



Caucasus International University

**REGULATION for the DISSERTATION COUNCIL
and DOCTORAL STUDIES**

**Approved by the Academic Council
on 03/11/2016 –minutes #32**

Chapter I

General Regulations

Article 1.Regulation Scope

This regulation is developed in accordance with the “Law of Georgia on Higher Education” and regulates the principles and rules of the Faculty Dissertation Board and the Doctoral Studies at Caucasus International University (hereinafter - University), as well as the minimum standard for awarding the Doctor's Academic Degree.

Article 2. The purpose of doctoral studies

The Doctoral Degree Program is the third level of higher academic education and is aimed at preparing scientific-pedagogical staff. The doctoral studies end with the Faculty Dissertation Board awarding the Doctor's academic degree.

Chapter II

Faculty Dissertation Council

Article 3. Awarding the Doctor's academic degree

1. The Faculty Dissertation Council is the body awarding the Doctor's Academic Degree. It is possible to make an agreement with the partner university for awarding a joint degree.
2. The Faculty Dissertation Council conducts activities in accordance with the present regulation.

Article 4. The Faculty Dissertation Council

1. The Faculty Dissertation Council consists of all the professors and associate professors of the faculty holding a professor's academic degree or its equivalent.
2. By the decision of the Dissertation Council, other persons holding a professor's academic degree or its equivalent can become members of the Council;
3. The composition of the Dissertation Council, submitted by the Dean of the Faculty, is approved by the Rector of the University.
4. The Faculty Dissertation Council:
 - A. Makes a decision about the approval of relevant doctoral education programs and the head(s) of the Doctoral Program;
 - B. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**
 - C. Discusses and by open voting approves the list of dissertation topics;
 - D. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**
 - E. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**
 - F. Makes a decision about the appointment of reviewers;
 - G. Decides on the date of the dissertation defense and the composition of the Board (including the Chairperson);
 - H. Implements the resolutions of the University Academic Council and other authorities defined by this Regulation.

Article 5.Regulation for the Dissertation Council

1. The Faculty Dissertation Council conducts its activities in accordance with the present Regulation.
2. Meetings of the Faculty Dissertation Council are held as needed at least twice a year.
3. The Faculty Dissertation Council makes decision at the Council meeting. The meeting is authorized if it is attended by more than 2/3 of the members. **(#57, 31.08.2018)**
4. The decision of the Faculty Dissertation Council is deemed to be accepted if it voted for by more than half of the attendants unless other point is envisaged by this Regulation. **(#57, 31.08.2018)**
5. Any decision made by the Faculty Dissertation Council is written in the minutes and signed by the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Council.
6. Any decision taken by the Faculty Dissertation Council and the Chairperson of the Council will be notified to the doctoral candidate in the written form.

7. The work of the Council between the Faculty Dissertation Council sessions is supervised by the Chairperson and Secretary of the Council.
8. In case of absence of the Secretary, the Chairperson is authorized to impose the Secretary's function on one of the members of the Council.

Article 6. The Chairperson of the Faculty Dissertation Council

1. The Faculty Dissertation Council is headed by the Chairperson of the Dissertation Council.
2. The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council is elected by secret ballot from the Dissertation Council Composition by the majority of the Dissertation Council for a period of three years.
3. A group of at least three members of the Dissertation Council has the right to nominate a candidate for the Chairperson with the prior consent of the candidate.
4. If the Chairperson can not attend the Dissertation Council meeting, the chairperson of the meeting is elected by the majority of the voters.

Article 7. The rights and responsibilities of the Chairperson of the Faculty Dissertation Council

1. The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council:
 - A. calls meetings of the Council as needed and leads them;
 - B. he/she supervises the activities of the Dissertation Council between its meetings;
 - C. develops recommendations on the expediency of continuation of studies by the doctoral student;
 - D. organizes mandatory thematic workshops for doctoral students;
 - E. once a year reports to the Dissertation Council on the activities carried out and the future activities to be conducted;
 - F. exercises other powers defined by this Regulation.
 - G. makes a decision on changing the dissertation topic of the doctoral student under the framework the same PhD programme; (#57, 31.08.2018)
 - H. makes a decision on changing a scientific supervisor of the doctoral student; (#57, 31.08.2018)
2. The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council calls the Dissertation Council session on his/her own initiative, at the suggestion of the Dean, the Secretary of the Dissertation Council, Doctoral Studies Coordinator, Doctoral Program Director or at least of three members of the Dissertation Council.

Article 8. The Secretary of the Faculty Dissertation Board

1. The organizational activities of the Faculty Dissertation Council are ensured by the Secretary of the Dissertation Council, nominated by the Chairperson of the Dissertation Council from the members of the Council and elected by a majority vote of the composition of the Dissertation Council for a period of three years by secret ballot.
2. The Secretary of the Dissertation Council:
 - A. Keeps the minutes of the Dissertation Council meetings in compliance with the Uniform Rules for the University proceedings;
 - B. Helps the Chairperson to resolve organizational issues;
 - C. Manages the council archive and the proceedings;
 - D. Is responsible for maintaining the protocol.
3. The Secretary of the Dissertation Council is obliged to inform the Doctoral candidate about the decisions of the Dissertation Council and the Chair of the Dissertation Council, as well as information on the deadline of any session in the course of the program implementation in written form (via e-mail).

Article 9. Doctorol Studies Coordinator

1. The Doctoral Program Coordinator, who is appointed by the Rector, ensures the organizational activities of the Faculty Dissertation Council and the Doctoral Program implementation.
2. Doctoral Studies Coordinator:
 - A. Records the doctoral candidate's dissertation documentation;
 - B. Helps the Chairman to resolve organizational issues;

- C. Provides consultation and helps the doctoral candidate to prepare appropriate documents before and after he/she defends the dissertation;
 - D. Transfers the completed dissertation to the experts and reviewers;
 - E. Provides timely placement of information on the information website;
3. The Doctoral Program Coordinator is obliged to provide the doctoral candidate with information on the decisions of the Dissertation Council as well as the information on the deadline of any session in the course of the program implementation

Chapter III

Doctoral Studies

Article 10. The right to study for a Doctoral degree

1. A person with a Master's degree or its equivalent academic degree has the right to study for a doctoral degree.
2. The right to study in the doctoral program may be granted to the graduate of a foreign university in accordance with Article 50 of the "Law of Georgia on Higher Education".

Article 11. Admission Requirements for Doctoral Studies

1. Admission to Doctoral Studies is announced only once a year within the approved doctoral program.
2. In order to enroll in the Doctoral Program, the contestant must submit a statement addressed to the Rector of the University to the Dissertation Council Coordinator, the doctoral program should be indicated in the statement. The statement must be accompanied by:
 - A. The contestant's autobiography (employment and educational information), CV;
 - B. Master's or equivalent degree diploma and a certified copy of an attachment to it (the University has the right in accordance with the legislation to request the applicant or a student already enrolled to submit a document on recognition of diploma. The failure to submit a document on recognition of diploma within a reasonable time is the basis for enrollment refusal or invalidation of enrolled doctoral student);
 - C. A copy of the identity card (passport);
 - D. Two recommendations of the relevant field specialists;
 - E. Photograph, size 3X4 (cm);
 - F. A copy of a valid certificate or a military ticket (for military liability);
 - G. Certificate of B2 level knowledge of the English language. A person who has completed the Bachelor's or Master's Degree Program in the English language is exempted from the certificate. A person who cannot submit a Certificate of the English Language proficiency shall pass a test in English at the University Language Center.
 - H. Explanation that the applicant is not enrolled in the doctoral program at some other higher education institution or that he/she was not refused the enrollment in the doctoral program at some other higher education institution.
 - I. A notification verifying at least 6-month working experience according to the field of expertise (for those Doctoral Programmes, in which there is no specific qualification as a precondition for enrollment, notification on working experience is required); (**#57, 31.08.2018**)
 - J. A motivation letter related to the research topic; (**#57, 31.08.2018**)
3. In case of indicating scientific publications and participation in conferences in the data on education and employment, the doctoral studies applicant must submit copies of these materials.
4. Doctoral Studies candidate whose native language is not Georgian and who wants to study in Georgian shall submit a Georgian language proficiency certificate (B2 level).

Article 12. Prerequisites for admission to contest interviews

1. A competitor, who submits all the documents stipulated in Article 12 of this regulation to the Doctoral Coordinator within a prescribed period meets the doctoral degree admission requirements and is allowed to be interviewed.

2. The doctoral candidate will be interviewed on nomination by the Doctoral Program Coordinator before the selection committee created by order of the University Rector.
3. The doctoral coordinator or the doctoral program director submits the candidate's personal data and a motivation letter concerning the research topic to the Committee. The motivating letter should be substantiated by the relevance and the importance of the selected topic.
4. The person shall be considered enrolled in the doctoral studies if the majority of the members supported him/her by the open vote.
5. When enrolling in the Doctoral Studies the following information will be taken into consideration:
 - A. Having scientific publications;
 - B. Participation in scientific conferences;
 - C. Other documents and materials related to study / research activities (certificates, diplomas, patents, etc.).

Article 13. Enrollment in Doctoral Programs

1. In case of successful interviewing, the contestant shall be admitted to the relevant doctoral program.
2. Competitor will be enrolled in the Doctoral Studies by the University Rector's Individual Administrative-Legal Act which shall be placed on the University website.
3. Within ten days after the enrollment in the doctoral program an agreement between the University and the doctoral student is signed which determines the rights and obligations of the Parties.

Article 14. Suspension of doctoral status

1. Doctoral students shall be entitled to participate in the study process and perform research work after completing the relevant administrative semester registration.
2. Doctoral students who do not complete the administrative semester registration without a good reason, shall have their doctoral student status suspended and shall lose the right to obtain credits in the semester.
3. In case of failure to complete the administrative registration and automatic suspension of the status students continue to study from the semester for which the administrative registration will be completed.
4. The doctoral student is given an academic leave in accordance with the applicable legislation and rules established at the University.

Article 15. Termination of doctoral status

1. In addition to the provisions regulating the learning process and prerequisites defined by the University regulatory procedures, the doctoral student status may be terminated:
 - A. If plagiarism or data falsification is confirmed;
 - B. In case of failure to comply with the agreement concluded between the university and the doctoral student;
 - C. Doctoral student can not complete the dissertation and present it in 5 years after completion of the program (regardless of the status - suspended / active), which can not exceed 10 years from the moment of enrollment.
2. The termination of doctoral status for the doctoral student is commenced on the basis of a report presented by the Dean of the faculty, the corresponding Doctoral Program Director or the scientific supervisor.
3. The status of the doctoral student shall be terminated with the order of the Rector of the University in accordance with the rules regulating the academic process and the procedures prescribed by the regulations.

Chapter IV Doctoral Programme

Article 16. Developing and Submitting Doctoral Program

1. Doctoral Program is developed
 - A. By one or several professors of the Faculty;
 - B. Together with the partner university;
 - C. Together with an education or research institution on the basis of an appropriate agreement concluded between the University and this institution.
2. The Doctoral Program is supervised (co-supervised by a faculty professor or associate professor).
3. The Doctoral Program will be reviewed and approved by the University Academic Council.
4. The Doctoral program should be accompanied by syllabi of training courses defined by this program.
5. In the implementation of the Doctoral Program participate:
 - A. University Professor or Associate Professor;
 - B. A scholar from a partner university or scientific institution;
 - C. An invited specialist holding a Doctor's or its equivalent academic degree.
6. The Doctoral Program Director should have research experience and publications in the scientific sphere connected with the Doctoral Program.
7. The number of doctoral students to be enrolled in the Doctoral Program during the academic year is determined by the Faculty Dissertation Council.

Article 17. Scope of the Doctoral Education Program

1. The educational process in the Doctoral Program is organized in the framework of the Doctoral Program.
2. The Doctoral Education Program includes 180 ECTS credits, 60 ECTS credits in one academic year and 30 ECTS credits in one semester.
3. The Doctoral Program consists of the study and research components and concludes with the fulfillment and defense of the dissertation work.
4. 60 ECTS credits of the doctoral program are used for the study component and 120 ECTS credits are used for the research component.
5. In case of failing to submit a dissertation within the prescribed period (3 years), the doctoral candidate has the right to complete the doctoral studies in the subsequent 2 years.
6. The doctoral candidate retains the student status over the course of the next year/semester.

Article 18. Study Component of Doctoral Education Program

1. The study component of the Doctoral Education Program aims at providing a doctoral candidate with methodological skills, helping him/her to perform the dissertation work and prepare for future pedagogical and scientific activities.
2. The study component of the Doctoral Education Program includes courses of lectures and other activities;
3. Thematic seminars will be submitted by the doctoral candidate to the Coordinator of Doctoral Studies until the end of the semester (not later than the 15th week);
- 3¹. Sending the electronic version of the presented work to Anti-plagiarism software is ensured by the Coordinator of Doctoral Studies. (#57, 31.08.2018)
- 3². The results received from Anti-plagiarism software are presented to the scientific supervisor and in case of receiving positive conclusion by the scientific supervisor, the thesis will be submitted for further consideration. (#57, 31.08.2018)
4. The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council submits a motion to the Rector for the approval of the date for the thematic seminars defense as well as appointing the composition of the Commission no later than 17th week;
5. On the basis of a motion the defense date is appointed by the Rector's order not beyond the examination period;
6. The order of the Rector shall be approved by the Commission, which includes the Doctoral Program Director, the doctoral candidate's scientific supervisor and Academic Staff of the Direction/field (at least 5 members);

7. The presentation of thematical seminars are performed by doctoral students within 20-30 minutes, followed by discussion;
8. Members of the Commission shall conduct the assessment of the doctoral student in accordance with the criteria provided by the syllabus. The doctoral student must overcome 50% in each component;
9. The maximum score is 100 points. The doctoral candidate's score shall be equal to the arithmetic mean of the assessments given by all the members of the commission.

Article 19. Research Component of the Doctoral Education Program

1. The purpose of the Research Component in the Doctoral Education Program is to develop a student's research skills.
2. The research component of the Doctoral Education Program together with other appropriate activities envisaged by the Doctoral Program includes the following requirements:
 - A. Publication of at least three scientific articles in international refereed journals in which the main findings of the scientific research conducted on the dissertation/seminar topics should be reflected;
 - B. Participation in international scientific conferences: (a doctoral student is obliged to participate at least in one international scientific conference. His/her participation should be confirmed by certificates and published materials).
3. The doctoral student's scientific article should reflect the substantive results of theoretical and/or empirical research.
4. The scientific articles should be published in the international refereed journals which are recommended by the Dissertation Council and recognized by the University for this purpose and are approved by the Dissertation Council.
5. The doctoral student's scientific article is considered to be published if:
 - A. The corresponding volume of the journal is printed;
 - B. The work is placed on the journal official website.
6. By the decision of the Faculty Dissertation Council, the doctoral student is exempt from the obligation to publish articles if he/she has published a relevant monograph related to the doctoral topic.
7. The rule for the research components assessment is determined by relevant syllabi.

Article 20. The presentation of the research and colloquiums conducted according to the Dissertation Research Project (Prospectus) and their defense before a Commission

1. In case of the scientific supervisor's positive assessment, the Doctoral Student shall present the research and colloquiums completed according to Dissertation Research Project (Prospectus) to the Coordinator of Doctoral Studies (no later than the 15th week) until the end of the semester. **(#57, 31.08.2018)**
 - 1¹. Sending the electronic version of the presented work to Anti-plagiarism software is ensured by the Coordinator of Doctoral Studies. **(#57, 31.08.2018)**
 - 1². The results received from Anti-plagiarism software are presented to the scientific supervisor and in case of receiving positive conclusion by the scientific supervisor, the thesis will be submitted for further consideration. **(#57, 31.08.2018)**
2. The chairperson of the Dissertation Council shall submit a motion to the Rector that the date of the defense of the research and colloquiums completed according to the Research Project (Prospectus) be appointed and the composition of the commission be approved not later than the 17th week.
3. On the basis of the motion and the order of the Rector the date of defense shall be appointed which must not take place beyond the examination period.
4. The order of the Rector approves the Commission, composed of the Doctoral Program Director, the doctoral candidate's scientific supervisor, and academic staff of the field (at least 5 members).
5. The doctoral candidate makes a presentation on the research and colloquiums completed according to the Dissertation Research Project (Prospectus) within 20-30 minutes followed by discussion.

6. The Commission assesses the work done by the doctoral candidate positively or negatively and recommends him/her to continue working or take into account the remarks and correct the research and colloquiums completed according to the dissertation research project (prospectus).

Chapter V

Doctoral Student's Scientific Supervision

Article 21. Doctoral Student's Scientific Supervisor

1. The doctoral student's scientific supervisor may be a University professor holding an academic position, a member of the Faculty Dissertation Council.
2. The doctoral student's scientific supervisor may be a professor holding a doctor's or its equivalent degree who by the decision of the Faculty Dissertation Council the University will invite for scientific supervision, based on the specifics of the dissertation theme.
3. The Scientific Supervisor should have research experience in the field connected with the doctoral student's dissertation theme.
4. Not later than one month after the beginning of the semester, the doctoral candidate will present the written consent of the candidate for the dissertation scientific supervision.

Article 22. The scientific supervisor's responsibilities (#57, 31.08.2018)

1. A scientific supervisor of the doctoral student follows the rules which are established at university.
2. He/she assists the doctoral student to select a research topic and submits a letter of consent on supervising PhD candidate to Dissertation Board within one month after the semester starts.
3. A scientific supervisor monitors the completion of academic and research component by a doctoral student.
4. A scientific supervisor ensures submission of the doctoral student's research and academic components within the deadlines and the format elaborated by the university.
5. A scientific supervisor ensures providing information to the doctoral student about not violating the norms of plagiarism established at university.
6. A scientific supervisor ensures following the ethical norms and procedures available at university.
7. A scientific supervisor organizes regular meetings with doctoral students related to dissertation, provides them with recommendations during the working process on the dissertation, prepares a doctoral student to make presentations about various completed components and monitors the progress of qualification research at different stages.
8. A scientific supervisor ensures students' involvement them in various scientific activities.
9. At the end of every semester, a scientific supervisor presents a report on accomplished tasks with a doctoral student.
10. In case, a scientific supervisor refuses the supervision, he/she is obliged to submit a well-grounded statement to Dissertation Board at any stage of studies.

Article 22¹. A doctoral student's responsibilities(#57, 31.08.2018)

1. A doctoral student follows the rules which are established at university.
2. Within one month after the enrollment, a doctoral student presents Dissertation Board a selected title of the thesis and consent made by a scientific supervisor.
3. A doctoral student completes academic and research components in compliance with the regulations determined by the university.
4. A doctoral student submits research and academic components within the deadlines and formats elaborated by the university.
5. A doctoral student follows the norms on plagiarism established at university.
6. A doctoral student follows the ethical norms and procedures established in the institution.
7. A doctoral student meets a scientific supervisor about the issues related to the dissertation on a regular basis.
8. A doctoral student is involved in various scientific activities.

9. A doctoral student communicates with a scientific supervisor for preparation of dissertation and presentation of various components.
10. At the end of every semester, a doctoral student presents a report on accomplished tasks with a scientific supervisor.
11. In case a doctoral candidate refuses to cooperate with a scientific supervisor, he/she is obliged to submit a well-grounded statement to Dissertation Board at any stage of studies.

Article 23. Changing the scientific supervisor and the dissertation theme

1. The scientific supervisor may be changed before the beginning of the semester based on the doctoral candidate's substantiated request. Exactly, based on the scientific supervisor's similar request his/her obligations may be cancelled.
2. If in case of the scientific supervisor's change, the old and the new supervisors obtain consent the dissertation theme may not change.
3. On the joint substantiated request of both the doctoral candidate's and scientific supervisor's request the dissertation topic may be changed within the doctoral program before the beginning of the semester. In such cases, when the dissertation topic is changed within the same doctoral program, the decision is made by the Dissertation Council.

Chapter VI

Preparing and defending a dissertation

Article 24. Dissertation

1. The dissertation work should be the result of a doctoral candidate's independent scientific research. The dissertation work should reflect the scientifically grounded new results of theoretical and/or empirical research, characterized by scientific innovation and contributing to the development of the branch.
2. The dissertation work presented for the Doctor's academic degree must be fulfilled in the Georgian language, according to the established pattern and rule.
3. The assessment criteria, volume, format, style and other technical data of the dissertation paper are determined by the appropriate syllabus.

Article 25. Presenting a dissertation

1. The doctoral student shall present two printed copies of the dissertation work and its electronic version (in PDF format) to the Dissertation Council.
2. Together with the dissertation the doctoral candidate must submit the following documents to the Dissertation Council:
 - A. Statement to the Chairperson of the Dissertation Council on the dissertation acceptance for examination;
 - B. A certificate issued by the Dean's office of the fulfillment of the study component (60 credits) envisaged by the Doctoral Program;
 - C. His/her authorship or co-authorship must be indicated on the publications reflecting the main scientific outcomes of the research performed on the dissertation and the publication of scientific papers in accordance with this regulation;
 - D. Scientific seminars, forums and conference materials, where the main results of the dissertation are reflected (a doctoral candidate is obliged to have participated at least in one international scientific conference, the participation should be confirmed by certificates and published materials).
3. The submitted dissertation must be accompanied by a written opinion of the doctoral candidate's scientific supervisor (co-supervisors) about the dissertation, as well as a written statement that the scientific supervisor (co-supervisors) has read the dissertation and it is ready to be submitted to public examination.
4. The dissertation work must be accompanied by an explanation for the fact that the dissertation is performed by the doctoral student and all the sources used in the work are properly indicated.

5. The doctoral student is exempt from the semester registration and tuition fee for the semester following the submission of the dissertation to the Dissertation Council.
6. The dissertation will be submitted for examination to the Dissertation Council at the end of the final semester, in case of spring - from May 1 to May 30 and in case of autumn - from November 1 to November 30.
7. After submission of the dissertation, the Dissertation Council coordinator checks the documents within three working days and if they are in order, submits it to the Faculty Dissertation Council for making a decision about the appointment of experts for preliminary presentation.

Article 26. Approbation of the dissertation

1. After the doctoral student submit the dissertation, the Dissertation council shall designate two experts (one of them invited / external) to evaluate the dissertation. The experts should submit their written opinions within 1 month.
2. In case the experts submit positive opinions, the Faculty Dissertation Council will set up a sectoral commission and will schedule the date for the preliminary examination of the dissertation.
3. If one of the experts' opinion is negative, the Dissertation Council shall designate a third expert to assess the work.
4. In case of two negative opinions, the dissertation will be returned to the doctoral candidate for improvement.
5. In case of the experts' positive opinions, the Faculty Dissertation Council shall establish a sectoral commission and shall designate the date of interim defense/assessment of the dissertation.
6. The assessment of the preliminary examination of the dissertation by a sectoral commission of the Faculty Dissertation Council takes place according to the following criteria:
 - The relevance of the dissertation topic;
 - Scientific innovation of the dissertation;
 - The structure of the dissertation, the content, the research awareness;
 - Research methodology, the ability to search and use scientific literature;
 - Consistent reasoning, argumentation and quoting ability;
 - Ability to adequately understand a problem and to use critical and analytical thinking skills;
 - Demonstration of Visual Material, Presentation Skills.
7. In case of positive recommendation from the sectoral commission the dissertation will be submitted for further consideration. A doctoral student is entitled to consider the remarks expressed for the dissertation thesis and depict them in the thesis before submitting to the reviewer. (#57, 31.08.2018)
8. In case of negative recommendation from the sectoral commission, the work is returned to the doctoral student with remarks. The doctoral candidate is entitled to submit the completed work within the timeframe established by the Regulations.

Article 27. Author's abstract

1. The author's abstract is a shortened version of the dissertation.
2. The author's abstract must be drawn so that the interested person gets acquainted with the basic results of the work.
3. The author's abstract should contain a title page. It should contain the relevance of the topic, the purpose of the work, object of study, research methods, the main findings of the work and scientific novelty as well as information about the scope and structure of the dissertation. The author's abstract should provide the main results of the dissertation according to the chapters and general conclusions.
4. The author's abstract should contain a list of only those publications by the author, whose content corresponds to the dissertation and is included in the dissertation.
5. The author's abstract shall also contain the information concerning the discussion of the main scientific theses of the dissertation (such as reports on conferences, forums, symposiums and seminars).
6. The author's abstract shall be performed in Georgian and one of the international (English, German, French) languages;

7. The total volume of the author's abstract (in both languages) should not exceed four printed tabs (64 pages).

Article 28. Approval of the reviewers

1. In case of a successful completion of the dissertation preliminary assessment, the doctoral student will submit to the Dissertation Council four bound printed copies of the dissertation and its electronic version (in the PDF format), as well as 4 copies of the author's abstract together with the electronic version (for uploading on the University web site). (#57, 31.08.2018)
 - 1¹. Sending the electronic version of the dissertation thesis to Anti-plagiarism software is ensured by the Coordinator of Doctoral Studies. (#57, 31.08.2018)
 - 1². The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council designates reviewers (including one invited / external) (one of the reviewers may be anonymous by the decision of the Chairperson of the Council) after checking the thesis in antiplagiarism software and in case of positive conclusion made by the supervisor. (#57, 31.08.2018)
2. The reviewer of the dissertation paper may only be a doctor or a holder of a doctor's equivalent academic degree and having scientific publications in the sphere related to the dissertation theme.
3. The reviewer can not be:
 - A. Chairman or Secretary of the Dissertation Board;
 - B. Co-author of any publications performed by the doctoral candidate;
 - C. Person depending on the doctoral candidate in office.
4. It is unacceptable that both reviewers be employees of one and the same structural unit (eg, faculty, school) of any organization.
5. The doctoral studies Director shall deliver the copies of the dissertation and author's abstracts to the reviewers within 5 working days after the designation of reviewers.

Article 29. Reviewing the dissertation

1. A reviewer shall submit his/her written report (opinion) about the dissertation to the Dissertation Council no later than 30 calendar days from the date of delivery.
2. If an reviewer is not able to present a review due to objective circumstances (accident, illness, etc.), the Dissertation Council designates a third assessor (reviewer).
3. The reviewer's review should reflect:
 - A. Relevance of the Doctoral Dissertation;
 - B. Scientific level of the research;
 - C. Methods (methodology) used;
 - D. Reliability of the results obtained;
 - E. Design of the dissertation, etc.
4. The review shall be confirmed with the reviewer's signature whose authenticity should be certified with the employer's stamp.
5. The dissertation is evaluated according to a 100-score system. The percentage share of the reviewers' evaluation in the final assessment is 40 %. The criteria for evaluating the dissertation by a reviewer are as follows: (#57, 31.08.2018)
 - Relevance of the topic, identification of the problem and defining the strategy – 5 points;
 - Access to required information, critical assessment of information and its sources and efficiency of the use of information, the quality of involvement of foreign researches - 5 points;
 - Innovative thinking - 5 points;
 - The applied system of research methods, research methodology – 5 points;
 - Quality of the survey conducted - 5 points;
 - Conclusions and results, problem solving - 5 points;
 - Area of the survey results application - 5 points;
 - Legal and ethical use of information, academic writing culture - 5 points.

In each of the above listed components (in case of both reviewers) the doctoral candidate must collect more than 50%.

6. Five positive and two negative assessments are used for estimating the dissertation work.

7. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**

8. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**

9. If one of the two reviewers negatively evaluates the dissertation, the Dissertation Council within 10 calendar days shall appoint a third reviewer for evaluating the dissertation. The third reviewer has 30 calendar days to evaluate the work.

10. If the third reviewer positively evaluates the submitted dissertation, the final score is determined on the basis of the reviewers assessments and is equal to the arithmetic mean (the sum of the points earned divided by the number of reviewers).

11. If the third reviewer negatively evaluates the submitted dissertation, the doctoral candidate shall not be admitted to the defense.

12. The Chairperson of the Dissertation Council shall notify the doctoral candidate in writing about the decision made by the reviewers.

13. In case of a negative assessment of the dissertation, the doctoral student is not not admitted to the defense. By the decision of the Dissertation Council he/she may be given additional time for working on the dissertation. In such a case in accordance with the rule established at the University the doctoral candidate is given the right to take an additional semester(s) with retention of student status.

14. The dissertation shall be repeatedly submitted to the Dissertation Council within the next two years, but within one year after receiving a negative assessment. If the repeatedly submitted dissertation will receive a negative assessment, the doctoral candidate's student status will be terminated.

15. The improved dissertation repeatedly submitted by the doctoral candidate shall be given to the same reviewers and if it is impossible due to objective circumstances (accident, illness, etc.), the Dissertation Council appoints new reviewers.

16. In case of negative assessment of the improved and repeatedly submitted dissertation it is not admitted to the defense.

17. In case the dissertation is rejected a defense, one copy of the dissertation and the reviewers' written opinions shall be deposited in the archives of the Faculty Dissertation Council.

18. The doctoral candidate has the right on his/her own initiative at any stage to withdraw his/her dissertation from examination. In the latter case the dissertation may be presented in the next academic year.

Article 30. Approval of the date of dissertation defense and composition of the board

1. A decision on the date of the dissertation defense and the composition of the board (including the chairperson of the board) shall be made by the Faculty Dissertation Council.

2. The defense of the dissertation shall be appointed in 40 calendar days after the session of the Dissertation Council.

3. The doctoral studies coordinator shall have the copies of the dissertation and the author's abstracts delivered to the members of the Dissertation Board within 5 working days after the approval of the composition of the Board.

4. The doctoral studies coordinator shall notify the doctoral candidate in writing (mail, e-mail or other) about the decisions made by the Council. The notification must be sent at least 30 days before the date of the defense and should include the composition of the Dissertation Board, the date of defense, the time and place, the possibility of attending the defense for guests and their permissible number.

5. On the basis of the decision of the Dissertation Council, the doctoral studies Coordinator disseminates information in writing or via e-mail on the date of the dissertation defense, besides, he/she shall provide putting the announcement in a prominent place (places).

Article 31. Dissertation Board

1. The Dissertation Board shall be created once only for a specific dissertation defense.

2. The Dissertation Board shall consist of 5 or 7 scholars related to the topic of the dissertation including at least 1 (in the case of a 5-member board) and 2 (in the case of a 7-member board) invited from outside/external members who have the right to vote.
3. A member of the Dissertation Board having the right to vote may be a professor or an associate professor as well as a Doctor or a Doctor's equivalent academic degree holder.
4. The doctoral candidate's scientific supervisor and his/her reviewers participate in the Dissertation Board only with the advisory voting (they do not have the right to vote).
5. The same person may not participate in more than two defenses within a week.
6. The Dissertation Board is headed by the Chairperson selected from its members and approved by the Dissertation Council. He/she must be the University's current or honorary professor. The Chairperson can not be the doctoral candidate's scientific supervisor or his/her reviewer.
- 6¹. Based on the presenting by a chairperson of the dissertation board, the board selects a secretary through an open voting for a single time. The secretary is responsible for writing a minute during the dissertation defence. The secretary can not be the doctoral candidate's scientific supervisor or his/her reviewer. (**#57, 31.08.2018**)
7. The Dissertation Board is authorized to get acquainted with the reports on the dissertation.

Article 32. Dissertation Board Session

1. A dissertation is publicly defended at the Dissertation Board session.
2. The language of defense is Georgian unless the the Dissertation Council makes a different decision.
3. The session of the Dissertation Board is authorized if it is attended by 3/4 or more of the members of the Voting Board.
4. If one of the reviewers is not attending the defense for a valid reason, his/her review should be read in full.
5. The scientific supervisor must attend the defense. If he/she does not attend the dissertation board session for a valid reason, he/she sends a corresponding report and the doctoral candidate's personal characteristic to the dissertation board.
6. If the doctoral candidate failed to attend the defense for a valid documented reason or there was lack of quorum, or the defense was not held for some other reason not connected with the doctoral candidate, the Dissertation Board shall appoint an additional session in the same semester.
7. At one session of the Dissertation Board only one dissertation defense can be held.

Article 33. Dissertation defense

1. The chairperson of the Dissertation Board announces the doctoral candidate's identity and the dissertation topic, identifies the experts and reviewers. The board is informed about the documents submitted by the doctoral candidate, the dissertation defense procedure and short biographical information about the doctoral candidate by a secretary of the board. (**#57, 31.08.2018**)
2. The defense process envisages the dissertation presentation by the doctoral candidate, scientific discussion, evaluation of the dissertation and the announcement of the evaluation results of the dissertation. The rules of the procedure are reasonably determined by the Dissertation Board. (**#57, 31.08.2018**)
3. The presentation of the dissertation means the doctoral student's report - the presentation of the theme whose duration usually shall not exceed 30 minutes. By the proposal of the chairperson of the Board, the doctoral student introduces the main statements and results of his/her research to the board, clearly formulates the scientific novelty of his/her work.
4. In the presentation of the dissertation the doctoral student must use visible materials, for example, slides, posters, videos, etc.
5. After the presentation of the dissertation a scientific discussion is held. The doctoral student shall answer the questions asked by those present, after which the chairperson of the board will introduce the results of the preliminary review of the dissertation. The reviewers start a dispute with the doctoral candidate after which the word is given to the scientific supervisor (co- supervisor) of the dissertation

for characterizing the doctoral candidate. A discussion takes place in which both the members of the board and the representatives of those present may participate.

6. After the completion of the scientific debate, by the proposal of the chairperson, the doctoral candidate is given the final word whose duration shall not exceed 10 minutes.

7. After the doctoral student's final word the members of the Board who have the right to vote make a decision on a closed vote at the closed final session.

Article 34. Evaluation of the dissertation

1. The dissertation is evaluated by the members of the Dissertation Board

2. Each member of the Dissertation Board evaluates the dissertation according to a 60-point system using the criteria provided by the appropriate syllabus. The final score is determined on the basis of assessments made by the members of the Dissertation Board and is equal to the arithmetic mean (the sum of the points earned are divided by the number of board members). (**#57, 31.08.2018**)

3. Five positive and two negative assessments are used for estimating the dissertation work.

4. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**

5. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**

6. **Removed (#57, 31.08.2018)**

7. In case of unsatisfactory (insufficient) assessment of the dissertation by the Dissertation Board the doctoral student is given the right to submit a revised dissertation. For this purpose he/she has the right within a month after the announcement of the results to submit a statement to the Dissertation Council with the request to improve the dissertation and repeatedly defend it.

8. In case of unsatisfactory (insufficient) evaluation of the dissertation by the Dissertation Board, the doctoral student is entitled to take an additional semester(s) in accordance with the rules established by the university. The dissertation may be repeatedly defended during the next one year.

9. In case of the dissertation is evaluated by the Dissertation Board as completely unsatisfactory (sub omni canone) the doctoral candidate loses the right to submit the same dissertation.

10. The dissertation evaluation criteria by the members of the Dissertation Board are as follows:

1. Topicality of the theme, identification of the problem and determining the strategy - 5 points;
2. Access to required information, critical assessment of information and its sources and efficiency of using information - 5 points;
3. Quality of engagement in foreign studies - 5 points;
4. Innovative thinking - 5 points;
5. The system of methods used in the research, research methodology - 5 points;
6. Quality of research conducted - 5 points;
7. Conclusions and results, problem solving - 5 points;
8. The use of research results - 5 points;
9. Legal and ethical use of information - 5 points;
10. Culture of academic writing - 5 points;
11. Organizing a presentation, ability to deliver material - 5 points;
12. Scientific dispute - 5 points.

In each of the above listed components the doctoral candidate must overcome 50%.

11. The final evaluation of the dissertation thesis is determined by Dissertation Board through summing up the arithmetic average of reviewers' assessment and that of board members's assessment. In case the summed up result is 51 or more, the dissertation thesis is evaluated as positively by Dissertation Board and is given the assessment: P- defended. (**#57, 31.08.2018**)

11¹. A positive evaluation (P – defended) of the dissertation is made according to the following system:

- Excellent (summa cum laude) – Excellent work, maximum evaluation 91 and more;
- Very good – (magna cum laude) result that comprehensively exceeds the requirements - maximum evaluation 81-90;
- good (cum laude) - result that exceeds the requirement - maximum evaluation 71-80;

- average (bene) – a result that comprehensively meets the requirements - maximum evaluation - 61-70;
- Satisfactory (rite) – The result, which meets the requirements despite the shortcomings – maximum evaluation 51-60. (#57, 31.08.2018)

11². In case of a positive assessment the doctoral student will get 120 credits envisaged for the research component. (#57, 31.08.2018)

11³. A negative evaluation of the dissertation (F – failed to defend) is made according to the following system:

- Unsatisfactory (insufficenter) - the outcome that can not meet the requirements due to the significant shortcomings;
- Completely unsatisfactory (sub omni canone) - the result that does not satisfy the requirements at all. 40% and less than the maximum. (#57, 31.08.2018)

12. The chairperson of the Dissertation Board publicly announces the final decision of the Board. The doctoral candidate has the right to get acquainted with the evaluation of the Dissertation Board.

13. The Secretary of the Dissertation Board writes the minutes of the defense of the dissertation, reviews the course of the defense and its final results, all the members of the Board sign it.

14. Within ten calendar days from the defense of the dissertation the doctoral studies coordinator submits one copy of the dissertation to the National Library and one copy to the university library.

15. Creating a video footage of the dissertation defense must be ensured by the doctoral candidate.

Article 35. Publishing a dissertation and awarding a doctoral degree

1. In case of receiving a positive assessment, the successful dissertation must be published in electronic form on the university website.

2. After the dissertation is published the Faculty Dissertation Council awards the doctor's academic degree.

3. The Secretary of the Dissertation Council within ten days from the decision of the Dissertation Council prepares a draft order about awarding a doctor's academic degree to the doctoral candidate and issuing an appropriate diploma which he/she submits to the Rector of the University.

4. Issuance of the order, as well as issuing a diploma and diploma supplement shall be done in compliance with the procedure established by the university.

Article 36. Diploma verifying a doctor's academic degree

1. Doctor's academic degree diploma will be issued by the University.

2. The person is called a Doctor after he/she is awarded the Doctor's Diploma.

Article 37. Dissertation case archive

1. After the dissertation is defended the Dissertation Case remains in the Dissertation Board archive, it includes:

- A. Doctoral candidate's application, endorsed by the Chairperson of the Dissertation Board on receiving the dissertation for review;
- B. Author's abstract of the dissertation;
- C. Written conclusion of the scientific supervisor (co- supervisors) on the dissertation;
- D. Electronic version of the dissertation and author's abstract of the thesis (PDF format);
- E. Scientific publications published by the doctoral candidate alone and/or in co-authorship, as well as their list;
- F. Scientific seminars, forums and conference materials and a list of the main results of the dissertation work;
- G. List of assessments reflecting the performance of study and research components;
- H. Opinions of the reviewers;
- I. The minutes of the Dissertation Board meeting, certified by the seal of the university;
- J. Document certifying the printed or electronic form of successfully defended dissertation;

- K. Copy of University Rector's Order on awarding the Doctor's Academic Degree to the Doctoral candidate.
2. The threaded together documentation will be stored in the board for a year, after which it will be passed to the archive of the university.

Article 38. Doctor's academic degree cancellation

1. By the decision of the Faculty Dissertation Board, the doctor will be deprived of the Doctor's academic degree, in case of misrepresentation of data in the dissertation, falsification of data, plagiarism and violating other norms of academic honesty.
2. If the plagiarism or the falsification of the dissertation documents is confirmed at any time, the Dissertation Board has the right to invalidate the awarded academic degree and abolish the appropriate diploma.

Chapter VII

Doctoral Studies with Partner University Participation

Article 39. Agreement on implementation of Doctoral Program

1. The University is authorized to jointly implement the Doctoral Education Program with Universities accredited in Georgia and/or with foreign universities similarly recognized according to foreign legislation.
2. The implementation of the Doctoral Program with the participation of the partner university is regulated by the agreement concluded with this university on cooperation and a joint Doctoral Program.
3. Forms of interuniversity Doctoral Programs:
- A. Organizing Joint Teaching;
 - B. Co-supervising a doctoral student;
 - C. Awarding a dual degree.

Article 40. Application for admission to doctoral studies

1. In case of partner university participation, admission to doctoral degree program must meet the requirements for the admission to the doctorate studies at both universities, which are determined by the contract on joint doctoral studies.
2. The doctoral candidate's application must be accompanied by the documents provided according to this regulation and a relevant professor's (from the partner university) agreement to co-supervise the dissertation.

Article 41. Scientific Supervisor

1. In case of the partner university participation, a doctoral student must be jointly supervised by professors of the University and the partner University. Both professors' conclusions are necessary. The defense of the dissertation should be attended by at least one of the supervisors.
2. The professor of the partner university who submits his/her consent to supervise the dissertation, submits his/her conclusion to the Faculty Dissertation Board.
3. If the dissertation proceedings are predominantly conducted at the partner university, they are implemented according to the regulation of the Doctoral Department of the partner University.

Article 42. The document certifying the Doctor's academic degree

1. The document confirming the Doctor's academic degree is issued by the University, where the dissertation was defended.
2. The document must contain the indication that the dissertation was defended with the participation of the Partner Universities.

Article 43. Language of presenting and defending a dissertation

The dissertation should be presented in Georgian and in the instruction language of the partner university. The same rule is applied for defending the dissertation.

Article 44. Publication

The decision to publish the dissertation is made in accordance with this Regulation or the requirements of the relevant Partner University Regulation.

Chapter VIII

Awarding the Honorable Doctor's Degree

Article 45. Honorable Doctor's Degree

1. A person with special scientific merit may be granted the academic rank of honorary doctor in a specific field.
2. The decision on awarding the title of honorary doctor is made by the Rector of the University upon the submission of the Faculty Dissertation Board.

Chapter IX

Financing

Article 46. Funding sources

Doctoral financing is carried out through university funding, scholarship, charity and self-financing.

Chapter X

Mobility

Article 47. Mobility in the Doctoral Program

1. The right to mobility is given to doctoral students after completing the first year of study, before the semester begins, twice a year.
2. A doctoral student has the right to mobility only within the same or related doctoral program.
3. The mobility process is regulated in accordance with the applicable legislation and the internal acts of the University. (#57, 31.08.2018)
4. The data of the doctoral student enrolled through mobility will be submitted to the Faculty Dissertation Board for the approval of the dissertation topic and the scientific advisor.
5. The Dissertation Board approves of the Dissertation topic and the scientific supervisor within the existing doctoral program.

Chapter XI

Final Provisions

Article 48. Final Provisions

1. Approval of this regulation, as well as changes and amendments therein, are carried out by the decision of the University Academic Council.
2. The Dean of the Faculty or any member of the Dissertation Board has the right to nominate the proposal on changes and amendments to this regulation. The justified proposal will be considered at the nearest meeting of the Dissertation Board. In case of a positive decision, the Dean of the Faculty submits the decision made by the Dissertation Board to the University Academic Council for consideration.
3. This regulation enters into force on 1 January, 2017.
4. The assessment system envisaged in paragraph 5 of Article 34 of this Regulation is not applied for the doctoral students who have already obtained credits in research components. Their final assessment will be the sum of credits obtained in research components performed by them subtracted from 120 credits. (#57, 31.08.2018)