



# LENS

Department of Human Anatomy, University of Nairobi



## THE DEPARTMENT SOARS INTO THE DIGITAL AGE

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The department has integrated digital approaches to teaching and quality assurance this past academic year. Indeed, as the world becomes more and more digital, it is imperative for any strategic institution to move in this direction to stay relevant.

Within the department, this has been exemplified by the introduction of online teaching modules for histology as well as biometric signing-in of students into teaching sessions. This has seen increased digital diversity in the core functions of the department.

In the past, the use of the internet has been successful in teaching of gross anatomy with an

online database (OG Anatomy). Moreover, the introduction of biometric signing for students has reduced cases of skiving as well as the undesirable consequence of students signing in for absent colleagues. This has resulted in an improvement in attendance hence reducing the loss of precious contact hours between faculty and students.

The strategic importance of these initiatives is seen in the light of the fact that the department remains one of the foremost institutions of anatomy not only regionally but indeed continentally.



**Cutting edge in quality assurance:** Biometric logging in of students into teaching sessions.

## A SPAWN OF INTELLECTUAL ENERGY

The department of Human Anatomy has in the past been lauded as a center of excellence in the teaching of Anatomy. This, still true, is partly due to the caliber of alumni that the department has nurtured in the past. During this academic year, a total of 8 graduates from the department continued in this extraordinary tradition of excellence. Leading this group was Prof. Julius Ogeng'o who was awarded a Doctor of Medicine

degree and Dr. Moses Obimbo who was awarded a PhD in Anatomy. Drs Olabu, Pulei and Maseghe were awarded each Msc (Anatomy) while Nelson Mpekethu Brian Kariuki and Brian Wambua were awarded each Bsc (Anatomy). We congratulate and celebrate these achievements and wish the graduates a prosperous path ahead. Forth!



**Proud:** The Department's 2014 graduates with Prof. Adel Malek

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



As it has done in the past, LENS continues to capture the strides we have made, examines our heritage and challenges us to even greater achievements.

We are challenged to continue upholding our past victories as we look for-

ward, in line with our long-term strategy, to smoothen our service delivery in the various facets that make this department a diverse, unique blend of energies geared towards intellectual, personal and indeed national development.

- Prof Hassan Saidi

**Anatomy is destiny**

**- Sigmund Freud**

## FROM THE EDITOR

*To detail the events of an excellent department has and still is a joy. Indeed, chronicling these activities offers an opportunity for reflection at a successful year as well as a chance to learn from the past.*

*In this issue of Lens, we tell of departmental successes this past year. This is against a backdrop of*

*an array of activities, ever so brightened by the excellence of our alumni and students.*

*This issue also pays tribute to a diligent colleague, friend and mentor: Prof. Jameela Hassanali. She retired from the department this past year*

*and we, though saddened by her departure, are glad to have been illuminated by her protean achievements in a sparkling career.*

*I hope this issue of Lens invigorates you as we*

*reflect on a greater tomorrow.*

*-Musa*

## PROF SAIDI REAPPOINTED AS CHAIR

The Vice-Chancellor has reappointed Prof Hassan Saidi as chairman of the department for a further period of three years. During his time of chairman, Prof Saidi has both managed and led the department using a combination of flexibility, appropriate exercise of authority and communication. Among the major achievements in his first term as chair include: Restructuring the governance system in the Department to allow for effective delegation of duties, Resources management including a performing CFP, space improvement, departmental retreats to reenergize,

establish positive working environment / enhance team spirit, "Welfare' funds" to Humana, Hatswa and Haaswa, establishment of the Lens newsletter, Anatomy Journal of Africa and linkage to the Association of African Anatomical Societies, Fostered high standards for scholarship in the department, research output and innovations in learning strategies.

To this end, eight academic members of staff have registered, advanced or completed PhD work, the PhD Anatomy program has attracted international students, enrollment into the MSc Anatomy pro-

gram has grown. Moreover, six technical staff members have registered or completed degree courses in laboratory medicine, while the BSc Anatomy program continued to produce remarkable graduates. Further, Kimani's Histology: text and atlas book was published, online Histology content was completed and uploaded, three new curricula (Intercalated PhD Anatomy, intercalated MSc Anatomy and Diploma of Mortuary Sciences) have been approved at the Department for submission to the school and college and Nairobi surgical skills center (NSSC) opened its doors.

Beyond the department, he doubles up as the Associate dean, school of Medicine. He is engaged at national level as the Chairman of the Surgical Society of Kenya (SSK) and Editor-in Chief of the Annals of African Surgery.

The department congratulates him and wishes him more success in his next term.

## 2013/2014 AT A GLANCE

### TRANSITION

#### Faculty:

Prof Jameela Hassanali retired from the department to join Pwani University.

#### Non-teaching staff:

Ian Gitau, previously working as an IT assistant, left the department.

### PROMOTION

Prof Peter Gichangi to Associate Professor

Dr Kirsteen Awori to Senior Lecturer.

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CORE PROJECTS:

Introduction of biometric signing in of students to teaching sessions

Continued issuance of the Anatomy

Journal of Africa

Completion of online histology modules

Continued growth in customer numbers at the Chiromo Funeral Parlor

### TEAMBUILDING:

A teambuilding cum strategic plan retreat for teaching and non-teaching staff to Lake Elementaita Lodge.

### COMPLETED PROJECTS

Dr Phillip Maseghe's Msc (Anatomy) research project.

Prof Julius Ogeng'os (Doctor of Medicine) MD project and Dr Moses Obimbo's PhD project.

### ONGOING PROJECTS

Prof Hassan Saidi's research in Trauma Registry at KNH as well as a national breast cancer registry.

Drs Kevin Ongeti and Paul Odula's PhD projects

### PARTNERSHIPS

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (International Injury Research Unit)

Johnson and Johnson

Dr Obimbo's partnership at UCSF

### NON-TEACHING STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Joseph Mwangi graduated with a degree in Biomedical Laboratory technology

*... our "Physick" and "Anatomy" have embraced such infinite varieties of being, have laid open such new worlds in time and space, have grappled, not unsuccessfully, with such complex problems, that the eyes of Vesalius and of Harvey might be dazzled by the sight of the tree that has grown out of their grain of mustard seed.*

**-Thomas Henry Huxley**

## TEAM BUILDING RETREAT

A most central tenet in management is the motivation of staff. This was the reason behind a team building retreat undertaken by both the teaching and non-teaching staff at the department. The staff retreat to Mount Longonot, came hot on the heels of another retreat by

members of the faculty to Lake Elementaita Resort. Amongst the fun, staff took some time to reflect on the strategic plan of the department as outlined in the five year (2013-2018) grand plan.

Following the retreats, staff were noted to be more jovial and energetic

at undertaking their duties. We reiterate the importance of a cohesive team structure at the department and hope that the departmental family will soar in unity to greater heights.



**Unity and fun:** Members of staff at the team building retreat

## DR. PETER GICHANGI BECOMES ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Dr. Peter Gichangi has been promoted to Associate Professor in the Department of Human Anatomy, University of Nairobi. Professor Gichangi is a holder of B.Sc. Anatomy (Hons), M.B.Ch.B., M.Med. (Obs Gyn) and PhD (ObsGyn). Prof. Gichangi is a consultant obstetrician gynaecologist with over 20 years experience in teaching Human Anatomy. Additionally, he has wide experience in research stretching from

basic science to public health issues related to HIV/AIDS, Family planning and key population in Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Ethiopia and South Sudan.

In the Department of Human Anatomy, Prof Gichangi chairs several committees and is the Course Director for MSC and Ph.D. programs as well as the Thematic lead for Embryology

and genetic studies. Prof Gichangi also holds the position of visiting Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Ghent University in Belgium. The department congratulates Prof. Gichangi on his furtherance.



## DR MOSES OBIMBO WINS INTERNATIONAL MENTORED SCIENTIST AWARD FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM FROM UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN FRANCISCO

Dr. Obimbo, Moses from the University of Nairobi Department of Human Anatomy and Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology has proposed a translational study that will correlate HIV status of mothers who deliver preterm infants with several aspects of placental pathology this partly forming part of his work at Ob/Gyn and further research on the same subject. This is a mentored proposal, and Moses will be mentored by two senior faculty members, Prof. Susan Fisher and Prof. Craig Cohen of University of California San Francisco. The plan of the study will be to collect samples in Kenya at two birth hospitals with very high delivery rates,

carry out gross pathological measurements on site, fix tissues on site, do initial studies in Kenya and complete the molecular work at UCSF. Moses will then spend some time in Prof. Fisher's lab at UCSF carrying out extensive and advanced microscopic and molecular analysis of the samples. The goal of these studies is to understand whether HIV affects placental architecture and inflammatory status in cases of preterm birth, in order to better understand the strong recognized association between HIV+ status and preterm birth. We wish to congratulate Obimbo on this outstanding achievement.



**Inspiring:** Dr. Moses Obimbo

**Do, or do not. There is no try.**

**-Yoda**

## MEMBERS OF STAFF ATTEND 18TH INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ANATOMICAL SOCIETIES CONGRESS

Central to the strategic positioning of the department in the global spheres of anatomy is the active participation in discourse concerning anatomical questions in the modern world. It is in this spirit that the chairman of the department led a delegation of three faculty members who attended the 18th congress of the international Federation of Anatomical Societies in China. Accompanying the chairman were Drs Mandela and

Maseghe. The congress was an opportune time for them to not only actively represent the department's and the Association of African Anatomist's agenda but also to establish strategic linkages for the department.

The congress was a learning opportunity on the current trends in the teaching of anatomy and the role of anatomy in 21st century medicine and surgery.



Prof. Hassan Saidi (left), Dr. Pamela Mandela (Center) and Dr. Phillip Mwachaka (right) during the 18th IFAA conference in China



**A true giant:** Prof. Hassanali with Dr Pulei (left) and Dr. Mandela.

## TRIBUTE TO PROF JAMEELA HASSANALI

Prof. Jameela Hassanali has retired from the Department of Human Anatomy, University of Nairobi in June 2014. Prof. Hassanali was born in Tanga, Tanzania and trained in Edinburgh (MDS, 1970), Scotland. She started working at the department of Dental Surgery, University of Nairobi, Kabete in April 1975. And later moved to the Dental School in 1978. She transferred from Dental School to the Department of Human Anatomy in 1978.

She persisted and progressed in teaching and research in Human Anatomy, Histology, Embryology, Neuroanatomy and Oral Biology and Community Health Education. She became an Associate Professor at the Department of Human Anatomy in

1993. A position she maintained until her retirement in July 2014. Prof. Hassanali areas of specialisations include Neuroscience and Oral Biology with several local and international publications and conference participations. She co-authored two books which have been published in 1996, titled “Essentials of Orofacial Anatomy” and “Practical Manual on Oral and Craniofacial Histology and Embryology”. She is also an Author in the Kimani Histology Text and Atlas, 2014.

Her hobbies include nature

walks and travelling. Prof. Jameela Hassanali moved to Pwani University as a full Professor of Human Anatomy and Dental Surgery. The department of Human Anatomy acknowledges and thanks her for her contributions in teaching, research, outreach programs especially among the Maasai community and linkages with Institute of Primate Research, National Museums of Kenya and Kenya Medical Research Institute. The department wishes Professor Jameela Hassanali well in all her future endeavours.

**Those who have dissected or inspected many, have at least learnt to doubt; while others who are ignorant of anatomy and do not take the trouble to attend it are in no doubt at all.**

**- Giovanni Battista Morgagni**





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## THE YEAR IN PICTURES



**Clockwise (From Top Right):** Dr Awori, who has been promoted to the position of Senior Lecturer. Dr. Moses Obimbo receives his PhD (Anatomy) from the Vice Chancellor. Ian Gitau during his farewell party. Participants during this year's graduation ceremony for the Mortuary Attendants Certificate Course. Joseph Mwangi in his graduation regalia on his graduation day.