

# Academic Libraries, Interdisciplinarity, and Medical Humanities

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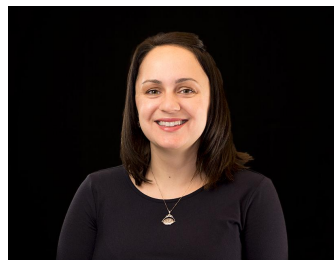
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# Interdisciplinarity & Libraries

Who are we?



- Why did we embark on this as a research area?
  - Had a mutual interest in interdisciplinarity. We see more focus on humanities in the medical curriculum. Began leaning on the expertise of colleagues within the library to service these needs.
- Interdisciplinarity challenges traditional library practice that functions along disciplinary boundaries
  - Collection Development
  - Outreach

# The Medical Humanities: A Case Study

“A newish interdisciplinary area that explores the social, historical and cultural dimensions of medicine.”

- Belinda Jack, Times Higher Education

“The study of the intersection of medicine and humanistic disciplines such as philosophy, religion, literature, and the fine and performing arts.”

- National Library of Medicine, Collection Development Manual

# State of the Field

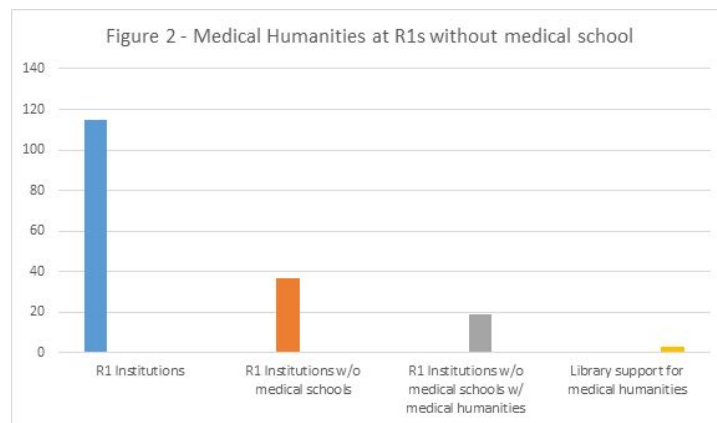
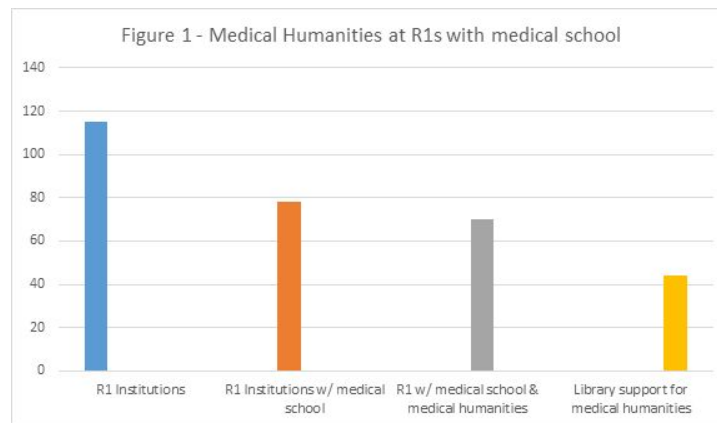
Our SBU Experience:

## [Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care & Bioethics](#)

- MD with Scholarly Concentration
- Dual MD/MA
- Medicine in Contemporary Society - Phase 1 required course in Pre-Clinical Education
- Faculty from various depts. History and English
- Special events (poetry readings, lectures)

# State of the Field

## Our Findings from R1 Institutions:



# Medical Humanities in the Library

- Interdisciplinary Approach
  - Consistent with library mission, training of librarians (Curran, 2012)
  - Dual foundation in critical thinking and the cultivation of empathy (Curran, 2012; Podolsky & Greene, 2016)
- Diverse User Group
  - Students
  - Clinicians
  - Humanist Faculty
  - Medical Faculty

# Collections-based Initiatives

- [Libguide](#); bringing light to items that were already in the collection
  - Promote interdisciplinary usage of collections
  - Remain mindful of access issues (Dali & Dilevko, 2006)
- Digital projects & Digital Humanities
- Dental Exhibit

# Outreach & Consultations

- Meetings
- Consultations
- Events
- Instruction
- Identification of key researchers



# Future Directions

- Improvements in library services to interdisciplinary programs
- Awareness of how existing collections and collection strategies can support multiple research priorities
- The library's role as an interdisciplinary forum on campus
- Greater understanding of medical humanities support at other academic libraries -- semi-structured interviews

# Discussion

- Do you observe interdisciplinary programs or initiatives on your campus?
- How is your library currently engaging with interdisciplinary programs?
- Have you faced or do you foresee any challenges to providing services to interdisciplinary programs?
- How does interdisciplinarity inform emerging practices in academic librarianship?

# Selected References

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