



Office of the Dean
Medical Student Admissions
College of Medicine
4301 W. Markham St., #551
Little Rock, AR 72205-7199
501-686-5354
501-686-5873 (FAX)
medicine.uams.edu



Tom G. South
Assistant Dean
Medical Student Admissions
southtomg@uams.edu

Jeanne R. McLachlin, Ph.D.
Director
Admissions and Recruitment
jmclachlin@uams.edu

February 15, 2018

Medical Humanities Steering Committee
University of Arkansas,
Fayetteville, AR 72701

To whom it may concern:

It is with pleasure that I write to enthusiastically endorse the adoption of a medical humanities minor by the University of Arkansas. Although I am now at UAMS, I am familiar with the development of the proposed program and I am very glad to see it formally being considered.

During my tenure at the University of Arkansas I was Associate Director of the Liebolt Premedical Program and a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences. As part of the premedical program I was eager to see the English Department offer a medical humanities honors colloquium and with Dr. Kayser's expertise that became a reality. This course is very popular and serves a need to educate students about the social and cultural differences that factor into the patient experience and ability of the health care provider to provide the best care. Even though many of the enrolled students are in the premedical program with aspirations to attend medical school, the course has broad appeal for many students considering a career path in health care, public health, or social work, to name a few.

The College of Medicine at UAMS has a long-standing relationship with the University of Arkansas because it is the largest feeder school of medical school applicants from a single institution in the state. The medical humanities minor aligns with our institution's core values. Specifically, "respect for the dignity of all persons" and an understanding of diversity to "reduce racial and ethnic health disparities in our state". The College of Medicine has adopted a holistic approach to the evaluation of medical school applicants. We strive to select students who can handle the rigors of a medical school education but equally important is the emphasis on selecting students who embody our

core values. This includes students who have experience with diverse cultures and appreciation of diverse beliefs and perspectives.

The medical humanities minor would provide a framework to enhance the education and social awareness of future medical school students, as well as students pursuing a broad range of careers in health care. Based on the courses listed in the proposed minor, students benefit from gaining increased self-awareness along with a better understanding patient's rights, different cultural values, gender identity and the social problems contributing the quality of life. Our hope is that as they mature through their college years they will develop a greater sensitivity and empathy for people who are disadvantaged economically, educationally, and physically or face discrimination on several levels. To gain the trust of patients and provide the highest level of care, future health care workers must have a good understanding of the social determinants of health and better able to appreciate differences in their patients.

I fully support the proposed medical humanities minor with a focus on the humanistic side of medical care. The benefits are clear as we educate students who will become responsible for caring for patients and approach their profession and their patients with greater understanding and respect for all individuals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeanne R. McLachlin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Jeanne R. McLachlin, Ph.D.
Director of Admissions and Recruitment
College of Medicine
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
Little Rock, AR 72205