

West University of Timișoara

2021

I. Introduction

I was invited to join to the evaluation team of the online doctoral school evaluation process of the West University of Timișoara as an international evaluator of the Marketing doctoral study program of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). The online evaluation took place between Thursday 11 October and Friday 15 October 2021. Before the evaluation, I received the self-evaluation report of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration and the Marketing domain. My report is following the structure of the indicators.

II. Methods used

Before the online evaluation I have overviewed the self-evaluation report of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration and the Marketing domain and the Annexes and I have checked the documents, data and information available on the website about the doctoral school and the Marketing domain. I didn't visit the institution personally, but, according to the report and the feedbacks of the colleagues who participated at the onsite visit, I have formed an image of the institution, the doctoral school and the domain as well. I joined almost all the online meeting discussions with the representatives of the different bodies of the institution and the doctoral school, and the meetings with the students, graduates and employers. The English translation worked perfectly at it made the discussions easy to understand. During these discussions, I also appreciated the honesty from the side of the institution and the doctoral school, just as the problems and challenges were openly discussed.

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

According to the information and written documents the administrative, managerial institutional structures and financial resources (Criterion A.1.) of the doctoral school are at a good level. The operation of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, including the Marketing domain relies on a system of regulations, procedures and tools covering the whole doctoral educational process. In accordance with the Standard A.1.1., the institution organizing doctoral studies

(IOSUD) has implemented effective functioning mechanisms provided for in the specific legislation on the organization of doctoral studies. The performance indicators A.1.1.1. and A.1.1.2. meet with the expected level.

Standard A.1.2. is focusing on the logistical resources necessary to carry out the doctoral studies' mission. The ACADEMIS information system, currently existing in the West University of Timișoara, is an Integrated Information System for ERP Management (Enterprise Resources Planning), a solution for streamlining university management by computerizing all processes of the university and doctoral school operation. This computer system is an appropriate tool for the record of Ph.D. students and their academic background, so the A.1.2.1. performance indicator is fulfilled, just like the A.1.2.2. performance indicator as there is an online iThenticate software used, and with the help of this software, all Ph.D. theses are analyzed, according to internal procedures, before being defended in front of the guiding commission, and before the public defense.

According to the Standard A.1.3., IOSUD ensures that financial resources are used optimally, and the revenues obtained from doctoral studies are supplemented by additional funding to that provided by the Government. The performance indicators within this standard (A.1.3.1.; A.1.3.2.) are fulfilled, in the examined period, 40 Ph.D. students from SDEAA benefited from 2 grants, 2 students of the Marketing domain benefited from 2 grants, and 2 students have received additional funding sources from the 8 active PhD students of the Marketing domain, so the score was 25%, which is higher than the expected 20% level. It is important to point out that A.1.3.3. performance indicator does not reach the expected 10% but we must keep in mind that the evaluated period was affected by the virus crisis, and this partly explains the non-compliance.

In connection with the research infrastructure (A.2.), the A.2.1. standard and A.2.1.1. performance indicator is fulfilled. According to the self-evaluation report and the received information, the university has proper material bases for the educational and research process. It is also important to point out that from last year, due to the COVID situation, the university, just like other higher education institutions, has started to organize the educational activities online. According to the received information, the university and the doctoral school managed to cope with this atypical situation. It is important to point out that the university must pay a permanent attention to maintain and develop the infrastructure of research and education.

Standard A.3.1. is focusing on the appropriate human resources, the qualified staff that have the proper competences and the necessary experience to carry out the

doctoral studies program. However, the Performance Indicator A.3.1.1. is just partially fulfilled as from 3 Doctoral advisors 1 does not meet with the ARACIS standards. This fact on a long run may jeopardize the appropriate operation of the Marketing domain so it is highly recommended to make steps to reach the minimum level as soon as it is possible. Out of the 3 Ph.D. advisors, in the field of Marketing are affiliated within IOSUD-WUT, 2 Ph.D. advisors (66.67%) are holders of WUT while 1 has a tenure at "Ovidius" University from Constanța, so this performance indicator (A.3.1.2.) is at an appropriate level, just like the A.3.1.3. and the A.3.1.4 indicators, as the teaching staff and researchers have proper competencies to do their work correctly and have proved expertise in the field of study, and at the time of this report, no Ph.D. advisor in the Marketing field coordinates more than 8 Ph.D students.

Standard A.3.2. is concentrating on the scientific activities, performances and the scientific visibility of the doctoral advisors of the Marketing domain at international level. According to the received information, the A.3.2.1. and A.3.2.2. performance indicators are at a proper level, in connection with the A.3.2.1 the score is 66,67%, 2 thesis advisors have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications, just like at A.3.2.2, where the score (66,67%) is also over the minimum level.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Criterion B.1. is focusing on the number, quality and diversity of candidates enrolled for the admission contest. According to the B.1.1. standard, the institution organizing doctoral studies has the capacity to attract candidates from outside the higher education institution or in greater numbers than the number of places financed from the state budget. The performance indicator B.1.1.1. examines the ratio between the number of candidates and the number of seats financed from the state budget in the last five years. This indicator is above the minimum value of 1.2 (1.29), so this indicator is fulfilled.

In accordance with the Standard B.1.2 candidates admitted to doctoral studies have to demonstrate academic, research and professional performance. Performance indicators B.1.2.1. and B.1.2.2. are fulfilled, the admission to doctoral study programs is based on selection criteria including, the entrance exam to doctoral studies consists of an entrance examination conducted online in which the candidate presents a scientific research project, and according to the data, the rate of expelled Ph.D. students, including after dropping out, 3 and 4 years after admission, does not exceed 30%.

In connection with the content of doctoral programs (Criterion B.2.), in accordance with the Standard B.2.1. as the training program based on advanced university

studies is appropriate to improve doctoral students' research skills and to strengthen ethical behavior in science, there are 5 performance indicators. The training program curriculum for doctoral students enrolled in the Marketing study domain includes at least three subjects relevant to their training in scientific research, including a subject for in-depth study of research methodology, as well as a subject aimed at statistical data processing, so the performance indicator B.2.1.1. is fulfilled, just like the B.2.1.2., because there is a subject dedicated to the aspects regarding ethics in research activity and the compliance with the standards, norms, principles and rules valid at international level as well as a subject related to Scientometrics. The situation is the same with the other performance indicators. Doctoral students enrolled in doctoral studies in Marketing benefit from the guidance of functional guidance commissions. Within the Marketing field, the coordination of the 8 current Ph.D. students is ensured by Ph.D. advisors together with other teachers, who are associate professors or lecturers. In total, 7 teachers provide guidance within the doctoral advisory committees. The ratio is 1.14: 1 (lower than the ratio of 3 : 1).

Criterion B.3. is concentrating on the results of the doctoral studies and their assessment procedures and there are 2 standards (B.3.1.; B.3.2) and 4 performance indicators, and according to the data, all of them fulfilled. The list of relevant scientific papers authored during the doctoral studies program by Ph.D. students who have obtained their Ph.D. in the last 5 years in the field, list prepared based on available information, can be found at Annex SDEAA_B.3.1.1. The second indicator is also met, each of the doctoral students who completed their studies during the evaluated period delivered at least one presentation at prestigious international events. Out of the 9 external referees used in the Marketing field, none was in more than 2 committees for one or more Ph.D. advisors, so B.3.2.1. is also fulfilled. In connection with the B.3.2.2., the expected ratio has not been reached or exceeded.

Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

In the Domain C, there are 3 Criteria: Criterion C.1. Existence and periodic implementation of the internal quality assurance system Criterion; C.2. Transparency of information and accessibility of learning resources, and Criterion C.3. Internationalization. According to the received data, all the standards and the performance indicators are met and the processes are at the expected level. Reviewing the structure and activities of the quality assurance (C.1.1.1.), these processes operate well, but quality assurance has to become the part of the organizational culture of the institution. The evolution and development of a real organizational culture of quality assurance at every stage of university and doctoral school operation should be in focus.

In connection with the C.1.1.2. performance indicator, at the level of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, SDEAA is currently implementing a questionnaire regarding the degree of satisfaction of Ph.D. students in relation to the activity carried out within the doctoral studies program. This tool certainly helps to identify the needs of the students at doctoral school level, but it is also recommended to examine the Marketing study program separately.

Performance Indicator C.2.1.1. is focusing on the online information available about the doctoral school and domains. The website of the IOSUD-UVT is <https://www.uvt.ro/cercetare/doctorat/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>. Information about the Doctoral School and the domains can be found on the website of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. The available information is mostly in Romanian language. If the internationalization of the doctoral school and the different domains is a priority in the future, it is recommended to develop the English contents as well.

The university offers to the doctoral students the opportunity to access wide range of databases (C.2.2.1.) – it is suggested to maintain this situation because it is certainly a great help for the doctoral students when they are preparing their thesis.

According to the performance indicator C.2.2.2. Each doctoral student shall have access, upon request, to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works. In case of the examined doctoral school, doctoral students have the possibility to have access to this system.

All doctoral students have access to the research infrastructure of the university (C.2.2.3). According to the received information, the research facilities are on a good level, it is recommended to maintain the present state and develop if the financial conditions allow.

The doctoral school and the evaluated domain has many international connections, and students and the academic staff have the possibility to participate at international mobility and attend international scientific conferences. Although these processes connections (C.3.1.1.) seem to operate well, it is recommended to maintain and manage these contracts permanently with the partner institutions and permanently increase the number of students and staff members taking part in mobility activities. Even in the period of COVID, when the personal contacts are more complicated, the doctoral school must pay attention to find the appropriate management of its contacts if the present situation drags on and the online world lasts longer.

To invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students (C.3.1.2.) could increase the international visibility and could broaden students' knowledge as well. When the virus crisis is going to be over, after the online world it would be important again to invite experts from abroad who personally visit the university and have classes with the doctoral students.

In connection with the performance indicator C.3.1.3., it is very important to point out that in the doctoral school and in the Marketing educational program it would be important to pay permanent attention to the internationalization and attract more students from abroad.

IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good reputation, experience and prestige of the university and the doctoral school - academic excellence - the importance of the institution in the internal and international environment 	<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - present human resources challenges - academic career is not very attractive for young generations - other domains of the doctoral school might be more attractive for students
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attract more students - increase the level of internationalization - gain from the possible advantages of the online world and keep some parts of the online methods when the virus crisis is going to be over 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unsolved human resources challenges - other domains of the doctoral school remain more attractive for students

V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	PI	A.1.1.1. The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university	fulfilled	The operation of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, including the Marketing domain relies on a system of regulations, procedures and tools covering the whole doctoral educational process.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>doctoral study domain:</p> <p>a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;</p> <p>b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;</p> <p>c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);</p> <p>d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;</p> <p>e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;</p> <p>f) the contract for doctoral studies;</p> <p>g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding</p>		

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.		
2.	PI	A.1.1.2. The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards binding on the aspects specified in Article 17, paragraph (5) of the Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies with subsequent amendments and additions.	fulfilled	
3.	PI	A.1.2.1. The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.	fulfilled	According to the self evaluation report, the university has proper IT system for the educational and research process.
4.	PI	A.1.2.2. The existence and use of an appropriate software program and evidence of its use to verify the percentage of similarity in all doctoral theses.	fulfilled	
5.	IP	A.1.3.1. Existence of at least one research or institutional / human resources development grant under	fulfilled	According to the report, in the examined period 2 students of the Marketing domain benefited from 2 grants.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>implementation at the time of submission of the internal evaluation file, per doctoral study domain under evaluation, or existence of at least 2 research or institutional development / human resources grant for the doctoral study domain, obtained by doctoral thesis advisors operating in the evaluated domain within the past 5 years. The grants address relevant themes for the respective domain and, as a rule, are engaging doctoral students.</p>		
6.	PI *	<p>A.1.3.2. The percentage of doctoral students active at the time of the evaluation, who for at least six months receive additional funding sources besides government funding, through scholarships awarded by individual persons or by legal entities, or who are financially supported through research or institutional / human resources development grants is not less than 20%.</p>	fulfilled	<p>According to the received information, at the time of the evaluation of the Marketing doctoral study program, 2 students have received additional funding sources from the 8 active PhD students, so the score was 25%, which is higher than the expected level. In the future, it is suggested to maintain the good level of funding.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
7.	PI *	<p>A.1.3.3. At least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).</p>	partially fulfilled	<p>Although his score is lower than the expected level, the evaluated period was affected by the virus crisis situation. In the next period, when the virus crisis is going to be over, it is recommended to increase the present level and if it is possible, reach the expected 10%.</p>
8.	CPI	<p>A.2.1.1. The venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school enable the research activities in the evaluated domain to be carried out, in line with the assumed mission and objectives (computers, specific software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to international databases etc.). The research infrastructure and the provision of research services are presented to the</p>	fulfilled	<p>According to the self-evaluation report and the received information, the university has proper material bases for the educational and research process. It is also important to point out that from last year, due to the COVID situation, the university, just like other higher education institutions, has started to organize the educational activities online. According to the received information, the university and the doctoral school managed to cope with this atypical situation. It is important to point out that the university must pay a permanent attention to maintain and develop the infrastructure of research and education.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		public through a specific platform. The research infrastructure described above, which was purchased and developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly		
9.	CPI	A.3.1.1. Minimum three doctoral thesis advisors within that doctoral domain, and at least 50% of them (but no less than three) meet the minimum standards of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU) in force at the time when the evaluation is carried out, which standards are required and mandatory for obtaining the enabling certification.	partially fulfilled	From 3 Doctoral advisors 1 does not meet with the ARACIS standards. It is recommended to make steps to reach the minimum standards as soon as it is possible.
10.	PI *	A.3.1.2. At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.	fulfilled	Out of the 3 Ph.D. advisors, in the field of Marketing are affiliated within IOSUD-WUT, 2 Ph.D. advisors (66.67%) are holders of WUT while 1 has a tenure at "Ovidius" University from Constanța It is recommended to keep this employment level that meets the ARACIS indicators.
11.	PI	A.3.1.3. The study subjects in the education program based on advanced higher education studies pertaining to the doctoral domain	fulfilled	Teaching staff and researchers have proper competencies to do their work correctly and have proved expertise in the field of study.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		are taught by teaching staff or researchers who are doctoral thesis advisors / certified doctoral thesis advisors, professors / CS I or lecturer / CS II, with proved expertise in the field of the study subjects they teach, or other specialists in the field who meet the standards established by the institution in relation with the aforementioned teaching and research functions, as provided by the law.		
12.	PI *	A.3.1.4. The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs does not exceed 20%.	fulfilled	At the time of this report, no Ph.D. advisor in the Marketing field coordinates more than 8 Ph.D students, so this indicator meets the ARACIS standards.
13.	CPI	A.3.2.1. At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance	fulfilled	The score is 66,67%, 2 thesis advisors have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications. In the future it is recommended to maintain this level of publication activities.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad. For Arts and Sports and Physical Education Sciences, doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in</p>		

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.		
14.	PI *	A.3.2.2. At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in a specific doctoral study domain continue to be active in their scientific field, and acquire at least 25% of the score requested by the minimal CNATDCU standards in force at the time of the evaluation, which are required and mandatory for acquiring their enabling certificate, based on their scientific results within the past five years	fulfilled	The score is over the standards (66,67%)
15.	PI *	B.1.1.1. The ratio between the number of graduates of masters' programs of other higher education institutions, national or foreign, who have enrolled for the doctoral admission contest within the past five years and the number of seats	fulfilled	The ratio between the number of candidates and the number of seats financed from the state budget in the last five years is 1.29 (above the minimum value of 1.2).

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		funded by the state budget, put out through contest within the doctoral domain is at least 0.2 or the ratio between the number of candidates within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.		
16.	PI *	B.1.2.1. Admission to doctoral study programs is based on selection criteria including: previous academic, research and professional performance, their interest for scientific or arts/sports research, publications in the domain and a proposal for a research subject. Interviewing the candidate is compulsory, as part of the admission procedure.	fulfilled	
17.	PI	B.1.2.2. The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission does not exceed 30%.	fulfilled	The rate of expelled Ph.D. students, including after dropping out, 3 and 4 years after admission, does not exceed 30%.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
18.	PI	<p>B.2.1.1. The training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least 3 disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students; at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing.</p>	fulfilled	<p>The training program curriculum for doctoral students enrolled in the Marketing study domain includes at least three subjects relevant to their training in scientific research, including a subject for in-depth study of research methodology, as well as a subject aimed at statistical data processing.</p>
19.	PI	<p>B.2.1.2. At least one discipline is dedicated to Ethics and Intellectual Property in scientific research or there are well-defined topics on these subjects within a discipline taught in the doctoral program.</p>	fulfilled	<p>There is a subject dedicated to the aspects regarding ethics in research activity and the compliance with the standards, norms, principles and rules valid at international level as well as a subject related to Scientometrics</p>
20.	PI	<p>B.2.1.3. The IOSUD has mechanisms to ensure that the academic training program based on advanced university studies addresses „the learning outcomes”, specifying the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities.</p>	fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
21.	PI	<p>B.2.1.4. All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.</p>	fulfilled	<p>Doctoral students enrolled in doctoral studies in Marketing benefit from the guidance of functional guidance commissions.</p>
22.	CPI	<p>B.2.1.5. For a doctoral study domain, the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral guidance must not exceed 3:1.</p>	fulfilled	<p>Within the Marketing field, the coordination of the 8 current Ph.D. students is ensured by Ph.D. advisors together with other teachers, who are associate professors or lecturers. In total, 7 teachers provide guidance within the doctoral advisory committees. The ratio is 1.14: 1 (lower than the ratio of 3 : 1. In case of this indicator it is recommended to meet permanently with the ARACIS standards.</p>
23.	CPI	<p>B.3.1.1. For the evaluated domain, the evaluation commission will be provided with at least one paper or some other relevant contribution per doctoral student who has obtained a doctor's title within the past 5 years. From this list, the members of the evaluation commission shall randomly select 5 such papers / relevant contributions per doctoral study domain for review. At</p>	fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		least 3 selected papers must contain significant original contributions in the respective domain		
24.	PI *	B.3.1.2. The ratio between the number of presentations of doctoral students who completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years), including posters, exhibitions made at prestigious international events (organized in the country or abroad) and the number of doctoral students who have completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years) is at least 1.	fulfilled	The indicator is met, each of the doctoral students who completed their studies during the evaluated period delivered at least one presentation at prestigious international events.
25.	PI *	B.3.2.1. The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD should not exceed two (2) in a year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor.	fulfilled	Out of the 9 external referees used in the Marketing field, none was in more than 2 committees for one or more Ph.D. advisors.
26.	PI *	B.3.2.2. The ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher	fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>education institution, other than the institution where the defense on the doctoral thesis is organized, and the number of doctoral theses presented in the same doctoral study domain in the doctoral school should not exceed 0.3, considering the past five years. Only those doctoral study domains in which minimum ten doctoral theses have been presented within the past five years should be analyzed.</p>		
27.	PI	<p>C.1.1.1. The Doctoral school in the respective university study domain shall demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance following a procedure developed and applied at the level of the IOSUD, the following assessed criteria being mandatory:</p> <p>a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors;</p> <p>b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity;</p>	fulfilled	<p>Reviewing the structure and activities of the quality assurance of the university, these processes operate well, but quality assurance has to become the part of the organizational culture of the institution. The evolution and development of a real organizational culture of quality assurance at every stage of university and doctoral school operation should be in focus.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized;</p> <p>d) the scientific activity of doctoral students;</p> <p>e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students;</p> <p>f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.</p>		
28.	PI *	<p>C.1.1.2. Mechanisms are implemented during the stage of the doctoral study program to enable feedback from doctoral students allowing to identify their needs, as well as their overall level of satisfaction with the doctoral study program in order to ensure continuous improvement of the academic and administrative processes. Following the analysis of the results, there is evidence that an action plan was drafted and implemented.</p>	fulfilled	<p>At the level of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, SDEAA is currently implementing a questionnaire regarding the degree of satisfaction of Ph.D. students in relation to the activity carried out within the doctoral studies program. This tool certainly helps to identify the needs of the students at doctoral school level, but it is also recommended to examine the Marketing study program separately.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
29.	CPI	<p>C.2.1.1. The IOSUD publishes on the website of the organizing institution, in compliance with the general regulations on data protection, information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Doctoral School regulation; b) the admission regulation; c) the doctoral studies contract; d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis; e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies; f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data; g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor); h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis; i) links to the doctoral theses' summaries to 	fulfilled	<p>The website of the IOSUD-UVT is https://www.uvt.ro/cercetare/doctorat/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/. Information about the Doctoral School and the domains can be found on the website of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. The available information is mostly in Romanian language. If the internationalization of the doctoral school and the different domains is a priority in the future, it is recommended to develop the English contents as well.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented; this information will be communicated at least twenty days before the presentation.		
30.	PI	C.2.2.1. All doctoral students have free access to one platform providing academic databases relevant to the doctoral studies domain of their thesis.	fulfilled	The university offers to the doctoral students the opportunity to access wide range of databases – it is suggested to maintain this situation because it is certainly a great help for the doctoral students when they are preparing their thesis.
31.	PI	C.2.2.2. Each doctoral student shall have access, upon request, to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works.	fulfilled	Doctoral students have the possibility to have access to this system.
32.	PI	C.2.2.3. All doctoral students have access to scientific research laboratories or other facilities depending on the specific domain/domains within the Doctoral School, according to internal order procedures.	fulfilled	All doctoral students have access to the research infrastructure of the university. According to the received information, the research facilities are on a good level, it is recommended to maintain the present state and develop if the financial conditions allow.
33.	PI *	C.3.1.1. IOSUD, for every evaluated domain, has concluded mobility agreements with	fulfilled	Although these connections are operating quite well, it is recommended to maintain and manage these contracts permanently with the partner institutions and permanently increase the number of

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>universities abroad, with research institutes, with companies working in the field of study, aimed at the mobility of doctoral students and academic staff (e.g., ERASMUS agreements for the doctoral studies). At least 35% of the doctoral students have completed a training course abroad or other mobility forms such as attending international scientific conferences. IOSUD drafts and applies policies and measures aiming at increasing the number of doctoral students participating at mobility periods abroad, up to at least 20%, which is the target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.</p>		<p>students and staff members taking part in mobility activities. Even in the period of COVID, when the personal contacts are more complicated, the doctoral school must pay attention to find the appropriate management of its contacts if the present situation drags on and the online world lasts longer.</p>
34.	PI	<p>C.3.1.2. In the evaluated doctoral study domain, support is granted, including financial support, to the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage or invitation of leading experts to deliver</p>	fulfilled	<p>When the virus crisis is going to be over, after the online world it would be important again to invite experts from abroad who personally visit the university and have classes with the doctoral students.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		courses/lectures for doctoral students.		
35.	PI	C.3.1.3. The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees etc.).	fulfilled	In the doctoral school and in the Marketing educational program it would be important to pay permanent attention to the internationalization and attract more students from abroad.

VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

My report is based on what I have experienced; what I have read and have heard before and during the online visit. Although the present situation, role, and reputation of West University of Timișoara, and the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, and the Marketing study program is good, the doctoral school should pay enough attention to the permanent changes (number of students, financial stability, changing needs of the potential students). Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration should permanently invest in the physical and human infrastructure and facilities when own resources, state support or any other funds allow. In the Marketing study program, it is recommended to solve the human resource and administrative challenges. It is important to point out that all the doctoral advisors have to meet with the ARACIS standards, so it is recommended to make steps to reach the minimum standards as soon as it is possible. Parallel with the human resources development, it is also recommended

to increase the number of students on the Marketing domain. Parallel with traditional roles, doctoral schools have to adapt to the new needs of the students where permanent improvement of quality have to be in focus, and this type of adaptation needs flexibility and investment in human capital. The Marketing study program has to find its competitive factors with specialization and have to define and find the role and the place in local and international market and attract new potential groups parallel with the traditional markets. If the present pandemic situation drags on for longer time, the doctoral school, just like other higher education institutions, has to pay intensive attention for taking the possible advantages of it and might keep some parts of the online methods when the virus crisis is going to be over.

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