Deadline for application is August 31st

1. Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the M Phil in Family Medicine at Stellenbosch University. The purpose of this brochure is to give you enough information to decide if you want to enroll in the M Phil in Family Medicine Degree programme.

2. Broad Aim

The M Phil Degree programme serves as a non-clinical Masters qualification. It is aimed at doctors who have an interest in the development of the discipline of Family Medicine and in particular its research base in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is NOT intended for those wanting to train clinically as a family physician.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the programme are:

- To ensure that students acquire a high level of theoretical knowledge as well as practical skills and experience in the field of Family Medicine, via appropriate assimilation and analysis of new information, the ability to find workable solutions to problems and challenges, as well as practical application of knowledge accrued.

- To prepare such students to make a contribution to the strengthening of Family Medicine as a discipline.

- To ensure that students acquire the necessary skills to identify key research opportunities, initiate well-structured research studies and complete such studies.

- To prepare students with the necessary teaching skills to contribute to the effective learning of topics relevant to both the practice of Family Medicine and the development of the academic discipline.

- To prepare students who aspire to move to a higher level of academic research work for Doctoral Studies and to promote an approach based on academic integrity and professional ethics.

- To contribute to the pool of academics with the competence and critical intellectual abilities to ensure advancement in the field of Family Medicine through developing a skilled scientific workforce of the highest calibre.
• To prepare students who can apply their skills to the task of answering the relevant questions and meeting the critical needs of the primary care patients.

4. Admission Requirements

For admission to the M Phil (Family Medicine) degree programme, a candidate must hold a MB, ChB degree (or equivalent qualification that enables registration with a professional body as an allopathic medical practitioner). The candidate shall also hold current registration with the licensing body of the country in which he or she is practicing (HPCSA or equivalent). In order to fulfill the requirements of the programme, the candidate must be working in a context suitable for the practice of Family Medicine or Primary Care.

5. Distributed Education

The MPhil (Family Medicine) programme depends almost entirely on distance supervision of the student. There will be one contact week per academic year when it is required that the student be on campus.

This is supplemented by:

• Regular online chat room or discussion forum interaction to facilitate advanced reflection and working in groups;
• Where possible students will be encouraged to participate in at least one video-conference meeting per module;
• There will also be theoretical training through the following activities:
  ✓ Web-based electronic training materials;
  ✓ Independent self-study of standard text books and references;
  ✓ Independent self-study of specially prepared materials;

Students will have access to the academic staff teaching in their module on a regular basis. They will also have full access to the library and the expertise within the entire Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Each student will be allocated a study mentor/ supervisor, to assist them with their research and whom they could contact for specific guidance in case of academic difficulties. The mentor could facilitate contact between the student and academic staff involved with a specific module, as well as contact with other academic resources within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

On average you will need to set aside 6 - 10 hours per week during the modules for studying and working on-line.
A team of people will be available to provide you with administrative, technical and academic support. They will be available on the Internet, by email, by fax or by telephone.

In order to participate in the course the following technical specifications are recommended:

- i3 Or i5 processors, at least Windows 7 or 8 with Internet Explorer 11, Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox;
- Office 2010 / 2013

6. **Course Content and Duration**

The M Phil is a 2-year programme. Three web-based modules of 12-weeks duration are offered per year and students must complete 6 such modules during the programme. Two of these modules relate to the development of the research proposal and completion of the research thesis. These modules support the research process, which is undertaken throughout the 2-year period. The academic modules are distance learning apart from an obligatory contact session in January each year that will be held at the University (Tygerberg Campus, Cape Town).

The course content and outline is shown diagrammatically on page 5.

7. **Web-Based Academic Modules**

A brief description of each module is given below:

7.1 **Research Proposal Development**

This module deals with the steps required to write a research proposal: formulating a research question, finding and synthesing the literature in an argument for the social and scientific value of the study, describing the aim and objectives, conceptualising the methods, considering the ethical issues, as well as planning the timeframe and budget.

7.2 **Chronic Disorders, Health Promotion and Prevention of Disease**

This module will enable students to organize, personally manage and teach the principles of chronic disease management with the necessary theories and skills.
7.3  **Teaching and Learning in Family Medicine**

This module exposes students to theory and skills of teaching and learning in order to equip them with different teaching strategies within their working environment and the health care system.

7.4  **Research Thesis**

This module takes the student through the process of research and writing a research thesis. The student is expected to complete this research during years 1 - 2 and submit it as a thesis at the end of the 2nd year.

7.5  **Community-oriented Family Medicine**

This module will expose students to theories and skills which will enable them to understand the population at risk that they serve, to do a community survey, present that to community representatives and together plan an intervention for an identified health need.

7.6  **Leadership and Clinical Governance**

This module will help the family physician to develop the skills to address clinical governance in the district health care system and take on leadership roles to contribute to change and improvement.
8. **Contact sessions**

There will be one obligatory contact week per academic year when the student will be required to be on campus.

9. **Assessment**

9.1 Formative feedback is given throughout the online modules. There is a summative assessment at the end of each module.

9.2 The pass mark for each module will be 50% and the research thesis must be passed by the examiners with a mark of at least 50%.

9.3 The final degree mark will be made up of a weighted average of the marks for each component. The weightings will be as follows:

- a) Modules: Average mark across four modules - 70%
- b) Research thesis - 30%
10.1 **Award of the M Phil (Family Medicine) degree**

The pass mark for the degree will be 50% and a degree mark of 75% or more is regarded as a distinction.

10.2 **Pass Cum Laude**

To be awarded the degree of M Phil (Family Medicine) *cum laude* a candidate must attain a final mark of at least 75%.

11. **Supplementary examination**

If a student fails a module, the module may be repeated. When a student has failed the module for a second time the Faculty Board may recommend that the student be denied the right to attempt the module again. This may then prevent the student from completing the degree.

12. **Cost**

The cost per year will be approximately R15,400. Fees are modularized and students pay for the components of the programme that they are registered for. This includes both tuition fees and material fees. There is a financial penalty imposed by the university for students who do not complete their research within the first four years of registration.

The University reserves the right to make changes to the fees as they appear in this brochure. You should check the final fee structure at the time of registration.

13. **Accreditation**

Completion of the programme will enable you to receive your M Phil (Family Medicine) from Stellenbosch University. This degree does **NOT** allow registration as a Family Physician with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

14. **Recognition of prior learning**

Possible exemption on the grounds of comparable academic training or professional experience gained at another recognized institution may be granted by the University.

15. **Deferment**

If you need to defer any component of your studies, you are required to complete a form for administrative purposes, which will also allow your fees for that year/module to be recalculated.
16. **APPLICATIONS - Deadline is before 31st August**

Application forms can be downloaded from the Internet at [http://www.sun.ac.za/fammed](http://www.sun.ac.za/fammed)

**PLEASE APPLY FOR THE PROGRAMME BY:**

1. Completing the general University Form 'Postgraduate Application for Admission to the University'
2. Completing the form "Application for M Phil (Family Medicine)"
3. Enclosing certified copies of your Degree certificates
4. Enclosing a certified copy of your current HPCSA (or equivalent) Registration Certificate
5. R100 application fee via EFT, see banking details below.

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**BANKING DETAILS**

Bank: Standard Bank  
Branch: Stellenbosch  
Branch Code: 050610  
Account Number: 073006955  
Swift code: SBZAZA JJ  
Address: 20 Bird Street, STELLENBOSCH  
Reference: Student number / Surname and date of birth.  
Please fax proof of payment to: 021 938 9704 / 0867146253

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Application must be via the university web-site ([www.sun.ac.za/fammed](http://www.sun.ac.za/fammed)), and NOT by post/fax, with the original copy of the application form signed by yourself.

Please simultaneously notify the division of your application by email: nicolec@sun.ac.za

Direct all enquiries to:

Ms Nicole Cordon-Thomas

Tel: 021-938 9168 / nicolec@sun.ac.za

A final decision on acceptance of applications will only be made at the end of October and communicated to you via email in mid-November.