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## Evaluation methodology of doctoral theses (Revision 1)

### *Legal Framework*

- National Education Law no. 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and addenda.
- The Code of Doctoral University Studies, approved by Government Decision no. 681/2011, with subsequent amendments and addenda;
- Order of the Minister of Education and Research no. 4621/2020 for the approval of the Regulation on the organization and functioning of the National Council for Attesting Titles, Diplomas and Certificates;
- Order of the Minister of Education and Research no. 5229/2020 for the approval of the methodologies related to the granting of the qualification certificate, the granting of the doctorate title, as well as the resolution of complaints regarding non-compliance with quality standards or professional ethics, including the existence of plagiarism, within a doctoral thesis.
- Order of Minister of National Education no. 5110/2018 on the approval of the minimum national standards for granting the doctoral degree.
- R1# Quality standards regarding the way teaching, learning, research, practical applications and evaluation activities are carried out, in full-time education, through the use of specific electronic, IT and synchronous communication resources, approved in the Extraordinary Meeting of ARACIS Council of August 5, 2022, by Decision 85/H/08/05/2022

### CHAPTER I. General provisions

**Art. 1.** Within the meaning of the current methodology, the terms and expressions below have the following meaning:

- a)** Organizing Institution of University Doctoral Studies/Organising Institution of Doctorates;
- b)** The doctoral file consists in the doctoral thesis and all the documents requested by IOSUD/IOD and the National Council for Attesting Titles, Diplomas and Certificates, hereinafter referred to as CNATDCU, to a doctoral student for the granting of the doctoral title, based on the current methodology

**Art. 2. (1)** The person involved in the evaluation procedure is considered to be in a situation of conflict of interests, if a personal interest is involved, as follows:



a) spouse, close to or II<sup>nd</sup> degree relative, including with the person whose file is evaluated, as well as with the PhD Supervisor, if appropriate.

b) has benefited in the last 3 years prior to the evaluation or is currently benefiting from undue benefits from the assessed person, including the PhD Supervisor, if appropriate.

(2) These situations do not include occasional collaborations with IOSUD, such as participation in doctoral or habilitation commissions, other than those under the direct analysis of CNATDCU.

**Art. 3.** The doctoral thesis is an original work, the source for each material used being mandatory.

**Art. 4.** The PhD student is the author of the doctoral thesis and thus takes all responsibility for the accuracy of data and information presented in the thesis as well as the opinions and demonstrations expressed in the thesis.

**Art. 5.** The PhD Supervisor is solitarily responsible along with the author of the thesis for compliance with standards of quality or professional ethics, including for the originality of the contents, based on provisions of Article 170 in the National Education Law no. 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and addenda.

## Chapter II. Stages prior to the defense of the doctoral thesis

### Stage 1. Creation of the PhD Student file

**Art. 6. (1)** In view of the evaluation process of the PhD files, IOSUD/IOD are obliged to create them both in printed and electronic form.

(2) IOSUD/IOD verifies the PhD file.

**Art. 7. (1)** The PhD student and the PhD Supervisor must consider initiating the stages for organizing the public defense of the doctoral thesis no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the final year of doctoral studies, respectively the 4<sup>th</sup> year of doctoral studies

(2) In view of the following stages, the Doctoral School verifies that the **PhD student has met all his/her obligations** stated in the doctoral programme and those featuring in the study contract, including the financial ones, where appropriate.

**Art. 8.** At this this stage, the following documents are attached to **the PhD file**, both in printed and electronic form:

- the admission decision to the University Doctoral Programme;
- the contract for University Doctoral Studies contains provisions on the publishing of the doctoral thesis based on the law in force, accompanied by the name and surname of the PhD student and the PhD Supervisor; personal data, except for the name, will not be made public;
- certificates regarding the completion of the modules within the training program based on advanced university studies;
- the project defense made by the PhD student at the end of the first year of study and the minute of the defense meeting;



- the reports presented by the PhD student in the IInd and IIIrd years of study and the minutes of the defense meetings;
- scanned copy of the PhD student's ID card;
- scanned copy of the PhD student's birth certificate;
- scanned copy of marriage licence or the court ruling on the change of name in case the name on the bachelor's degree does not correspond to the one under which the doctoral thesis is defended;
- copy of mandatory articles **related to the research theme**.

**Art. 9.** Based on the documents certifying the duration of the study program, the doctoral school prepares **the preliminary report for the public defense of the thesis**; the preliminary report is attached to the file

### Stage 2. Pre-defence of the doctoral thesis

**Art. 10.** If the PhD student has fulfilled all his obligations in the doctoral study program and those stipulated in the study contract, both the PhD the student and PhD supervisor are notified that the **pre-defense of the doctoral thesis can be organized**.

**Art. 11.** The following documents will be included **in the doctoral file**, in both printed and electronic copy:

- application signed by the doctoral student, registered at the doctoral school, regarding the initiation of the thesis evaluation procedures by the guidance commission, approved by the doctoral supervisor (**Typed form- Form 1**)
- affidavit signed by both the PhD student and PhD Supervisor on assumption of responsibilities regarding the originality of the doctoral thesis as well as the fulfillment of the quality standards and professional ethics, based on Art 143, Para (4) and Art. 170 in the National Education Law no. 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and completions and on Art 65, Para (5)-(7) in the Code of University Doctoral Studies, approved by Government Decision no. 681/2011 with subsequent amendments and completions (**Typed form- Form 2**).

**Art.12.** Pre-defence of the doctoral thesis consists in the PhD student defending his/her thesis in front of the Guidance Commission. After the pre-defence, that can be public, the PhD Supervisor and the Guidance Commission decide upon the official submission and the public defence of the thesis. The approval of the Guidance Commission in view of submitting the doctoral thesis at the Doctoral School Secretariat (**Typed form- Form 8**) will be included in the PhD file. The period of time necessary for the evaluation of the thesis by the Guidance Commission is 30 days and can be prolonged, for a maximum of another 30 days in highly justified situations.

### Stage 3. Similarity analysis of the doctoral thesis

**Art. 13. (1)** After the completion of the doctoral thesis, following the pre-defense stage, the PhD student submits the doctoral thesis and annexes in both electronic (pdf, no scans allowed) and printed form at the Doctoral School Secretariat and completes **the typed form for submission of the doctoral thesis**. The doctoral thesis will have 2 definitive copies.

(2) The Doctoral School performs the **similarities analysis** by using, at least, one software accepted by CNATDCU; the Doctoral School can additionally request the use of a program developed at national level regarding the detection of similarities.

(3) The softwares accepted by CNATDCU and used by IOSUD/IOD, in view of establishing the degree of similarity for the scientific papers are:

1. iThenticate;
2. Turnitin;
3. Plagiarism detector + PDAS (PDAS - Plagiarism Detector Accumulator Server);
4. Safe Assign;
5. www.sistemantiplagiat.ro.

(4) The period of time for the analysis cannot surpass 30 days since the submission of the thesis.

**Art. 14.** The similarities report generated by the programme is forwarded to the PhD Supervisor. The PhD Supervisor analyses and approves the Similarities Report and recommends admission/rejection of the public defense of the thesis (**Typed form- Form 4**). In the aftermath of the analysis and the PhD Supervisor's recommendations, a minute regarding the originality of the thesis is signed.

**Art. 15.** All typed forms from this stage are included in **the PhD file**.

#### **Stage 4. Submission of documents in view of the public defence of the doctoral thesis**

**Art. 16.** In order to complete **the PhD file** in view of organising the public defense of the thesis, **the PhD student** will submit to the Doctoral School Secretariat the following documents, in printed and electronic form:

- the acceptance report of the doctoral thesis elaborated and signed by the PhD Supervisor;
- reports of the official referees, members of the doctoral commission, signed by them;
- summary of the doctoral thesis in Romanian (6 typed copies);
- signed CV of the PhD student;
- list of publications resulted from the scientific research within the doctoral studies programme, published or accepted for publication, where appropriate, and signed scanned copies of the publications;
- the PhD Supervisor's/main coordinator's proposal regarding the component of the PhD Commission (Typed form- form 5), approved by CSUD
- signed CVs of all the members of the PhD Commission;
- affidavit of the PhD student on their options regarding the publishing of the doctoral thesis on the national platform, based on provisions of the Government Decision no 681/2011, with subsequent amendments and completions (**Typed form- Form 10**);

**Art. 17.** The Doctoral School Secretariat will attach to **the PhD file** the following documents:

- decision to appoint the public defence commission;
- certificate regarding the submission of a copy of the thesis to the library (**Typed form - Form 7**).

#### **Stage 5. Submission of the request for public defense of the doctoral thesis**

**Art. 18.** The application for setting the date for the public defense of the doctoral thesis, endorsed by the PhD Supervisor/main coordinator and the president of the public defense commission (Typed form - Form 6) is submitted to the Doctoral School Secretariat at least 20 calendar days before the date proposed for the defense .

#### CHAPTER IV. Public defense of the doctoral thesis

**Art. 19. (1)** In order to publicly defend the doctoral thesis, a committee of specialists is established, called the doctoral commission. The commission is proposed by the PhD Supervisor/main coordinator and approved by CSUD Director.

**(2)** The doctoral commission consists in:

- a) The President of the commission, as CSUD representative;
- b) The PhD supervisor/s;
- c) At least three official national or foreign referees, specialists in the domain of the doctoral thesis, of whom at least two deploy their activity outside UMF "Carol Davila" in Bucharest.

**(3)** The President of the Commission is the Dean of the Faculty that sustains the public defense of the thesis or a CSUD member with habilitation within the doctoral thesis domain.

**(4)** All members of the doctoral commission must meet the following criteria

- a. They must have the PhD degree;
- b. They must be, at least, Lecturer or IInd degree Scientific Researcher or PhD Supervisor, in the country or abroad;

**(5)** In the case of joint supervision PhDs with one of the PhD Supervisors outside UMF „Carol Davila” in Bucharest, the doctoral commission will comprehend representatives of both institutions.

**(6)** In the case of unavailability of The President of the Commission or one of the official referees, after the validation of the doctoral commission, CSUD Director can approve, upon the PhD Supervisor’s proposal, the replacement of the respective doctoral commission member.

**(7)** The activity of the official referees within the doctoral commission is regulated and remunerated according to the law. For payment of referees in the doctoral commissions outside UMF Carol Davila Bucharest the following documents are necessary:

- certificate from the workplace, showing seniority in the specialty; in the case of retired referees, in addition to the certificate from the last place of work (in which seniority in the specialty is certified), a copy of the pension coupon is also required;
- copy of the identity card/passport, with specified PIN (personal identification number);
- copy of a document issued by the bank where the referee has a card account that highlights the IBAN account, the name of the bank branch.



(8) Offering of gifts or other unfair advantages by the PhD student to the members of commission as well the request that the PhD student contribute to the settlement of spendings related to the travel of some of the commission members or to the organising of the public defense of the thesis are strictly forbidden.

**Art. 20. (1)** The Doctoral School Secretariat can proceed to the organising of the public defense of the doctoral thesis only after it has received the evaluation reports of the PhD Supervisor/main coordinator and all the official referees.

(2) The public defense of the doctoral thesis is approved by CSUD Director, after which the Doctoral School Secretariat will publish the announcement on UMF Carol Davila website.

(3) After the approval of the public defense, the doctoral school prepares and displays the announcement for the public defence at least 20 calendar days before the proposed. The announcement must include the date, location and time of the defense, the PhD Supervisor/s, as well as the place where the full text of the thesis can be consulted, in printed format. The announcement of the public defense, the summary of the thesis in electronic format, the PhD candidate's CV, the CVs of the members of the commission for the public defense of the doctoral thesis or links to them are displayed on IOSUD website

**Art. 21. (1)** Upon the public defense of the thesis, the presence of the Doctoral Commission President, the PhD Supervisor/s and at least that of two official referees is mandatory.

(2) The official referee who cannot participate at the public defense of the doctoral thesis must send to the Doctoral Schools Secretariat, prior to the public defense meeting, a written motivation where he/she declares the reason of absence and the rating of the thesis.

R1# (3) In well justified situations, referees outside University of Medicine and Pharmacy „Carol Davila” in Bucharest can participate at the public defence of the doctoral thesis by videoconference.

(4) In situations of force majeure, for example during the period of suspension of face-to-face activities (determined by the state of emergency on the territory of the country or any other official decisions of the authorities), the defense of the doctoral thesis can be carried out online. The defense of the doctoral thesis by videoconference is carried out using the University e-learning platform, through Google education services platform, via the Hangouts Meet system. The doctoral commission members and the candidate will receive the meeting login link, and the meeting will be recorded and archived.

**Art. 22. (1)** The meeting for the public defense of the doctoral thesis is led by the President of the doctoral commission and will deploy as follows:

- a. a succinct presentation (30-40 min) of the content of the doctoral thesis by the PhD student;
- b. reading the evaluation reports drawn up by the PhD Supervisor/s and official referees;
- c. debate of the doctoral thesis, during which the members of the doctoral commission and the public address questions to the PhD student

(2) The questions session is mandatory and is recorded in the minutes of the meeting. It must be the central point of the public defense of the doctoral thesis, with the aim of highlighting the PhD student's knowledge in the field of the addressed theme and the elements of originality contained by the thesis.

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(3) Based on the public defense of the doctoral thesis and the reports from the official referees, the doctoral commission evaluates and debates on the qualification of the doctoral thesis.

(4) Each member of the Doctoral Commission gives one qualification. The qualifications Excellent, Very good, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory can be assigned. The qualifier that received the absolute majority of the votes cast by the committee members becomes the decision of the entire commission.

(5) In the case of doctoral thesis of PhD students enrolled in the 2019-2019 academic year, upon giving the qualification, the doctoral commission will take into consideration the following recommendations:

*Excellent:* National minimum standards are met. The sum of the impact factors (considered at the date of publication) of the journals in which the articles from the doctoral thesis were published and where the PhD student is the main author is  $\geq 4$

*Very good:* The minimum national standards are met. The sum of the impact factors of the journals in which the articles from the doctoral thesis were published (considered at the date of publication) and where the doctoral student is the main author is  $\geq 2$

*Good:* The minimum national standards are met. The sum of the impact factors of the journals in which the articles from the doctoral thesis were published (considered at the date of publication) and where the doctoral student is the main author is  $\geq 0.5$ .

*Sufficient:* National minimum standards are met, but the thesis is modest in terms of approach and results.

(6) The public meeting minute also includes:

- a) the established qualification by the commission after the vote, as well as the one granted by each member of the Doctoral Commission;
- b) mentioning of CNATDCU specialty commission to whom the university doctoral study domain was attributed in which the study program was completed;
- c) the date of the public defense of the thesis.

(7). The President of the Commission communicates the decision of the Doctoral Commission to the audience attending the public defense of the doctoral thesis.

(8) The meeting minutes (**Typed form- Form 9+ Annex**) are included in the **PhD file**.

**Art. 23.** If, during the evaluation of the doctoral thesis, a member of the Doctoral Commission identifies, both before and during the public defense, serious deviations from good conduct in scientific research and university activity, including plagiarism of the results or publications of other authors, fabrication of results or replacing the results with fake data, the doctoral commission member is obliged to take the following measures

- a. to notice the Ethics Committee in UMF "Carol Davila" in Bucharest to analyse and resolve the case, including by expelling the doctoral student, according to art. 306-310 and 318-322 of the National Education Law no. 1/2011 and the provisions of Law no. 206/2004 on good conduct in scientific research, technological development and innovation, with subsequent amendments and additions
- b. To notice all the Doctoral Committee members on the deviations and granting of the *Unsatisfactory* qualification.



**Art. 24.** If the PhD student met all the criteria requested by the scientific research programme and the overall appreciations on the doctoral thesis allow the qualifications Excellent, Very Good, Good or Satisfactory, the Doctoral Committee proposes to grant the title of PhD. The proposal is forwarded to CNATDCU for evaluation and validation. Following the evaluation of the PhD file, CNATDCU proposes to Minister of Education and Research granting or non-granting of the PhD title.

**Art. 25.** In the case of assigning the qualification "Unsatisfactory", the Doctoral Commission specifies the content elements to be redone or completed in the doctoral thesis and requests a new public defense of the thesis. The second public defense of the thesis takes place in front of Doctoral Commission as in the case of the first defense. In the event that the qualification "Unsatisfactory" is obtained at the second public defense as well, the PhD title is not awarded, and the doctoral student is expelled.

## CHAPTER V Analysis of the thesis by CNATDCU

**Art. 26. (1)** The process of evaluation of the doctoral file by CNATDCU is sustained by an informatic system, hereinafter referred to as the national platform, ensured by Ministry of Education and Research (MEC).

**(2)** The documents in electronic format (PDF), signed with qualified/advanced electronic signature by persons named by UMF „Carol Davila” in Bucharest in the PhD file are uploaded on the platform by the Doctoral School Secretariat and form the electronic PhD file.

**(3)** The PhD file is uploaded on the platform in maximum 30 days from the public defense of the doctoral thesis.

**(4)** UMF „Carol Davila” is responsible for the correctness of the uploaded data. Through qualified/advanced electronic signature, University takes full responsibility for the true copy of the documents included in the electronic PhD file of the PhD student, including the true copy of the electronic files with the printed ones.

**(5)** Upon uploading the electronic file of the PhD student, „UMF” Carol Davila constitutes the PhD student’s profile, including the targeted doctoral domain in view of obtaining the PhD title.

**Art. 27.** After evaluating the PhD file, CNATDCU proposes to Ministry of Education and Research the granting or non-granting the PhD title

**Art. 28.** CNATDCU will not resume the evaluation of files regarding doctoral thesis that have already been evaluated and invalidated one by CNATDCU and that, also, are not transmitted within one year since the invalidation, as well as the files regarding doctoral thesis that were evaluated and invalidated twice by CNATDCU, according to Art. 168, Para (8) in Law no 1/2011 with subsequent amendments and completions.

**Art. 29. (1)** Based on CNATDCU’s decision on granting the PhD title, the Ministry of Education and Research grants the PhD title by Order of Minister.





(2) CNATDCU Technical Secretariat transmits to IOSUD the order regarding the granting of the PhD title within 15 days after issuance of the order.

(3) The Technical Secretariat completes in the platform the number and date of the Order of Minister for granting the PhD title.

(4) After completing the Order of Minister in the platform and based on the publication options completed by UMF "Carol Davila" in the platform, the thesis and the annexes become public on the national platform, in accordance with the provisions of Art. 168 Para. (9) from the National Education Law no. 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and completions, and of Art. 66 of Government Decision no. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of doctoral university studies, with subsequent amendments and additions

**Art. 30. (1)** If the decision of CNATDCU invalidates the doctoral thesis, the platform notifies CNATDCU Technical Secretariat and UMF "Carol Davila" of the decision, accompanied by the synthetic evaluation report, according to Art. 168 Para. (8) from the National Education Law no. 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and additions

(2) In the case of invalidation decision issued by CNATDCU after the evaluation of a thesis re-transmitted to CNATDCU, based on Art. 168 Para. (8) in Law no. 1.2011, with subsequent amendments and additions, CNATDCU Technical Secretariat proposed to the Minister of Education and Research the non-granting of the PhD title. In this case, the Minister of Education and Research issues an order for non-granting of the PhD title.

**Art. 31.** UMF "Carol Davila" communicates CNATDCU decision to the PhD student within 15 days from the date of notification.

**Art. 32.** CNATDCU' decision may be appealed against 15 days since the receiving them by the PhD student.

**Art. 33.** The appeal is registered at the Ministry of Education and Research, accompanied by IOSUD communication regarding CNATDCU's decision and the CNATDCU Technical Secretariat uploads them, within 15 days maximum from the date of registration.

**Art. 34. (1)** CNATDCU's decision regarding the resolution of the appeal is signed by the President of the General Council, including by electronic means and are uploaded on the platform.

(2) The platform notifies CNATDCU Technical Secretariat regarding CNATDCU's decision.

(3) CNATDCU Technical Secretariat communicates to the PhD student and IOSUD/IOD on the decision issued by CNATDCU, within 15 days from the date of issuance.

**Art. 35.** The PhD degree will include the obtained qualification obtained by the PhD student, namely *Excellent, Very Good, Good or Satisfying*. Also, a Latin mention will be inscribed, as follows:

- a) For the *Excellent* qualification- *Summa cum laude*;
- b) For the *Very Good* qualification - *Magna cum laude*;
- c) For the *Good* qualification - *Cum laude*;



## CHAPTER VI

### Final dispositions

**Art. 36.** The PhD file will be archived by IOSUD, on a permanent ground, based on the law in force.

**Art. 37.** The PhD thesis (including their annexes) represent public documents. Thus, they will be published on a site administered by Ministry of Education and Research, based on the law in force regarding the field of copyright.

**Art. 38.** The protection of intellectual property rights over the doctoral thesis is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the law.

**Art. 39.** The exploitation of copyright and/or industrial property rights on the original product made within the doctoral university study program is done in accordance with the provisions of the legislation in the field

**Art. 40.** The quality of PhD student ends upon the granting of the PhD title or of the decision of expelling.