



Medical Alumni Association
University of Toronto



MEDICAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION & CREMS SPONSORED
RESEARCH AWARDS IN THE HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

2021 SUPERVISOR INFORMATION FORM

If you wish to act as a supervisor for a first- or second-year University of Toronto medical student wishing to conduct a research project in the Humanities & Social Sciences between June and August 2022, please complete the form below with as much detail as possible.

*****Submit this form to crems.programs@utoronto.ca by the deadline of February 24, 2022****

PART A: Supervisor and On-Site Supervisor Contact Information

Name	Dr. Ariel Lefkowitz
Email Address	ariel.lefkowitz@utoronto.ca
Telephone	416-480-5108
Department	Medicine
Selected Publications	Lefkowitz, A., Meitar, D., & Kuper, A. (2020). Can doctors be taught virtue? <i>Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice</i> , 27(3), 543–548. https://doi.org/10.1111/jep.13398 Hendren, E., Hladunewich, M. A., & Lefkowitz, A. (2021). Caring for pregnant patients with CKD---an ethical discussion of 5 cases. <i>Kidney International Reports</i> , 6(5), 1273–1279. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ekir.2021.02.020 MacKinnon, K. R., Lefkowitz, A., Lorello, G. R., Schrewe, B., Soklaridis, S., & Kuper, A. (2021). Recognizing and renaming in obstetrics: How do we take better care with language? <i>Obstetric Medicine</i> , 14(4), 201–203. https://doi.org/10.1177/1753495x211060191
Area of Research Project (2 keywords)	Professionalism, Humanities



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PART B: Project Information

The option to consider student ideas and/or opt for a less detailed supervisor project description is also available. If this pertains to your project/situation, please indicate below in the space provided

Project Title (this can be modified later, but we would like to have a working title from the start):

A national environmental survey on student perspectives of effective current and suggested approaches to integrate critical humanities within medical learning

Provide background information on the project (max 500 words):

Background:

In recent decades, Humanities have been integrated into medical curricula to diversify students' conceptions of the skills required to become a good physician, including empathizing with patient perspectives, reflecting on health inequities, and working towards social advocacy.

At the University of Toronto, humanities courses include lectures on professionalism and the companion curriculum excerpts within the weekly case-based learning modules. An ongoing study on the University of Toronto's Humanities companion curriculum, looking at the barriers of integrating humanities within the medical curriculum, has recently found that students are interested in learning humanities but face difficulties sustaining engagement amidst lack of institutional support and faculty development.

Nationally, a recent environmental review of humanities-focused faculty at Canadian medical schools identified key challenges, such limited communications between learners at different universities and a lack of a central repository of health humanities learning objectives and outcomes (1). Currently, there are no research studies assessing student perspectives across Canadian universities on implementations of humanities learning.

A national study on medical student perspectives would expand the scope of the current University of Toronto local study, and it would address the barriers identified in the national faculty survey of the lack of a national understanding of student uptake of health humanities learning. The value of specifically analyzing student feedback is that it may better identify the current barriers faced by students in accessing health humanities learning. These results could inform future approaches to curriculum design.



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Research Question:

What are Canadian medical student perspectives of effective current and potential approaches to integrating critical humanities into medical school learning?

Aims:

The project aims to expand the scope of past studies to design a Canada-wide student survey for outlining current best practices and suggestions for developing future critical health humanities content.

Methods:

The study will adopt a mixed-methods approach, including both a survey design and focus group interviews. The survey results would offer a statistical way of assessing the current state of health humanities curricula across medical schools. Participants who fill out the survey will be offered the opportunity to participate in focus groups aiming to brainstorm best practices for overcoming identified barriers to student engagement with humanities curricula.

Distribution and Recruitment Strategy:

The study will aim to interview a diverse range of students. Our research group will establish contact with the humanities student networks at all Canadian universities through the U of Toronto Artbeat health humanities and the Canadian Federation of Medical Students networks, and with faculty leads through the Canadian Health Humanities network.

Analysis:

Our study will employ statistical analysis of survey data and will adopt a constructivist grounded theory methodology in evaluating focus group data through descriptive thematic analysis and coding.

Significance:

The research results will inform medical curriculum development at the University of Toronto and more broadly. The aim is for the study's thematic analysis to offer student perspectives on practical ways to address common barriers of integrating humanities, so that future medical humanities curricula may be more effective in connecting with students.

References

1. Peterkin A, Beausoleil N, Kidd Monica, Orang B, Noroozi H, Brett-MacLean P. Medical humanities in Canadian medical schools: Progress, challenges, and opportunities. In: Bleakley A, ed. *Routledge Handbook of the Medical Humanities*. Routledge; 2019:364-380.

Student's roles and responsibilities in bullet form (please be as specific as possible):

- Design an online survey for evaluating student perspectives of effective ways to integrate humanities into medical learning



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- Design an interview guide for conducting semi-standardized interviews
- Conduct structured discussions with 3-4 person focus groups for detailed narrative data on perspectives of humanities within medical curriculums
- Develop the skills for qualitative thematic and quantitative statistical analysis of study results, including reviewing the Health Science Research modules of the year 2 medical curriculum at the University of Toronto
- Research the environmental background of humanities within medical education currently in Canada, through seeking the guidance of key faculty leads across universities
- Attend additional seminars and conferences for self-learning
- Establish contact with national networks of humanities student groups, including the Canadian Federation of Medical Students and the Canadian health humanities networks
- Explore alternative ways of sharing the results, in addition to publishing a research study. Possibilities include publishing on the Canadian health humanities website and designing a virtual forum for further discussion. This deliverable could spark more engagement from learners and would be in line with aim of a national repository of health humanities content advocated for by past studies

Is this project for a specific student, or will you interview and select an interested student who would contact you directly for this opportunity?

Note: All supervisor/student applications will be adjudicated by a panel of faculty, given a score, and ranked based on the score given. Funding will be based on ranking.

For a specific student. Name of student:

For whichever student is chosen after interview

If human subjects are involved, has Ethics been obtained?

Note: Written proof or an email indicating protocol approval may be requested prior to the student's arrival at on-site location

Yes
 No
 N/A