The Health Sciences Pole, Université libre de Bruxelles

The Health Sciences Pole, UB, located in the heart of Europe, is one of the 3 main universities in the French part of Belgium, international relations is one of its most important aim.

The Deans and President of the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Motor Sciences, Faculty of Pharmacy and Public Health School decided a few years ago to associate themselves in a Health Sciences Pole so as to increase collaborations and partnerships, to improve facilities to students and staff particularly on the campus Erasme.

The teaching of several fields in Belgium depends on Ministry of Education as well as the Ministry of Health which regulates the access to several professions. Over the years, the professions in health sciences are still and more attractive to students who are certainly excited by the aim to combine quality and excellence to human relations.

Professors and all staff members are involved to guarantee a teaching of high quality with, at the centre the human being, the health and the well-being of the population.

The policy of the pole Health Sciences ULB in terms of international relations is to optimize and share its practices in terms of mobility and cooperation, to be constantly creative, open and curious, towards its own different systems of education (medicine, public health, physiotherapy, osteopathy, pharmacy) and especially towards the partners from abroad.

Study programs

Coming study at ULB, in one of the fields of Health Sciences is an opportunity to enjoy of its education and research based on the principle of free inquiry. It assumes in all matters rejection of the argument of authority and independence of judgment.

Level of teaching: bachelor degree (min. 3 years), master degree, advanced master degree and PhD.

The Faculty of Medicine also propose lifelong learning teaching.

The Faculty of Medicine proposes 4 main teaching (bachelor, master, advanced master and PhD’s degrees) in Medicine, Dentistry, Biomedicine and Veterinary Medicine (only the bachelor degree of Veterinary is available at ULB). Abroad students are welcome for training (preferably through programs or bilateral agreement). A lot of possibilities are also offered in labs to PhD’s students. Registration to advanced masters in Medicine/Dentistry is regulated by the Ministry of Health.

The Faculty of Motor Sciences covers 3 main teachings, according to the needs of Belgian society: physiotherapy, osteopathy and physical education (teaching, physical training and coaching of high performing athletes).

It also offers training courses to meet the developing demands and expectations within the society. The master on “health prevention” aims to offer new opportunities related to aging populations throughout Europe. Possibility to students to obtain a Ph.D. in one of the eleven research units.

The Faculty of Pharmacy offers 2 major fields of study: Pharmacy and biomedicine (for Pharmacists)

The Faculty confers bachelor degree in pharmaceutical sciences, master degrees in pharmaceutical and in biomedical sciences, complementary master degrees in industrial pharmacy, hospital pharmacy and clinical biology, and PhD degrees in all academic disciplines of pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences.

The School of Public Health covers 5 fields of study (Masters and Advanced masters teaching)

The school confers master’s degrees in six academic disciplines: Biostatistics and epidemiology; Environment & Health; Health politics and health systems; Health promotion; Health; society and security; Health structures management, but also complementary master’s degree in three disciplines (i.e. Public Health Methodology; English teaching), doctoral degrees in all academic disciplines.

Teaching infrastructures in Dentistry, Medicine, Osteopathy, Physiotherapy and rehabilitation

The Academic Hospital Erasme is joined by 2 specialized hospitals – Queen Fabiola University Hospital for Children and Institute Jules Bordet dedicated to cancer – and 2 general hospitals in Brussels. This structure of teaching, enlarging the ability to train students and postgraduate students as well as researchers, is the strength of ULB. In addition, the network of teaching is enlarged thanks to Brussels Hospital association “IRIS-SEB” as well as hospitals in Wallonia (French area of Belgium) and private centres.

Our faculty involved their students in a “bench to bedside” teaching.

The philosophy and way of teaching at hospital requesting autonomy although supervised is well-known and appreciated by abroad students.

Research

The Faculty of Medicine has many laboratories based on Erasme Campus but also in other ULB partner structures. It offers the possibility to study/work in unrestricted areas i.a.: Immunology, Neurosciences, Nephrology, Gynaecology and Obstetrics, Experimental Gastroenterology, Transplantation, Paediatrics, Neuroradiology, etc.

The Faculty of Motor Sciences: 11 research units able to receive doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships. Since several years, the different laboratories have international collaboration such as the Laboratory of neuropathology and movement biomechanics (NASA); Laboratory of applied biology and Research Unit in applied neurophysiology (University of Colorado, University of Minnesota, University of Jyväskyla, University of Turin, etc.), Research Unit in Osteopathy.

The Faculty of Pharmacy: 9 research laboratories grouped in 3 departments: Bioanalysis & toxicology, Pharmaceutical chemistry & technology and pharmaceutical care, Biopharmacy. The research activities of the laboratories are supported by technological platforms (analytical and drug delivery platforms). All of the nine research laboratories are able to receive doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships.
The School of Public Health is organized in 5 research centres (Environment; Statistic and Epidemiology; Politics International Health; Health Economics-Health Care management and Social approach of Health) where postdoctoral fellowships are welcome. The international collaborations are numerous in Europe but also in middle and low income countries. Most of its doctorates are coming from sub-saharan Africa (63%). The 5 research centres of the school are working with developing countries financed by several organisms i.a. European Union, “Commission Universitaire le Développement” (CUD), Wallonia-Brussels International, BTC Belgian development agency, “Direction générale Coopération au Développement et Aide humanitaire” (DGCD).

Campus environment

The Campus Erasme is located in a green part of South West Brussels, outside of the centre, but easily accessible by the public transport (metro, line 5) and the highway. 3 of 4 schools are based there: the Public Health School, the Faculty of Medicine and the Motor Sciences faculty but also, the Academic Hospital Erasme with its 800 beds, place of training but also of research. The Campus “La Plaine” is located near the principal campus of the Université libre de Bruxelles and includes the Faculty of Pharmacy that will move soon on the Campus Erasme.

Hospital Erasme: 900 beds, 3,000 staff members, scientific and clinical research i.a. supported by the Erasmus Foundation

Queen Fabiola University Hospital for Children: 168 beds, 45,000 days of hospitalisation, 25,000 emergency visits, 780 staff members, scientific and clinical research i.a. supported by the Belgian Fund for Kids Paediatric Research

Jules Bordet Institute: 177 beds, 1,000 staff members, 42,300 days of hospitalisation, 15,000 one-day clinic visits, scientific and clinical research in collaboration with national and international centres, (the institute will be soon on Campus Erasme)

Brugmann Hospital and Saint-Pierre Hospital: 1,444 beds, 1,000 staff members, scientific and clinical research

International Policy

So as to progress in the actual moving world, we want to develop new networks and agreements as well as pursuing the partnerships we already have for long all over the 5 continents.

Our main goals are mobility (incoming and outgoing) of students, doctorates and post-doctorates, teachers, staff training. Learn and share skills and knowledge.

The Faculty of Medicine maintains contacts for years with French network (SIDMEF, AUF), European countries through EU Programs, the faculty is involved and convinced in the necessity of Erasmus exchange program since the start of this EU program more than 20 years ago. It has also a lot of contacts with American (clinical/research areas) and African countries and is now focused on increasing its contacts with Asian countries.

The Faculty of Motor Sciences is taking advantage of its research contact with EU and American countries to enlarge its exchange collaborations. Recently, the faculty has developed new collaboration for students’ mobility training (Canada, Spain, Burkina Faso, etc.). For the future they are focusing their activities with Africa, Asia and Oceania partnerships.

Since decades, the Faculty of Pharmacy is active in cooperation with foreign countries (e.g. Burkina Faso and Congo) and student-exchange programs (e.g. possibility of a 6-week stay during the master degree in some countries, including China) with foreign universities all around the world is a tradition and a priority of our University. The laboratory of pharmacognosy has been working in the frame of a EU grant (FP7, www.gp-tcm.org); this coordination action has created a network of researchers working in the field of Traditional Chinese Medicines (e.g. Hong Kong, China, Australia, etc.).

The School of Public Health: International matters are at the heart of the policy and activities of the school in its missions of education, research, service to the community. The majority of teachers are involved in abroad training courses (in Europe, Asia and Africa). The recent reorganization of its studies, giving more time for internships, requests to enlarge the number of training places in Belgium and abroad. The master in Public Health - focused on healthcare policy and management - is probably the teaching where the internationalization is really making sense.

A large majority of students of the School of Public Health are coming from Africa (44%); an effort is done to attract more students from Asia (2%) and America (2%).

Moreover, the school hosts the “CEMUBAC” a ULB NGO specialized in supporting and making operational the health systems. Its actions and interventions are guided by a model of medical and scientific cooperation based on three principles: supporting the operation global health systems, the development of a continuing education program and promoting a program of applied research. It is mainly active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (http://www.cemubac.org/)

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