



WEILL CORNELL
MEDICAL COLLEGE IN QATAR

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PRESS RELEASE

Laboratory teaching under the microscope at first science symposium

Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) and Qatar University (QU) join forces today at the *First Symposium on Teaching and Learning in the Sciences* (Saturday, February 11, 2006).

The focus of the inaugural symposium is on the importance of laboratory exercises in the teaching of basic sciences – biology, physics, general chemistry and organic chemistry. It strengthens the existing collaboration between the institutions that has seen WCMC-Q and QU faculty members discussing their respective science courses with further joint events planned at regular intervals over the next few years.

Representatives of the science disciplines are attending the event with eight faculty members, four from each institution, giving presentations in the morning session. These will be followed by group discussions on issues related to laboratory teaching, such as the generation and development of experiments, safety, data collection, and preparation of laboratory reports.

President of Qatar University, Dr. Sheikha Abdulla Al-Missnad, said: “This first symposium is an example of scientific collaboration between our two institutions. Laboratory work is key to helping students engage in practical sessions, to learn to understand and master their disciplines with hands-on experience. Students need to engage in experiments as well as traditional learning activities, for optimal understanding of complex science concepts.”

Dean of WCMC-Q, Dr. Daniel R. Alonso, also recognized the WCMC-Q and QU collaboration. He emphasized the need to constantly review and refine science course curricula to assure their relevance to learning.

“Discussion between our institutions, facilitated by events such as this symposium, demonstrate the importance of science in the educational system. We both aim to contrast and compare our experiences in this field and to discuss the variety of learning experiences available, from the laboratory to lecture based scientific education and problem-based learning exercises,” he said.

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* A copy of the symposium program, including speaker abstracts, is available on request.

Notes to Editors:

Established in partnership with the Qatar Foundation, WCMC-Q is part of the Weill Medical College of Cornell University, the first American institution to offer its M.D. degree overseas. WCMC-Q offers a complete and integrated educational program, comprising the two-year Pre-medical Program, followed by the four-year Medical Program, with teaching by Cornell faculty. There are separate admission processes for each Program, guided by the standards of admission in use at Cornell University in Ithaca, and its Medical College in New York City.

Website: www.qatar-med.cornell.edu

The Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development is a private, nonprofit, chartered organization founded in 1995 aiming to develop and utilize human potential through a network of centers and campuses. In 1997 the Foundation set out on a strategic plan to create an Education City that is composed of a number of research centers, branch campuses of world-class educational institutions and a Science Park that acts as an incubator for research, responds to the immediate needs of industry and anticipates future necessities for development. In October 2003, Education City was officially inaugurated and it is now home to branches of some of the world's leading universities and research centers.

Website: www.qf.org.qa

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