



The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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I. Introduction¹

This report was drawn up during the periodical external reevaluation required after the conditional accreditation of the doctoral study domain of Theology at the University of Cluj-Napoca, between 17-19 March 2023, 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 reevaluation was to establish the level of quality reached in the domain of doctoral studies "Theology", organized in the IOSUD-BBU, 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. Assoc. Professor Dr. Wilhelm Tauwinkl (University of Bucharest), coordinator
2. Assoc. Professor Dr. Mariyan Stoyadinov (University of Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria), international expert;
3. Andrei-Cristian Pătrașcu (SNSPA, Bucharest), student.

The evaluated Doctoral school of Theology is part of the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca (BBU), a state accredited university in Romania which organizes doctoral studies (IOSUD), and uses the material, financial, and human resources of this university. The BBU organises doctoral studies

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



for 32 fields (<https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/ro/domeniile-de-doctorat/>), including the field of theology. The doctoral field "Theology" at BBU is organised in three doctoral schools and has 24 doctoral supervisors (full and associate) and 240 doctoral students, distributed in the three doctoral schools:

1. The "Isidor Todoran" Doctoral School of Orthodox Theology (1995) is organised and accredited within the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, where the first doctoral programmes started with coordinators who had transferred from other university centres.

At the moment, the doctoral school has 14 doctoral coordinators, 9 of whom are members of the UBB, and has 145 PhD students at different stages of their doctoral thesis preparation (RAE p. 54-55).

2. The Doctoral School of Theology "Ecumene" (since 2005) is a result of the partnership between the Faculty of Reformed Theology and the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology. Since 1999 the doctoral studies have been organised in a multid denominational and ecumenical environment and the first admission was organised in 2001/2002.

At the moment, the doctoral school has 6 doctoral coordinators, 3 of whom are UBB holders, and has 67 doctoral students at different stages of their doctoral theses (RAE p. 55-57).

3. The Doctoral School of Theology "Religion, Culture, Society" (since 2018). It operates within the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology and currently has 4 PhD coordinators, 3 of whom are UBB members, having 28 PhD students at various stages of the preparation of their doctoral theses (RAE p. 58). The technical support is provided by a secretary in each of the three doctoral schools. (Doctoral coordinators: https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/documente/alte_fisiere/Conducatori_Doctorat_Dupa_Facultati.pdf)

II. Methods used

The methods and tools used in the external reevaluation process, before and during the evaluation visit, included:

- 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;
- lecture halls for students;



- 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 Quality Assessment and Assurance Commission, the Quality Assurance Department, the Ethics Commission (including with the student representatives of these structures);
 - Secretariats.
 - Application of questionnaires to doctoral students or academic staff in the doctoral study domain under review.

In this report, for ease of writing and reading, we have used the following abbreviations:

CD = doctoral coordinator(s)/teaching staff

DD = doctoral field

IOSUD-UBB = Organizing Institution of Doctoral Studies of "Babeş-Bolyai" University

PC = research programme

PP = advanced degree programme

RPS = scientific progress report

SD = doctoral student(s)

SDT = Doctoral Schools

SDT-E = Ecumenical Doctoral School of Theology

SDT-O = Doctoral School of Orthodox Theology

SDT-RCS = Doctoral School of Theology 'Religion, Culture and Society

BBU = "Babeş-Bolyai" University

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

**general description of domain analysis.*

The academic staff of supervisors, the library and the rest of facilities in all three doctoral schools prove the capacity of UBB to run a doctoral program in Theology.

CD at BBU (arranged according to the fields of doctoral study) 01.Apr.2023:

https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/en/documente/alte_fisiere/Conducatori_Doctorat_Dupa_Domenii_Eng.pdf

CD at BBU (arranged according to faculties and doctoral schools) 01.Apr.2023:

https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/en/documente/alte_fisiere/Conducatori_Doctorat_Dupa_Facultati_Eng.pdf



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

The previous external evaluator gave a high rating of the complex of resources, used by the all three doctoral schools. My impression is the same.

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.

The administrative structures and guidelines are on a proper level. The theology doctoral programme has financial resources from government sources, from research grants and through the support of denominational ecclesiastical forums.

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:

(a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;

The doctoral schools and doctoral fields of the UBB are organized and operated according to the Regulations of the University. UBB Regulations for the organisation and conduct of doctoral studies: https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/REGULAMENTUL-UNIVERSITATII-BABES_EN.pdf

The three doctoral schools have each their own regulations according to which they operate:

1. SDT-O Regulation: <https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Regulament-actualizat-Teologie-Ortodoxa.pdf>

2. SDT-E Regulation: https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/documente/scoli_doctorale/regulament_Ecumene.pdf

3. SDT-RCS Regulation: <https://dr.rocateo.ubbcluj.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/REGULAMENT-Scoli-Doctorae-Religie-cultura-societate.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;

Elections for UBB leadership and representative positions are conducted in accordance with the Regulation on elections to UBB leadership structures and positions: https://www.ubbcluj.ro/ro/infoubb/alegeri/files/alegeri2020/Regulament_alegeri_Senat.pdf

The Director of the CSUD is elected in accordance with the "Methodology for conducting the competition for the position of Director of the Council for Doctoral Studies":

<https://senat.ubbcluj.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Metodologia-dedesf%C4%83%C8%99urare-a-concursului-pentru-func%C8%9Bia-de-director-alCSUD.pdf>

The Doctoral School Directors are appointed by the CSUD. Elections are held for the other seats on the Council of each Doctoral School (A.1.1.1-3. PV_alegeri_director_SDT_TO_2020). The last elections held were in 2020.



In response of the remarks of the previous international expert the Council of SDT-O now has 7 members.

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

All SDs in UBB use the methodology for the admission to doctoral studies in Babes-Bolyai University:

[Anexa_1_3_30-metodologie_admitere_doctorat_2022-2023.](#)

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

All SDs apply the methodology for automatic recognition in UBB of the quality of doctoral supervisor obtained in accredited university education institutions abroad: <https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/ro/recunoasterea-automata-in-ubb-a-calitatii-deconducator-de-doctorat-obtinute-in-institutii-de-invataman-universitar-acreditate-din-strainatate/>

For the field of theology, only one file was processed and approved during the evaluated period.

(Annex_A.1.1.1_d_Accreditation_certificate_.Appendix_A.1.1.1_d_CSISZAR_recognition_certificate_decision)

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

Each of the three DS have functioning councils. During the on-site visit, several minutes of them were checked by sampling. The frequency of meetings is more than 3 times a year. (A 1.1.2. [Procese verbale_Convocatoare_Orare](#))

f) the contract for doctoral studies;

The UBB signs with each PhD student a different study contract for fee-paying and subsidised forms of education. (<https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/ro/formulare/>)

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

The admissions examination topics are stipulated in the Admissions Methodology and are annually approved in the Council of each Doctoral School.

<https://lett.ubbcluj.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/RegulamentDoctorat-final-2020.pdf>

Recommendations: The recommendation of the previous foreign evaluator to "Include in the study contract at all SDs, or in its annex, the obligation of the PhD student to publish a number of 5 papers (3 studies and 2 communications), according to the OMed. 5.110/7.09.2018" was not taken into consideration. In the Contract (there was not English version, so I translated it by software) is fixed only the engagement for stimulation of the publication of scientific works of the doctoral student in specialized journals: Art 5(2)h).

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.

The previous evaluator mentioned that the regulations do not include all criteria, procedures, and standards on the specified issues, but most of them are stipulated in the IOSUD Regulation. I didn't see any development in this direction.

Recommendations: The regulations should be supplemented with the information required by the legislation.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

As part of IOSUD-UBB, the SDT in the field of Theology use the internal AcademicInfo platform for management of school situations, data collection for statistics and queries on reports, etc. For the verification of doctoral theses or partial scientific achievements SDT-O uses Turnitin software for similarity analysis.

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.

The UBB manages statistical data on students and PhD students through the AcademicInfo platform (Annex 1.3.47). In addition to the AcademicInfo platform, UBB offers doctoral students the Integrated Educational Register (REI) and access to the Single Matriculation Register, a platform for integrated management of data on students of state and private Romanian universities (Annex 1.3.48).

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.

The PhD thesis are analyzed by Turnitin and iThenticate software, followed by analysis and endorsement of the similarity report by the PhD coordinator.

(Annex_1_2_16_1 and Annex_1_2_16_2).

More details are available in the "Procedure for generating and analysing the Similarity Report" https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/documente/reglementari_ubb/HotarareCSUD12327-29iun.2016_GenerareAnalizaRaportSimilitudine.pdf.

Recommendations: As we were assured in our meetings the good level of communication between CD and SD is more than any software. It was confirmed by the SDs in our discussion with them. Keep this level.

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.



The three SDT in the field of Theology have the necessary financial resources and are using them to an optimal degree.

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.*

There are collection of data in the annexes for grants for doctoras study in Theology: Annexa A.1.3.1.a (2019), Annexa A.1.3.1.a (2020), CSISZAR_ proiecte_granturi, DIOSI_ proiecte_granturi, HOLLO_ proiecte_granturi, VIK_ proiecte_granturi, etc.

Recommendations: The grants and research projects in Theology are good opportunities for inter-Christian academic joint-working groups or teams.

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%.*

SDT is involved in research projects in collaboration with the Centre for Biblical Studies of BBU (Religion, Human Rights and Politics) and have received private grants within the framework of this project (Anexa A.1.3.2 – Alt...).

Doctoral students were awarded scholarships by Collegium Talentum, AS DIATHEKE, ICCMER, Diakonische Werk (LMU-Munich), The Church in Central and Eastern Europe (Anexa_1_3_56) and the Hungarian University Federation of Cluj-Napoca (Anexa_ 1_3_55). The PhD students received additional funding outside government funding, through scholarships from private entities or from the Erasmus+ programme (Anexa A.1.3.2_Alte...).

Recommendations: The criteria for financial aid to be available in public.

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.).*

The remarks and the recommendation of the previous foreign expert have been taken in consideration. We see a confirmation in the Annex 12_Settlement_ procedure and Annex 13_Doctoral_

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.



expenses_2022-2023. In the discussion with the SDs we remained with the impression that this topic is important for them and they are informed about the possibilities. They confirmed as well that there is no lack of funds for their projects or activities.

Recommendations: *To keep the level of the last two years in the future.*

The indicator is fulfilled

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Every one of the three Doctoral Schools has the necessary infrastructure.

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.*

The research infrastructure is in optimal condition for running the doctoral programs 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 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.

According to our observations, the infrastructure covers all of the necessities for doctoral studies in Theology.

Recommendations: *There is nothing missing. Just keep the level.*

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources

**general description of the criterion analysis*

The CDs are engaged actively in supervising doctoral students. The level of scholarly and publication activities – both SDs and CDs – is a very good one.

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.*

The CDs have required experience in academic work. They are well known on domestic and international levels. Their publications are visible in theological outlets.

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.

According to this Indicator the doctoral supervisors in the three doctoral schools are covering the minimum standards of the National Council for Attesting the University Titles, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU).

Recommendations:

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.*

The recommendation of the previous external expert has been taken into consideration.

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.*

Each doctoras school fulfills the criteria. It's visible according to A 3.1.1-2_Planuri de învățământ.

Recommendations:

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%.*

According to the provided data the percentage of those who surpass this number is 29%, 8 percent lower than at the time (May 2023) of the assessment in December 2021. (Annex 4_PhD/ Supervisor Report). This percentige is based on the total number of SD, incl. these in the extential period. If the calculation is based on the PhD students within the frame of the 3-year intership, then the % is 16 (4 of 24 supervisors have more than 8 doctoral students). One of CD coordinates 13 PhD students, but one of them is due to defend the thesis soon, so that the number of 12 will not be exceeded in the next year. The average number of PhD students per doctoral supervisor is 5. The

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.



difference up to the total number of 240 PhD students is given by those in the period of grace or interruptions (Art. 39 para. 4 and Art. 40 of the Code).” [Anexa_4_Teologie_studenti_conducatori].

It was done for the last 18 months, but the most important is that there is a tendency to decrease the number of doctoral students. Till the end of this year (December 2023) more than 40 SD will finalize their doctoral study and this will significantly reduce the number of actual SD. In addition, no new doctoral students were admitted during the current academic year.

According to the discussion we had in BBU the accepting of new CD in the field of Theology for the last months is under blockage in the CNATDCU Commission, where several theses of habilitation are waiting to be validated. This contributed to a perpetuation of the situation.

I'm convinced that the recommendations of the previous external expert have been taken into consideration and in the few months the percentage will be even less than 16.

Recommendations: Keep the tendency of reducing number of SD supervised by each CD to the required standards. Increase the number of CD. Invite foreign CD.

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.

According to the available data the CD are covering this standard.

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.

According to the provided data (A.3.2.1 - publicatii RCS, Anexa A.3.2.1_publicatii profesori) generally 16 Doctoral supervisors has published at least 5 Web of Science or ERIH indexed publications in journals with impact factor, or have other achievements with relevant significance in the theology field.

[Anexa_A.3.2.1_Publicatii profesori; Anexa A.2.1.2-4 CV Conducători; Anexa A.3.1.1-3 Fise de indeplinire a standardelor minimale]

Recommendations: I will repeat the previous recommendations on this indicator: Financial support should be given to those who attend and present in major international conferences outside Romania. More leading scholars should be brought to lecture or teach at the DSs.

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.*

According to the provided data more than 50% of the teachers in the evaluated field continue to be scientifically active and publish articles or other scientific papers frequently. (see Anexa A.3.2.1. A.3.1.1-4)

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**general description of domain analysis.*

The educational effectiveness covers necessary standards.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

In recent years the number of applicants who seeks admission to a doctorate in Theology at BBU is on a high level.

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.*

The interest of MA graduates from outside BBU in the doctoral program in Theology at BBU is constantly high.

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.*

The ratio between the number of Master's graduates of other higher education institutions in the country or abroad who have applied for admission to doctoral studies in the last 5 years and the number of places financed from the state budget in the doctoral school is (16:22=) 0.7272, i.e., more than four times the minimum required for this criterion.

According to the documents on file, the proportion of non-UBB candidates is between 0.41 and 1.14. (Anexa_1_3_45_master_nonubb_per_locuri_bugetare_sd_domenii).

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.

The high requirements of the admission process and the good final results of doctoral studies prove the required level.

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.

Admission to all three doctoral schools is done by observing all the procedures lay out by the BBU, including written exams and an interview/presentation of the research proposal.

Recommendations: *It would be good if all three doctoral schools used a single template for their regulations for admission.*

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%.

During the period being evaluated the drop-out rate of doctoral students does not exceed 30% (Anexa_1_3_46_rata_de_abandon_domenii_sd.pdf).

Recommendations: *Develop dropout prevention policies.*

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs

*general description of the criterion analysis.

Doctoral preparation is assured through the Advanced Graduate Programme and the Research Programme.

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.

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 in all of the three SDT has the necessary elements to cover this standard.

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.*

There are necessary disciplines in the three of the doctoral school.

Recommendations: DS share concern for the necessity of methodology in the field of their scientific research. The CD have to provide training in their specific area.

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.*

The training plans of all three doctoral schools contains the discipline "Ethics and Academic Integrity and Research Methodology".

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.*

The mechanisms in all three doctoral schools are available, according to the presented data (see B 2.1.3 > Fise discipline, AS 8 Example...)

Recommendations: Include more disciplines that provide research skills.

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.*

The commissions are available (see Anexe A 3.1.1.1-1 State_de_funcții and A 3.1.1.1-3 Dovezi feedback)

Recommendations: Keep the diversity in the mentoring commissions according to SDs necessities.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.



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.

According to the presented data, the recommendation of the previous evaluator has been taken into consideration. According to the Grading Structure for 2021-2022 (Annex 7_function_state_2021-2022) and 2022-2023 (Annex 8_function_state_2022-2023) (Grading Structures that were not the object of the previous Report of self-assessment), the ratio between the number of doctoral students and that of professors/researchers who function as supervisors is below the report from the indicator. Thus, for the doctoral students within the frame of doctoral studies (2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023), the ratio between the number of doctoral students and professors/researchers who function as supervisors is **1,5** (Annex 9_PhD_students_report_within_guidance_committees). For a better illustration of the efforts of the three Doctoral Schools in order to fulfil the requests coming from the ARACIS commission, the ratio for all the doctoral students (including those who are granted an extension) was calculated, the result being **2,43** (Annex 10_Total_report_PhD_students_guidance_committees).

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

The results of doctoral studies as well as the procedures in the case of the three doctoral schools are at a required level.

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.*

According to the data (see B.3.1. Activitate stiintifica doctoranzi) the SDs have a lot of opportunities for presentations at scientific conferences and to publish in scientific outlets and they take advantage of it.

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.

The level of scientific production is commensurable with the good level of doctoral research in Theology (see Anexa B.3.1.1 publicatii doctori).

Recommendations: *The involvement of CDs in reviewing the SDs scholarly output has to be continued.*

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.*

The recommendation of the previous international expert has been taken into account. After the years of pandemic stagnation the SDs are active on international events (see Anexa B.3.1.2).

Recommendations: The work in this direction has to be continued and to be developed.

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.*

The three doctoral schools have results in this direction (see B.3.2.1 > Anexa_11_Referenti_per_conducator).

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.*

After the previous evaluations, from December 2021 to December 2022, in the department of Theology, a number of 19 doctoral theses have been defended publicly. According to the justificatory document (Annex 11_Reviewers/Supervisor), all the Doctoral Schools of Theology met the request of the indicator. Thus, no referent has been present more than twice in a commission for public defence for the same supervisor. We also remark on the fact that, nationally, the number of possible referents on some subjects is not very generous, as well as on the fact that international referents were members of the commissions.

Recommendations: To keep the proper level in participation of members in examination commissions.

The indicator is 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.*

There are no situations exceeding this indicator (see B.3.2.2 > Anexa_11_Referenti_per_conducator).

Recommendations: To keep the proper level in participation of external referees.

The indicator is fulfilled.



Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

**general description of domain analysis.*

The institutional framework and procedures are available and used effectively.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Evaluation of the scholarly activities of the CDs and the infrastructure is done periodically.

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.*

The UBB has developed and regularly applies a procedure for internal evaluation and monitoring of the development of doctoral schools.

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.*

In accordance with the presented data self-evaluation reports have been regularly drafted. The Doctoral schools are evaluated on the basis of internal procedures and criteria in accordance with a policy and quality principles and indicators assumed by the BBU (see Anexa 1.3.1 – Politica calitatii in UBB, Anexa1_3_8_principii_criterii_si_indicatori_de_calitate).

Recommendations: 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.*

The Qualitas Centre (<http://qa.ubbcluj.ro/en/>) at UBB carry out regular analyses and statistics on student' satisfaction in all three cycles of education (<http://qa.ubbcluj.ro/>). Annually a report is published on the UBB website (http://qa.ubbcluj.ro/satisfactia_studentilor.php). (see also Anexa C.1.1.2 Capturi ecran...)

Recommendations: *Keep the processes of evaluation and monitoring of the quality of doctoral programmes.*

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Both information and learning resources are available and accessible.

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.*

All of the necessary information is available online.

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.*

The information is available on the UBB website (<https://doctorat.ubbcluj.ro/eng/>) and on the 3 websites of the faculties managing the doctoral programmes. Only two of them have English version of their websites.

Recommendations: *SDT-O has to make an English version of their website (<http://scdoct.orth.ro/>). SDT-RCS has to update the English version of its website. The Updates and Research projects are still in Hungarian (<https://dr.rocateo.ubbcluj.ro/en/>).*

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 SDs have access to the needed academic resources.

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.

All doctoral students have free access to a platform of academic databases relevant to the field. Through the Central University Library "Lucian Blaga" they have access to scientific research databases and also a digital library and several documentary databases (<http://documente.bcuculuj.ro/>; <http://transilvania100plus.ro/index>)

Recommendations: Digitalization is an important process. Keep it permanently.

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.

All SDs have access to iThenticate textual similarity detection software provided by Turnitin and Turnitin similarity analysis software provided by BBU.

Recommendations: More options for free verification.

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.

All PhD students have access to research centers in the field of Theology. We have the possibilities to meet their representatives and discuss their work and the main projects they run.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

According to the data in the last years the activities in direction of internalization are intensive. Erasmus+ is used effectively.

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.*



There is an understanding of the importance of internationalization and some steps were done. More can be desired.

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.

The recommendation of the previous evaluator has been taken into account.

Recommendations: Use Erasmus+ short programs for training more effectively.

The indicator is 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.

There are activities in this direction. A lot of foreign academics have been invited for lectures (see C.3.1 > Experti invitati).

Recommendations: Foreign academics to be invited for courses. More possibilities for co-tutelage to be used.

The indicator is 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.).

On the base of the presented data (see C3.1. anexe) there are concrete steps in this direction.

Recommendations: Involve more foreign academics in the teaching and research process.

The indicator is fulfilled.



IV. SWOT Analysis

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <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"> ● <i>All three SDT have good material base.</i> ● <i>Plagiarism in doctoral theses is verified with a program recognized by CNATDCU (A.1.2.2.)</i> ● <i>There is a constant concern for the endowment of the Libraries fund and digitalization (A.2.1.1.)</i> ● <i>CDs have several journals in the field in which they can publish scholarly materials (A.3.1.1.)</i> ● <i>A significant number of tenured professors serving as CDs who ensure the continuity of doctoral studies in the field (A.3.1.2.)</i> ● <i>The CDs publish frequently in indexed journals (A.3.2.2.)</i> ● <i>SDT applies academic performance criteria in the selection of candidates (B.1.2.)</i> ● <i>Low dropout / expulsion / attrition rate (B.1.2.2.)</i> ● <i>SDs appreciate the learning environment and support basis offered by their CDs (C.1.1.1)</i> ● <i>SDT has an environment conducive to research (C.2.2.3)</i> ● <i>Good collaboration with the church institutions as the main employer.</i> | <p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <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"> ● <i>Insufficient attention to language access of foreigners to basic resources of doctoral schools (C.2.1.1)</i> ● <i>Limited access of the SDs to a verification software in the process of research (C.2.2.2.)</i> ● <i>Insufficient participation of foreign specialists with lecture courses (C.3.1.2)</i> |
| <p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <p>- possible lines of action for the development of the institution under review shall be identified;</p> <p>- 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The internationalization is a positive opportunity to increase the international visibility of the theology field; the SDT have to pay more attention to it.</i> | <p><u>Threats:</u></p> <p>- 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;</p> <p>- 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>There are many positive steps in providing a good level of education and formation of SDs. They should not be interpreted as sufficient, but should be intensified.</i> |

- *Multi-denominational environment at UBB is opportunity for academic exchange.*

V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

| No. | Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI) | Performance indicator | Judgment | Recommendations |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|---|
| 1. | PI | <p>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:</p> <p>a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;</p> <p>b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;</p> <p>c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);</p> <p>d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;</p> <p>e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;</p> <p>f) the contract for doctoral studies;</p> <p>g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.</p> | Fulfilled | <i>The recommendation of the previous foreign evaluator to "Include in the study contract at all SDs, or in its annex, the obligation of the PhD student to publish a number of 5 papers (3 studies and 2 communications), according to the OMed. 5.110/7.09.2018" was not taken into consideration. In the Contract (there was not English version, so I translated it by software) is fixed only the engagement for stimulation of the publication of scientific works of the doctoral student in specialized journals: Art 5(2)h).</i> |
| 2. | PI | <p>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.</p> | Fulfilled | <i>The regulations should be supplemented with the information required by the legislation.</i> |
| 3. | PI | <p>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.</p> | Fulfilled | <i>As we were assured in our meetings the good level of communication between CD and SD is more than any software. It was confirmed by the SDs in our discussion with them. Keep this</i> |

| No. | Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI) | Performance indicator | Judgment | Recommendations |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--|------------------|--|
| | | | | <i>level.</i> |
| 4. | PI * | 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%. | Fulfilled | <i>The criteria for financial aid to be available in public.</i> |
| 5. | PI * | A.1.3.3. At least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.). | Fulfilled | <i>To keep the level of the last two years in the future.</i> |
| 6. | PI | 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. | Fulfilled | <i>Include more disciplines that provide research skills.</i> |
| 7. | CPI | 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 | Fulfilled | <i>The involvement of CDs in reviewing the SDs scholarly output has to be continued.</i> |
| 8. | PI * | B.3.1.2. The ratio between the number of presentations of doctoral students who completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years), including posters, exhibitions made at prestigious international events (organized in the country or abroad) and the number of doctoral students who have completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 | Fulfilled | <i>The work in this direction has to be continued and to be developed.</i> |

| No. | Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI) | Performance indicator | Judgment | Recommendations |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|---|
| | | years) is at least 1. | | |
| 9. | PI * | B.3.2.1. The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD should not exceed two (2) in a year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor. | Fulfilled | <i>To keep the proper level in participation of members in examination commissions.</i> |
| 10. | PI * | 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. | Fulfilled | <i>To keep the proper level in participation of external referees.</i> |
| 11. | PI | 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. | Fulfilled | <i>Consistency in the application of the above criteria.</i> |
| 12. | PI * | 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. | Fulfilled | <i>Keep the processes of evaluation and monitoring of the quality of doctoral programmes.</i> |
| 13. | PI | C.2.2.2. Each doctoral student shall have access, upon request, to an electronic system | Fulfilled | <i>More options for free verification.</i> |

| No. | Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI) | Performance indicator | Judgment | Recommendations |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|--|
| | | for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works. | | |
| 14. | PI * | 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. | Fulfilled | <i>Use Erasmus+ short programs for training more effectively.</i> |
| 15. | PI | 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. | Fulfilled | <i>Foreign academics to be invited for courses. More possibilities for co-tutelage to be used.</i> |
| 16. | PI | C.3.1.3. The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees etc.). | Fulfilled | <i>Involve more foreign academics in the teaching and research process.</i> |

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.

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).

Preparing this report was not an easy task. We didn't receive English version of Self-Evaluation Report. In fact, there were only 3 pages in English just on some of the problematic areas. I had to look for the answers in a bunch of Anexa in Romanian (in *.pdf, *.doc etc) and translate them



by software. In my humble opinion, this approach is far from the proper one. Receiving this minimalistic Self-Evaluation Report just a few days before our visit to BBU didn't help either.

Thanks to the visit we have in Cluj-Napoca, the flaw in the document was largely overcome. We met the responsible persons at the university level and the faculties, and saw the conditions for the preparation of doctoral students in each of the schools. We talked to a large part of the scientific supervisors, but the strongest positive impression, at least for me, was made by the doctoral students - the graduates and the current ones.

We have verified the progress that doctoral schools have made in recent months to address the deficiencies identified in the last evaluation. We also verified the willingness and capacity to maintain the parameters within the standards required by ARACIS.

There are objective difficulties beyond the capabilities of the local teams, for example the rapid increase in the number of scientific supervisors, but this is beyond our competence to evaluate.

My general impression is that the colleagues from SDT have taken in account the results of the previous evaluation (December 2021) and in a relatively short time have done the possible to be done. Of course, there are some details to be optimized. They have the capacity and will to do that.

Assoc. Professor Mariyan Stoyadinov PhD
International Expert, Theology,
University of Veliko Tarnovo
Bulgaria

07 June 2023



VII. Annexes

- *The detailed schedule of the evaluation visit, signed by the rector of the BBU, was submitted on paper at the headquarters of ARACIS*
- *The survey questionnaire applied to doctoral students is attached to the report in Romanian language*
- *During the evaluation visit several documents were submitted by the doctoral school and uploaded to the cloud of ARACIS. The list is attached to the report in Romanian.*