

The Health Sciences Humanities Incubator

The Hub for Innovative Health and Social Sciences Research and Activities

In-cu-ba-tor (noun): a device to nurture something; surroundings favorable to progress; company promoting entrepreneurship for startups

Artfully Rooted

In 1930, the Department of Medical History and Bibliography was officially launched at UCSF. It was the second program of its kind in the US. Located at the library on the Parnassus campus, the department was groundbreaking in its approach to medical history as it espoused a cultural model, making it a vibrant fixture of the community. It held seminars for medical students, featured a rare book room in the new library, and expanded the university's historical collections. So successful were its efforts that they were persuasively used to argue that the Medical School should remain in San Francisco and not be moved to the Berkeley Campus. The Department remained intact until 1998 when Medical History became a program (History of Health Sciences, HHS) in the interdisciplinary department of Anthropology, History, and Social Sciences and was moved to the Laurel Heights campus, the "Bibliography" program of the department was turned into the Archives and Special Collections (A&SC) in the mid-1960s and remained in the library. Slowly, the two programs drifted apart.

Recently, there have been efforts to bridge what had become a deep divide. Four years ago, HHS and A&SC collaborated on a Resource Allocation Program (RAP) Shared Instrument award. The impetus of this collaboration was a newly identified historical collection of patient records documenting care at UCSF's clinics and hospitals since the late 1880s. The high-speed scanner and associated hardware and software are currently housed at the library. HHS and A&SC have also worked together on program development and historical instruction. In 2018, A&SC's Head Archivist, Dr. Polina Ilieva, and Director of the History of Health Sciences Program, Dr. Aimee Medeiros, organized a speaking event and a master class in commemoration of the 2014 White Coats for Black Lives (WC4BL) Die-in. Author of *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*, Dr. Deirdre Cooper Owens was the invited speaker. The talk was heavily attended and the master class was also at capacity. We were also able to collaborate with WC4BL and the Black Caucus on the programming for this event. In order to make this talk possible, we booked the Lange room and a classroom space in the library. They were the most ideal venues for community engagement. Audience members and students who attended the class came from across campus, other academic institutions, and the community. Both the talk and the class exceeded the allotted time and expectations. Participants asked for similar future events. While the organizers were also extremely excited about how the day went (ecstatic in fact), we were unable to guarantee any future events as the spaces used were not exclusively designated for community engagement, HHS, or A&SC.

Vision

It is time to reunite the History of Health Sciences Program and Archives and Special Collections and provide this endeavor the space required to ensure its success. We propose a multi-use space - to be called the Health Sciences Humanities Incubator - situated in a highly visible area in order to extend the reach of the university into the surrounding community. It will be program-rich, meeting the needs of five distinct user groups: Students, Faculty, Staff, Community Members, and Librarians/Archivists. The **incubator** will feature a gallery for exhibits, a storytelling booth, a digital health humanities laboratory, and a creative hub for talks,

classes, and collaboration. It will serve as a high quality, responsible, and vital resource for UCSF.

Goals

This proposal meets several pedagogical and programmatic needs:

Pedagogical

- Teaching History of Health Sciences with artifacts and oral histories
- Medical Instruction and the Archives
- Designated space for digital health humanities enrichment opportunities
- Elective instruction and educational opportunities

Programmatic

- Collecting, sharing and preserving people's stories
- Playful exploration of the health sciences
- Providing a designated space for artistic installations and exhibits
- Meaningful community involvement and engagement
- Collaboration across disciplines and departments

Vision

This shared vision and combined objectives will contribute to the creation of a dynamic interdisciplinary studies workplace where students, staff, faculty, and researchers and community leaders and members from a range of backgrounds and expertise will be able to collaborate on projects exploring topics related to health, health sciences, science, life, and humanities. As a mixed used space, which celebrates the humanities, art, and science, the incubator will facilitate experimental research and spark creativity.

It will provide research data, expertise on research methods and tools, guidance from faculty and feedback from peers to diverse audience of learners. This would be a space where the latest discoveries will be presented and explained to patients and their families, neighborhood community and general public. Our focus will be pivoted from providing access to a selected set of researchers to making our institution more relevant to the public by contributing to community's equity and education.

Model

We will be pursuing a model developed and successfully implemented by the Wellcome Collection in the UK that combines the Library, Archives & Special Collections, Museum and Research Hub: <https://wellcomecollection.org/> and the Paul S. Russell, MD Museum of Medical History and Innovation at Massachusetts General Hospital: <https://www.massgeneral.org/museum/>. The major outcome will be the development of an innovative space that will encourage new ways of thinking about evolution of health care and health sciences, to nurture an inclusive creative community that incorporates sciences, technology, humanities, history and art. The digitization and born digital components of this lab will not only improve accessibility to our programs, content and collections, but provide universal free access to knowledge preserved and created at UCSF. *This collaborative work space will foster creativity, diversity of opinions, research perspectives and practices and advance careers.* This hub will eliminate existing siloes and generate diverse ways of researching our collections, both analogue and digital, to inspire and support new ideas.