Deadline for application is September 30th

1. Introduction

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

2. Broad aim

The Masters Degree programme aims to prepare doctors as Family Physicians with a high level of clinical and managerial competence, to solve problems through research and become mentors and teachers within the discipline of Family Medicine.

3. Objectives

The specific objectives of the programme are that a graduate will be able to:

- Effectively manage him/herself, his/her team and his/her practice, in any sector, with visionary leadership and self-awareness, in order to ensure the provision of high-quality, evidence-based care.
- Evaluate and manage patients with both undifferentiated and more specific problems cost-effectively according to the bio-psycho-social approach.
- Facilitate the health and quality of life of the community.
- Facilitate the learning of others regarding the discipline of family medicine, primary health care, and other health-related matters
- Conduct all aspects of health care in an ethical and professional manner

4. Admission requirements

For admission to the Master of Family Medicine degree programme a student must hold a MB, ChB degree of this University, or another qualification deemed by the University to be of an adequate standard. The Senate, or the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Senate, shall decide on the suitability of a candidate for admission to the M Med (Fam Med) programme. A candidate shall apply in writing for such admission.

During the course of the programme each candidate must spend the full-time equivalent of four years gaining practical professional experience in a training position approved by the University; at least three years of which need to be in an HPCSA accredited registrar post within an approved training complex (Eastern Metropole Cape Town; Worcester; Paarl; George).

Candidates must have completed their internship and be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.
Applicants must be competent in the use of English at an academic level. Applicants who are (a) not South African graduates and who (b) did not study in English as an undergraduate, may be asked to complete a test to assess their competence in academic English.

5. Distributed education

Distributed education allows learning to take place in the context of your own work setting and at times that are convenient for you.

The academic programme will largely be delivered by the Internet, which will enable access to the study guides, resource materials, self-tests, interaction with each other and your tutors, as well as processing of your assignments and marks.

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:

1. Internet Access with a ADSL modem and line speed of at least 384Kbs or 3G Internet Connectivity
2. Computer Hardware: (Minimum specs) Pentium 4; 2.0 GHz with 1Gb RAM (Memory), 80 Gb Hard drive, 17” Monitor and onboard sound or soundcard with speakers, Windows XP SP3 with Internet Explorer 6, and Javascript RTE 6.0. 16X CD-RW/DVD Combob drive

6. Course content and duration

The Masters Degree is a 4-year programme. Three web-based modules of 12-week duration are offered per year and students must complete 10 such modules during the programme. Stretching across all four years, an applied research project must be completed and handed in as a research assignment. The academic modules are distance learning apart from one obligatory contact session per year that will be held at the University (Tygerberg Campus). The contact sessions for years 1-4 will be for 3-4 days during January.

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

The elective modules in the final year allow for doctors to pursue specific interests or topics appropriate to different contexts.

7. Web-based academic modules

A brief description of each module is given below:

7.1 The Consultation
This module deals with clinical method, communication, counselling and consultation skills relevant to each phase of the consultation.

7.2 **Ethics**

This module teaches an approach to recognising, analysing and solving ethical dilemmas using ethical theories, principles, legislation, medico-legal rules and professional values.

7.3 **Evidence-based medicine**

This module teaches the application of evidence based medicine skills to clinical decision making as well as reading and critical appraisal of the medical literature.

7.4 **Applied research**

This module takes the student through the process of preparing a research protocol. The student is expected to complete this research during years 2-4 and submit it as a thesis at the middle of the 4th year.

7.5 **Chronic disorders, health promotion and disease prevention**

This module teaches principles of health promotion and disease prevention within the clinical context of chronic care. The management of common chronic medical disorders is covered with special focus on palliative care and rehabilitation. Students are expected to complete a quality improvement cycle for a chronic disorder in their practice.

7.6 **Community-oriented primary care**

This module teaches principles of community oriented primary care and students are expected to engage with the initial steps of this process in their own communities.

7.7 **Family Health**

This module teaches an approach to human growth and development, and family-oriented primary care.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Contact session</th>
<th>Module 1: Feb-April</th>
<th>Module 2: May-July</th>
<th>Module 3: August-October</th>
<th>Exam</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>The Consultation</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Evidence-based medicine</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Two/three clinical domains selected from Clinical Family Medicine</td>
<td>Clinical Family Medicine I</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Applied research</td>
<td>Chronic disorders, Health promotion and Disease prevention</td>
<td>Community-orientated primary care</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Three/four clinical domains selected from Clinical Family Medicine</td>
<td>Clinical Family Medicine II</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Human growth, development and Family-orientated Primary Care</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>Leadership and clinical governance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Three/four clinical domains selected from Clinical Family Medicine</td>
<td>Clinical Family Medicine III</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete 2 elective modules and research assignment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final clinical FCFP Part A exam</td>
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</table>
7.8 **Teaching and learning**

This module will equip the family physician with the skills to be a mentor and educator of family medicine in their own setting. Principles of adult education when working with both large and small groups will be covered.

7.9 **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.

7.10 **Electives**

In the 4th year a selection of modules will be offered and students will select two. The purpose of this is to allow students to study deeper in areas most relevant to their own practice setting. The current elective options are:

- Principles and Practice of Rural Health Care
- Integrative Medicine
- Rehabilitation in Family Medicine
- Geriatrics in Family Medicine
- Palliative Care in Family Medicine
- Forensics in Family Medicine
- Mindfulness-based practice

8. **Contact session**

At the end of January in years 1, 2, 3 and 4 there will be an obligatory 3-4 day contact session at the University. The main purpose of this contact session will be to introduce the year’s modules, learn computer skills, learn practical clinical skills, meet the departmental tutors, other students and interact around any problems or questions.

9. **Clinical family medicine and professional experience**

9.1 **Clinical Family Medicine I, II, III**

During the 4-year programme students are expected to study 10 clinical domains.

1. Mental Health 6. HIV/AIDS, TB and STIs
2. General Medicine 7. Ear, nose, throat, ophthalmology and dermatology
3. Women’s Health 8. General surgery
5. Anesthetics 10. Emergency medicine

Students can choose the order in which they study these domains but must commit to at least two and a maximum of four domains per year.

9.2 **Portfolio of clinical family medicine training and experience**

A portfolio must be completed for each year of the programme that records your clinical training and experience. The portfolio has 4 sections that focus on:

- Verification of professional experience at different departments and facilities
- Record of educational meetings with your supervisor
- Evidence of workplace based learning
- Audit of your clinical competency in core clinical skills
- Report on your performance during the year or rotation

This must be submitted during the January contact session of the subsequent year.

9.3 Professional experience

M Med students will be required to work in a registrar post in an accredited training complex for the 4-years of the programme. Training will be based at a district hospital, but will include professional experience in the community health centre and regional hospital. During these 4-years you will rotate between these facilities in order to achieve competency in the clinical skills expected of a Family Physician. The specific rotations will be finalized at the particular training complex and with regard to the specific M Med student’s learning needs. The training complexes currently available are:

1. **Cape Town East Metropole**
   Helderberg District Hospital, Khayelitsha District Hospital and Karl Bremer District Hospital,
   Contact **Dr Werner Viljoen** for more information on the complex wernerviljoen@telkomsa.net

2. **Worcester Training Complex**
   Hermanus District Hospital, Ceres District Hospital, Robertson District Hospital, Caledon District Hospital, Worcester CHC
   Contact **Prof Hoffie Conradie** for more information on the complex hoffie@sun.ac.za

3. **George Training Complex**
   Knysna District Hospital, Mossel Bay District Hospital, Oudtshoorn District Hospital, Beaufort West District Hospital.
   Contact **Dr Louis Jenkins** for more information on the complex Ljenkins@pgwc.gov.za

4. **Paarl Training Complex**
   Stellenbosch District Hospital, Swartland District Hospital
   Contact Prof Julia Blitz for more information on the complex juliablitz@sun.ac.za.

At the training complex the registrar will work under the supervision of a Family Physician. At the Regional Hospital they will work under the supervision of the specialist department to which they are attached. Registrars are expected to participate in the overtime roster at their district hospital and to “adopt” a community health centre for the duration of their studies. Registrars are expected to work full- and not part-time in their posts.

10. Assessment

10.1 Continuous evaluation is used throughout the 10 web-based modules. This will include the use of group work, discussions, written assignments and computer-assisted multiple choice questions.

10.2 The Clinical Family Medicine module marks will be made up of an exam mark and a clinical portfolio mark

10.3 A final mark of at least 50% shall be required to pass in a module in the Degree programme. The final class mark for the degree is calculated as the average of all the module marks - 10
web-based modules (excludes Applied Research module mark) and 3 clinical family medicine modules

11. Examinations

Students will sit the national exit examination, which is the Part A of the Fellowship of the College of Family Physicians (FCFO). Access to this exam is on the basis of satisfactory completion of a full three years of the training programme. Requirements for this exam can be found on the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa website [http://www.collegemedsa.ac.za/](http://www.collegemedsa.ac.za/)

11.1 Award of the M Med (Fam Med) degree

To be awarded the M Med (Fam Med) degree a candidate must:
- Successfully complete FOUR years of appropriate, supervised experience
- Obtain a pass mark of no less than 50% in all modules
- Pass the FCFP exams;
- Achieve a final mark of 50% or more derived from the combined class mark (50%), the combined examination mark – FCFP Part A (25%) and the research assignment – FCFP Part B (25%).

11.2 Pass Cum Laude

To be awarded the degree of M Med (Fam Med) cum laude a candidate must attain a final mark of at least 75%

11.3 Supplementary examination

If a student fails an examination, a supplementary examination may be attempted during the supplementary exam period (without the need to re-register for the module). When a student has failed one supplementary examination the Faculty Board may recommend that the student be denied the right to attempt further supplementary examinations. 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.

12. Cost

The cost per year will be approximately R12,000. 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 Masters Degree in Family Medicine from the University of Stellenbosch as well as the FCFP from the CMSA and to be able to register as a Family Physician with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

You will be eligible for Continuing Education Units (CEU) for your successful participation in the programme that will meet your annual requirements for 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 in respect of: (a) duration (b) professional experience (c) the prescribed modules. For example the candidate who holds a Diploma in Family Medicine or another equivalent qualification deemed by the University to be of an adequate standard may apply for exemption for the equivalent modules in the M Med programme. Exemption is granted at the discretion of 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/component to be re-calculated.

16. **Registration - Deadline is before 30th September**

Registration forms can be downloaded from the Internet at [http://www.sun.ac.za/fammed](http://www.sun.ac.za/fammed)
PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE PROGRAMME BY:

1. Completing the general University Form "Postgraduate Application for Admission to the University"

2. Completing the form "Application for M Med (Family Medicine)"

3. R100 application fee via EFT, banking details can be obtained from Ms Nicole Cordon-Thomas.

4. Completing form Z83 to simultaneously apply for a registrar post from the Department of Health (inside South Africa)

5. Enclosing certified copies of your Degree certificates

6. Enclosing a certified copy of your HPCSA Registration Certificate (or equivalent licensing body)

Registration must be through the university web-site (www.sun.ac.za/fammed), and NOT by post/fax, with the original copy of the registration form signed by yourself.

Please simultaneously notify the division and the Western Cape Department of Health of your application by e-mail nicolec@sun.ac.za

Direct all enquiries to:

Ms Nicole Cordon-Thomas

Tel: 021-938 9061 OR nicolec@sun.ac.za

A final decision on whether to accept applications will only be made after the interviews held by the Western Cape Department of Health.