develop a broad general knowledge of the discipline. This knowledge will be acquired through a combination of course work, regular participation in HSHM colloquia and workshops, and dedicated preparation for the qualifying oral examination.

The qualifying examination has two main goals. First, it is a preparatory step toward the dissertation. Students will master the analytical vocabulary of the discipline and engage critically with key historiographic and theoretical questions. This will prepare them to select a research topic of scholarly significance and to articulate its import effectively. Second, the qualifying examination will prepare students for teaching. Students will learn to communicate a set of historical themes and narratives confidently and fluently. Accordingly, as part of their exam preparation, students may be asked to draft a syllabus for an undergraduate course based on each exam field.

Students will normally spend the summer following their second year preparing for the oral qualifying examination, which will be taken in the third year, preferably during the first half.

The qualifying examination will normally consist of four fields, each of which will be examined by a different faculty member: two fields in the history of science and/or history of medicine; one field in an area of history outside of medicine and/or science; and one field of special interest, the content and boundaries of which will be established in consultation with the student’s adviser.

Possibilities for the field of special interest include a second field in history outside of history of science or medicine, a field with a scientific or medical focus (such as bioethics, health policy, public health, medical anthropology, or medical sociology), or a field at the intersection of science, medicine, and other subjects (such as law, national security, religion, culture, biotechnology, gender, race, literature, the environment, and so on).

In preparation for the qualifying examination, the program’s faculty work closely with students to facilitate the successful passage of the exam. A student who does fail the qualifying examination will be permitted to retake it. A student who fails a second time will be asked to withdraw from the program.

Advising

During their first term in the program, all students will be advised by the DGS. During the second term and thereafter, each student will be advised by a faculty member of the student’s choosing. The adviser will provide guidance in selecting courses and preparing for the qualifying examination. The adviser may also offer help with the development of ideas for the dissertation, but students are free to choose someone else as the dissertation adviser when the time comes to do so. Students are encouraged to discuss their interests and program of study with other members of the faculty.

Dissertation Prospectus

Students are encouraged to begin thinking about their dissertation topics during the second year. This is an opportune time, since they will be expected to submit a dissertation prospectus as soon as possible following the qualifying examination and to defend the
prospectus orally before being admitted to full candidacy for the doctoral degree. The prospectus colloquium is typically held in the second term of the third year, with advancement to candidacy before the start of the fourth year.

For more information, please see the program's Guide to Prospectus and Prospectus Colloquium at https://hshm.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/prospectus_guide.pdf.

Committee Constitution Requirement

Each Ph.D. student must have a dissertation committee and a dissertation adviser, satisfactory to the student's department and in accordance with Graduate School requirements, in order to register for the fourth year of study. Students without an approved committee and dissertation adviser will normally be withdrawn from their program.

Teaching

Teaching is an important part of the professional preparation of graduate students in History of Science and Medicine. Students are encouraged to participate in programs to develop their teaching skills, including the Certificate for College Teaching Preparation, which is a comprehensive training program designed to enhance proficiency in classroom instruction.

Typically, during the third and fourth years of study, students will serve as teaching fellows, which usually means that they will lead small-group discussion sections for undergraduate courses and grade their students’ exams and papers. On occasion, however, students may work as teaching fellows in the second term of the second year, particularly if they have received course credit for previous graduate studies, or if they choose to defer the completion of their required course work for the first term of the third year. Students usually work as teaching fellows for courses in the History of Science and Medicine, but they may also have the opportunity to be teaching fellows in History or other departments.

At least two terms of teaching are required for doctoral students to graduate from the Program in the History of Science and Medicine; four terms are required for students on Yale-supported fellowships, although students may elect to substitute one or two of these terms with research assistantships at the Yale Center for British Art, the Yale University Art Gallery, or other sites across campus. For more information, please contact the Office of Financial Aid.

Chapter Conference and Dissertation Completion

In the fourth or fifth year, and preferably no later than the fall term of the fifth year, students are required to submit one chapter of the dissertation (not necessarily the first chapter) to the dissertation committee. The committee will then meet as a group with the student to discuss the chapter and the student's progress on the dissertation more generally. This conference is meant to be an extension of the conversation begun in the prospectus defense, with the aim of providing feedback on the student's research, argument, and style at this early stage of the dissertation writing process.

M.D./PH.D. AND J.D./PH.D. JOINT-DEGREE PROGRAMS

Students may pursue a doctorate in History of Science and Medicine jointly with a degree in Medicine or Law. Standard graduate financial support is provided for the doctoral phase of work toward such a joint degree. Candidates for the joint degree in Law must apply for admission to both the Law School and the Graduate School. Information about the joint-degree program with Medicine can be obtained from the website of the Yale School of Medicine (http://medicine.yale.edu/mdphd) and from the website of the Section of the History of Medicine (http://medicine.yale.edu/histmed).

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. and M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

Terminal Master’s Degree Program For the terminal master’s degree students must pass seven term courses, four of which must be in HSHM. Course work will normally include at least two Problems graduate seminars and two additional graduate seminars in HSHM. The remaining courses are to be chosen in consultation with the DGS or a faculty adviser. Honors grades are required in two courses, with a High Pass average overall. Financial aid is not available for this M.A. program.

More information is available on the program’s website, http://hshm.yale.edu.

COURSES

HSHM 691a and HSHM 692b / ANTH 963a and ANTH 964b / HIST 963a and HIST 964b / HSAR 841a and HSAR 842b, Topics in the Environmental Humanities Staff

This is the required workshop for the Graduate Certificate in Environmental Humanities. The workshop meets six times per term to explore concepts, methods, and pedagogy in the environmental humanities, and to share student and faculty research. Each student pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Environmental Humanities must complete both a fall term and a spring term of the workshop, but the two terms of student participation need not be consecutive. The fall term each year emphasizes key concepts and major intellectual currents. The spring term each year emphasizes pedagogy, methods, and public practice. Specific topics vary each year. Students who have previously enrolled in the course may audit the course in a subsequent year. Open only to students pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Environmental Humanities. ½ Course cr per term
HSHM 701a / HIST 930a, Problems in the History of Medicine and Public Health  John Warner
An examination of the variety of approaches to the social and cultural history of medicine and public health. Readings are drawn from recent literature in the field, sampling writings on health care, illness experiences, and medical cultures in Asia, Latin America, Europe, and the United States from antiquity through the twenty-first century. Topics include the role of gender, class, ethnicity, race, religion, and region in the experience of sickness and healing; the intersection of lay and professional understandings of the body; and the role of the marketplace in shaping cultural authority, professional identities, and patient expectations.

HSHM 702a / HIST 931a, Problems in the History of Science  Deborah Coen
Surveys current methodologies through key theoretical and critical works. Students encounter major twentieth-century methodological moments that have left lasting imprints on the field: positivism and anti-positivism, the sociology of knowledge, actor-network theory, and historical epistemology, as well as newer approaches focusing on space, infrastructure, translation, and exchange. We also consider central conceptual problems for the field, such as the demarcation of science from pseudoscience; the definition of modernity and the narrative of the Scientific Revolution; vernacular science, the colonial archive, and non-textual sources.

HSHM 710b / HIST 921b, Problems in Science Studies  Joanna Radin
Exploration of the methods and debates in the social studies of science, technology, and medicine. This course covers the history of the field and its current intellectual, social, and political positioning. It provides critical tools—including feminist, postcolonial, and new materialist perspectives—to address the relationships among science, technology, medicine, and society.

HSHM 736b / HIST 943b / WGSS 730b, Health Politics, Body Politics  Naomi Rogers
A reading seminar on struggles to control, pathologize, and normalize human bodies, with a particular focus on science, medicine, and the state, both in North America and in a broader global health context. Topics include disease, race, and politics; repression and regulation of birth control; the politics of adoption; domestic and global population control; feminist health movements; and the pathologizing and identity politics of disabled people.

HSHM 761a / AFAM 752a / HIST 937a, Medicine and Empire  Carolyn Roberts
A reading course that explores medicine in the context of early modern empires with a focus on Africa, India, and the Americas. Topics include race, gender, and the body; medicine and the environment; itineraries of scientific knowledge; enslaved, indigenous, and creole medical and botanical knowledge and practice; colonial contests over medical authority and power; indigenous and enslaved epistemologies of the natural world; medicine and religion.

HSHM 780b / HIST 948b, History beyond the Archive  Nana Osei Quarshie
This course focuses on three broad themes. First, we examine the social construction of “the archive.” What forms of knowledge accumulation constitute a historical repository? Second, we examine the role of the archive in the interplay of ethnography and historiography. How do ethnographic history, historical ethnography, and history of the present differ? Lastly, we examine the necessity of the archive and consider various alternative grounds upon which history can be constructed. What might it mean to imagine a history (or a history of science, medicine, and technology) beyond the archive?

HSHM 920a or b, Independent Reading  Staff
By arrangement with faculty.

HSHM 930a or b, Independent Research  Staff
By arrangement with faculty.