

PRESS RELEASE

HBKU supports drive towards building capacity in Qatar's health sector with launch of pioneering graduate Genomics and Precision Medicine program

Doha, April 10, 2017 – Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) has announced the introduction of a Master of Science and a PhD in Genomics and Precision Medicine (GPM) program from fall 2017 at a meeting of university stakeholders that was held on April 10th in the HBKU Student Center. Discussions at the meeting highlighted how the new program has the potential to supporting the significant efforts being made towards developing efficient, patient-focused healthcare solutions in Qatar.

The new program will provide advanced training in a fast-growing healthcare sector that integrates cutting-edge technological methods with recent advances in medicine at the molecular level in order to understand the biology of individuals and tailor treatment for individual patients. HBKU will be helping bolster Qatar's drive towards supporting genome-based scientific discovery by supporting students who will be expected to join the program having had prior experience of studying the sciences and who will probably come from medicine, healthcare, and associated fields.

In a world first, the new program provides advanced, holistic teaching across all the main areas of genomics and precision medicine, including clinical, technical, and bioethical aspects. The program also offers students the opportunity to undertake extensive hands-on research experience.

Applications are now being accepted for the first cohort of GPM students and an information session will be held at the Liberal Arts and Science Building (LAS Building) within Education City on April 19th at 5pm. At the information session, potential students will have the chance to meet with faculty to get detailed information on the program's curriculum and will also get to discuss the application process with representatives of HBKU's admissions team.

Qatar is well positioned to become a global leader in the provision of healthcare services and the launch of HBKU's GPM program stems from a need, identified by the Ministry of Public Health in Qatar, to provide multidisciplinary academic training for future professionals and researchers in the field.

Commenting on the launch of the new program, Her Excellency Dr. Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari, Minister of Public Health, said: "New graduate programs such the Master's and PhD programs in Genomics and Precision Medicine offered by Hamad Bin Khalifa University focus on an increasingly important and rapidly expanding field of medicine. These programs present a real opportunity for the students of today to develop their knowledge and learning in order to improve the lives of patients and their families in the future. I wish the program every success."

Dr. Ahmad Hasnah, President of HBKU, noted: "HBKU's Genomic and Precision Medicine program seeks to develop future healthcare leaders through research training at the intersection of biological, clinical, societal and computational systems and to give our students the knowledge and skills needed to have a significant impact on disease treatment and prevention. Successful graduates of this program will emerge able to contribute not only to Qatar's healthcare needs, but will be critical in enhancing and solving global medicine's greatest challenges."

The program will be taught within HBKU's life sciences division. Dr. Khaled Letaief, HBKU Provost added: "Qatar is well positioned to become a world leader in the provision of healthcare services and has already launched many state-of-the-art initiatives such as the Qatar Genome project. Our new Genomics and Precision Medicine master's and PhD programs will be the first-of-their kind and will introduce students to the fascinating and growing field of personalized medicine. The programs are multi-disciplinary graduate programs that have been designed to prepare the next generation of professionals and leaders who will help implement the use of genomics and its application in medicine. Our students will not only be exposed to the latest advancements in the field but will also have the opportunity to work with our partners within Qatar Foundation's Education City and around the world.

“The launch of these programs would not have happened without the hard work of so many and in particular those members of the Genomics medicine Committee, led by Dr. Amine Bermak. My heartfelt thanks go to all of the committee members.”

The continued formation of new educational initiatives is part of HBKU’s mission to build and cultivate human capacity through enriching multidisciplinary programs, as envisioned in the Qatar National Vision 2030. Prospective students can now apply to HBKU’s programs at hbku.edu.qa.

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About Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, is an emerging research university that is building its foundation upon unique collaborations with local and international partners. Located in Education City, HBKU delivers undergraduate and graduate programs through its College of Science and Engineering, College of Law and Public Policy, College of Health and Life Sciences, College of Islamic Studies, and its College of Humanities and Social Sciences. It also provides unparalleled opportunities for research and scholarship through its research institutes, and its Center of Executive Education delivers customized programs for the business community of Qatar and the region, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.