

The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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I. Introduction¹

In this chapter, the following shall be summarized:

- the context in which this external evaluation report was drafted (**the type of evaluation, the period of the evaluation visit, the composition of the Experts Committee** etc.);
- details about the doctoral school(s) of which the doctoral domain under review is part (number of doctoral advisors, number of students, institutional context, short history etc.);
- details about the doctoral study domain under review (number of students, institutional context, short history etc.).

This report was completed as part of the periodical external evaluation of IOSUD Craiova conducted during the period 5-9 July 2021, in accordance with the Romanian legislation for higher education (third cycle, doctoral studies), as established by the Education Law no. 1/2011 (articles 158, 159, 160, 170), Government Ordinance 68/2011, and subsequent legislation.

The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the level of quality reached in the domain of doctoral studies “Theology”, organized in the IOSUD-UCV, as stipulated in the basic legislation that sets the minimal quality standards in higher education in Romania, especially Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005 concerning the assurance of education quality, approved with modifications and additions through Law no. 87/2006 (with further modifications and additions), Order no. 3200 of 7 February 2020 of the Minister of Education and Research concerning the Methodology for the evaluation of the university doctoral studies and of the criteria systems, standards and performance indicators used in the evaluation, as well as the Order no. 3651/2021 of the Minister of Education concerning the methodology of evaluation of doctoral schools.

To maintain a unitary evaluation, ARACIS insured that an expert evaluator coordinated the evaluation of the fundamental domain Humanities and Arts, while each domain, including Theology, for which I provide this report, has three experts, as follows:

1. Rev. prof. dr. habil. Dumitru Adrian VANCA (Universitatea „1 Decembrie 1918”, România),

¹ Each time when applicable the information shall be presented gender-wise.



coordinator;

2. Prof. dr. Lucian TURCESCU (Concordia University, Canada), international expert;
3. Mr. Mihail QARAMAH (Universitatea „1 Decembrie 1918”, România), doctoral student

The doctoral school (IOSUD) at Craiova is part of the University of Craiova (UCV), a publically accredited university in Romania, and uses the material, financial, and human resources of this university. Currently IOSUD-UCV has ten accredited schools and twenty-seven doctoral domains, with a total of 122 doctoral supervisors and 351 doctoral students.

(https://www.ucv.ro/pdf/invatamant/educatie/programe_doctorat/organizare/brosura_ro.pdf and Anexa 2_IOSUD_Domenii acreditate_2021.pdf).

The domain Theology was accredited for doctoral studies in 2009 (MEN Order no. 3675/13.04.2009), initially within the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, then from 2011-2015 as part of the Doctoral School of Socio-Humanistic Sciences of IOSUD-UCV, and from 2015, the “St. Nicodemus” Doctoral School of Orthodox Theology. As of 1 October 2020, the "St. Nicodemus" Doctoral School of Theology had the following supervisors: IPS Prof. Irineu Ion Popa, Rev. Prof. Picu Ocoleanu, Rev. Prof. Nicolae Răzvan Stan, Rev. Prof. Ion Popescu, Archd. Assoc. Prof. Gelu Călina, Rev. Assoc. Prof. Constantin Băjău and Rev. Assoc. Prof. George Adrian Boldișor ([raport_ucv_teologie_eng.pdf](#)).

II. Methods used

This chapter will contain the methods and tools used in the external evaluation process, before and during the evaluation visit, including at least:

- The analysis of the internal evaluation report of the doctoral study domain under review and its Annexes;
 - The analysis of documents made available by the IOSUD, in physical format, during the evaluation visit (if such documents have been requested);
 - The analysis of documents, data and information available on the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) website, in electronic format;
 - Visiting the buildings included in the institution's property, comprising (indicative and non-exhaustive list, which shall be changed according to the context):
 - classrooms;
 - laboratories;
 - the institution's library;
 - research centers;
 - the Career Counselling and Guidance Center;
 - lecture halls for students;
 - the student residences;
 - the student cafeteria;
 - sports ground etc.;
 - Meeting/discussions with doctoral students in the doctoral study domain under review;
 - Meeting/Discussions with the graduates of the doctoral study domain under review;
 - Meeting/Discussions with employers of the graduates in the doctoral study domain under review;
 - Meeting/Discussions with the school officials of the Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain under review is operating;
 - Meeting/Discussions with the doctoral advisors in the doctoral study domain under review;



- Meeting/discussions with the representatives of the various structures of the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain under review is operating:
 - The Council of the Doctoral School, the University Senate, the Board of Directors, the Quality Assessment and Assurance Commission, the Quality Assurance Department, the Ethics Commission (including with the student representatives of these structures);
 - the Career Counselling and Guidance Center;
 - student organizations;
 - secretariats;
 - various departments/administrative offices (Social/Student residences-Cafeterias etc.);
- Application of questionnaires to doctoral students or academic staff in the doctoral study domain under review.

Abbreviations

AS – Supplementary Annexes (Anexe Suplimentare)
CD – doctoral supervisor (conducator de doctorat)
CGPA – cumulative grade point average (media notelor necesara pt admitere)
IOSUD – Institution Organizing Doctoral University Studies
MO – Metropolitanate of Oltenia (Mitropolia Olteniei)
OUG – Emergency Government Ordinance (Ordonanta de Urgenta Guvernamentala)
RAE – STD's Self-Evaluation Report (Raport de auto-evaluare)
SD – doctoral student (student doctorand)
STD – Doctoral School of (Orthodox) Theology "St. Nicodemus" (Scoala de Teologie Doctorala)
UCV – University of Craiova (Universitatea Craiova)

The methodology for the evaluation of the quality was established by the Minister of Education Order no. 3651/2021 and took into account the performance criteria, standards and indicators spelled out in OUG 75/2005 regarding the education quality assurance, Law 87/2006, conforming to the methodologies and guidelines concerning the evaluation processes of the quality of higher education as applied by ARACIS.

The expert commissions analyzed the STD's Self-Evaluation Report (RAE) and its annexes, the documents provided to the experts during the period of the visit as well as during the onsite visit by the commission coordinator, took into account other documents available publically on the UCV website, information received during the commission's meetings with professors, students, graduates, employers or other interested actors involved, as well as the Supplementary Annexes (AS) submitted by the DST upon request of this commission. As international expert, I only participated in online meetings, both general, pertaining to the entire UCV and the fundamental domain Humanities and Arts, and specific to the domain of Theology. Some of the meetings were organized by ARACIS, while one meeting was requested by our commission. During this meeting (on 8 July 2021), Prof. dr. Picu Ocoleanu, the STD director, and Pr. Prof. Dr. Constantin Băjău participated, alongside all three members of our commission. Pr. Prof. Dr. Razvan Stan, the Theology Dean, joined the meeting briefly at the end.

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

**general description of domain analysis.*



In 2019-20, a number of 7 CDs coordinated a total of 39 doctoral students. According to my ARACIS commission coordinator, who visited the university physically during the evaluation period, the library has modern spaces, and thus the SDT has the capacity to run a doctoral program in Theology.

Criterion A.1. The administrative, managerial institutional structures and the financial resources

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

The UCV SDT has functional administrative structures, proper guidelines, methodologies and procedures in place. It also has the financial resources coming from governmental sources (subsidies and budget allocations), while enjoying the constant support of the Metropolitanate of Oltenia (through the publication of scholarly materials and funding of scholarly activities). Other than these forms of support, the SDT has not attracted funds from private sources or juridical persons.

Standard A.1.1. The institution organizing doctoral studies (IOSUD) has implemented the effective functioning mechanisms provided for in the specific legislation on the organization of doctoral studies.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Generally the regulations, methodologies, mechanisms and didactic processes and of academic management are applied.

Performance Indicator A.1.1.1. *The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university doctoral study domain:*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

(a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;

The regulations were presented in: Anexa A: Anexa_A1_Regulament_SDTO.pdf; [http://teologie.ucv.ro/images/files/metodologii/2regulament SDTO.pdf](http://teologie.ucv.ro/images/files/metodologii/2regulament_SDTO.pdf)

(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;

IOSUD-UCV presented documents regarding the elections held between 2016-2019 for the election of a CD and a student in CSUD. For the elections in the Council of the STD proofs were presented only for the elections of the doctoral student (Metodologie alegeri: [https://www.ucv.ro/pdf/media/stiri/2007/metod_consiliu IOSUD directorului CSUD UCV.pdf](https://www.ucv.ro/pdf/media/stiri/2007/metod_consiliu_IOSUD_directorului_CSUD_UCV.pdf); <https://www.ucv.ro/media/det.php?id=1891>; Anexa Y – 4B și Y-4C – Rezultate alegeri membru ales CSUD; Anexa 5A și Anexa 5B (decizii componența CSUD); Anexa R - Alegeri).



Difficulties encountered during the pandemic of COVID-19 were invoked that altered the normal administrative activities during that period.

c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);

The last competition for elections in the CSUD was held in 2016 and the pandemic of 2020-21 was invoked to explain the difficulties during the past two years.

(https://www.ucv.ro/pdf/invatamant/management/regulamente/Regulamente%20structuri%20UCv/2016_nov/Metodologie_Alegeri_IOSUD_UCv.pdf; Anexa X_Anexe IOSUD_Anexa 4A UCraiova)

d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;

These were presented here:

https://www.ucv.ro/pdf/admitere/2018/UCv_Regulament_ADMITERE_2018_2019.pdf; Metodologie admitere teologie:

*http://teologie.ucv.ro/images/files/metodologii/2020_metodol_adm_doctorat.pdf;
Anexa_A2-Metodologia elaborării tezei de doctorat_SDTO)*

e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;

In STD, no cases of recognition of habilitation obtained in other countries existed.

f) the contract for doctoral studies;

The STD Council met once a year (in 2015 and 2020) and twice a year in 2016-2019, and 2021 to deal with current issues. During our conversations with them, however, they explained that in fact the CSDT met more than three times a year, and the dates included in the file were for illustration purposes only. (Anexa B - Procese-verbale Consiliu SDT)

g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.

UCV has internal guidelines for initiating, approving, and monitoring of programs of studies. (<https://www.ucv.ro/pdf/despre/structura/senat/hotarari/20152603/Appendix3.pdf>). Similar procedures are in place at the SDT, http://teologie.ucv.ro/images/filSDTOes/metodologii/2regulament_SDTO.pdf.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that better records are kept in the future regarding the electoral processes for all the structures IOSUD/STD.

It is recommended that CSDT meets at least three times a year (cf. *Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies*)

It is recommended that the terms of 4 years for the CSUD director and members be respected.



The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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.*

- *description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
- *analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The SDT Regulations contain the informations specified under this criterion, but not all the details are mentioned here. The STD Regulations provide criteria in addition to the HG 681/2011 concerning the termination of the collaboration between a doctoral student and his / her supervisor. However, the Regulations do not contain clear indications about the opportunity, way of proposing and approval of the training program based on advanced university studies (COD art. 17.5 (b)).

Recommendations:

It is recommended that more clear indications be introduced in the Regulations on the opportunity, structure, and content of the training program, depending on the topic and specific research of each SD and on their area of specialization of their CD. (cf. COD, art. 63 (2-4))

The indicator is fulfilled.

Standard A.1.2. *The IOSUD has the logistical resources necessary to carry out the doctoral studies' mission.*

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Being part of the IOSUD-UCV, SDT uses the information system of the UCV in order to keep records of its students' performance. For the verification of doctoral theses or the partial verification of the scholarly work of those students, SDT uses a software for the analysis of similitudes. I managed to ask and hear numerous explanations about these processes.

Performance Indicator A.1.2.1. *The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.*

- *description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
- *analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The UCV information system "Evidenta Studentilor" (<http://cis01.central.ucv.ro/evstud/>) is effective and properly used by the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, including for its doctoral students. Access to this system is done by authorized persons only, according to the my domain coordinator who visited the university personally during the evaluation.



Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

UCV insures the verification of the authenticity and originality of doctoral theses and other scholarly works using the software www.sistemantiplagiat.ro, which is on the list of recognized such programs of the National Council for the Attestation of University Titles, Diplomas, and Certificates (CNATDCU), in conformity with art. 2 of the Order of the Minister of National Education nr. 3485/2016 (cf. X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\ANEXA 7A_IOSUD_Sistemantiplagiat.ro_Manual_Utilizator_RO.pdf). This software is used by the SDT for the verification of all of its doctoral theses (ANEXE_IOSUD_U_CRAIOVA\ANEXA_7B_IOSUD_Cerere+raport+similitudini+rezolutie conducator.pdf; Y ANEXE\ANEXA 8_IOSUD_Cerere sustinere teza in fata comisiei de indrumare_tipizat.pdf; ANEXELE_S1-S35).

While the usage of the software is welcome, the verification of similarities is done only as a last resort before the dissertation is to be submitted in view of its public defense.

Recommendations:

The antiplagiarism software should be used more widely by students, preferably for free, several times during the writing of the doctoral thesis, as well as for verification of the scholarly progress reports and articles.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Standard A.1.3. *The IOSUD makes sure that financial resources are used optimally, and the revenues obtained from doctoral studies are supplemented through additional funding besides governmental funding.*

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Performance Indicator A.1.3.1. *Existence of at least one research or institutional / human resources development grant under 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.*



- *description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
- *analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

Both the RAE and the officials we interviewed during the evaluation insisted that “attracting research grants is not really a priority” of the STD, since the research done by its faculty and doctoral students is in the service of the life of the Romanian Orthodox Church and not an end in itself (RAE, p. 10). Two faculty members (Stan and Calina) were particularly identified in the RAE as having obtained both internal grants and participated in other grants, and they are to be congratulated. Not all the grants identified were research grants, but additional information was provided to us upon request by the STD. As an international expert, I was negatively surprised by the attitude I encountered in the STD director (Ocoleanu), with nationalistic and isolationist overtones being emphasized several times during the interviews with us and with the experts in the fundamental domain Humanities. Fortunately, not all the professors we interviewed had the same attitudes and they are the ones who are interested in both applying for grants, already holding some, and encouraging their doctoral students to do so.

Recommendations: The participation of CDs be encouraged in external granting competitions (such as UEFISCDI), where peer-reviewing is applied.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *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%.*

- *description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
- *analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

According to RAE, pp. 11-12, the POCU (380/6/13/123990) project is mentioned as a possible source of funding of theology doctoral students. In reality, upon studying the project description (Anexa X-9A - IOSUD_Finanțare_extrabugetară), one realizes that the domain Theology is not eligible for funding from this project.

In the additional materials submitted at our request, STD refers to POSDRU/159/1.5/S/133255 (Burse postdoctorale) through which a CD (A. BOLDIȘOR) held a grant. However, the grant was held in 2014-15, before the current evaluation period.

Doctoral students are supported regularly with funding by the Metropolitanate of Oltenia and the Archbishopric of Craiova, but the criteria for the selection of students for such funding were not presented transparently.

Recommendations: Although there is significant funding of SDs by the Metropolitanate of Oltenia, the criteria for such funding should be presented more transparently so students know when, where, and



how to apply for it. Funding should also be committed for a number of years, so the students know what to count on.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *A.1.3.3.² 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.).

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

RAE (p. 12) alleges that this indicator is fulfilled (X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\ANEXA 10_IOSUD_venituri proprii si cheltuieli.pdf) with more than the minimum 10% being used to reimburse travel expenses for SDs attending conferences. However, no proof was provided to understand how the funds were spent on Theology SDs. Mention was made several times during the evaluation that SDs benefit from generous support from the MO toward publication in the MO journal and publishing press, both of which are CNCS accredited. Students interviewed by Prof. Vanca indicated that many times they have to fund their own travel to conferences and other research-related activities.

Recommendations: More detailed records should be kept concerning the funding of SDs; mechanisms should be put in place to support the SDs more transparently and in a competitive manner in their research activities.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Standard A.2.1. The IOSUD has a modern research infrastructure to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

According to my colleague, Prof. Vanca, the infrastructure is modern and up-to-date, conducive to proper research in Theology.

Performance Indicator 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

² The indicators marked with an asterisk (*) hold a special status, referring exclusively to the evaluation of doctoral studies domains, as per Article 12 from the annex No.1 of the Order of the minister of education No. 3651/12.04.2021 approving the Methodology for evaluating university doctoral studies and the system of criteria, standards and performance indicators used in the evaluation. In case they are not met, the Agency extends a period of maximum 3 years to IOSUD to correct the respective deficiencies.



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 public through a specific platform. The research infrastructure described above, which was purchased and developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Both according to RAE and to my colleague, Prof. Vanca, who visited the site of the doctoral school, the infrastructure is excellent and there is a constant preoccupation to endow the library with new books and journals.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

A number of 7 CDs are actively engaged in supervising doctoral students. Numerous scholarly activities are organized, involving both CDs and their SDs, that result in the publication of contributed volumes and journal articles. While this is laudable, most of the publications are done in-house at the outlets of the MO, and do not reach out to a larger Romanian or international academic audience.

Standard A.3.1. At the level of each domain there are sufficient qualified staff to ensure the conduct of doctoral study program.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

CDs are properly trained in theology both in Romania and abroad. His Holiness Metropolitan Irineu Popa, the IOSUD Director, is also an honorary member of the Romanian Academy. Due to the fact that most CDs are encouraged to publish in the outlets of the MO, the impact of their research is limited, with their h-index of Google Scholar not reaching beyond 3 for any of them.

Performance Indicator 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



Having evaluated the personal verification dossiers provided to the evaluation commission, only 5 of the 7 CDs fulfill the minimum CNATDCU standards. Thus, 70% of them do fulfill them, which is above the minimum of 50% expected.

(Anexe E - CV-uri coordonatori doctorat; Anexa F - Liste lucrări pentru CD; Anexa G – Fie Standarde; Anexa H – Fise standarde în ultimii 5 ani)

Some CDs include in their verification dossiers non-academic activities and achievements (e.g. church distinctions, library catalog mentionings, their inclusion in databases, video clips of their presentations, etc)

Recommendations: More care should be given to correctly report scholarly publications and activities, according to the existing CNATDCU norms and standards.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *A.3.1.2. *At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

In the SDT, 85% of the CDs are permanent and full-time employees of the UCV. Only one CD is retired, and hired with a limited-term contract. This means that the SDT has a stable body of CDs and that is a positive aspect for the SDs.

(Anexa C - ordine de abilitare; Anexe E - CV-uri; Anexa J 16 - Planuri și state de funcții)

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator A.3.1.3. *The study subjects in the education program based on advanced higher education studies pertaining to the doctoral domain 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



All the CDs giving courses in the SDT have received their habilitation and have expertise in the fields in which they teach, as well as a rich teaching and research experience. (Anexe J - Planuri - State de funcții; Anexa K - Fișe discipline)

*All the SDs have to take the exact same doctoral courses, a total of 6 **required** ones, in their first semester. We find this to be excessive and inappropriate, given that most of the courses were already taken in prior studies.*

*Recommendations: While the Ethics and Academic Integrity course should be taken by all the students, more flexibility should be shown, and **elective** (as opposed to required) courses should be offered to better serve the needs of individual students. Even the number of courses can be reduced, and more weight (that is, increase the number of credits per course) can be assigned to the remaining courses. That will allow the CDs to engage in less teaching and offer more supervision in the areas of research of their SDs.*

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *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 programs³ does not exceed 20%.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Currently, none of the CDs supervises more than 8 SDs. During the evaluation period, only once did Irineu Popa have more than the accepted limited of SDs, but even he has striven and managed to reduce that number.

(Anexe IOSUD X - Anexa A.3.1.1. IOSUD_Nr Drd. per Conducatori_2019_2020)

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Standard A.3.2. *The Doctoral advisors within the domain are carrying out a scientific activity visible at international level.*

**general description of the standard analysis.*

SDs do carry out scholarly activities, some of which are visible at the international level. But more needs to be done.

³ 3 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 159, paragraph (3), respectively 4 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 174, paragraph (3) of the Law of national education No.1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions, with additional extension periods approved as per Article 39, paragraph (3) of the Code of doctoral studies approved by the GD No. 681/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions.



Performance Indicator 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 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 organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The MO's efforts notwithstanding, only several CDs (Irineu Popa, Razvan Stan, A. Boldisor, and G. Calina) managed to get Google Scholar h-indexes at around 3 and make themselves somewhat visible internationally. One factor affecting this indicator could be the fact that SDT encourages in-house publication of articles and books through its own outlets, while the SDT director came out as vehemently opposed to internationalization. That kind of attitude discourages both colleagues and SDs from seeking more internationalization.

Recommendations: Publication in relevant national and international journals and with publishing presses is strongly recommended.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

All seven of the CDs are active scholarly, and in the past 5 years have achieved over 25% of the score required by CNATDCU to obtain the habilitation certificate.

(Anexe_H_Fise standarde ultimii 5 ani)

Recommendations:



The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**general description of domain analysis.*

Criterion B.1. The number, quality and diversity of candidates enrolled for the admission contest

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

A rather large number of applicants seeks admission to a doctorate in Theology at UCV each year. Each CD posts generally at least 4 openings for SDs each year. However, a more balanced attitude has been noted in recent years.

Standard B.1.1. The institution organizing doctoral studies has the capacity to attract candidates from outside the higher education institution or a number of candidates exceeding the number of seats available.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

A rather large number of MA graduates from outside UCV are attracted to the doctoral program in Theology at UCV.

Performance Indicator *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 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The ratio between external MA graduates who applied to study in a doctorate in Theology at UCV and the number of seats financed from the state budgeted is 14:17=0.8235, that is four times the minimum required for this criterion. In the academic year 2020-2021, the ratio is 17:22=0.7727, also keeping the proportion almost four times higher.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Standard B.1.2 Candidates admitted to doctoral studies demonstrate academic, research and professional performance.

**general description of the standard analysis.*



For a selection of quality SDs, the Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church set a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 8.51 of the previous studies, a written/oral exam in Dogmatic Theology for all the candidates, and a oral exam in the candidate's area of specialization (niche of specialization)

(cf. http://teologie.ucv.ro/images/files/metodologii/2regulament_SDTO.pdf; A Regulament Metodologie Acord\Anexa_A3_Acord_MO_SDTO.pdfX ANEXE IOSUD_U_CRAIOVA\Anexa_18_IOSUD_Conditii_de_inscriere_admitere_colocviu_doctorat.pdf).

The RAE (p. 27) also explained that the UCV admission criteria were respected.

Performance Indicator *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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Admission to the PhD in Theology is done by observing all the procedures laid out by the UCV, including actual examination, an analysis of the candidates' prior academic performance, their research interests and publications in the field, as well as the mandatory interview with the candidate.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator B.1.2.2. *The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission⁴ does not exceed 30%.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

During the period being evaluated, 53 SDs enrolled, while 7 abandoned. The overall attrition (or dropout) rate was thus 13.2%, which is a rather low attrition rate. (cf. ANEXA 18 D_IOSUD_Admitere_2015_2016_Situație numerică_Rata_abandon).

⁴ 3 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 159, paragraph (3), respectively 4 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 174, paragraph (3) of the Law of national education No. 1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions.



Recommendations: Identify the reasons for SDs dropping out of the program and develop a prevention strategy. From studies conducted internationally, the most important reason for abandoning a doctorate is the lack of funding and this should be explored in the UCV students.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Doctoral preparation is assured through the Training Program based on advanced university studies and the Research Program. The former consists of formation disciplines that are the same for all the SDs, regardless of their area of specialization. We identified the same issue as in A.3.1.3, that is, no diversity of course offering is available.

Standard B.2.1. The training program based on advanced university studies is appropriate to improve doctoral students' research skills and to strengthen ethical behavior in science.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Performance Indicator 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The Training Program based on Advanced University Studies is comprised of the following disciplines: Dogmatics, Ethics, Spirituality, History of Religions, and Patrology. Since 2019-20, "Ethics and Academic Integrity" has also been offered; it also includes elements about Research Methodology. (cf. K Fisele disciplinelor). In analyzing the course contents, we have observed that many courses are not properly developed for the doctoral level, but tend to repeat material already studied at the cycle 1 (Licence) and cycle 2 (Master) levels.

Recommendations: Courses should be developed differently to meet the needs of doctoral students, teach them more advanced research methods. Also, elective (or individualized reading) courses should be considered, depending on the SDs areas of specialization.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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.*



- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Beginning with the academic year 2019-20, a required course on Ethics and Academic Integrity has been offered yearly to doctoral students in SDT.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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 activities⁵.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The learning outcomes are spelled out in the course syllabi (fișele disciplinelor). It is assumed that through periodical evaluations such as the current one, the employer, UCV, will measure whether or not the objectives of the learning outcomes are achieved. In our view, some of the courses are not doctoral-level, although students may be able to develop some necessary research skills.

Recommendations: The courses syllabi should be developed with an eye to helping doctoral students achieve graduate-level competencies, not repeating material that was already studied and not emphasizing memorization but critical thinking. For example, as we noticed in one course syllabus (Anexa_K5.3_Bajau_FD_Patrologie_2019-2020.pdf), the emphasis should not be on memorization of lives of saints and reproducing already approved dogmas, but on an in-depth understanding of these theologians' texts.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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.*

⁵ Or by what the graduate should know, understand and to be able to do, according to the provisions of the Methodology of 17 March 2017 regarding inscription and registration of higher education qualifications in the National Register of Qualifications in Higher Education (RNCIS) approved by the Order No.3475/2017 with subsequent amendments and additions.



- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Proofs were provided to the commission that SDT has an active institutional relationship between the SD and his/her CD, through an official supervisory committee approved by the CSUD and CSDT. Proofs were also provided that the CDs are answering their SDs' emails and providing the necessary feedback when the SD is at the research and writing stage of his/her doctorate (Anexe N Comisii indrumare; Anexa AS12_Indrumare doctoranzi)

Recommendations: We recommend that better records be kept that provide written feedback to the student following their various exams. Also, the SD should be encouraged to consult with the other members of the supervisory committee, not just with the CD.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

From the RAE, p. 30, it results that the STD miscalculates the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral supervision. RAE takes into account only the new students admitted each year, and ignores the number of SDs from previous years that continue to be under the supervision of the same limited number of CDs. Thus, RAE alleges that the ratio has never gone beyond 4:1 (and most of the time is below 3:1). In reality, the annual ratio is: # 2015/2016=5.5 (22/4) #2016/2017=6.4 (32/5), #2017/2018=5.0 (25/5) #2018/2019=4.6 (28/6) #2019/2020=6.5 (39/6) (cf. Anexa N - Comisii indrumare). For the entire period, if 53 SDs have been supervised by 7 CDs, then the ratio is 7.5:1 (53/7)

Recommendations: The doctoral supervisory committees should be diversified to include faculty members from outside the SDT. That would allow for a more diversified experience for the SDs and would bring the ratio down.

The indicator is not fulfilled.

Criterion B.3. The results of doctoral studies and procedures for their evaluation.

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Standard B.3.1. Doctoral students capitalize on the research through presentations at scientific conferences, scientific publications, technological transfer, patents, products and service orders.



**general description of the standard analysis.*

Performance Indicator 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 least 3 selected papers must contain significant original contributions in the respective domain.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

I have reviewed the 5 articles selected by my commission colleagues. We concluded that a majority of the articles are not up to standards for a doctoral student. They tend to lack an explicit methodology and rely exclusively on Romanian scholarly literature or sources in Romanian translation. They do not demonstrate how the expected knowledge of ancient and modern languages is used in scholarly research, and betray a lack of familiarity with the relevant literature in the field. They also tend to be more prescriptive and less analytic.

Recommendations: CDs should be more involved in reviewing their SDs scholarly output. SDs should be directed to search to publish in outlets outside of the MO. More emphasis should be laid on teaching research methodology in the doctoral program.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

All of the SDT graduates over the past 5 years have participated in at least one presentation at an international scholarly conference 65 presentations/13 students=5. The ratio is 5.

Recommendations: SD participation should vary location, as the majority of the international ones were in Osijek, Croatia.

The indicator is fulfilled.



Standard B.3.2. The Doctoral School engages a significant number of external scientific specialists in the commissions for public defense of doctoral theses in the analyzed domain.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Performance Indicator *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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Between Oct 2015-Sep 2020 the following situation was present:

2015/2016 – 2018/2019 – no CD is present in more than 2 commissions

2019/2020

- Prof. M. Himcinshi is present in 4 commissions (Grozoiu, Munteanu, Vodoiu, Iliescu – theses supervised by G. Calina)*
- Prof. St. Buchiu is present in 3 commissions (Banu, Cravcenco, Ungureanu – theses supervised by Irineu Popa)*
- Prof. A Pavel is present in 3 commissions (Grozoiu, Munteanu, Vodoiu – theses supervised by G. Calina)*

(Anexa T - Comisii susținere teze)

Recommendations: Avoid the use of the same commission members for more than two commissions per year in order to avoid possible conflict of interest and promote transparency.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *B.3.2.2. The ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher 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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Between Oct 2015-Sep 2020, 17 doctoral theses were defended in Theology. As External Referees, the following participated in more than 5 commissions.

- prof. Ștefan BUCHIU (univ.din București), de 9 ori (0,5);*
- prof. Mihai HIMCINSCHI (Univ. din ALba Iulia), de 6 ori (0,35);*



- *prof. Nicolae Moşoiu (Univ. din Sibiu), 6 ori (0,35)*

Recommendations: Avoid the use of the same commission members in too many examination commissions in order to avoid possible conflict of interest and promote transparency.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

**general description of domain analysis.*

While the Regulations prescribe for quality assurance, the application in practice of those regulations is not always proper.

Criterion C.1. Existence and periodic implementation of the internal quality assurance system

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Standard C.1.1. There are an institutional framework and procedures in place and relevant internal quality assurance policies, applied for monitoring the internal quality assurance.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

There is a periodical evaluation of the scholarly activities of the CDs, of the infrastructure, the logistic necessary for the research activities. The procedures and norms necessary for these, as well as for the organization of the doctoral studies are spelled out in Regulamentul SDT (art. 6.7, art. 11, and art 16). In 2018, the SDT also approved a procedure for the evaluation and monitoring of their doctoral studies program.

Performance Indicator 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:*

- (a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors;*
- (b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity;*
- (c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized;*
- d) the scientific activity of doctoral students;*
- e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students;*
- f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



In their submission, the SDT has provided proofs for the evaluation and monitoring of the SDT for the years 2019-2020, and the proofs cover all the above-mentioned aspects.

(Anexe X_IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\ANEXA IOSUD_Procedura de evaluare interna si de monitorizare IOSUD_UCV.pdf; Anexa X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\Anexa 20A_IOSUD Codul_de_asigurare_a_calității.pdf; Anexe X_IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\Anexa 20B AGENȚIA ROMÂNĂ DE ASIGURARE A CALITĂȚII ÎN ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL SUPERIOR

IOSUD_Declaratie Rector_Politica domeniul_calitatii.pdf; cf. ANEXA 22B

IOSUD_Rezultate chestionar evaluare; X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\Anexa 22A IOSUD _2021_Chestionar on-line si procedura de completare.pdf; X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\ANEXA 22C_IOSUD_Interpretare statistica rezultate 2021-Chestionar doctoranzi_F.pdf)

Recommendations: We recommend consistency in the application of the above criteria.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

In their submission, the SDT has provided proofs for the application of such mechanisms (cf.

ANEXA 22B IOSUD_Rezultate chestionar evaluare; X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\Anexa 22A IOSUD _2021_Chestionar on-line si procedura de completare.pdf; X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\ANEXA 22C_IOSUD_Interpretare statistica rezultate 2021-Chestionar doctoranzi_F.pdf).

During the visit, the Report for the period evaluation for 2019 was also provided (Anexa AS 3 –

Raport de evaluare internă 2019)

Recommendations: Students appreciate the possibility of providing feedback but the survey is not administered annually. Administer the student satisfaction survey annually.



The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion C.2. Transparency of information and accessibility of learning resources

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Efforts are being made to provide transparency and visibility, but more needs to be done to make it more systematic.

Standard C.2.1. Information of interest to doctoral students, future candidates and public interest information is available for electronic format consultation.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

On the website of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, the SDT publishes the bulk of the information needed by potential candidates and other interested parties. Sometimes, the website is not easy to navigate, since relevant information is published on their website by both the IOSUD and the SDT.

Performance Indicator 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:*

- (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 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.*
 - description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
 - analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

Information on the above topics is published on the website of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, but the navigation is not always easy. This is the case with many institutions.

[http://teologie.ucv.ro/index.php/table/\\$coala-doctorala/scoala-doctorala/](http://teologie.ucv.ro/index.php/table/$coala-doctorala/scoala-doctorala/)

Recommendations: Produce a more user friendly website.

The indicator is fulfilled.



Standard C.2.2. The IOSUD/The Doctoral School provides doctoral students with access to the resources needed for conducting doctoral studies.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The SDT has an excellent and functional infrastructure for research; the spaces are modern and conducive to research by the SDs.

Performance Indicator 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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

SDs have free access to the platform Anelis Plus (cf. Anexa U Biblioteca\Anexa I2C_IOSUD_Biblioteca_Baze de date stiintifice 2015-2020_rotated.pdf; U Biblioteca\Prezentare Biblioteca Universitatii din Craiova 2020.pdf).

Recommendations: More databases be made available for research. We strongly recommend the consultation of the database ProQuest dissertations (available at UCV) when choosing a topic for doctoral dissertations. A topic that was already researched should be chosen with care, only if the SD is capable of bringing something really new, while showing familiarity with the scholarship already published.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

All SDs in the SDT have access to the antiplagiarism platform offered by IOSUD-UCV through the www.sistemantiplagiat.ro (cf. X ANEXE IOSUD_U CRAIOVA\ANEXA 7A_IOSUD_Sistemantiplagiat.ro_Manual_Utilizator_RO.pdf X ANEXE IOSUD_UCRAIOVA\ANEXA 7B_IOSUD_Cerere+raport similitudini+rezolutie conducator.pdf).

Access to this antiplagiarism software is limited to one verification of the final form of the doctoral theses in view of the public defense of the thesis.



Recommendations: We recommend the purchase of another licence by the UCV, that would allow for the free verification by the SDs of other pieces of scholarship they produce during their residency.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Being a Humanistic discipline, Theology does not have labs other than computer labs. However, SDs have access to the Centre for Theological and Interreligious Studies

<http://teologie.ucv.ro/index.php/prezentare/prezentare/laboratoare.html>

Following its agreement with the MO, SDT also has access to the building located at Str. Breslei 24, as well as the Library of the Craiova Archbishopric (cf. Anexa_A3_Acord_MO_SDTO.pdf). The material infrastructure of the SDT is thus appropriate for doctoral research.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

In RAE and the supporting documents provided there is evidence of internationalization. Students appreciate it and even many faculty appreciate it. The supplementary annexes (AS) also contain additional proof of internationalization.

Standard C.3.1. *There is a strategy in place and it is applied to enhance the internationalization of doctoral studies.*

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Some proof of internationalization has been provided. Part of it is limited to inviting foreign speakers to give conferences, seminars and workshops that are supposed to be attended by the SDs. Not much preoccupation exists for Erasmus-type mobilities. Part of it is having SDs participate in conferences usually in Croatia.



Performance Indicator *C.3.1.1. IOSUD, for every evaluated domain, has concluded mobility agreements with 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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The Faculty of Orthodox Theology at UCV and IOSUD have signed Erasmus+ mobility agreements with 8 foreign universities. While proof has been provided for a number of the SDs participation in international conferences (mostly in Croatia), very little evidence exists in the dossier that SDs take advantage of the international mobility of the Erasmus type. I was able to identify only three such participations (Grozoiu, Florin, and Sorescu). So, $3/53=5.66\%$, which is well below the minimum 20% expected for this indicator.

Recommendations: We recommend that SDT makes more efforts to encourage and support its SDs to participate in Erasmus+ type mobility.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Performance Indicator 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 courses/lectures for doctoral students.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

RAE and the discussions conducted with SDT representatives have revealed that no doctorates in co-tutelage have existed yet. Officials of the SDT we spoke to consider that a co-tutele type doctorate is not a priority for the field of Theology. The exposure of SDs to foreign scholars is done through visits by invited guests who lecture or offer short seminars to SDs at UCV Theology.

Recommendations: We strongly recommend that the SDT be more open toward internationalization, as this would be beneficial for both faculty (some of whom are in favor of more internationalization) and SDs. Foreign scholars should also be invited to give courses part of the preparation programs of the SDs and co-tutelle considered.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.



Performance Indicator 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.).*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

As argued in RAE, p. 43, the writing of a doctoral dissertation in a foreign language is possible through the existing regulations (Annex A - Regulament Metodologie Acord\Anexa_A1_Regulament_SDTO.pdf) though not a priority, according to the current head of the SDT. Instead, RAE tries to make the case that the English abstracts each thesis has "cover more than 10% of the number of pages of the thesis itself" and that would be enough of an effort at internationalization. Of course, this is a ridiculous claim that seems to be marred by nationalistic overtones. From discussions we had with SDT representatives, we noticed that the isolationist opinions come mainly from the current SDT director, Rev. Prof. Picu Ocoleanu, and are not shared by other faculty members. But their opinions did not get a chance to be represented properly in the documents. As a result, the ARACIS Evaluation Commission for Theology received a letter no. 424/15.07.2021 from the Dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology (AS 15 - Opinia decanului FTO referitor la politica de internaționalizare a programelor de doctorat in deomeniul teologie), clarifying what we were suspecting that the faculty and the SDT are open to internationalization and working hard at it and that Rev. Dr. Picu Ocoleanu only expressed his personal opinions in the report.

Recommendations: We recommend that the SDT pursue internationalization in accordance with its Regulations, extend the possibility of co-tutelage, courses by foreign specialists, and encourage more SD Erasmus+ mobility.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

IV. SWOT Analysis

<u>Strengths:</u>	<u>Weaknesses:</u>
<p>- the strengths identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general strengths that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SDT Regulations has supplementary specifications (HG 681/2011) regarding the 	<p>- the weaknesses identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general weaknesses that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of regulations and methodologies in the functioning of the

<p>termination of collaboration between a doctoral student and his supervisor (A.1.1.2.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plagiarism in doctoral theses is verified with a program recognized by CNATDCU (A.1.2.2.) ● Students receive significant support for the publication of articles and other scholarly materials in journals and the Oltenia Metropolitanate Publishing House (A.1.3.3.) ● There is a constant concern for the endowment of the Library fund (A.2.1.1.) ● CDs have several journals and a publishing house in the field in which they can publish scholarly materials (Mitropolia Olteniei journal-ERIH; Revista Ortodoxa - online – CNCS B; Oltenia Metropolitanate Publishing House - CNCS B) (A.3.1.1.) ● A significant number of tenured professors serving as CDs who insure the continuity of doctoral studies in the field (6 tenure track professors) (A.3.1.2.) ● Some CDs publish frequently in ERIH journals (A.3.2.2.) ● SDT manages to attract a large number of Master graduates from other universities in their PhD program and insure funded seats for them (B.1.1.1.) ● SDT applies academic performance criteria in the selection of candidates (Grade point average of the years of study - license + master for a minimum of 8.51) (B.1.2.) ● Low dropout / expulsion / attrition rate (13%) (B.1.2.2.) ● SDs frequently publish articles or scholarly papers at the Mitropolia Olteniei publishing house (B.3.1.1.) ● SDs appreciate the learning environment and support basis offered by their CDs (C.1.1.1) 	<p>structures is not always consistent and does not completely cover the necessary didactic and managerial processes (A.1.1.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The verification of the plagiarism is done as a last resort, in order to publicly defend a thesis (A.1.2.2.) ● Grants earned are not always research grants (A.1.3.1) ● There is not much preoccupation for obtaining extra-budgetary funds in order to ensure the activity of research and scientific mobility of SDs (A.1.3.2.) ● The financial support relationship from the Metropolitanate of Oltenia is not institutionalized (A.1.3.2.) ● Although there are amounts allocated to research, SDs tend to fund their own travel to and participation in conferences (A.1.3.3.) ● A majority of the publications by the CDs are "in house" (A.3.1.1.) ● A tendency by the CDs to exaggerate the scores obtained according to the CNATDCU standards checklist, through inclusion of non-academic achievements (A.3.1.1.) ● Lack of flexibility in the composition of Preparatory Plans; the topics included in the Advanced Training Plan are mandatory for all SD (A.3.1.3.) ● Some published articles lack originality (A.3.2.1) ● It is not clear how a prevention strategy is applied to the abandonment of doctoral programs (B.1.2.1) ● The contents of some of the doctoral specialization disciplines are formulated as general themes or introductory courses for the first cycle of studies (bachelor's degree or
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDT has a modern and proper infrastructure conducive to research (C2.2.3) 	<p>licence) and they tend to repeat materials already studied in previous degrees (B.2.1.1.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supervisory committee does not provide corrections and written guidelines in the research activity, drafting and evaluation of the scholarly progress report (B.2.1.4.) • All supervisory committees are composed of only SDT CDs (B.2.1.5.) • Lack of originality and serious deficiencies regarding to the way SDs structure their articles, objectives and methods (B.3.1.1) • Few external mobilities (B.3.1.2.) • Lack of diversification in doctoral defense commissions (B.3.2.1). • Limits SD access to verification software to verify the originality of their final work (C.2.2.2.) • Confusing messages about the internationalization efforts and doctorates in co-tutelage. (C.3.1.2.) (C.3.1.3.)
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - possible lines of action for the development of the institution under review shall be identified; - examples of opportunities: a favorable economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the uniqueness of the study programs and their relevance to the local/national market, the overall attractiveness of the study programs etc. • The SDT is directly supported by the Metropolitanate of Oltenia whose leader is at the same time CSUD director and who has an important role to play in the development of doctoral studies at UCV; • Some of the teachers engaged in SDT have studies and specializations in European countries, a good opportunity to expand networks international collaboration; 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the possible causes of the deficient aspects (the causes of the identified weaknesses), which are practically the threats to the proper functioning of the institution, shall be identified; - besides, there may be external threats, such as: the inopportune economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the conduct of low attractiveness study programs for both candidates and the labor market etc. • The field of theological research is not among the concerns of the Development and Research Strategy of Romania, a fact that can determine undermine the chances for alternative resources in Theology • Reduced presence of CDs in the national and international grant competitions and for the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Faculty of Theology, on whose human resource the SDT relies upon, is the only educational institution in the geographical area Oltenia, thus benefitting from an important recruitment pool for doctoral studies in the field; this has to be exploited. • Relatively young teaching staff, with an average age of approximately 50 years consolidating long-term perspective. 	<p>internationalization of teaching activity and UCV research;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the legislation in the field determines leads to errors on the part of the SDT management in the realization and implementation of procedures.
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V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

The recommendations contained in the report shall be resumed in the indicators' analysis. Other general recommendations may be made that do not fit within a particular indicator.

VERY IMPORTANT!!! – *Each identified weakness must be correlated with at least one recommendation to improve the situation!*

No.	Type of indicator (*, C)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1		A.1.1.1	Fulfilled	- Better records be kept re. the electoral processes for all the IOSUD/STD structures - CSDT meet at least three times a year - The 4-year term for the CSUD director and members be respected
2		A.1.1.2	Fullfilled	- more clear indications be introduced in the Regulations on the opportunity, structure, and content of the training program, depending on the topic and specific research of each SD and on their area of specialization of their CD
3		A.1.2.2	Fullfilled	The antiplagiarism software be used more widely by students, preferably for free, several times during the writing of the doctoral thesis, as well as for verification of the scholarly progress reports and articles
4		A.1.3.1	Fullfilled	The participation of CDs be encouraged in external granting competitions (such as UEFISCDI), where peer-reviewing is applied
5	*	A.1.3.2	Partially fulfilled	Although there is significant funding of SDs by the Metropolitanate of Oltenia, the criteria for such funding should be presented more transparently so

				students know when, where, and how to apply for it. Funding should also be committed for a number of years, so the students know what to count on.
6	*	A.1.3.3	Partially fulfilled	More detailed records be kept concerning the funding of SDs; mechanisms be put in place to support the SDs more transparently and in a competitive manner in their research activities.
7	C	A.2.1.1	Fulfilled	Correctly report scholarly publications and activities, according to the existing CNATDCU norms and standards
8		A.3.1.3	Fulfilled	Elective (as opposed to required) courses be offered to better serve the needs of individual students
9	C	A.3.2.1	Fulfilled	Publication in relevant national and international journals and with publishing presses is strongly recommended.
10		B.1.2.2	Fulfilled	Identify the reasons for SDs dropping out of the program and developing a prevention strategy.
11		B.2.1.1	Fulfilled	Courses be developed differently to meet the needs of doctoral students, teach them more advanced research methods. Also, elective (or individualized reading) courses should be considered, depending on the SDs areas of specialization
12		B.2.1.3	Fulfilled	The courses syllabi be developed with an eye to helping doctoral students achieve graduate-level competencies, not repeating material that was already studied and not emphasizing memorization but critical thinking
13		B.2.1.4	Fulfilled	Better records be kept that provide written feedback to the student following their various exams. Also, the SD should be encouraged to consult with the other members of the supervisory committee, not just with the CD.
14	C	B.2.1.5	Not fulfilled	The doctoral supervisory committees be diversified to include faculty members from outside the SDT. That would allow for a more diversified experience for the SDs and would bring the ratio down.
15	C	B.3.1.1	Partially fulfilled	CDs should be more involved in reviewing their SDs scholarly output. SDs should be directed to search to publish in outlets outside of the MO. More emphasis should be laid on teaching research methodology in the doctoral program.
16	*	B.3.1.2	Fulfilled	SD participation should vary location, as the majority of the international ones were in Osijek, Croatia.

17		B.3.2.1	Partially fulfilled	Avoid the use of the same commission members for more than two commissions per year in order to avoid possible conflict of interest and promote transparency
18	*	B.3.2.2	Partially fulfilled	Avoid the use of the same commission members in too many examinations commissions in order to avoid possible conflict of interest and promote transparency
19		C.1.1.1	Fulfilled	We recommend consistency in the application of the above criteria
20	*	C.1.1.2	Fulfilled	Administer the student satisfaction survey annually
21		C.2.1.1	Fulfilled	Produce a more user friendly website
22		C.2.2.1	Fulfilled	More databases be made available for research, including ProQuest dissertations
23	*	C.3.1.1	Partially fulfilled	SDT encourage and support its SDs to participate in Erasmus+ type mobility.
24		C.3.1.2	Partially fulfilled	The SDT be more open toward internationalization

VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

















Several important issues raised during the evaluation are resumed and some general conclusions are drawn on the quality of the education provided within the doctoral study domain under review; the Experts' Panel also presents general assessments about the institution. Other general recommendation may also be presented, which cannot be related to a specific indicator and have not been presented at point V.

*Prof. univ. Dr. Lucian Turcescu
International Expert, Theology
Concordia University, Montreal
Canada*

VII. Annexes

The following types of documents shall be attached:

- *The detailed schedule of the evaluation visit – MANDATORY: Having been online only, I have followed the schedule of the evaluation visit sent by ARACIS. Additionally, on July 7, at 18h, together with the members of the evaluation committee (Rev. Prof. Vanca, and Qaramah) we had a two-hour online meeting with the DST Council (Rev. Profs. Ocoleanu and Bajau).*
- *Supplementary Annexes (uploaded on owncloud/U Craiova Evaluare Domeniu Teologie/Anexe suplimentare/UCV_Anexe suplimentare (16.07)*

 AS01 - sedinte consiliu suplimentare - indicator-A.1.1.1.f	>
 AS02 - analiza tematica admitere - indicator-A.1.1.1.h	>
 AS03 - Raport evaluare internă 2019	>
 AS04-finantare burse - indicator A.1.3.2	>
 AS05-doctoranzi coordonati fiecare indrumator - indicator A.1.3.4	>
 AS06-lucrari profesori - 5 exemple, indicator A.3.2.1	>
 AS07-comisii indrumare, indicator B.2.1.4	>
 AS08-tabel doctoranzi, stagi, prelungire, intrerupere	>
 AS09-cursuri prof. straini la SDTO, indicator C.3.1.2	>
 AS10 - Doctoranzi participari conferinte strainatate, indicator C.3.1.1	>
 AS11 - Indrumare drd. - indicator B.2.1.5	>
 AS12-Indrumare doctoranzi, indicator B.2.1.4	>
 AS13-granturi - indicator A.1.3.1	>
 AS14- Dovezi Mitropolie finantare manifestari	>
 AS15 - opinia decanului FTO referitor la...amelor de doctorat in domeniul teologie	>
 opis_ucv_teologie_Anexe-suplimentare.pdf	