



TEHRAN UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL CAMPUS

“Office of Vice President for Research Affairs”

Regulations on
“PhD BY RESEARCH”
Programs

Developed by:

❖ *office of Vice President for Research Affairs (OVPRA)*

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Introduction: This document has been prepared based on the *Postgraduate Research Protocol approved by the ministry of Health and Medical Education (approved on 15 June 2013)* 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 *Postgraduate Research Protocol* and also the requirements by the **Research Centers Council/ School**.

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 TUMS-IC is 4 years from matriculation.

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 **12**.

The courses are chosen by the supervisor(s) from among the following:

- 1- Advanced Biostatistics and Epidemiology (max 2 credits)
- 2- Advanced methodology (max 2 credits)
- 3- Ethics in Research (max 2 credits)
- 4- Report Writing (max 2 credits)
- 5- Health Economics (max 2 credits)
- 6- Health Politics (max 2 credits)
- 7- Knowledge transfer and interpretation (max 2 credits)
- 8- Marketing (max 2 credits)

9- Program-related Courses (max 6 credits)

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

Second Phase:

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

Minimum length of this period is 2.5 years. 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 at least at the Associate Professor or Research Associate Professor level, **and**
 - must have at least a PhD or Clinical Doctorate or PhD by Research degree (if your supervisor has a clinical doctorate degree, you must choose a second supervisor with a PhD degree as well) **and**
 - must have at least 4 published (indexed at ISI, Pub Med)
 - 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.
- **Students may choose two more supervisors if required and recommended by the main supervisor.**

II - to choose advisor(s):

Based on supervisor's suggestion and approval by the **research centers council/ school**. 1-3 advisors may 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 least at the Assistant Professor or Research Assistant Professor level, **and**

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 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 TUMS-IC VP 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 *Research Council of the* institute/school for review.
- 3- Then the proposal has to be checked by the *Office of the TUMS-IC VP for Research Affairs*.

IV- Proposal approval:

- To develop and write the proposal with the supervisor's help
- The proposal must be submitted to **Research Council of the** institute/school,
- to get the **Research Council of the** institute/school approval in order to obtain research funding for the thesis.
- To submit a copy of the approved proposal and the approval letter (from **Research Council of the** institute/school) to the Office of the TUMS-IC VP for Research Affairs for the proposal registration and getting the fund,

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 and at least every 6 months.

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 **research centers council/ school** will suggest a time for the thesis defense.
- 3- Eventually the suggested time for the defense has to be announced to the Office of the TUMS-IC VP for Research Affairs.
- 4- The student has to obtain the **Invitation Forms for the jury members** from the Office of the TUMS-IC VP for Research Affairs.
 - The supervisor(s) has to assess scientific quality, validity and reliability of the thesis and approve it in advance. Then, the

supervisor will notify the **research centers council/ school** of his assessment.

- The students have to present their thesis in a *preliminary defense* to the panelists as well as other students.

- 5- After obtaining approval from the **research centers council/ school** and involved professors and confirmation that the thesis has been written according to the **Thesis Writing Guidelines**, the **research centers council/ school** will authorize the defense.
- 6- Before the defense, the student must obtain *three resulted journal article publications (or acceptances)* (with his/her name as the first or corresponding author of the articles).
- 7- Selecting Jury Members

Jury (Thesis Committee) Members:

- Supervisor(s),
- Advisor(s),
- Four academic members from *the Research Centers Council/school* being at least at the Associate Professor or Research Associate Professor level,

Note : These 4 members are suggested by the department and will have to be approved by the research centers council/ school.

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

- 8- The student has to submit the *unbound copy of the thesis* along with the Thesis Evaluation Forms 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:

1- The jury members will confidentially put the marks on the *Thesis Evaluation Forms* and submit them to *the Office of the TUMS-IC VP for Research Affairs*.

- *If the jury decides that the thesis needs **corrections/modifications**, the marks will be released to the student only when the necessary corrections /modifications have been done).*

2- The Office of the TUMS-IC VP for Research Affairs will announce the marks to the *VP 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 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
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VIII- Post-defense Procedures:

- 1- The students must submit *two HARD-BOUND copies of the thesis* along with their *Electronic Copies* (in Word & PDF) to the library (**Must mention TUMS-IC as the first affiliation on the Thesis**).

- 2- The students must submit *one HARD-BOUND copy of the thesis* along with the resulting article (**Must mention TUMS-IC as the first affiliation on the article**) to the Office of the TUMS-IC VP for Research Affairs.

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