

30th Residential Summer Course in Epidemiology, Florence

19. – 30. June 2017



The «Norwegian» PhD-students attending the course, six of us with the support of the NRSGH International Training Grant



I attended the European Educational Programme in Epidemiology for 2 weeks held in Florence, Italy, in June 2017.

The course covers basic and intermediate topics in epidemiology and statistics, including introduction to STATA statistics program.

The course was structured in the same way every day from 08.30 to 18.30, including lectures in statistics and practical exercises in STATA in the afternoon, and lectures and exercises in epidemiology after lunch.

The learning methods consist mainly of lectures for the whole group, but also individual and group work in smaller groups.

There were some social activities organized in the evenings and in the weekends. Because the majority of the participants also stay at the course venue, it is a very social happening.

The topics in statistics and epidemiology are at a level which is very relevant for my own project and I gained a lot of knowledge regarding study designs, their pros and cons and what types of outcome can be measured by the different designs. Even though some of the lectures were revision from my previous studies, it was very good to have them repeated and explained in another way. The questions and discussions with other PhD-students provided new approaches to the different topics.

We were a large group, around 90 participants from 22 countries. This provided an opportunity to meet and exchange experiences and ideas from other PhD-students in different fields. It was interesting to hear about the different projects, the settings and the methods used, and it gave me new ideas for my own project. It is always refreshing to learn that there are many ways to reach a target.

I would definitely recommend the course to other PhD-students in global health. Because it is so intensive, many topics are covered in a short time and there is a natural and logical progression from one lecture to the next. The days are very intense, so there is not much time to do anything else when the course has finished for the day. The great benefit is that you are able to concentrate only on the course and the topics covered!

I will especially mention the lecturers in statistics from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; they were excellent in explaining statistical concepts and making it understandable. Another good thing about the course is that they provide many practical examples in the exercises, making the knowledge more down to earth and easier to grasp when you have a clinical background as myself.

It is a great benefit to have some previous knowledge of epidemiology and biostatistics, and have worked a bit with other statistics programs such as SPSS. No previous knowledge of STATA is necessary since they start from scratch.

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Tromsø, 31.07.17