



TEHRAN UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL CAMPUS

“Office of Vice Dean for Research Affairs”

Regulations on
“PhD BY RESEARCH”
Programs

Developed by:

❖ *office of Vice Dean for Research Affairs (OVDRA)*

2015

Introduction: This document has been prepared based on the *PhD by research Protocol*, which was approved by the ministry of Health and Medical Education on Jan 4, 2015 and briefly explains about the regulations, and guides students through their study. 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 by Research* student must satisfy the requirements of the *PhD by Research Protocol*.

The total number of credits for the courses in this program is **40 credits** and approved time limit for completion of the “PhD BY RESEARCH” degree at IC-TUMS is 4 years from matriculation which may be increased or decreased for maximum 2 semesters only by approval of the **School’s Postgraduate Council**.

This period is divided into two phases:

- 1- *First phase*
- 2- *Second phase*

First Phase:

This phase takes 1 year in which the students learn fundamentals about theoretical and practical skills in research. Number of the total credits of the courses which are taken by students in this phase is **18** of which **9** courses are **general courses** as follows:

- 1- Advanced Biostatistics and Epidemiology (2 credits)
- 2- Advanced methodology (2 credits)
- 3- Ethics in Research (1 credit)
- 4- Report Writing and Scientific Writing (2 credits)
- 5- Communication Skills (2 credits)

Rest of the courses which are dedicated courses are chosen by the supervisor(s).

- ❖ The minimum pass mark for the courses is 70% (14 out of 20).

In addition, in this phase, students have to choose their research Subject, do primary studies, write proposal and get it approved by the **Research Council of the center/school**.

- ❖ The subject of the theses must be in accordance with the goals of the school/center and approved budget/grant of the supervisor, and must also result in resolving the health system issues.

Second Phase:

This phase starts *after* completion of the first phase and approval of the *proposal*.

Minimum length of this period is 3 years which may be increased or decreased for maximum 2 semesters only by approval of the **School's Postgraduate Council**.

During this period, students take internship and thesis courses (**internship: 6 credits – Thesis: 22 credits**) and carry out their thesis work.

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

I- to choose supervisor(s)

- A research supervisor:

- must be an academic member at the related school/ center and must at least be at the Associate Professor level , **and**
- must be the first author or corresponding author of at least 6 published articles in Pub Med/ ISI journals in the last 2 years, **and**

- must have minimum *h-index* of 10 in the Scopus system(for dentistry schools /centers minimum h-index of 8 in acceptable), **and**
- must have a research grant/approved budget to carry out the research, **and**
- may only supervise maximum 2 students at *PhD by Research* level at the same time.
 - “if your supervisor has a clinical doctorate degree, you must choose a second supervisor with a PhD degree as well” ,
 - “if needed, the main supervisor may suggest maximum 2 more supervisors (that can be external) for the project who must be at least Assistant Professor with minimum 2 years of teaching experience at M.Sc./MD/clinical doctorate level” ,
 - ❖ A supervisor must dedicate at least 6 hours per week to guide his/her student.

II - to choose advisor(s):

Based on the **supervisor's suggestion** and approval by the **postgraduate studies council of the centers/school**, 1-3 advisors may be chosen from among the academic members, and outstanding researchers and professors.

- An *advisor*:

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

III – to choose a Thesis Subject:

The process for choosing the thesis subject is as follows:

- 1- Students must choose a subject for their thesis with the supervisor's guidance, and the subject has to be in accordance with the objectives and policies of the research center/institute for resolving the main and crucial health issues and improving health qualities.

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.
- 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 **postgraduate studies council of the centers/school** for review.
 - 3- Then the proposal has to be checked by the *Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs*.

IV- Proposal approval:

- To develop and write the proposal with the supervisor's help,
- To submit the proposal to the **postgraduate studies council** of the centers/school,
- To get the approval of the **postgraduate studies council of the centers/school**,
- To submit a copy of the approved proposal along with the approval letter (from the **postgraduate studies council of the centers/school**) to the Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs for further process.
- To register the proposal in the **Pajoooheshyar** system.

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 being approved by the supervisor, the report has to be submitted to the Research Council of the school/center for further review.

VI- defense process:

- 1- Before the defense, the students must obtain *three journal article publications (or acceptances) resulted from the thesis* with their name as the first or corresponding author of the articles and submit them to the IC-TUMS Vice Dean for Research Affairs.
 - *The publications must be in PubMed or ISI, and at least one of the articles must be in a journal with Impact Factor not less than 1.*
 - *At most one of the articles may be published at the TUMS accredited journals.*
 - *Tehran University of Medical Sciences - International Campus (IC-TUMS) must be the first affiliation on the article.*
- 2- If a thesis/project results in an invention,/discovery/patent/production of a valuable medical/pharmaceutical product, the above condition (journal publication) may be fully or partially waived.
- 3- After obtaining the initial approval from the supervisor, student is obligated to hold a pre-defense meeting with the jury.
- 4- And finally, the defense meeting will be held later and can be official with attendance of the chairman and at least 4 referees (attendance of the main supervisor, one advisor, one internal referee and one external referee is required to make the meeting official).

Jury (Thesis Committee) Members:

- The representative of the school/center's Postgraduate Studies Council (Chairman)
- Supervisor(s),
- Advisor(s),
- Two internal Referees(internal academics with Associate Professor level or above)
- Two external Referees(external academics with Associate Professor level or above)

In addition, a representative from the office of Vice Dean for Research Affairs will attend the defense.

VII- Thesis Evaluation and Marking Guidelines:

- 1- The jury members will confidentially put the mark on the *Thesis Evaluation Forms* and submit it 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).*
- 2- The Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Research Affairs will announce the marks to the Office of the IC-TUMS VD for Educational Affairs

Note 1: If the jury finds the thesis unacceptable, it will cancel the defense and notify the student to correct/complete the thesis. After the correction/ completion are done, the student has to defend it at a time which the jury decides.

Note 2: With adding the thesis *correction* time, the total 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

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*).

If you have any questions about these regulations, please contact us through:

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Fax: 021-88908689

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