

Florida Atlantic receives preliminary accreditation for new medical school

February 21, 2011|By Linda Shrieves, Orlando Sentinel

Florida Atlantic University's new medical school now officially can start recruiting students for classes that are slated to begin in the fall semester of 2011.

FAU's Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine has been granted preliminary accreditation by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. The group is the nationally recognized accrediting authority for medical education programs leading to a medical degree in U.S. and Canadian medical schools.

"This is truly a historic day for Florida Atlantic University and our surrounding communities throughout South Florida," said Bob Stilley, chair of FAU's Board of Trustees. "FAU has taken an important step to educate aspiring new doctors and address our communities' needs for improved access to healthcare."

The college has developed a curriculum titled "Integrated Patient Focused Curriculum," which features early and continuous community-based clinical experiences and problem-based learning with emphasis on small-group and self-directed learning.

A key component of the curriculum is early exposure to patients and the actual practice of medicine. To give students that opportunity, FAU has established relationships with several area hospitals that will serve as sites for clerkships, hospital-based electives and residencies. During clinical training, students will have the opportunity to work side-by-side with physicians in the diagnosis and treatment of patients, applying knowledge learned from the first two years of study to real-life situations.

The college has signed affiliations with eight top-ranked hospitals in Broward and Palm Beach counties including: Boca Raton Regional Hospital; Delray Medical Center; West Boca Medical Center; St. Mary's Medical Center; JFK Medical Center; Bethesda Memorial Hospital; Cleveland Clinic Florida; and Memorial Healthcare System, including Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital.

FAU also has partnered with The Scripps Research Institute, Florida to offer a dual M.D./Ph.D. degree, with the medical degree conferred by FAU and the doctorate conferred by The Scripps Research Institute's Kellogg School of Science and Technology.

The FAU-Scripps partnership will provide all FAU medical students, whether or not they are in the M.D./Ph.D. program, with an opportunity to interact with Kellogg faculty.

FAU has received funding for an enrollment of 256 students. FAU's tuition will be equivalent to the average tuition charged by Florida's other public medical education programs.

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