

Pursuant to Article 42 of the Statute of the University of Split School of Medicine and provisions of the Decision on Amendments to the Regulations on University Postgraduate Studies and Doctoral Graduation Process (hereinafter: the Regulations), on 18 December 2015, the Dean, Prof. Zoran Đogaš, concluded the consolidated version of the Regulations, which encompasses the Regulations adopted at the session of Faculty Council held on 10 April 2016 and the Decision on Amendments to the Regulations adopted at the sessions of the Faculty Council held on 12 June 2014 and 18 December 2015.

## REGULATIONS ON UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE STUDIES AND DOCTORAL GRADUATION PROCESS (consolidated version)

### 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### Article 1

These Regulations prescribe the organization and delivery of university postgraduate doctoral studies (hereinafter, doctoral studies) and university postgraduate specialist studies (hereinafter, specialist studies); procedure and requirements for the proposal, evaluation, and defense of dissertation; and other issues relevant for the organization and delivery of postgraduate studies at the School of Medicine in Split.

#### Article 2

All postgraduate study programs delivered at the School are adapted to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) requirements and requirements of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) to facilitate international mobility of students and faculty, comparability of student's overall burden, comparability of teaching quality, and recognition of qualifications in other European countries.

### 2. POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS

#### Article 3

The School organizes and delivers doctoral studies and specialist studies in the area of Biomedicine and Healthcare.

By completing doctoral studies, a student earns at least 180 ECTS credits and the degree of doctor of science.

By completing specialist studies, a student earns at least 60 ECTS credits and a university master's degree, pursuant to the Act on Academic and Professional Titles and Academic Degree.

### 3. WORKING BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION AND GRADUATION PROCESS

#### Article 4

For successful and efficacious execution of basic activities within postgraduate education and doctoral graduation process, the School establishes the following permanent bodies:

- Doctoral School, and
- Doctoral Program Committee.

### 3.1. DOCTORAL SCHOOL

#### Article 5

The Doctoral School is established by joining together several doctoral and specialist studies at the School to make the delivery of study courses more efficacious, increase research and teaching capacities, standardize the criteria across postgraduate studies, foster interdisciplinarity, and provide more economical organization and delivery of postgraduate studies.

The Doctoral School is founded by the Faculty Council in the area of Biomedicine and Healthcare.

#### Article 6

For successful and efficacious delivery of doctoral and specialist studies, the Doctoral School establishes the following working bodies:

- Doctoral School Council,
- Program Councils,
- Thesis Committee for Specialist Studies

#### 3.1.1. DOCTORAL SCHOOL COUNCIL

#### Article 7

The Doctoral School is governed by the Doctoral School Council.

The members of the Doctoral School Council are

- Vice Dean for Science and Postgraduate Studies,
- Directors and deputy directors of doctoral study programs,
- Chair of Doctoral Program Committee.

Administrative activities for the Doctoral School Council are carried out by an officer at the Office for Science, Postgraduate Studies, and Continuing Medical Education.

The work of the Doctoral School Council is governed by the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Doctoral School Council.

The Doctoral School Council meets as needed, but at least twice a year.

#### Article 8

The Doctoral School Council is managed by the Chair elected by secret ballot of the Council members to a four-year term. The Vice Chair is elected in the same manner.

#### Article 9

The tasks of the Doctoral School Council are as follows:

- to foster collaboration among different study programs within the Doctoral School,
- to evaluate the work results of all study programs,
- to review the reports of program directors,
- to initiate the process of enrollment in postgraduate studies,
- to consider proposals of new postgraduate study programs,
- to consider all other matters within the scope of postgraduate studies and suggests solutions.

#### 3.1.2. PROGRAM COUNCIL

##### Article 10

There is a Program Council for each postgraduate study program.

The Program Council consists of the Program Director and Deputy Director, a student representative, and a faculty representative who is an employee of the School.

The Program Director recommends the faculty representative for the Program Council.

The student representative at the Program Council is elected by students.

The members of the Program Council are appointed by the Doctoral School Council.

##### Article 11

The Program Council meets as needed, but at least twice a year. The Program Council:

- proposes the student enrollment plan to the Doctoral School Council,
- ensures the quality and delivery of study programs,
- meets with the postgraduate students and their mentors at least once a year,
- summons, advises, helps, and stimulates underachieving students and their mentors,
- submits an annual written report on its work to the Doctoral School Council, describing: the analysis of academic success of each student (passed examinations, dissertation proposal, progress made in research, preparation and publication of papers, preparation and defense of dissertation), and statistical indicators of program performance,
- carries out self-evaluation for the application for re-accreditation.

#### 3.1.3. THESIS COMMITTEE FOR SPECIALIST STUDIES

##### Article 12

The Thesis Committee for Specialist Studies is a standing professional committee of the Faculty Council. It coordinates activities in and standardizes the criteria for the process of completing a thesis at specialist studies.

The Committee recommends the members of thesis evaluation expert committees to the Doctoral School Council.

The members of the Thesis Committee are appointed by the Faculty Council upon the recommendation from the Chair of the Doctoral School Council.

##### Article 13

The Program Council recommends the members of the Thesis Evaluation Committee to the Doctoral School Council.

### 3.2. DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE

#### Article 14

The Doctoral Program Committee (hereinafter, the Committee) is a standing expert committee of the Faculty Council. It standardizes the criteria and coordinates activities in the doctoral graduation process from the point of dissertation topic proposal to the point of public defense of dissertation.

The Committee is established by the Faculty Council upon the recommendation from the Academic Administration Office, whereby the balanced representation of all fields in the area of Biomedicine and Healthcare is taken into account.

The Committee consists of an odd number of members (at least eleven).

Upon the recommendation from the Committee, the Faculty Council adopts the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee are elected by majority vote of the present Committee members through secret ballot to a two-year term.

### 4. DOCTORAL AND SPECIALIST STUDIES

#### Article 15

Doctoral and specialist studies are organized and delivered as regular studies in accordance with the teaching plan and program determined by the competent authorities upon the recommendation from the Faculty Council.

#### Article 16

The teaching programs of doctoral or specialist studies contain the following:

- the specialist or academic title and degree,
- the duration of studies and deadline to complete a degree,
- the requirements for admission to postgraduate studies,
- the content outline and number of hours of mandatory and elective courses,
- the types of instruction (lectures, seminars, practical classes, practical work, laboratory work etc.) and recommended literature,
- the number of ECTS credits earned after passing each exam,
- the comparable international study programs,
- the optimum number of students
- the enrollment requirements for the next year of studies and completion of the program,
- the method of teaching quality monitoring,
- the list of potential mentors for doctoral dissertation or thesis,
- the completion of the program and requirements for continuation of studies for the students who discontinued their studies.

#### Article 17

The central component of the university doctoral studies is a research project.

Lectures, as a form of teaching, do not account for more than 20% of the total teaching workload.

As capacity allows, doctoral studies are available to all doctoral students at the University of Split and other universities, in accordance with the pre-specified requirements and inter-institutional agreements.

For students who completed their graduate studies in other scientific fields, an individualized program is designed by combining the doctoral courses available at the School or University. The individualized program is designed by the Program Council in agreement with the Doctoral School Council.

By completing a specialist postgraduate study program, a student earns, as a rule, 60 ECTS credits, whereas by completing a professional postgraduate study program within the residency training, a student earns, as a rule, up to 30 ECTS credits.

Credits earned in professional postgraduate studies within residency training may cover only the ECTS credits from elective courses.

The title of Master of Science earns 90 ECTS credits.

The decision on acknowledging ECTS credits is recommended by the Program Council in agreement with the Doctoral School Council.

Student rights and obligations regarding the studies are regulated by the Regulations on Studies and Studying System at the Split School of Medicine.

#### Article 18

For postgraduate candidates who obtained their scientific training abroad, the Doctoral School Council may acknowledge part of the ECTS credits upon the recommendation from the Program Council.

#### Article 19

There are three ECTS credit groups at doctoral studies:

- the first ECTS credit group consists of mandatory courses (maximum of 30 ECTS),
- the second ECTS credit group consists of elective courses (maximum of 30 ECTS), and
- the third ECTS credit group consists of mandatory research activities defined by the study plan and program and elective research activities (maximum 30 ECTS).

#### Article 20

Doctoral students shall earn the prescribed number of ECTS credits in the first year of their studies from the courses in the first or second ECTS credit group and, in the second year, they shall earn the number of ECTS credits prescribed by the teaching program from the second ECTS credit group.

#### Article 21

Elective research activities in the third ECTS credit group are weighted as follows:

- research papers published in journals indexed in Current Contents (CC): first author – 15 ECTS, coauthor – 7.5 ECTS
- participation in international conferences (conference abstract): oral presentation – 5 ECTS, first author on a poster presentation – 3 ECTS,
- participation in local conferences (conference abstract): oral presentation – 2 ECTS, first author on a poster presentation – 1 ECTS.

## Article 22

Specialist studies are organized and delivered as separate studies. They consist of two credit groups: mandatory (40 ECTS) and elective (20 ECTS) credits.

## 5. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES APPLICATION

### 5.1. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

#### Article 23

An applicant may be admitted to doctoral studies or specialist studies if the applicant completed a relevant graduate study program. The Doctoral School Council determines the types of completed graduate studies and student's grade point average that are acceptable for admission to relevant doctoral or specialist studies.

### 5.2. APPLICATION

#### Article 24

Invitation for applications to doctoral or specialist studies is publicly announced in the daily newspapers and on the School's website. The decision to invite applicants to apply for postgraduate studies is made by the Faculty Council upon the recommendation from the Doctoral School.

#### Article 25

The invitation for application for postgraduate studies contains:

- the title of postgraduate study program,
- admission requirements,
- the minimum and maximum number of students,
- tuition fee,
- the list of documents required for application,
- the application deadline and other requirements that are posted on the School's bulletin board and website.

Applicants apply by submitting the proper application form (postgraduate application form).

#### Article 26

Applicants who completed their graduate studies abroad shall submit the decision on recognition of credentials earned abroad.

#### Article 27

The applicants for postgraduate studies are selected by the application committee consisting of the director and director deputy of the relevant doctoral or specialist studies.

#### Article 28

If there is a sufficient number of applicants who meet the admission requirements, the Faculty Council makes a decision to run the postgraduate study program.

The Faculty Council receives the report on the number of applicants accepted for admission.

#### Article 29

The decision on the admission and enrollment of applicants is made by the Faculty Council and posted on the School's bulleting board and website. A separate website is launched for each postgraduate study program.

The decision on admission and enrollment is considered a fist-instance decision and may be appealed against within 15 days from the day when the decision was posted on the School's bulletin board and website. The Dean's decision upon appeal is considered final.

### 6. COMPLETION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

#### Article 30

University postgraduate doctoral studies are considered completed after all the obligations have been fulfilled, all the exams passed, and the dissertation finished and publicly defended.

Postgraduate university specialist studies are considered completed after all the obligations have been fulfilled, all the exams passed, and the thesis finished and/or relevant final exam passed in accordance with the study program.

#### Article 31

After having completed a doctoral program, a student earns the academic degree of doctor of science and other rights pursuant to specific regulations.

After having completed a specialist program, a student earns a university master's degree pursuant to the Act on Academic and Professional Titles and Academic Degree.

#### Article 32

A specialist diploma after completion of specialist program is issued by the School upon the recommendation from the Doctoral School Council.

#### Article 33

The academic degree of doctor of science is awarded by the University of Split on the basis of procedure run by the School in accordance with the Law, University Statute, School's Statute, and provisions of these Regulations. The date of successful public defense of dissertation is considered the date of obtaining the academic degree of doctor of science.

#### Article 34

In addition to a certificate, diploma or confirmation, a doctoral student shall be issued an additional document (a diploma supplement) certifying which exams the student passed, which grades the student received, and ECTS credits the student earned. Upon a personal request, the student may be issued a preliminary diploma supplement even before the completion of the studies.

Diplomas, certificates, and confirmations issued by the University are public documents.

## 7. POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

### Article 35

A university doctoral student may be:

- a research fellow or assistant employed at the University of Split School of Medicine, whose tuition fees are covered according to the current directive of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (MSES).

- a student paying tuition fees themselves, a scholar having a Croatian or international scholarship or a person whose tuition fees are covered by the person's employer.

Requirements for studying and completing the degree and tuition fees are the same for Croatian and foreign citizens.

### Article 36

At the point of enrollment in the first semester of doctoral studies and specialist studies, the selected applicants sign the Agreement on mutual rights and obligations.

The Agreement referred to in section 1 of this Article contains provisions on: (a) parties to the Agreement, (b) student's financial obligations, (c) obligations regarding the enrollment and completion of the studies, and (d) other rights and obligations important for completion of the studies.

After signing the Agreement referred to section 1 of this Article, paying the agreed tuition fee, and receiving a student transcript book, the applicants receive the status of postgraduate students.

### Article 37

Upon completion of each year of studies, a postgraduate student has to certify the previous year of studies.

A student shall lose the status of a doctoral student if the Faculty Council accepts the negative report from the Program Council and Doctoral School Council.

### Article 38

Appeal against the decision on revocation of the status of a student may be submitted to the Dean within 15 days. The Dean may refuse, reject or accept the appeal.

## 8. FACULTY, DIRECTORS, TUTORS AND MENTORS AT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS AND EXPERT COMMITTEES

### 8.1. FACULTY AND DIRECTORS

#### Article 39

Doctoral and postgraduate specialist courses are delivered by the faculty appointed to research and teaching or research positions.



In exceptional cases, upon the recommendation from a course director and in agreement with the program director and Vice Dean for Postgraduate Studies, parts of the courses may be delivered under the faculty member's supervision by teachers not appointed to research and/or research and teaching positions, but holding an academic degree of a doctor of science.

Pursuant to the Law, University Statute, and School's Statute, other professional who, on the basis of their teaching or professional work and achievements, may contribute to the quality of education or research and professional work may participate in course delivery after being authorized by the Doctoral School Council.

#### Article 40

Each doctoral and specialist program has a director. A program director has to be appointed to a research and teaching position. A program director selects his or her deputy from the faculty appointed to research and teaching positions. The deputy actively participates in the delivery of the relevant postgraduate study program.

A program director and deputy director are appointed by the Faculty Council upon the recommendation from the Doctoral School Council and in accordance with the accreditation.

#### Article 41

A program director has the following rights and obligations:

- a member of the Faculty Council
- a member of the Doctoral School Council,
- organizes the study program and is responsible for realization of the teaching plan and program,
- calls and chairs the meetings of the Program Council and course directors,
- calls and chairs the meetings of mentors and students,
- holds a meeting with all students of the relevant postgraduate study program at least once a semester,
- recommends changes to the teaching plan and program to the Program Council,
- carries out other tasks pursuant to the provisions of the School's applicable documents.

#### Article 42

A deputy program director has the following rights and obligations:

- in agreement with the postgraduate program director, develops course timetables,
- is a member of the Doctoral School Council,
- prepares reports on courses taught,
- attends to teaching materials and tools,
- counsels students on choosing elective courses,
- carries out other tasks pursuant to the provisions of the School's applicable documents.

#### Article 43

A doctoral course director or specialist course director may be a person appointed to a research and teaching or research position, professor emeritus or academician.

## 8.2. STUDENT TUTORS

### Article 44

In mastering the content of the doctoral or specialist studies, a student may be assisted by a tutor appointed by the Program Council.

## 8.3. DISSERTATION MENTORS

### Article 45

Pursuant to the Law and the Statute of the University of Split, the candidate has the right to choose the dissertation mentor.

The candidate recommends one mentor. The decision on the appointment of the mentor is made by the Faculty Council upon the recommendation from the Doctoral Program Committee.

### Article 46

The dissertation mentor cannot be a member of the Dissertation Proposal Committee, Dissertation Committee or Dissertation Defense Committee.

### Article 47

The dissertation mentor is an active researcher from the ranks of faculty and scientists appointed to a research and teaching or research position.

The mentor referred to in section 1 of this Article has to have a track record of research accomplishments in the previous five years (at least three articles in the research field of the dissertation topic) published in journals indexed in Current Contents (CC) or Web of Science (WoS) databases.

The mentor may be a researcher outside the School with whom the School signed an agreement on cooperation and candidate mentoring.

The mentor and candidate submit the annual research report to the Program Council.

The mentor is responsible for successful topic proposal, conduct of research, and completion and defense of candidate's dissertation.

## 8.4. THESIS EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR SPECIALIST STUDIES

### Article 48

Upon the recommendation from the Program Council, the Doctoral School Council appoints the Thesis Expert Committee for Specialist Studies.

### Article 49

The Thesis Expert Committee for Specialist Studies submits to the Doctoral School Council the evaluation report of the thesis in specialist studies. On the basis of a positive evaluation report, the Council concludes that the specialist study program was successfully completed and the right to the academic title of "master" earned and recommends to the Faculty Council that the School issues the relevant diploma.

#### Article 50

The members of thesis expert committees shall be persons with the academic degree of doctor of science who are appointed to research and teaching or research positions.

### 8.5. EXPERT COMMITTEES IN THE PROCESS OF PROPOSAL, EVALUATION AND DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION

#### Article 51

Upon the recommendation from the Doctoral Program Committee, the Faculty Council appoints the following expert committees:

- (a) Dissertation Proposal Committee,
- (b) Dissertation Defense Committee.

#### Article 52

For the process of awarding the academic degree of doctor of science, the expert committee members shall be persons with the academic degree of doctor of science who are appointed to research and teaching or research positions. A professor emeritus may be a member of a committee in the process of awarding the academic degree of doctor of science and the dissertation mentor.

#### Article 53

For the process of awarding the academic degree of doctor of science, the expert committee members cannot be:

- (a) persons who are the candidate's relatives (through blood or by marriage, e.g. the father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, brother or sister, husband or wife),
- (b) persons with conflict of interest (co-authors or co-owners of a patent described in the qualification paper).

#### Article 54

For the process of awarding the academic degree of doctor of science, expert committees regularly consist of three members and one standby member from another research institution.

Exceptionally, expert committees may consist of five members in the following circumstances:

- (a) the dissertation topic is interdisciplinary, covering more than three scientific fields, or
- (b) the candidate completed graduate studies in another scientific field; in that case, at least one member of the expert committee shall be from the respective study program. i.e. scientific field.

### 9. GRADUATION PROCESS

#### Article 55

The Regulations prescribe:

- all requirements and procedures related to a doctoral dissertation (hereinafter, dissertation) topic proposal and submission and defense of the finished dissertation, including:
  - o requirements for dissertation topic proposal,
  - o dissertation topic proposal,
  - o dissertation topic approval procedure,
  - o requirements for submission of finished dissertation,
  - o requirements for public defense of dissertation,
- the rights and obligations of the Doctoral Program Committee (hereinafter, the Committee),
- the rights and obligations of dissertation mentor,
- the rights and obligations of expert committees in the procedure of proposal, evaluation, and defense of dissertation.

## 10. REQUIREMENTS FOR DISSERTATION TOPIC PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION AND DEFENSE OF FINISHED DISSERTATION

### 10.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR DISSERTATION TOPIC PROPOSAL

#### Article 56

The dissertation topic proposal should contain one original paper on the dissertation topic describing the original research, which is published in a journal with the impact factor (IF) higher than 1 indexed in CC or WoS databases. The candidate should be the first author (or the co-first author) on the paper.

#### Article 57

A person who has a record of significant research accomplishments, if the requirements prescribed by the general enactments of the University of Split (hereinafter: University) and pursuant to these Regulations of the School of Medicine in Split are met, may propose the topic of doctoral dissertation and earn a doctoral degree outside the doctoral studies.

These research accomplishments imply that the requirements for the appointment to the research position of senior research associate (except for a doctor of science) are met. The candidate should demonstrate continuous research activity, i.e. two CC or WoS papers published in the previous five years.

Papers referred to in this Article that are required for a doctoral dissertation proposal cannot be used to meet the requirement for doctoral dissertation defense.

In their doctoral dissertation proposals, the candidates referred to in Article 57 shall explicitly list the research papers to be used in specific stages of the graduation process.

#### Article 58

Persons who earned the academic degree of Master of Science may enroll in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the doctoral study program and must cover the cost of 60 ECTS credits. They have to earn 15 ECTS credits by class attendance according to the Program Director's decision.

Candidates who propose an article-based dissertation are exempt from this requirement.

#### Article 59

The Doctoral Program Committee may allow that the entire graduation process, proposal, public discussion on the proposed topic, submission of finished dissertation, and public defense of dissertation, be carried out in English language. The title and abstract of the dissertation written in English language shall be provided in Croatian language.

### 10.2. DOCTORAL DISSERTATION TOPIC PROPOSAL

#### Article 60

Doctoral dissertation topic proposal consists of the application, curriculum vitae, description of the topic, evidence on meeting the requirements for topic proposal, opinion of the proposed mentor, and ethics committee approval, as appropriate.

The proposal is submitted in printed and electronic forms.

#### Article 61

The doctoral dissertation topic may be based on:

1. primary research,
2. research papers compiled into a unified work,
3. research based on a systematic review.

Description of the doctoral dissertation topic referred to in point 1 consists of the following sections:

- a) the title of the topic,
- b) introduction,
- c) research problem,
- d) hypothesis,
- e) research aim,
- f) research design,
- g) research outcomes,
- h) research methods,
- i) research organization,
- j) estimated role of the candidate in the research,
- k) expected scientific contribution,
- l) ethical principles,
- m) references,
- n) one research paper on the doctoral dissertation topic, as defined in Article 56.

Description for the doctoral dissertation topic referred to in point 2 contains:

- a) the title of the topic,
- b) the list of research papers proposed as a doctoral dissertation,
- c) introduction, review of the previous research and knowledge on the proposed problem, with a special review of one's own research,

- d) a clear, well-posed problem and aim of the compiled research papers,
- e) research methods (short presentation of methodology used in research papers compiled into a dissertation),
- f) summary of the compiled results,
- g) scientific contribution of the compiled research papers,
- h) evidence on adhering to ethical principles in research,
- i) references,
- j) research papers compiled in a doctoral dissertation as a unified work, which includes at least three papers published in journals with the impact factor above 1 indexed in CC or WoS databases. For each paper used, the candidate must be the first author and are the most recent of these research papers has to be published in the previous two years.

Description of the doctoral dissertation topic referred to in section 3 contains:

- a) explanation of why the research topic is important and what questions will be answered in the review article,
- b) review of previous research and knowledge on the proposed problem, showing clearly that there have been no previous attempts at a systematic review on the proposed topic, which implies checking the titles and protocols in Cochrane library,
- c) preliminary search according to the defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, showing clearly that the search will not result in an “empty” systematic review,
- d) a detailed protocol of the planned systematic review (inclusion and exclusion criteria, types of studies included in the systematic review, observed interventions, planned comparisons, outcome measures, literature search strategy, and data collection form) or a print-out of the approved protocol from the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (if the systematic review is developed within Cochrane collaboration),
- e) estimated scientific contribution of the dissertation,
- f) references,
- g) one research paper on the doctoral dissertation topic, as defined in Article 56.

#### Article 62

Candidates completing their graduate studies in scientific fields other than the scientific field in which they wish to propose the dissertation topic must, before the topic may be accepted, successfully pass the combined examination before the Dissertation Proposal Expert Committee in the chosen scientific field and research topic and show knowledge of research problem and chosen methodology. The content of the entire examination is determined by the Expert Committee in agreement with the Doctoral Program Committee. The combined examination may be either written or oral.

#### Article 63

For doctoral dissertation topic proposals that are predominantly from other scientific areas, the Doctoral Program Committee recommends to the Faculty Council not to process them further.

The candidates who carried out their research for doctoral dissertation during their education abroad shall submit the program/project leader's statement that they may use the obtained results for their dissertation at the School.

#### Article 64

The proposed mentor's opinion has to contain the evaluation of scientific novelty and expected scientific contribution of the proposed dissertation, information where the research will be carried out, and candidate's role in the research if there are more collaborators on the research project.

### 10.3. APPROVAL OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION TOPIC

#### Article 65

Doctoral dissertation topic proposal is reviewed by the Committee. The Committee may request the review from an outside expert.

The Committee returns the description of the topic for revision if it contains significant shortcomings.

#### Article 66

Upon the recommendation from the Committee, the Faculty Council appoints the Dissertation Topic Expert Committee, consisting of at least three members appointed to research and teaching or research positions. The Dissertation Topic Expert Committee submits to the Faculty Council the report with the recommendation to either accept or reject the dissertation topic.

The proposed mentor is not a member of the Expert Committee.

As a rule, at least one member must be from outside the School.

Exceptionally, the Expert Committee may consist of five members, in cases where:

- (a) the dissertation topic is interdisciplinary and covers several scientific fields,
- (b) the candidate completed graduate studies in another scientific area; in that case, at least one member of the Expert Committee must be from the relevant scientific area.

#### Article 67

The dissertation topic proposal is discussed publicly, i.e., the topic is presented in public in case that the dissertation topic proposal is based on research papers that make a unified work.

The Chair of the Expert Committee opens a public discussion on the proposed topic, where the candidate and proposed mentor explain the expected scientific contribution of the research to the members of the Expert Committee.

The Chair of the Expert Committee keeps the minutes, which are signed by all members of the Expert Committee.

The minutes are delivered to the Office for Science, Postgraduate Studies, and Continuing Medical Education.

After the public discussion, the Expert Committee may accept the proposed topic, request revision by indicating what needs to be improved, or recommend the rejection of the topic, in which case there is a written statement.

The candidate must submit the revised topic proposal to the Expert Committee for evaluation.

#### Article 68

The Chair of the Dissertation Topic Expert Committee submits the proposed topic evaluation report to the Doctoral Program Committee within one month from the public discussion.

The dissertation topic evaluation report is written according to the guidelines from the Doctoral Program Committee and must contain the statement that the candidate meets the requirements for doctoral topic proposal pursuant to the provisions of these Regulations.

The report is signed by all members of the Expert Committee.

In case of a separate opinion of the member of the Expert Committee, this opinion is also enclosed.

#### Article 69

If the report was found to lack the required elements or not to correspond in important parts to the text of dissertation proposal, the Committee returns the dissertation topic report to the Expert Committee and recommends the needed revisions.

#### Article 70

The representative of the Doctoral Program Committee reports on the dissertation topic at the Faculty Council session.

On the basis of the well-argued report and recommendation from the Dissertation Proposal Expert Committee, the Committee's opinion, and the discussion, the Faculty Council makes the final decision to accept or reject the proposed dissertation topic.

At the same session, the Faculty Council, upon the recommendation from the Doctoral Program Committee, appoints the mentor and Dissertation Expert Committee consisting of at least three members.

As a rule, at least one member of the Expert Committee must be from outside the School.

The Dissertation Committee may have the same composition as the Dissertation Proposal Expert Committee.

The members of the Dissertation Expert Committee are persons appointed to research and teaching or research positions in the same scientific area as the topic of the doctoral dissertation.

### 10.4. DISSERTATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

#### Article 71

The candidate submits the soft-bound copies of the dissertation for each member of the Expert Committee, one for the Chair of Doctoral Program Committee, and one for the Archives.

The formatting of the dissertation should conform to the Doctoral Program Committee's guidelines.

#### Article 72

The members of the Dissertation Expert Committee submit the report with the short description of dissertation content, their opinion on and evaluation of the dissertation with the review of methods used, scientific contribution of the dissertation, and recommendation from the Expert Committee.

In the report, the Dissertation Expert Committee may recommend that:

- the dissertation be accepted and the candidate allowed to defend the dissertation,
- the dissertation be returned to the candidate for revision or correction, or



- the dissertation be rejected.

The dissertation evaluation report is composed by the Chair of the Expert Committee and signed by all the members.

In case of a separate opinion of the member of the Expert Committee, this opinion is also enclosed.

The Doctoral Program Committee considers the Expert Committee's report and refers it, together with its own opinion, to the Faculty Council or returns the dissertation evaluation report to the Expert Committee and suggests the needed revisions if the report does not correspond to the important parts of the text of dissertation.

The Doctoral Program Committee may recommend to the Faculty Council to expand or change the composition of the Dissertation Expert Committee.

#### Article 73

If, on the basis of the Dissertation Expert Committee's report, the Committee concludes that the dissertation has flaws that may be remedied, the Committee returns the dissertation to the candidate and mentor to revise it according to the instructions and comments.

In case referred to in the previous section, the candidate shall amend the dissertation within 90 days from the day of receipt of the Committee's conclusion.

If the candidate does not follow through on the instructions and comments of the Dissertation Expert Committee within the stipulated period and without a justified reason, the dissertation will be deemed rejected.

#### Article 74

If the Committee concludes that the report of the Dissertation Expert Committee does not provide a valid basis for the decision reached, the Committee may include new members and request that they submit a report or recommend to the Faculty Council a new Dissertation Expert Committee that will reconsider the dissertation and submit their report to the Committee.

Upon the acceptance of the positive evaluation of the dissertation, the Faculty Council appoints the Dissertation Defense Expert Committee upon the recommendation from the Committee.

The members of the Dissertation Committee may also be members of the Dissertation Defense Committee.

#### Article 75

If the Committee accepts the negative report from the Dissertation Expert Committee, the Faculty Council makes the final decision on the dissertation, which is delivered to the candidate within eight days.

### 10.5. REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC DEFENSE OF FINISHED DISSERTATION

#### Article 76

Candidates whose dissertation received a positive evaluation from the Faculty Council may publicly defend the dissertation after they have fulfilled all the requirements for dissertation defense. Before submitting the finished dissertation for evaluation, the candidate should have published the second paper in the research branch and provide the PubMed DOI number or galley proof, i.e. the print-out of the electronic version of the paper. The paper has to be

published in a journal with an impact factor higher than 1 indexed in CC or WoS databases. The candidate must be the first author (or co-first author) on the paper. Exempt from the requirements in this Article are the candidates whose primary research as defined in Article 58 was published in a journal indexed in CC or WoS databases with an impact factor equal to or higher than 4 on which the candidate is the first author, and the candidates whose dissertation is based on compiled research papers.

#### Article 77

The dissertation defense is public.

The day of dissertation defense is determined by the Chair of the Dissertation Defense Expert Committee upon the decision from the Faculty Council.

The Office for Science, Postgraduate Studies, and Continuing Medical Education of the School of Medicine announces the presentation and the day and place of the dissertation defense not later than seven days before the defense takes place by posting the notice on the School's bulletin board and website.

#### Article 78

The candidate defends the dissertation before the Dissertation Defense Expert Committee.

Minutes on the dissertation defense are kept by the Chair of the Expert Committee and signed by the members of the Dissertation Defense Expert Committee.

The decision made by the Expert Committee on the defense of the dissertation is recorded in the minutes.

The Expert Committee's decision on the dissertation defense may be as follows:

- defended by unanimous vote of the Committee,
- defended by majority vote of the Committee,
- not defended.

#### Article 79

The candidate who did not defend the dissertation has the right to propose a new dissertation topic not earlier than within 90 days.

#### Article 80

After the successful defense of dissertation, the candidate shall submit eight (or ten) copies of the bound dissertation for each member of the Expert Committee, one for the School's Library, one for the libraries of the Schools of Medicine in Zagreb, Osijek, and Rijeka, one for the National and University Library in Zagreb.

Each bound copy must have an electronic version of the dissertation enclosed.

#### Article 81

The candidate who successfully defended the dissertation is awarded the diploma and supplemental document on completed postgraduate doctoral studies and earned academic degree of doctor of science.

The diploma specifies the scientific area, field, and branch in which the doctorate was earned and the title of the dissertation.

The Dean refers the recommendation along with other required documents for the promotion of doctors of science to the University Provost.

The diplomas are presented by the University Provost at a diploma award ceremony.

## 11. REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURE OF REVOCATION OF THE ACADEMIC DEGREES OF DOCTOR OF SCIENCE AND MASTER OF SCIENCE

### Article 82

The academic degree is revoked if found to be earned against the proscribed requirements, by a gross breach of the study program rules or on the basis of plagiarized or falsified doctoral dissertation or thesis.

The procedure of academic degree revocation is set in motion by the Faculty Council either by official duty or upon the recommendation from the persons who provide evidence of legal interest.

The grounds for revocation of the awarded academic degree are confirmed by the expert committee appointed by the Faculty Council.

After the procedure, the expert committee submits its opinion to the Faculty Council, which makes the final decision on the revocation of the awarded academic degree.

Upon the revocation of the awarded academic degree, all other titles earned on the basis of this academic degree are lost.

The ethical aspects of the procedures at postgraduate studies and graduation procedure are supervised by the Ethics Committee of the School of Medicine.

## 12. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

### Article 83

The provisions of these Regulations apply to all postgraduate studies.

The candidates may complete the process by 31 May 2015 according to the provisions of the Regulations that had been in force by 30 April 2014.

### Article 84

On the day of entry of these Regulations into force, the Regulations on Postgraduate Studies from 8 December 2011 and Regulations on Doctoral Graduation from 8 December 2001 shall cease to have effect.

These Regulations take effect on the eighth day from being announced on the School's bulletin board and website ([www.mefst.hr](http://www.mefst.hr)).

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