ROMANIAN AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION
*Full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education - **ENQA***
*Listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education - **EQAR***

Annex No. 3

The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

Contents

I. Introduction[1]

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 Universitatea "Aurel Vlaicu" University (UAV) of Arad conducted during the period 13-18 September 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" (part of the Scoala Doctorala Interdisciplinara, SDI), organized in the IOSUD-UAV, 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.

The "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad (UAV) is an accredited institution of higher education and research that operates under the coordination of the Ministry of Education and Research (in accord with Gov. resolution no. 739/2020); it has been externally audited by ARACIS in 2018 and was conferred a *trustworthy* rating in 2019.

---

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

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

1. Prof. dr. habil. Paul BRUSANOWSKI (Universitatea „Lucian Blaga", Sibiu, România), coordinator;

2. Prof. dr. Lucian TURCESCU (Concordia University, Montreal, Canada), international expert;

3. Mr. Mihail QARAMAH (Universitatea „1 Decembrie 1918", Alba Iulia, România), doctoral student

The doctoral school (IOSUD) is part of the UAV, a publicly accredited university in Romania, and uses the material, financial, and human resources of this university. Currently IOSUD-UAV has three accredited doctoral domains (Philology since 2008, Theology since 2010, and Environmental Engineering since 2019) (Anexa_IOSUD2a, 2b, 2c.pdf). The Theology domain is comprised of Orthodox Theology and Evangelical Theology.

The domain Theology was accredited for doctoral studies in 2010 (OMECTS Order no. 4966/31.08.2010). As of 1 September 2021, the doctoral domain Theology had the following supervisors: Rev. Prof. Dr. Constantin Rus, Rev. Prof. Dr. Cristinel Ioja, Rev. Prof. Dr. Ioan Tulcan, Rev. Prof Dr. Vasile Vlad, Rev. Prof. Dr. Florin Dobrei, PS Dr. Emilian Crisanul (Vlad Nica), Prof. Dr. Corneliu Constantineanu (deceased March 2021) Prof. Dr. Marcel Macelaru, Prof. Dr. Corneliu Simut, Prof. Dr. Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru (https://cdn.uav.ro/documente/Universitate/Academic/Doctorat/Lista-doctoranzi-inmatriculati-2020-2021.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 – cummulative grade point average (media notelor necesara pt admitere)

COD – Doctoral Studies Code (Codul studiilor universitare de doctorat)

CSUD – Council of the Doctoral School (Consiliul Scolii Universitare de Doctorat)

IOSUD – Institution Organizing Doctoral University Studies

OUG – Emergency Government Ordinance (Ordonanta de Urgenta Guvernamentala)

RAE – Self-Evaluation Report (Raport de auto-evaluare)

SD – doctoral student (student doctorand)

SDI – Interdisciplinary Doctoral School (Scoala Doctorala Interdisciplinara)

Theology – Doctoral School of Theology (Scoala Doctorala de Teologie, part of the Scoala Doctorala Interdisciplinara)

UAV – University "Aurel Vlaicu" of Arad (Universitatea "Aurel Vlaicu" din Arad)

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 commission analyzed Theology'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 UAV website, information received during the commission's online meetings with professors, students, graduates, employers or other interested actors involved, as well as the Supplementary Annexes (AS) submitted by the evaluated unit upon request of this commission. As international expert, I only participated in the online meetings, both general – pertaining to the entire UAV and the fundamental domain Humanities and Theology – and specific to the domain Theology. The meetings were organized by ARACIS.

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY
*general description of domain analysis.

In 2020-21, a number of 10 CDs coordinated a total of 71 doctoral students (Orthodox CDs had 35 SDs and Evangelical CDs had 36 SDs). According to my ARACIS commission coordinator, who visited the university physically during the evaluation period, the library has modern spaces, and thus Theology has the capacity to run a doctoral program. The same conclusions can be drawn from the discussions we had with the persons responsible for doctoral studies, Domain Theology, in the SDI.

Criterion A.1. The administrative, managerial institutional structures and the financial resources
*general description of the criterion analysis.

The UAV Theology 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). Other than these forms of support, Theology (especially the Evangelical partner) have indicated that they attracted funds from private donors but provided little proof for this.

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, metodologies, 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: Annex A1.1.1.a.pdf and Annex_IOSUD_5c.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-UAV presented documents regarding the methodology for the election and appointment of the CSUD members (A 1.1.1.b.pdf and A 1.1.1.b1.pdf) for the current evaluation period and for 2020-2024.

During our online meeting with the SDs, they indicated that no pressure was made for their election nor was an Orthoddox "blessing" required for their participation in the elections. No minutes were presented of how the elections took place.

c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);
The methodologies were made available to this committee as annexes M-09-Admitere-doctorat-ed-II-rev-1.pdf, A.1.1.1.c finalizare.pdf, as well as at:
https://cdn.uav.ro/documente/Universitate/Calitate/Regulamente-Metodologii-Proceduri-Formulare/Metodologii/M-09-Admitere-doctorat-ed-II-rev-1.pdf. Proofs of the admission calendar for Fall 2021 were also provided. The number of available places and doctoral thesis themes for each CD are approved by CSUD and UAV's Administrative Council for each academic year (RAE, p. 20).

d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;
Based on Government Ordinance no. 5921/06.12.2016 for the default recognition - by institutions of higher education (including institutions that host doctoral studies) – of doctoral and PhD supervisor titles conferred by accredited foreign institutions, the methodology under this sub-criterion was presented in A 1.1.1.d.pdf and A 1.1.1e.pdf. In UAV, several members of the domain Theology, the Evangelical section, indicated during our online meeting with them that they did not have problems with the recognition of their foreign doctorates or their habilitation.

e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;
RAE claims that functional management structures are in place for the CSUD and respected, that the CSUD meets regularly, but no minutes or other proofs were provided.

f) the contract for doctoral studies;
RAE directed us to the university website for the contract template and various other documents that students have to sign for their studies on October 1 of each year. I assume that they are signed as required.

g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.
The internal procedures for the Theology are presented in detail in A 1.1.1.g PO-54.

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 Council of the Theology domain 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 SDI Regulations (A 1.1.1.a.pdf) contain the informations specified under this criterion, but not all the details are mentioned here. The SDI Regulations provide criteria in line with 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-UAV, SDI uses the information system of the UAV 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, SDI 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 UAV information system "Platforma informatică de management universitar" (https://core.uav.ro) is effective and properly used by the university, 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. An example of how the grades are managed

through the system was provided for an Orthodox theology doctoral course (AU121.pdf).

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

UAV 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. Annexes A.1.2.2.2018, A.1.2.2.2019, A.1.2.2.2020). This software is used by the SDI for the verification of all of its doctoral theses and since 2016, no doctorate in Theology from UAV was invalidated by CNATDCU. 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. Doctoral students we met indicated that the software was used for articles they submitted to the journal Studia Doctoralia (from UAV). Dean Cristinel Ioja (Orthodox) and Prof. Marcel Macelaru indicated that the use of the antiplagiarism software is free for students publishing their articles in Studia Doctoralia and Teologia (Revista Facultatii de Teologie din Arad, an ERIH+ publication). Also, after the first free use, the cost of additional usage of the software is 50 RON/usage.

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

RAE lists here Institutional Development Fund (FDI) projects administered through the university (https://www.uav.ro/universitate/documente/proiecte-f-d-i) and Annex A 1.3.1.TE.pdf. Evangelical CDs have obtained some research grants but no dollar amount is indicated in any of materials submitted. The information is availlable in open source format on the internet (https://uk.langham.org/get-involved/seedbed/central-eastern-bible-commentary) and the Langham Project based in Ireland and the UK is estimated to cost about 400,000 GBP. While three Evangelical theology CDs are participants in two external grants (and have hired 8 doctoral students), no Orthodox CDs hold any research grant.

Recommendations: The participation of CDs should be encouraged in national (such as UEFISCDI) and international granting competitions, where peer-reviewing is applied. Orthodox CDs in particular should consider applying for such grants, as they have not received grants.

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

Annex A 1.3.2.pdf provided a list of 23 students (out of a total of 71) who received either partial or full funding between 2018-2021. Of those 15.49% received full or partial funding from the UAV (government funding), while 16.90% received funding from private or ecclesiastical sources. While the total percentage of funded students represents 32.39%, the funding from non-governmental sources is below 20%.

Recommendations: While the university has its own rules about funding (https://www.uav.ro/universitate/organizare/documente-interne/documente-studenți/burse), the rules about private sponsorship of students should also be made known to new and returning students in the name of transparency and so that students know what to count on.

The indicator is 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 (pp. 26-27) claims that this indicator is fulfilled with more than the minimum 10% being used to reimburse accommodation and meals for SDs attending conferences organized by UAV Theology in Arad, as well as the publication costs of *Studia Doctoralia* journal. Two receipts were provided, as an example, from one symposium organized in September 2020 (total 7509.35 RON paid by the UAV to a catering company Milenium Invest / Events) to show how the funds were spent on Theology SDs. It is difficult to establish if the above amount represents 10% of the total yearly amount of doctoral grants. Mention was made several times during the evaluation that SDs benefit from support for such symposia and toward the publication in the Studia Doctoralia; no proofs were submitted to substantiate these claims. Doctoral students and the professors we interviewed indicated that they had no idea about the 10% funding available to SDs. SDs indicated that if they participated elsewhere they had 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. Also, SDs have to access and use the money as they wish in accordance with the regulations.

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. Brusanowski, as well as to video images shared with Dean Cristinel Ioja during interviews with him, the infrastructure SDs benefit from at UAV is modern and up-to-

---

[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.

date, conducive to proper research in Theology. Prof. Macelaru also confirmed that the infrastructure SDs in the evangelical section benefit from is currently being renovated and will be ready to use soon.

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 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. Brusanowski, 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. Access technology, databases, primary sources in the original languages, etc, are all available to the SDs and they are described in detail in the RAE. Two research centers are also present to assist SDs and their CDs: The Center for Historical Theological Studies and Missionary Pastoral Prognosis (http://www.teologiearad.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Regulament-CENTRU-DE-CERCETARE.pdf) and the Center for Intercultural and Interfaith Studies (https://stiinteumaniste.uav.ro/cadre-didactice/cercetare/centru-de-cercetare; see also the documents pertaining to the establishment and operation of the centres: Annexes A126b1 and A126b2).

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources
*general description of the criterion analysis.

A number of 9 CDs are actively engaged in supervising doctoral students (the 10th CD, Prof. Dr. Corneliu Constantineanu passed away in March 2021). Numerous scholarly activities are organized locally, involving both CDs and their SDs, that result in the publication of contributed volumes and journal articles.

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. Some of the CDs have two doctorates, and one even three doctorates. Evangelical CDs tend to have doctorates from abroad, while most Orthodox CDs have doctorates obtained in Romania. The impact of their research, however, 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, all 10 CDs fulfill the minimum CNATDCU standards. Thus, 100% of them do fulfill them, which is above the minimum of 50% expected.

Some CDs include in their verification dossiers non-academic activities and achievements (e.g. church distinctions, library catalog mentionings, their inclusion in databases, etc). (Annex A 3.1.1)

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 Theology, in 2020-21 50% of the CDs were permanent and full-time employees of the UAV, while the other 50% are only associated. However, due to the death of Prof. Corneliu Constantineanu in March 2021, only 40% of the CDs are now permanent and full time. This means that the Theology has a somewhat unstable body of CDs. (Annex A 3.1.1.1.pdf). Overall, for the enntire period under evaluation, the average of permanent and full-time faculty reached 84.88%. (Annex A3.1.2Tt.pdf)

The indicator is fullfilled.

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 Theology have received their habilitation and have expertise in the fields in which they teach, as well as a rich teaching and research experience. (A 3.1.1.1.pdf). The Ethics and Academic Integrity course is taught by an associate professor who is not yet a CD.

All the SDs have to take a number of 8 doctoral courses (**4 required, and 4 electives)**, in their first semester. We find this to be excessive and inappropriate, and in interviews with us students themselves have complained about the large number of courses in the first semester of their program. (B 2.1.1.a.1.pdf)

Recommendations: While the Ethics and Academic Integrity course should be taken by all the students, more flexibility should be shown. 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 programs[3] 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

Of a total of 10 CDs in Theology, four have over 8 SDs (cf.
https://cdn.uav.ro/documente/Universitate/Academic/Doctorat/Lista-doctoranzi-inmatriculati-2020-2021.pdf*)*
1) Pr. prof. univ. Ioan Tulcan – 9;
2) Prof. univ. Corneliu Constantineanu – 12;
3) Prof. univ. Marcel Măcelaru – 12;
4) Prof. univ. Corneliu Simuț – 10;
Thus, 40% of the CDs have more than 8 SDs simultaneously. A justification for this large number of SDs (A314_1.pdf) was introduced by Dean C. Ioja and approved by the UAV Administration Council (HS_UAV.pdf of 23 June 2020) .

---

[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.

Recommendations: The number of doctoral students per CD should be reduced.

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.

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

This criterion is fulfilled, with at least 50% (in fact more than that) CDs having published scholarly articles in ERIH+ journals. Despite this, however, only very few of them managed to get Google Scholar h-indexes at around 3 and make themselves more visible internationally. One factor affecting this indicator may be the fact that Theology encourages in-house publication of articles and books through its own outlets (Teologia is an Arad-based, ERIH+ recognized journal;) that are not high-impact journals and presses. The CDs are also active on the boards of various journals and scholarly associations (Annexes A3.2.1crc.pdf and A3.1.1.pdf)

Recommendations: Publication in more high-impact international journals and with publishing presses is strongly recommended. That would give the domain Theology more visibility.

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 standars 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 ten 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. (Annex A 3.2.pdf)

      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 UAV 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 UAV are attracted to the doctoral program in Theology at UAV.

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

Annex B 1.1.1.pdf miscalculates the ratio between the number of graduates of other higher education institutions who have enrolled for the doctoral admission competition within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget. The correct calculation for this ratio is:

1) 2016-2017: 2:6=0,33
2) 2017-2018: 2:6=0,33
3) 2018-2019: 13:11=1,18
4) 2019-2020: 16:3=5,33
5) 2020-2021: 10:4=2,5

Overall for the past five years the ratio is: 43:30=1,43.

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:

1) 2016-2017: 6:6=1
2) 2017-2018: 12:6=2
3) 2018-2019: 19:11=1,72
4) 2019-2020: 23:3=7,66
5) 2020-2021: 18:4=4,5

Overall for the past five years the ratio is: 78:30=2,6.

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.

Annex B.1.2.1 presents the UAV Methodology for Doctoral Admission (2021) in various fields. In addition to those criteria which are respected by both sections of Orthodox and Evangelical theology, 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). The RAE explained that all the admission criteria are carefully observed, but provided no proofs for that.

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 UAV (and the Holy Synod in the case of Orthodox theology), 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. (Annex B 1.2.1) No proof was provided to substantiate the claims though.

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 admission[4] 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, 71 SDs enrolled, while 5 were exmatriculated. The overall attrition (or dropout) rate was thus 7.04%, which is a low attrition rate. (Annex B 1.2.2). RAE misleads in asserting that there is 0 attrition rate.

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 all relevant for the SDs, regardless of their ultimate area of specialization.

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.

The program is highly relevant for the SDs. They have a combination of required and elective doctoral courses to choose from.

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

---

[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.

The Training Program based on Advanced University Studies is comprised of relevant disciplines from which the SDs can choose (some courses are required, while others electives). "Ethics and Academic Integrity", as well as the Methodology of Scientific Research are offered. (Annexes B 2.1.1.a1.pdf and B2.1.1.a2.pdf). In analyzing the course contents, we have observed that the courses are properly developed for the doctoral level and do not necessarily present lower-level (master or licence) academic material (annexes included in B211b).

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

The curricula for doctoral studies in the field of theology, includes the mandatory discipline of research ethics: "Ethics and academic integrity" (Annex B212Et).

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 activities[5].*
- 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 most of the course syllabi (fișele disciplinelor). It is assumed that through periodical evaluations such as the current one, the employer, UAV, will measure whether or not the objectives of the learning outcomes are achieved. In our view, students will be able to develop the necessary research skills.

Recommendations: The courses sylllabi should be developed with an eye to helping doctoral students achieve graduate-level competencies, not emphasizing

---

[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.

memorization but critical thinking and work with the primary texts as much as possible.

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.*
- 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

PhD students benefit from the guidance of functional doctoral steering commissions. The activity of doctoral supervision is provided in the professors' Job Description (Annex B214FP) and is visible in the Daily Activity Sheet (Annex B214Faz). Also, doctoral supervisors have consultation hours when they meet doctoral students and are also in contact with the students via email to offer support and guidance. Within the advanced research program, the doctoral steering committee is established according to the research direction of the doctoral student (Annex B214C – example of doctoral steering committee appointment sheet).

Recommendations: 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

Currently, there are 71 active SDs (cf. Tabel_doctoranzi_Arad_20_21 (1).pdf), who are directed by 29 faculty members (cf. Tabel comisii TO). The ratio is 2,44:1.

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

The indicator is 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 and 3 others I verified myself. Not all 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 Studia Doctoralia. More emphasis should be laid on teaching research methodology in the doctoral program.

    The indicator is 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

According to Annex B312, as well as folder B311, every single one of the 24 graduates in Theology participated in at least one conference/ international symposium domestically and/or abroad, for a total of 71 presentations. The ratio is thus 2.95, which is bigger than 1.

Recommendations: SD participation should vary location, as the majority of the international conferences 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

    According to folder B321, of the 15 external referees in the past 15 years, 5 had more that two theses to evaluate in one year, as follows:
    1) Pr. prof. univ Irimie Marga – in 2018: 3 theses
    2) Pr. prof. univ. Ștefan Buchiu – in 2017: 6 theses; in 2018 – 3 theses;
    3) Pr. prof. univ. Valer Bel – in 2017: 3 theses;
    4) Pr. prof. univ. Dumitru Megheșan – in 2017: 3 theses
    5) Arhid. Conf. Univ. George Grigoriță – in 2018: 3 theses

    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

    During the period of the evaluation, 24 doctoral theses were defended. During the same period, Pr. Prof. Dr. Stefan Buchiu was invited as a member in the defense committees 12 times. Thus, 12:24=0.5 (cf. Annex B322)

    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 clear.

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 SDI (art. 63, cap 5). In 2018, the Theology domain 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

UAV has implemented a series of operational procedures based on which the evolution of the doctoral school can be followed with a special emphasis on the scientific activity of doctoral supervisors, the infrastructure and logistics used for the research activity, as well as the legislative provisions and internal regulations underlying the organization of doctoral studies (Annex C111). The scholarly activity of doctoral students is also constantly monitored and the doctoral school applies

internal quality assurance procedures within the training program (Annexes B111; B211b).

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

Within the doctoral field of Theology, feedback mechanisms have been implemented for doctoral students (CEAC-F reports). Thus, they have the opportunity to evaluate the program, the teaching process, related services through the SUMS platform twice a year, following operational procedures: **OP 20** and **OP 22**, processes which are described and available at https://www.uav.ro/academic/calitate/manualul-procedurilor. On the basis of these, the doctoral students can evaluate the didactic activity and the related services of the University, in their account from the SUMS platform. Their answers are processed by the CEAC (quality assurance) commission and based on the report prepared, measures are taken to improve the aspects reported by doctoral students. The graphs are difficult to read and no explanations are provided as to the meaning of the answers.
At the same time, SDs complete a monthly report that is discussed in coordination meetings and used to ensure good practices in the educational process. (Annex C112).

Recommendation: Make the evaluation questionnaires more user-friendly.

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.

Information about the SDI and more general regulations for the entire university are published at https://www.uav.ro/academic/școala-doctorală-interdisciplinară-șdi-a-uav-arad. The website is user-frienndly and easy to navigate.

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 All public data pertaining to the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School as well as the associated regulations, methodologies and specific procedures are published on the university website: https://uav.ro/ and https://www.uav.ro/academic/școala-doctorală-interdisciplinară-șdi-a-uav-arad. Information is available also in Annexes C211 and Theology Studies Guide. RAE made available numerous links to various other regulations that are available on the UAV websiite.

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 SDI has an excellent and functional infrustructure 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

Through the accounts allocated by the University, doctoral students have access to online research databases, through AnelisPlus. To these are added the storage of electronic databases in the library's computer servers, in the field of Theology (collections of patristic texts, dictionaries, journal resources). In their doctoral research projects, SDs are encouraged to use these resources in order to build their research on a solid foundation. (Annex A211). During the interview with the Commission members, SDs have complained that they do not have access to the latest scholarly books and articles.

Recommendations: More databases be made available for research. We strongly recommend the consultation of the database ProQuest dissertations (available at UAV) 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 Theology have access to the antiplagiarism platform offered by IOSUD-UAV through the www.sistemantiplagiat.ro (cf. Annexes A.1.2.2.2018, A.1.2.2.2019, A.1.2.2.2020.)

Access to this antiplagiarism software is limited to one free verification of the final form of the doctoral thesis in view of the public defense of the thesis, as well as verification of some articles submitted to journals in view of publication. Second verifications cost 50 RON/verification and are thus not very expensive, according to Dean Cristinel Ioja.

Recommendations: We recommend the purchase of another licence by the UAV, 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

Theology does have labs, such as music, computer labs, as well as the chapel. However, SDs have access to two Centres for Theological Studies. (Annex A211)

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

There are Erasmus+ mobility agreements covering that UAV signed with some 80 universities in both UE and non-UE countries (Anexa_IOSUD_20b.pdf). The doctoral field Theology has also benefitted from mobilities (Annex C311). In the field of Theology, out of the 75 doctoral students enrolled in the period 2016-2020, over 52 (68%) of the doctoral students participated in domestic conferences (with international participation) as well as abroad. However, no student benefitted from an ERASMUS stage abroad. (Annex B311).

Recommendation: Students should be encouraged to apply and benefit from ERASMUS stages abroad.

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 (pp. 39-40) and the discussions conducted with Theology representatives have revealed that no doctorates in co-tutelage have existed yet. The exposure of SDs to foreign scholars is done through visits by invited guests who lecture or offer short seminars to SDs at UAV Theology.

Recommendations: We strongly recommend that Theology be more open toward internationalization, as this would be beneficial for both faculty 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

RAE (pp. 40-41) refer the evaluator to internationalization activities carried out by the UAV, but nothing specific to the Theology domain. Judging from the listing of students, one can identify some 5 foreign students, mostly in Evangelical theology. No additional proofs were provided.

Recommendations: We recommend that Theology 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

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- 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. ● **The recognition of CDs' doctoral degrees and habilitations obtained elsewhere is easy at UAV** (A.1.1.1 d) ● 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 *Studia Doctoralia* (A.1.3.3.) ● There is a constant concern for proper infrastructure for the SDs and the endowment of the Libraries (A.2.1.1.) ● At least 50% of CDs publish frequently in ERIH+ journals (A.3.2.1) ● SDI 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.) ● SDI 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 (7.04% overall rate) (B.1.2.2.) ● SDs appreciate the learning environment and support basis offered by their CDs (interview with SDs) ● Student feedback is frequent and used by the university (C.1.1.2) ● SDI has a modern and proper infrastructure conducive to research (C2.2.3)	- 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. ●Application of regulations and methodologies in the functioning of the structures is not always consistent and does not completely cover the necessary didactic and managerial processes (A.1.1.1) ● The verification of the plagiarism is done as a last resort, in order to publicly defend a thesis (A.1.2.2.) ● Orthodox CDs do not apply for national and international 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.) ● Although there are amounts allocated to research, SDs tend to fund their own travel to and participation in conferences other than those organized "in-house" at UAV (A.1.3.3.) ● SDs are supposed to take too many courses, esp. in their first year and they complained about it (A.3.1.3) ● Too many CDs exceed the allowed number of SDs they supervise (A.3.1.4) ● All supervisory committees are composed of only SDI CDs (B.2.1.5.) ● Few external mobilities abroad (B.3.1.2, C.3.1.1.) ● Lack of diversification in doctoral defense commissions (B.3.2.1). ● No doctorates in co-tutelage. (C.3.1.2.) (C.3.1.3.)
Opportunities:	**Threats:**
- possible lines of action for the development of	- the possible causes of the deficient aspects

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. ● Some of the professors engaged in SDI have studies and specializations in European countries, a good opportunity to expand networks international collaboration; ● The Faculty of Theology in UAV has had a century-long presence in Arad and was the basis of the current university. It can thus benefit from its prestige and this has to be exploited. ● Relatively young teaching staff, consolidating the long-term perspective of the SDI.	(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 internationalization of teaching activity and UAV research; ● Lack of knowledge of the legislation in the field (e.g. re. 10% of funds for SDs) leads to errors on the part of the SDI management in the realization and implementation of some procedures.

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 national (such as UEFISCDI) and international granting competitions, where peer-reviewing is applied
5	*		A.1.3.2	**Fulfilled**	While the university has its own rules about funding, the rules about private sponsorship of students should also be made known to new and returning students in the name of transparency and so that students know what to count on.
6	*		A.1.3.3	**Partially fulfilled**	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. Also, SDs have to access and use the money as they wish in accordance with the regulations.
7			A.3.1.1	**Fulfilled**	More care should be given to correctly report scholarly publications and activities, according to the existing CNATDCU norms and standards.
8			A.3.1.3	**Fulfilled**	While the Ethics and Academic Integrity course should be taken by all the students, more flexibility should be shown. 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.
9			A.3.1.4	**Fulfilled**	The number of doctoral students per CD should be reduced.
10	C		A.3.2.1	**Fulfilled**	Publication in more high-impact international journals and with publishing presses is strongly recommended. That would give the domain Theology more visibility.
11			B.2.1.3	**Fulfilled**	The courses sylllabi should be developed with an eye to helping doctoral students achieve graduate-level competencies, not emphasizing memorization but critical thinking and work with the primary texts as much as possible.
12			B.2.1.4	**Fulfilled**	SDs should be encouraged to consult with the other members of the supervisory committee, not just with the CD.
13	C		B.2.1.5	**Fulfilled**	The doctoral supervisory committees should be

					diversified to include more faculty members from outside the Theology. That would allow for a more diversified experience for the SDs.
14	C	B.3.1.1	**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 *Studia Doctoralia*. More emphasis should be laid on teaching research methodology in the doctoral program.
15	*	B.3.1.2	**Fulfilled**		SD participation should vary location, as the majority of the international ones were in Osijek, Croatia.
16	*	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.
17	*	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
18		C.1.1.1	**Fulfilled**		We recommend consistency in the application of the criteria for this indicator
19	*	C.1.1.2	**Fulfilled**		Make the evaluation questionnaires more user-friendly.
20		C.2.2.1	**Fulfilled**		More databases be made available for research, including ProQuest dissertations
21		C.2.2.2	**Fulfilled**		We recommend the purchase of another licence by the UAV, that would allow for the free verification by the SDs of other pieces of scholarship they produce during their residency.
22	*	C.3.1.1	**Partially fulfilled**		Students should be encouraged to apply and benefit from ERASMUS stages abroad.
23		C.3.1.2	**Partially fulfilled**		We strongly recommend that Theology be more open toward internationalization, as this would be beneficial for both faculty and SDs. Foreign scholars should also be invited to give courses part of the preparation programs of the SDs and co-tutelle considered.
24		C.3.1.3	**Partially fulfilled**		We recommend that Theology pursue internationalization in accordance with its Regulations, extend the possibility of co-tutelage, courses by foreign specialists, and encourage more SD Erasmus+ mobility.

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 presnted at point V.

A decision is proposed, together with the reasons for granting it (if the Experts' Panel members do not reach a consensus, each of them can propose and argue his/her own decision).

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

VII. Annexes

The following types of documents shall be attached:

U Aurel Vlaicu Evaluare Domeniu Teologie +

☐ Name ▲

ANEXE ARAD (18.09.2021)

Anexe suplimentare (15.09)

Inregistrari-recordings

▶ 18 sept_Intalnire finala reprez. UAV.mp4

▶ Intalnire finala echipa_18.09.2021.mp4

▶ Intalnire pregatitoare echipa_10.09.2021.mp4

▶ Intalnire preliminara echipa_13.09.2021.mp4

▶ Intalnire studenti Teologie_15.09.2021.mp4

▶ Intalnire tehnica echipa_17.09.2021.mp4

Timetable_Eval IOSUD_DSUD_UAV Arad_13.09-18.09.2021_semnat_UAV_inreg ARACIS.pdf