

New training opportunities in Department of Human Anatomy

The Department of Human Anatomy, College of Health Sciences University of Nairobi is in the process of broadening high level training opportunities in the field of basics sciences, in particular Human anatomy. Towards achieving this objective, the Department presented three new training curricula and one revised curricula in Human Anatomy.

Top in the list is Ph.D. track in Human Anatomy. This program will admit qualified candidates to undertake full time or part time training in Human Anatomy. Related to this is an intercalated Masters/Ph.D. program. This program will admit exceptionally good students who have completed two years of their Masters clinical training. They will spend one year full time in the Department of Human Anatomy after which they will concurrently continue with their clinical training and research work for Ph.D. thesis. Students under this program will have double degree awards, one for their clinical training and the second one in Human Anatomy. The objectives of the Ph.D. programs are to: train high-level manpower for teaching and contemporary research in basic medical science and particularly in Human Anatomy; produce graduates with skills used in the dissection, preparation of specimens for the various microscopic examination, morphometric evaluation and in imaging interpretation; and produce graduates who will provide leadership in basic and clinical research as it relates to the field of medicine. Clinician scientists and basic scientists are different. Ph.D. scientist seeks to understand basic biological principles or mechanisms while clinician-scientist seeks to understand underlying pathology of a disease and effective or novel means of treatment or a more thorough understanding of healthy versus diseased states. These Ph.D. program will academicians and as well as clinician-scientists who will drive innovations in the practice of medicine. The intercalated track will specifically strive to clinician-scientists.

The Department has been running Master of Science in Human Anatomy, for which the curriculum was approved in 2005. This curriculum has been revised to reflect the current realities and needs for masters training. Sister to this program is the intercalated Masters in clinical training and Master of Science in Human Anatomy. This is a brand new program. Suitable

candidates will be eligible for admission after completing their two years of clinical training after which they will spend one full time academic year in the Department to take core courses and research for the Masters in Human Anatomy thesis. Candidates admitted in this program will be able to delve in details subjects of their interest in particular to the areas of their clinical studies. The objectives of the MSC programs are to: train high-level manpower for teaching and research in the areas of basic medical sciences and particularly in Human Anatomy, with emphasis on neuroanatomy, microscopic and developmental anatomy, and clinical aspects of gross anatomy; and produce graduate with skills used in the dissection, preparation of specimens for the various microscopic examinations, morphometric evaluations and in imaging interpretations.

Human Anatomy is a crucial feature of the study of man. It is a central science that is descriptive, numerate and whenever possible, experimental. Human anatomy is a broad subject comprising topographic, microscopic, imaging, comparative, developmental and clinical components. Teaching and research in anatomy focuses on all these, and also includes physical, anthropology, paleontology, genetic engineering, molecular biology, cloning, congenital malformations and neurosciences. Knowledge valuable in understanding disease patterns, their diagnosis, management and application to prevent and correct congenital anomalies has been increasingly demanding greater in-depth teaching and research in all divisions of human anatomy studies. Globally, experts in Human anatomy studies have been contributing in generation of basic knowledge as well as knowledge for clinical application. Worldwide, there is a shortage of anatomists, especially for topographic anatomy. In Kenya, with increasing number of Universities offering medical and related trainings, there is limited number of persons skilled in Human Anatomy studies to provide relevant teaching and research. There is need for programs to produce Human Anatomy teachers and researchers. The MSC and Ph.D. programs being developed and run by the Department responds to this need.