Purpose: Advert for Master's of Science (Medicine) in Surgery by Dissertation

We are offering a Masters research project for students interested in global health of neurological disease or clinical neuroscience. Disorders affecting the nervous system impact more than 40% of the global population and represent the greatest overall disease burden in the world. Yet data from Africa remains scarce. This is a Master's by dissertation for a suitably qualified candidate, hosted in the African Brain Child Research Initiative (ABC - UCT Division of Neurosurgery and Neuroscience Institute), a multi-disciplinary research group focused on clinically translational research, and all staff and students work across the clinical and research domains. ABC is the recipient of the 2024 National Research Foundation Science Team of the Year Award and is considered a world-leader in traumatic brain injury research.

Call for Application:

Injury accounts for more death than HIV, TB and Malaria combined, and the most dangerous injury is trauma to the head. However, to date we have poor data to quantify the mortality of that injury. These data are essential to motivate for national and international policy change including effective prevention and care strategies. The proposed project is based on quantifying head-injury fatality rates in patients with trauma-related death. This will be a multi-center project involving data collection and analysis across African sites, supported by ABC's extensive research connections continentally and internationally. The student will be expected to liaise with study sites, engage in study meetings, drive data collection, conduct data quality control, conduct data analysis, write up findings for publication as well as dissertation, present findings at academic meetings, and contribute to general research-related activities within the ABC group.

Conditions:

The successful incumbent will be required to register for full-time study and must comply with the University's approved policies, procedures, and practices for the postgraduate sector. Successful candidates may not hold scholarships and salaried/full-time employment concurrently but will be permitted to take up part-time employment (specified maximum hours per week).

Value and tenure:

Funding of R150 000 for this project is available for one MSc student. Applications for further funding as per UCT prescribed funding limits will be supported. Funding carries no fringe benefits and is available for full time study.

Academic criteria:

Students from backgrounds including global health, epidemiology, data science, or biomedical sciences are encouraged to apply. Applicants will need to demonstrate relevant and meritorious research or work experience. Applicants should be South African citizens or already hold a valid student visa for South Africa.

Application requirements and selection process:

Please send through a letter of application stating your areas of expertise and research interests as well as a full CV, copies of academic transcripts, and the names of 2 referees. Eligible and complete applications will be considered by a selection committee within the Paediatric Neurosurgery Unit.

Closing date for applications:

All positions are available to commence study by latest February 2026.

Contact details for submission of applications and for enquiries:

Please send all applications to Dr Jill Combrinck at j.combrinck@uct.ac.za by closing date 30 September 2025.

The University of Cape Town reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications. The University of Cape Town reserves the right to change the conditions of award or to make no awards at all.