

# Foundational Knowledge in Rhetoric of Health & Medicine

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I am currently a first year PhD student interested in pursuing Rhetoric of Health and Medicine (RHM). Though I'm quite a distance from settling on a dissertation topic my research focus to date has considered food and health issues including an analysis of a technical report on genetically modified foods (GMOs), a new materialist approach to the American Gut Project (microbiome mapping), and the rhetoric surrounding "clean" laboratory-produced meat.

RHM is situated at a disciplinary crossroad. Judy Segal's article "Interdisciplinarity and Bibliography in Rhetoric of Health and Medicine" (2005) sought to differentiate RHM from other fields that also study discourse. Segal states that much of the research being published under the heading of RHM is not from scholars of rhetoric, but from other disciplines such as sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, and medicine (p. 313). Ellen Barton (2005) reflects on this intersection of fields as an opportunity for genres to mutually inform one another (p. 246). In my studies I have taken the only course explicitly taught on RHM in my college's rhetoric department. I am considering additional coursework in communication studies, which will certainly have a social science bent, though Lynch and Zoller (2015) caution against the "perpetuating needless disciplinary boundaries" (p. 501).

My question is applicable to other students, as well as to scholars who have influence in shaping departmental curriculum. **What is foundational knowledge and coursework for emerging scholars wishing to pursue a future in RHM? And is it helpful and informative to stray outside of rhetoric departments, or does it further muddle our already interdisciplinary discipline?**

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Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD student at Texas Tech University – TC &amp; Rhetoric (MA from Communications – social science based)</li> <li>• ½ + through coursework</li> <li>• Food, bodies &amp; technology and hope to make my home in RHM</li> <li>• Mine is a question of <b>disciplinary boundaries</b> from a training perspective</li> </ul>
Rhetoric of...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhetoric of....science, technology, fiction, econ, health &amp; medicine</li> <li>• Judy Segal (2005) Interdisciplinary and bibliography in rhm – we borrow from a lot of other disciplines (anthropology, sociology, medicine, cultural study – “emerging field” trying to find our voice and it’s being muddied by non-rhetoric people and methods</li> <li>• Barton’s (2005) introduction to the special issue of Journal of Business &amp; TC – <b>disciplines complement and genres mutually inform</b> one another – give and take nature</li> <li>• Lynch &amp; Zoller (2015) appealed to me b/c it delineated what I’d been seeing and trying to come to terms RHM vs. health comm.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rhetorical analysis???? Feeling more confident now</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
RHM Def.	<p>Meloncon &amp; Scott (2018) – <b>not an emerging field but EMERGED</b> (field vs. discipline???)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define RHM and methods specific to it</li> </ul>
Research Q’s in RHM??	<p>I’d love to see this (Carolyn Rude’s “Mapping the Research Questions” in JBTC</p> <p>Me or someone else in this room? – could I make a dissertation around that type of analysis?</p>
My Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is <b>foundational knowledge</b> and coursework for emerging scholars wishing to pursue a future in RHM?</li> <li>• And is it helpful and informative to stray outside of rhetoric departments, or does it <b>further muddle our already interdisciplinary discipline (as Segal suggests)?</b></li> </ul>

## References

Barton, E. (2005, July). Introduction to the special issue: The discourses of medicine. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 19(3), 245–248.

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Lynch, J. A. & Zoller, H. (2015). Recognizing differences and commonalities: The rhetoric of health and medicine and critical-interpretive health communication. *Communication Quarterly*, 63(5), 498–503.

Segal, J. Z. (2005). Interdisciplinarity and bibliography in rhetoric of health and medicine. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 14(3), 311–318.

- Rhetoric of...
- Discipline boundaries
- RHM (Scott & Melancon, 2018) “rhetorical interactions across varied and overlapping cultural spheres, including those related to health and medical research, clinical medicine, health and policymaking, consumer health and personal health management, health advocacy, and communityObased health practices” (p. 2).
- Hartelius’ 2009 call for what distinguishes RHM (answered w/Scott & Melancon book...)