



TEHRAN UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL CAMPUS

“Office of Vice Dean for Research Affairs”

Regulations on Education and Research for PhD Programs

Developed by:

❖ *office of Vice Dean for Research Affairs*

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Introduction: This document has been prepared based on the *Postgraduate Educational and Research Protocol approved by the ministry of Health and Medical Education* and briefly explains about the regulations, and guides students through educational and research periods. The purpose of providing this document is to inform our students regarding what is expected of them during their program and also provides them with step-by-step guidance on how to choose a proposal, carry out thesis research, defend it and finally graduate.

In order to qualify for a degree, a PhD student must satisfy the general requirements of the Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs and the Departmental requirements demanded by the related department.

The maximum time limit for completion of the PhD degree at IC-TUMS is 4.5 years from matriculation.

This period is divided into two phases:

1- Educational phase

2- Research phase

Educational Phase: This phase takes 3-5 semesters in which the students complete their educational courses. Also at this phase, the students have to choose a topic for the proposed thesis which they have to defend at the end of the program.

Research Phase: This phase starts *after* completion of the educational phase and approval of the *proposal*.

Note: before the research phase, the students have to take the **Comprehensive Exam** and pass it in order to enter the research phase.

According to the Top Programming Committee, the number of credits in a PhD program is as follows:

Thesis Courses: -----→ Min <u>16</u> Credits Max <u>30</u> Credits
Total Educational and Research Courses: -----→ Min <u>42</u> Credits Max <u>50</u> Credits

The process from choosing the proposal topic to the thesis defense is as follows:

I- TO CHOOSE A SUPERVISOR

The students must choose a supervisor by the end of the first semester. As long as the students have not chosen a supervisor, the head of the department will be acting as supervisor.

- *A research supervisor:*

- must have at least a PhD or Clinical Doctorate or PhD by Research degree, **and**
- must be at the Assistant Professor or Research Assistant Professor level, **and**

- must have at least 3 years of teaching or research experience in postgraduate level, **and**
- must have been supervisor for at least 2 master's theses, OR advisor for 4 PhD theses.

Maximum number of theses that can be supervised simultaneously by a supervisor:

- Two PhD theses **OR**
- One PhD and three Master's theses

Note: In exceptional circumstances, the School Postgraduate Studies Council can change these limits.

II - TO CHOOSE ADVISORS:

Based on supervisor's suggestion and approval by the *School Postgraduate Studies Council*, 1-3 advisors will be chosen from among the faculty members, or well known, outstanding researchers and professors.

- An *advisor*:

- must have at least a PhD or Clinical Doctorate or PhD by research degree, **and**

- must be at the Assistant Professor or Research Assistant Professor level, **and**
- must have at least 3 years of teaching or research experience in postgraduate level, **and**
- must have at least a PhD degree if not a faculty member

III – TO CHOOSE A THESIS SUBJECT:

The process for choosing the thesis subject is as follows:

- 1- The students must choose a subject for their thesis **with the supervisor's help** sometime after the second semester and before the fourth semester, and then must announce the subject to the related department.

Note: Any delay in this matter will cause prolongation of the study period, and may lead to expulsion from the program.

Important Advice:

- Before preparing the proposal, students should check with the *Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs* to make sure that the subject has not been covered already; and also to ascertain that the supervisory candidate has not reached the maximum number of theses that can supervise.

- Students must choose and announce their thesis subject before the deadline or they will be expelled from the program
- 2- The students must complete the *proposal form* in accordance with the supervisor's and advisor's instructions, and then to submit it to the *Research Council of the related department* for review.
 - 3- Then the proposal has to be approved by the *Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs*.

IV- PROPOSAL APPROVAL

- The proposal must be submitted either to *the Research Council of the Department* or *the Postgraduate Council* and get approved by the council.
- Afterward, the proposal must go to *the Department Head* for possible correction and final approval.

The students must take the **Comprehensive Exam** and pass it before entering to the **Research Phase**.

- To develop and write the proposal with the supervisor's help
- To submit the proposal to the Department Council and get approval
- To submit the proposal to the Research Deputy Office to get the **School Research Council** or **Research Centers/institutes** approval in order to obtain research funding for the thesis.
- To submit a copy of the approved proposal and the approval letter (from *School Postgraduate Council*) to the Office of

the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs for the proposal registration.

- To submit a summary of the thesis research according to the *Proposal Submission Form* format to *the Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs* .

V- TO PERFORM THESIS

- The students have to perform their thesis according to the schedule specified in the proposal and within the time limit.
- The students have to submit a written *Thesis Progress Report* to the thesis supervisor at least every 6 months.

After review and approval by the supervisor, the report will be submitted to the *School Postgraduate Council*.

Afterward, a special meeting whose members are assigned by the council will assess the report with the presence of the supervisor.

VI- DEFENSE PROCESS:

- 1- After completion and writing of the thesis by the students and completion announcement by the research supervisor, at least one of the jury members has to approve the thesis as defensible.
- 2- Then, the related department will suggest a time for the thesis defense.

- 3- Eventually the suggested time for the defense has to be affirmed by the School Postgraduate Studies Council.
 - The supervisor has to assess *scientific quality, validity and reliability* of the thesis and approve it in advance. Then, the supervisor will notify the **Department Council** or **School Postgraduate Studies Council** of his assessment.
 - The students have to present their thesis in a *preliminary defense* to the panelists as well as other students.
- 4- After obtaining the approval from the related department and involved professors and confirmation that the thesis has been written according to the **Thesis Writing Guidelines**, the **Research Deputy of the school** will authorize the defense.
- 5- Before the defense, the student must have two articles that:
 - have been published (or accepted) by journals which are cited in ISI or PubMed, AND
 - one of the articles must be resulted from the thesis, and student be the first author of it, AND
 - if the other article is not resulted from the thesis, it must be about the student's field of study, and the student must **IC-TUMS** as his/her first affiliation.

6- Jury Members:

Jury (Thesis Committee) Members:

- Supervisor(s),
- Advisor(s),
- Four academic members from *the related department/or Research Institutes being* at least at the Assistant Professor or Research Assistant Professor level, **and having minimum 3** years of teaching or research experience in postgraduate level. Two out of these four referees must be **external**, i.e., non-TUMS academics.

Note : These 4 members are suggested by the department and will have to be approved by the School Postgraduate Council.

- A Representative from the Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs.

8- The student has to submit the *unbound copy of the thesis* to the jury members at least one week prior to the defense.

9- The student has to hold the defense session in front of the jury.

VII- THESIS EVALUATION AND MARKING GUIDELINES:

- The jury members will confidentially put the marks on the *Thesis Evaluation Form* and submit them to *the Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs*.
 - *If the jury decides that the thesis needs **corrections/modifications**, the mark will be released to the student only when the necessary corrections /modifications have been done).*

- The Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs will announce the mark to the *VD for Educational Affairs*.

Note1: If the jury finds the thesis unacceptable, it will cancel the oral examination and require the student to correct/complete the thesis. After the thesis **correction/ completion**, the student has to defend it at a time which the jury decides.

Note 2: By adding the thesis *correction* time, the total PhD completion period must not exceed the allowable time.

Marking Method:

Mark	Rank
19 - 20	Excellent
18 - 18.99	Very good
16.5 - 17.99	Good
15 - 16.49	Satisfactory
Less than 15	Unsatisfactory

- ❖ An extra mark may be granted if the student has published an additional article with *IC-TUMS affiliation*.
- ❖ The thesis mark will be noted on the student's transcript; however, it **will not be calculated** into the student's GPA.
- ❖ The thesis mark is **calculated as** the average of marks given by at least 5 of the jury members.

VIII- POST-DEFENSE PROCEDURES:

The students must submit the following items to the Office of the IC-TUMS Vice Dean for Research Affairs:

- One **HARD-BOUND** copy of their thesis ,
- A CD of their thesis in Word & PDF formats ,
- Articles resulted from their thesis (*IC-TUMS must be on them as the first affiliation*).

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