This seminar studies the transfer of medical knowledge from the ancient Greco-Roman world to an Arabic context from the ninth century onward and a Western Christian context from the eleventh through the fourteenth centuries. We will examine how and why centres of learning, such as Alexandria and Baghdad or southern Italy and Spain, brought both continuity and change to the medical tradition. By studying physiology, gynaecology, contagious diseases, and pharmacology, we will explore the ways in which Muslim, Jewish and Christian views of health and illness influenced each other in the formation of a medical discourse based on a pagan past. How did medicine, as knowledge of the body and healing, connect with other disciplines in the medieval universities, such as natural philosophy, theology, and astrology? We will also consider the Western spread of medicine out of the learned Latin-speaking world to a broader audience through translations into the European vernaculars.

**Basic texts:**


**Week 1: The making of a classical heritage**


**Week 2: The rise of Arabic/Islamic medicine**


Meyerhof, Max. ‘Sultan Saladin’s Physician on the Transmission of Greek Medicine to the Arabs.’ *BHM* 18 (1945) 169-178. ***


**Week 3: Western medieval medicine: historical overview**


McVaugh, Michael R. “Bedside Manners in the Middle Ages.” *BHM* 71.2 (1997) 201-223


Week 4: Hospitals and Universities
Leiser, Gary. “Medieval Education in the Islamic Lands from the Seventh to the Fourteenth Century.” Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences 38.***


Week 5: Gender and physiological difference
Week 6: Leprosy in Medicine and Culture

Week 7: The Black Death: Debating Plague in the Medieval World
Arrizabalaga, Jon. “Facing the Black Death: Perceptions and Reactions of University Medical Practitioners.” In Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death, pp. 237-88. ***

Week 8: Religion and magic


**Week 9: Anatomy and surgery**


Koning, Pieter de (tr.) and Fuat Sezgin (ed.). *Trois traités d’anatomie arabes*. Frankfurt am Main: Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, 1986.


Week 10: Plants, Drugs and Baths: Pharmacology and therapeutic regimen


Harvey, John H. “Gardening Books and Plant Lists of Moorish Spain.” *Garden History* 3.2 (Spring 1975) 10-21.


Useful reference materials, old and new:


See also the decent but outdated bibliography of medieval medicine at [http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/medica/biblio.html](http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/medica/biblio.html)
