



## FIRST ERASMUS MUNDUS MASTER COURSE IN NURSING

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In 2010 and within the European Call for Erasmus Mundus proposals, the University of Oviedo together with three partner institutions, the University of Metropolia Helsinki (Finland), the University of the Algarve and the Polytechnic Institute of Santarém (both in Portugal), submitted a first-time proposal for a Masters Degree in Nursing. The quality, originality and soundness of the project enabled its selection out of 171 applications from different universities and degrees.

The Erasmus Programme is one of the oldest and most prestigious European mobility programs for students, lecturers and in recent years also for administrative staff. Since its launch in 1987, it has continuously developed into various modalities: Erasmus, Erasmus training (2007), Tempus, Erasmus Mundus.

Most of these programmes require signing agreements between different universities and centres of higher education in Europe, which allows students from these countries to carry out part of their studies in another European centre. Prior to the student mobility a learning agreement with the subjects that the student will be taking abroad is signed, thus allowing for these subjects to be recognised and transferred to the student's transcript of records on returning to his/her home institution.

In the field of Nursing, the contents that can be performed abroad include theoretical, theoretical-practical modules, as well as clinical training, the latter being the most demanded option by European students.

The Erasmus Mundus Programme differs from the Erasmus Programme in not depending on an agreement between institutions but being an open and competitive call for all degrees. The prerequisites for applications include the participation of at least three tertiary education institutions from three different European countries, the development of a joint proposal, and a coordinating institution. These projects can be Masters, Doctorates or Mobility projects.

As for our Nursing Program it was jointly designed by four centres in three European countries: Spain, Finland and Portugal. A Master's programme was developed with a joint degree, i.e., on satisfactory completion of the programme the student will be awarded the Master's degree from the four institutions.

Our Erasmus Mundus Master Course in Emergency and Critical Care Nursing (NURSING EMMECC) is a Joint Master's Degree, coordinated by the University of Oviedo (Spain), which along with three other European partner institutions, the University of Helsinki Metropolia (Finland), the University of the Algarve and the Polytechnic Institute of Santarém (both of them in Portugal), form the consortium from which the student will receive his/her Master's degree. As associated partner institutions this master also counts on the invaluable collaboration of two non-European universities: the University of Sao Carlos (Brazil) and Mahidol University (Thailand).

The Erasmus Mundus Master Course in Emergency and Critical Care Nursing (EMMECC NURSING) is the first international joint degree in advanced nursing available in Europe. It offers highly specialised education in nursing, with an advanced perspective. The programme combines theoretical teaching, research methodology and activities, communication and management of critical scenarios and advanced evidence-based practice, using state of the art clinical technologies.

The Master's main objective is to provide a structured and methodologically sound training programme that will cover the shortage of specially trained staff that burdens our health systems' intensive and acute care services. EMMECC NURSING course structure balances theoretical education on evidence based nursing, comprehensive clinical practice and a solid scientific instruction through a 90 ECTS (one and a half year) Postgraduate course leading to an international joint degree and diploma supplement recognized by all four institutions.

### **Master syllabus**

The master has comprises three semesters: the first one consists of the mandatory theoretical knowledge of the master with a choice of elective study track: Adult-Geriatric or Paediatric-Neonatal specialisation, the second semester focuses on clinical training and elective study track and the third one on further specialization culminating with the completion of a Master's thesis. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is used across the programme.

In the first semester all students take the compulsory subjects of Advanced Clinical Nursing (12 ECTS: 300-360 hours), Research Methodology (6 ECTS: 150-180 hours), Nursing Management (3 ECTS : 75-90 hours), Leadership and Communication in Nursing (3 ECTS : 75-90 hours) and one of the elective subjects: Advanced Adult-Geriatric Clinical Nursing (6 ECTS : 150-180 hours) or Advanced Paediatric-Neonatal (6 ECTS: 150-180 hours).

In the second semester students travel to Finland/Spain in accordance with their selected specialty in Emergency and Critical Care Nursing: Spain offers specialisation in Adult and Paediatric and whereas Finland offers Geriatric and Crisis Resource Management.

In the third semester the Master's thesis will be carried out. In this last period students can move to any of the four consortium institutions in Spain, Finland, Portugal as well as to the associated partner institutions in Brazil and Thailand in order to complete their Master's thesis.

### **Student admission criteria**

To be eligible for the EMMECC NURSING Master Programme the applicant must fulfil the following minimum requirements:

- Be the holder of a Bachelor's degree in Nursing (a minimum of three years' study at a university and of a minimum of 180 ECTS or equivalent, according to the regulations in the country of origin and to the European regulations).
- Be proficient in English: Applicants must certify at least a B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or its IELTS/TOEFL equivalent.
- At least three years of working experience in the field of nursing, after the final higher (tertiary) education degree certificate was issued. Only full-time work will be considered; part-time work will be converted into full-time work (150 hours or 20 full-time working days corresponding to one month).

We cannot forget that, in addition to the academic and professional goals, the Erasmus Mundus Master in Nursing has other goals equally important such as knowledge and respect for other cultures; we are fully aware that the best way to acquire these skills is to live with Master's students. In our first edition of the EMMECC NURSING the nurses participating come from countries as diverse as Indonesia, Pakistan,

Nepal, Finland, Colombia, Ethiopia, Congo, Peru, Palestine and the Philippines. The best experience for students and lecturers has been daily life with an excellent human potential from many different countries, of different races, cultures or religions. Dining at the same table a Muslim with a Catholic, Protestant or agnostic is a unique and enriching experience, no doubt the best way to help us both understand multiculturalism and practice respect for others.

Joining this first Erasmus Mundus Master of Excellence is a great opportunity for any nurse regardless of nationality, therefore I encourage all readers of this editorial eligible for admission to apply and become a part of the EMMECC NURSING family.

We are now in the process of selecting candidates for the third edition and application for an Erasmus Mundus scholarship is no longer available. However, the EMMECC NURSING welcomes applications from self-funding students or students with other sponsorships than the Erasmus Mundus scholarships. The next call is scheduled to take place in September 2014.

Websites:

- <http://www.masternursing.eu/>
- [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en.php)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/mundus\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/mundus_en.htm)
- [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus\\_mundus/results\\_compendia/selected\\_projects\\_action\\_1\\_master\\_courses\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/selected_projects_action_1_master_courses_en.php)
- <http://www.uniovi.es/descubreuo/ofertaformativa/masters/meucc>

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