



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

University Council

January 9, 2026

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2025-2026

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal from the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences for a new Undergraduate Certificate in Health Humanities: Health, Arts, and Society will be an agenda item for the January 16, 2026, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Susan Sanchez, Chair

cc: Provost Benjamin Ayers

Dr. Marisa Anne Pagnattaro

PROPOSAL FOR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Date: October 25, 2025

School/College/Unit: Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Department/Division: Anthropology

Certificate Title: Health Humanities: Health, Arts, and Society

CIP: 51320400

Effective Term: Fall 2026

Which campus(es) will offer this certificate? Athens

Level (Undergraduate, Graduate, or Post-Baccalaureate): Undergraduate

Program Abstract: The proposed Undergraduate Certificate in Health Humanities: Health, Arts and Society will provide students with a foundation in interdisciplinary health studies, demonstrating how the arts, humanities, and social sciences contribute to the study of health and medicine. The program's curriculum is structured to teach students the core knowledge and skills they will need to contextualize their pre-health or health-related studies within social, cultural, historical, and aesthetic frameworks. The proposed program is appropriate for students across campus interested in the complex relationship between healthcare, society, and the human condition.

The proposed certificate is inspired by health and medical humanities programs across the United States that have been developed to provide opportunities for students to complement their interests in healthcare fields with training in humanistic approaches. This interdisciplinary certificate program will draw on course offerings across the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences that highlight how the social sciences, arts, and humanities contribute to meeting the diverse and complex challenges of medicine and healthcare in the 21st century. It will provide pre-health students with knowledge and skills that will help prepare them for medical or other professional schools in the healthcare sector.

The certificate requires students to complete five elective courses with at least one three-credit course in each of the areas of the arts, humanities, and social approaches to health, as well as a required three-credit hour capstone course led by the certificate coordinator. This capstone course will serve to develop community, create networking opportunities, and ask students to create a project that demonstrates their integration of the academic and professional skills they have developed in the elective courses. The capstone will also be used to assess and improve the certificate program's success and learning outcomes. As the program is developed, the certificate coordinator will meet with an advisory board to discuss new courses and assessment strategies.

This advisory board currently includes faculty members from the departments of Anthropology,

Communication Studies, the Institute for Women's and Gender studies, the Lamar Dodd School of Art, and the UGA School of Medicine.

1. Purpose and Educational Objectives

State the purpose and educational objectives of the program. How does this program complement the mission of the institution?

The humanities have long been shown to play an important role in health professions education, nurturing essential qualities including empathy, self-efficacy, visual diagnostic skills, and patient-focused care. Extending education beyond biomedical sciences is a core strategy in developing professional values and behaviors, including professional identity formation, and encourages deeper understanding of patients' illness journeys. Therefore, the primary purpose of the Undergraduate Certificate in Health Humanities: Health, Arts, and Society will be to teach students to appreciate the holistic nature of health. It will enhance students' coursework through the addition of interdisciplinary training in the cultural, historical, aesthetic and ethical context of health and healthcare. Students will learn how the arts, humanities, and social sciences provide essential context to the technical training required for modern health professions. Through their coursework, students will build empathy and creativity, strengthen communication and interpersonal skills, and enhance critical thinking about the social contexts of health and care.

This interdisciplinary certificate directly complements the University of Georgia's commitment to creating a pipeline of well-trained future healthcare professionals that are prepared to meet the needs of Georgians and beyond. By providing pre-health students with a deeper understanding of community health needs and social, cultural, and ethical frameworks, the certificate will complement other campus efforts aimed at positioning the university as a national leader in medical education. Research has shown that experience in the medical humanities enhances medical school preparation and performance.¹

2. Need for the Program

There are frequent calls to ensure that future healthcare professionals are equipped to deal with the increasing complexity of providing patient-centered, humanistic care to diverse communities. Baccalaureate programs in the health humanities help to meet this need by providing a pathway for students to develop a more complex knowledge of health and healthcare while exploring the contributions of the arts and humanities to 21st century healthcare. Specifically, training in the health humanities prepares students for the social and cultural nuances of healthcare. Incorporating this as an option for pre-health students allows them to hone their skills in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity, each of which is critical to participating in the complex U.S. healthcare system as individuals and as part of professional healthcare teams.

Health humanities programs offer valuable training for applicants to all health professions, including medical, physician assistant, nursing, pharmacy, and other professional schools. Health humanities programs enhance the student's core academic programs and, through attention to interdisciplinary approaches, cultivate the communication skills, ethical intelligence, and cultural awareness that are increasingly prioritized by admissions committees of professional programs².

¹ Lamb, E. G., Berry, S. L., & Jones, T. (2022). *Baccalaureate programs in health humanities*. Health Humanities Consortium (HHC) Curricular Toolkit. <https://healthhumanitiesconsortium.com/publications/hhc-toolkit/>.

² Anderson-Fye, E. P., Knopes, J., & Villareal, H. (2018). Piloting an undergraduate survey course in medical humanities and social medicine: Lessons, tradeoffs, and institutional context. *Journal of Humanities in Rehabilitation*, Spring 2018

For the MCAT, coursework in the health humanities will strengthen a student’s ability to critically analyze complex texts and apply social/behavioral concepts that are a component of the Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior section of the exam. Exposure to topics including patient narratives, arts in medicine, and reflective practice found in the humanities can enrich student’s awareness of whole-person health approaches. This holistic preparation ensures graduates possess the interdisciplinary perspective required to navigate patient-centered care and consider the social, cultural, economic, and aesthetic nature of health.

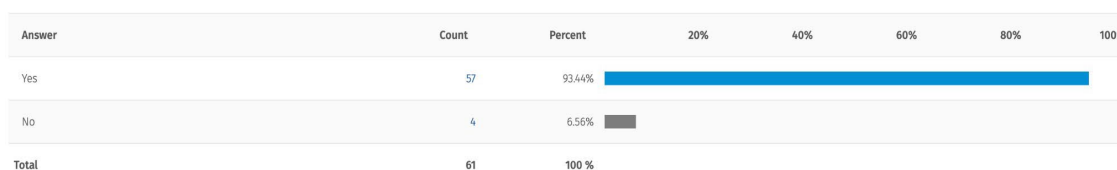
- a. **Semester/Year of Program Initiation:** Fall 2026
- b. **Semester/Year of Full Implementation of Program:** Fall 2026
- c. **Semester/Year First Certificates will be awarded:** Fall 2027 or Spring 2028
- d. **Annual Number of Graduates expected (once the program is established):** 15-20
- e. **Projected Future Trends for number of students enrolled in the program:** The faculty expect the program to grow to 20-30 graduates annually over the next five years.

3. Student Demand

- a. *Provide documentation of evidence of student demand for this program, including a student survey.*

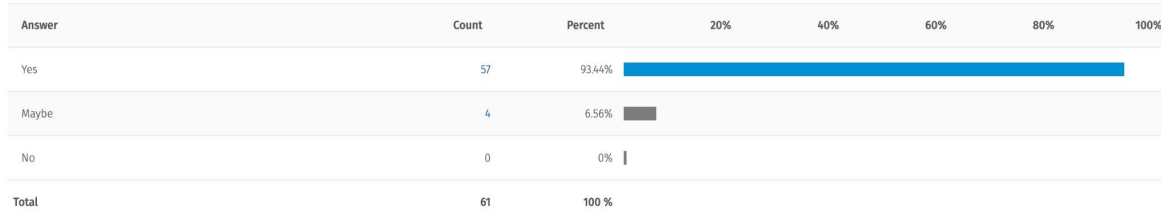
A survey of undergraduate students across key courses in anthropology, the visual arts, and biology was conducted in October 2025. A total of 61 students responded. The most common majors of students who responded to the survey included biology and related programs, anthropology, and the visual arts. Over 90% of survey respondents indicated their career goals were related to a healthcare or medical field suggesting the survey was able to capture the target student groups.

Are you or do you plan to work in a healthcare or medical field—whether that’s helping people or animals?

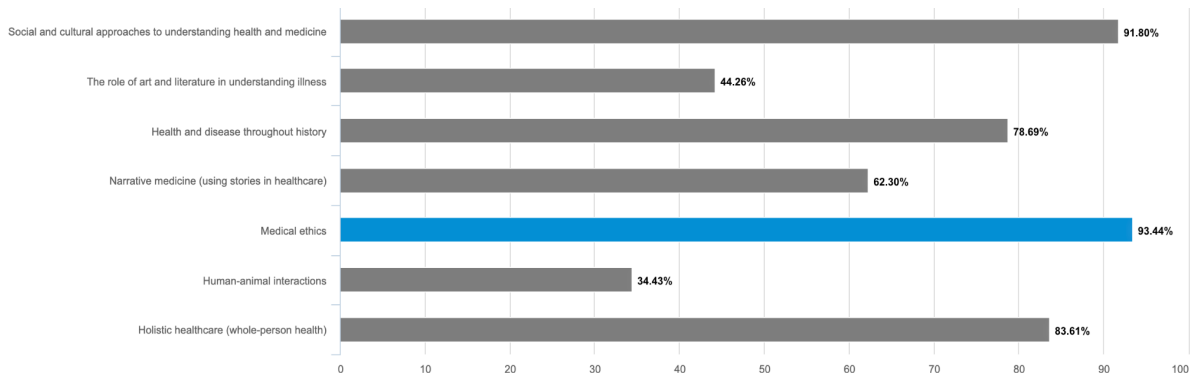


On the whole, the survey indicates sufficient demand for the certificate program and interest in the skills and knowledge students would gain in this interdisciplinary program. Over 90% of respondents agreed that UGA should offer the program. Students also indicated broad support for instruction across the proposed curriculum including attention to the cultural, social, historic, political and aesthetic aspects of health and healthcare.

Do you think UGA should offer an undergraduate program in the interdisciplinary study of medicine through the lens of disciplines such as the arts, humanities, and social/behavioral sciences? This area of study is often called Medical Humanities or Society and Health at other universities.



Which of the following topics do you find compelling? (Select all that apply)



Students also indicated broad interest in the professional skills and areas of knowledge commonly associated with training in the medical and health humanities, including communication skills and empathy to create better interactions (78% of respondents indicated interest), understanding of cultural and social dynamics to facilitate working across communities in the U.S. and globally (83% indicated interest), and interdisciplinary problem-solving and collaborative/team-based care (77% indicated interest). Students also indicated interest in the use of arts and design principles to improve medicine and healthcare.

b. Provide evidence that demand will be sufficient to sustain reasonable enrollment.

As of Fall 2025, there are about 2,700 students in the Biology (B.S.) major, the majority of whom are also considered part of the pre-health program at UGA. This is a large pool of potential participants and the level of interest expressed in the survey also supports that demand should support enrollment. If only 2-5% of those students enroll in the certificate program, there will be sufficient enrollment. If demand exceeds expectations, the faculty believe the program coordinator and associated faculty will have time to adjust to the new responsibilities by creating new courses, facilitating new sections of the capstone courses specific to the certificate program, and building capacity in this area. If student demand exceeds the program's ability to adjust, acceptance to the program can be limited to meet capacity in the required capstone courses.

Beyond those students who aim to become human healthcare practitioners, the program may see demand from students in other units and colleges across campus as programs in the health humanities have been shown to build skills in critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. These skills are essential for careers in the broader healthcare industry, including marketing, medical research, consulting, insurance, and in the non-profit healthcare sectors. The program faculty anticipate adding courses from

qualified and interested faculty from additional units across campus to the list of elective courses in the future.

4. Program of Study

Provide a detailed program of study for the certificate program, including:

a. Specific course prefixes, numbers, and titles

Required Capstone

ANTH 4545, Capstone in Health Humanities (3 hours)

Elective Courses

Students must take five elective courses across three areas, with at least one course in each area, for a minimum of 13 hours.

A. Social and Ethical Dynamics of Health and Healthcare

Select a minimum of one course. Students must take at least one course that addresses the social, cultural, economic, ethical, and interpersonal dynamics of health.

ANTH 3540, Multicultural Health Care (3 hours)

ANTH 3590, Nutritional Anthropology (3 hours)

ANTH 4540/6540-4540L/6540L, Health, Biology, and Culture (3 hours)

ANTH 4590/6590, Anthropology of Infectious Disease (3 hours)

CLAS 1030, Medical Terminology (3 hours)

COMM 3350, Topics in Interpersonal and Health Communication Processes (3 hours)

COMM 4420/6420, Communication and Body Image (3 hours)

COMM(HPRB) 4610/6610, Health Communication (3 hours)

COMM(HPRB) 4625, Communication and Health Disparities (3 hours)

PHIL 2030, Introduction to Ethics (3 hours)

PHIL 3220, Biomedical Ethics (3 hours)

PHIL 4260/6260, Advanced Biomedical Ethics (3 hours)

PSYC 3810, Psychology of Health (3 hours)

SOCI 3100, Medical Sociology (3 hours)

SOCI 3110, Sociology of Health Care (3 hours)

SOCI 4000, Society, Bodies, and Health (3 hours)

WMST 4120/6120, Sex, Politics, Science, and Reproduction (3 hours)

WMST 2500, Introduction to Gender, Women, and Health (3 hours)

WMST 3270S, Gendered Politics of Food (3 hours)

WMST(EDUC) 4400/6400, Bodies, Gender, Sexuality, and Sex Education for Children and Youth (3 hours)

B. Visual Culture and Creative Practice in Healthcare

Students must select a minimum of one course. These courses demonstrate the aesthetic nature of health, healthcare, and medicine. They include instruction on arts in medicine, creativity, holistic approaches to understanding bodies and visual aesthetics, and communication across different mediums. Arts electives that do not explicitly address health or healthcare are included when they provide students with essential skills that will benefit healthcare. As demonstrated by UGA's collaboration with the Georgia Museum of Art, engaging with visual culture fosters the observational precision and critical thinking necessary to recognize patterns in complex visual data and improve

patient rapport³. Furthermore, courses in dance, drawing, textiles, and design enhance manual dexterity and fine motor skills required for medical procedures, bridging the gap between artistic practice and clinical excellence.

ARED 3070, Art and Society: Visual Culture, Diversity, and Pedagogy (3 hours)
ARGD 3010, Foundations of Graphic Design (3 hours)
ARHI 2000, Introduction to Art History: Technique, Style, and Context (3 hours)
ARST 1050, Drawing I: Observation and Visual Language (3 hours)
ARST 1080, Three-Dimensional Design (3 hours)
ARST 2000, Introduction to Figure Drawing (3 hours)
ARST 2205, Introduction to Photography and Image Culture (1 hour)
 AND ARST 2205L, Introduction to Photography and Image Culture Laboratory (2 hours)
ARST 2700, Textile Foundations (3 hours)
ARTS 2000, Art Appreciation (3 hours)
ARTS 2100, Strategic Visual Thinking (3 hours)
MUSI 1022, Introduction to Music Therapy (1 hour)
MUSI 2020, Introduction to Music (3 hours)
PEDB 1609, Creative Dance for Well-being (1 hour)

C. History and Narratives in Health and Healthcare

Select a minimum of one course. These courses situate health and medicine in history and cultures through attention to the role of time and place in health as well as the value of reflection and narrative writing in medicine.

ANTH 3444, Ancient Human Health (3 hours)
BIOL 4200W, Science and Health Writing (3 hours)
CMLT 2800, Literature and Medicine (3 hours)
CMLT 4444/6444, Literature and Medicine (3 hours)
CMLT 4710/6710, Health and Narratives in Global Asias (3 hours)
ENGL 3836, Literature and the Health Humanities (3 hours)
ENGL 3851S, Writing for Social Justice: The Prison Writing Project (3 hours)
ENGL 4836W/6836W, Writing about Health and Medicine (3 hours)
HIST 2710, Disease and Human History (3 hours)
HIST 3433, History of Medicine (3 hours)
HIST 3740, Disease and Human History (3 hours)
HIST 3768, Global History of Public Health since 1900 (3 hours)
HIST(GLOB)(LACS) 3770, Pandemic! Infectious Disease in Global History (3 hours)
HIST 4065/6065, History of American Medicine to 1865 (3 hours)
HIST 4066/6066, History of American Medicine, 1865 to the present (3 hours)
HIST(CLAS) 4225/6225, Medicine, Healing, and the Body in Ancient Greece and Rome (3 hours)
HIST 4445/6445, A Global History of Drugs (3 hours)
SPAN 4003, Medical Spanish (3 hours)

D. Students must take a Capstone Course, ANTH 4545 (3 hours)

Students must have completed at least one course in each area above before enrolling in ANTH 4545, the capstone course.

³ Is there a doctor in the gallery (<https://georgiamuseum.org/is-there-a-doctor-in-the-gallery-au-uga-med-students-learn-valuable-lessons-from-georgia-museum-of-art-galleries/>)

b. Identify any new courses created for this program.

ANTH 4545, Capstone in Health Humanities (3 hours). Students will develop a project that illustrates the integration of their coursework in the certificate program and the value of interdisciplinary approaches to health and healthcare. Students will learn about interdisciplinary research, reflect on the connections across their courses, conduct additional research and present a final product. The course will be led by the program coordinator and serve to build community among the certificate students.

Faculty expect one section of the required capstone course (20–25 students) to be sufficient during the program’s early years. The program coordinator will create sharable course materials to support future instructors as the program scales. If enrollment rises, faculty on the advisory board have expressed interest in offering additional sections. Certificate faculty will also coordinate with other interested faculty. However, if demand surpasses the ability to maintain program standards and completion timelines, admissions will be limited.

5. Model Program and Accreditation

a. Identify any model programs, accepted disciplinary standards, and accepted curricular practices against which the proposed program could be judged. Evaluate the extent to which the proposed curriculum is consistent with these external points of reference and provide a rationale for significant inconsistencies and differences that may exist.

A 2024 overview titled “Health Humanities Baccalaureate Programs in the United States and Canada,” produced by Case Western Reserve University’s School of Medicine, notes that programs in the health humanities are found across the country. Within Georgia, both Emory University and Augusta University house related programs: Emory University offers a major in Human Health (A.B.), while Augusta University offers an Undergraduate Certificate in Health Humanities and a major in Health, Society, and Policy (A.B.). While there are no accepted disciplinary standards, programs require a minimum of one humanities course with additional humanities or social sciences electives. Additionally, it is expected that the programs emphasize an interdisciplinary focus on health or medicine.

The faculty drew on the following resources and certificate programs at peer and aspirational institutions to inform the development of this program:

Health Humanities Baccalaureate Programs in the United States and Canada:
<https://case.edu/medicine/bioethics/education/health-humanities>

John Hopkins University, Medicine, Science, and the Humanities (A.B.):
<https://krieger.jhu.edu/msh/undergraduate/>

Augusta University, Undergraduate Certificate in Health Humanities:
https://catalog.augusta.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=48&poid=11479&returnto=5727

The proposed program has several important advantages that will distinguish UGA’s program from similar programs at peer and aspirational schools. First, the arts are not consistently a required component of baccalaureate programs at peer and aspirational institutions, which tend

to focus heavily on the social sciences and humanities. The proposed program's inclusion of the arts as a required area will expose students to the breadth of the health humanities and provide more opportunities for students to observe and practice interdisciplinary approaches. Second, while research or capstone courses are required components of other programs, the proposed program's use of the capstone course to build community, create networking opportunities, and produce a product showcasing how their learning contributes to their professional goals will exemplify the value of high-impact teaching practices.

b. If program accreditation is available, provide an analysis of the ability of the program to satisfy the curricular standards of such specialized accreditation.

Not applicable.

6. Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify the value of the humanities, arts, and social and behavioral sciences to understanding health and healthcare
- Describe examples of the social, cultural, and ethical dynamics of health and healthcare
- Describe the role of the arts in medicine and healthcare
- Describe the role of history and narratives in understanding illness and health
- Employ career-ready skills in collaboration and communication.

7. Assessment and Admissions

Describe how the learning outcomes for the program will be assessed. Describe the process and criteria for how students will be admitted to and retained in the program.

Learning Outcome	Program Assessment
LO1. Identify the value of the humanities, arts, and social and behavioral sciences to understanding health and healthcare.	<p>Anonymous survey of fourth-year students and alumni.</p> <p>Survey of faculty teaching elective classes.</p> <p>Assignments and activities in required Capstone course (Anth4545).</p>
LO2. Describe examples of the social, cultural, and ethical dynamics of health and healthcare.	<p>Anonymous survey of fourth-year students and alumni.</p> <p>Survey of faculty teaching elective classes.</p> <p>Discussions between students and the certificate coordinator about electives and how they target learning and career goals.</p> <p>Selection of assignments and activities in elective courses offered over the previous academic year from Section A of curriculum.</p>
LO3. Describe the role of the arts in medicine	Anonymous survey of fourth-year students and

and healthcare.	<p>alumni.</p> <p>Survey of faculty teaching elective classes.</p> <p>Selection of assignments and activities in elective courses offered over the previous academic year from Section B of curriculum.</p>
LO4. Describe the role of history and narratives in understanding illness and health	<p>Anonymous survey of fourth-year students and alumni.</p> <p>Survey of faculty teaching elective classes.</p> <p>Selection of assignments and activities in elective courses offered over the previous academic year from Section C of curriculum.</p>
LO5. Employ career-ready skills in collaboration and communication.	<p>Anonymous survey of fourth-year students and alumni.</p> <p>Survey of faculty teaching elective classes.</p> <p>Observations of faculty teaching elective courses that assess collaboration and communication skills.</p> <p>Assignments and activities in required Capstone course (Anth4545).</p>

Students will apply to the certificate program by completing an online survey. Applicants must be in good academic standing at the time of application to the program. Admission will occur on a rolling basis. The required capstone course (ANTH 4545) will serve a cohort building effect. Additionally, all students currently enrolled in the program and any faculty teaching elective courses will be invited to participate in an annual capstone community building event. During this event, the coordinator and advisory group will directly engage with students on what they have learned, challenges, and opportunities for future improvement. This will also complement the program coordinator's survey of students, faculty, and alumni of the program.

Documentation of Approval and Notification

Proposal: Undergraduate Certificate in Health Humanities: Health, Arts, and Society

College: Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Department: Anthropology

Proposed Effective Term: Fall 2026

School/College:

- Head of the Department of Anthropology, Dr. Theodore Gragson, 11/7/2025
- Franklin College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean, Dr. Paula Lemons, 12/16/2025

Use of Course Notifications:

- Director of the Hugh Hodgson School of Music, Dr. Daniel Bara, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of Romance Languages, Dr. Dana Bultman, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of Psychology, Dr. Malissa Clark, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of Kinesiology, Dr. Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of Classics, Dr. Mario Erasmo, 1/12/2026
- Associate Head of the Department of Communication Studies, Dr. Kelly Happe, 1/12/2026
- Assistant Director of the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies, Dr. Cecilia Herles, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of History, Dr. Kevin Jones, 1/12/2026
- Associate Director of Curriculum for the Lamar Dodd School of Art, Professor Michael Marshall, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of Philosophy, Dr. Aaron Meskin, 1/12/2026
- Chair of the Division of Biological Sciences, Dr. Kristen Miller, 1/12/2026
- Mary Frances Early College of Education Associate Dean, Dr. Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett, 1/12/2026
- Director of the Lamar Dodd School of Art, Professor Joseph Peragine, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of Sociology, Dr. William Pridemore, 1/12/2026
- Director of the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies, Dr. Patricia Richards, 1/12/2026
- Interim Head of the Department of Communication Studies, Dr. Belinda Stillion Southard, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of Comparative Literature and Intercultural Studies, Dr. Frans Weiser, 1/12/2026
- Head of the Department of English, Dr. Roland Végső, 1/12/2026