Reflections

Dora Reglodi, Department of Anatomy, University of Pecs

2024. November

Participating in the Leanbody Project was an excellent experience for me. It was very useful to hear presentations from colleagues from other universities, visit their departments and have personal exchange of ideas. It is always useful to compare how anatomy is taught at other universities, and what good practice we can also implement in our teaching. We are now more convinced than ever that cadaveric dissections are necessary for a high quality anatomy teaching. Visiting the Cambridge University was a lifetime experience. We have learnt a lot from Prof. Cecilia Brasset. Regarding our research, we do more basic research, with molecular biology, histology and clinical studies. However, our attention is now also turned towards anatomical research, variations, clinical applications, teaching methods. We have seen several positive examples for that and also how these studies can involve students and how we can publish them. Another new aspect that we are now implementing is the ethical aspect of anatomy teaching. Colleagues from Karolinksa Institutet gave several talks on this issue, which increased our awareness of promoting EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) in our lectures. As we are an international university, we have now included more images of people from different races and ethnicities to demonstrate anatomy. This has been done in several lectures, especially where surface anatomy is shown. We continue to pay special attention to include all races in our demonstration material, and many of our lectures have been updated accordingly. We also heard quite a few talks on feedback systems. And although this has been also done at our university for a long time, we have included some novel aspects, organized teacher-student talks on the feedback to give our reflections on changes that we make based on their feedback or explain why certain things cannot be changed. A further ethical concern was about our donors. The donor system is similar at all universities, but how students thank the donors is different. This was on one hand very interesting to compare, on the other hand, we learnt some novel aspects that we can also include in our programme. For example, we have increased our students’ awareness of the body donation programme, helping them to appreciate the generosity of the donors. We have collected “Thank you” messages for the donors’ relatives, based on samples of tributes written by students from the University of Cambridge. At our most recent funeral ceremony for our donors, one such tribute was read to the students and relatives present, in all 3 languages (German, English, Hungarian). We have also heard different ways how to increase the number of donors, which we are currently working on.

Following our visit and workshop at Cambridge University, several of our colleagues have visited the Anatomy Department there, as a short term teaching exchange. This was an excellent opportunity for them to see lectures, to be involved in the practical teaching. Other have visited Zagreb or Masaryk University and one colleague even joined the Chech Society for Anatomists meeting. Several things have been already included in our teaching. The importance of clinical anatomy has been even more emphasized after seeing the Cambridge curriculum. We have organized “Clinical cases in Anatomy” workshops for students this semester, and invited further clinical lecturers for both students and staff. Having heard from other anatomy departments how they renewed their examination system has made us putting more effort to standardization of our examination system too. The openness of colleagues from all other universities and personal exchanges about teaching and examination methods is a great experience and a wonderful opportunity to always move towards further development of our teaching system. I thank all colleagues who participated in this project.