INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE DOCTORAL STUDY PROGRAM OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Quality assurance through the creation of appropriate mechanisms and processes of monitoring quality is the basic strategic principle of the doctoral study program. Monitoring the quality of the doctoral study program has been assigned to the Committee for Ensuring the Quality of Doctoral Studies, whose members are chosen among the members of the Postgraduate Study Council. The Committee consists of three members.

Apart from monitoring quality through mechanisms and forms prescribed by the Handbook on the Doctoral Studies of University North, the Committee establishes the mechanisms and the procedure for monitoring the quality of the study program, as well as monitoring the position of the doctoral study program with regards to the environment. The basic instruments for monitoring a doctoral candidate and teachers are reports in the form of a Personal Plan for Doctoral Candidate Development, while the teachers and mentors are required to submit to the Committee for Ensuring the Quality of Doctoral Studies the following: a. personal development plan, b. researcher profile.

Alongside the aforementioned, a survey regarding the quality of the study and the satisfaction and experience of working with the mentor is conducted on a yearly basis among the doctoral candidates. The survey is conducted anonymously after each semester and improvements are made upon its analysis and conversations with students and mentors. The survey is used for changes and improvements which can also be suggested by doctoral candidates.

Teachers who partake in teaching at the doctoral study program are active researchers in their scientific field, which is manifested through scientific publications and participating in national and international research projects. Results of the research projects are continuously included in teaching and mentor work at the doctoral study program. A guarantee of the doctoral candidate’s research production is a required component of the doctoral study program according to which doctoral candidate must publish at least one research paper prior to writing doctoral dissertation.

The doctoral study program supports doctoral candidates both through content and financially when participating at national and international conferences, either as listeners or active presenters. Joint publications of the doctoral candidate and the mentor are common.

Teaching at the doctoral study program is based on the research work of the teacher-researcher. A guarantee of the quality of supervising doctoral works is based on a long-term experience of supervising successfully defended doctoral dissertations and through mentor workshops which the study organizes for the new mentors.

Topics of the doctoral dissertations are directed towards current trends in information and communication technologies. A great number of them has a wider social application as they are focused on research of many public institutions with large numbers of users. Therefore, the results of research can directly or indirectly influence a great number of people, as well as actions and procedures of different institutions.

The Committee for Ensuring the Quality of Doctoral Studies at least once a year checks the forms handed in by the teachers and doctoral candidates on a yearly basis. The forms which the teachers hand in to the Committee contain the courses taught by the teacher at the study program, list of papers, citations, list of mentorships in progress, and similar indications that may point to a possible discrepancy between the list of papers, courses taught by the teacher and similar. In case the discrepancy which could affect a drop in quality of the study is confirmed, the teacher is warned; in the case of absence of corrections, the teacher may no longer be involved at the doctoral study performance, or he/she receives a suggestion for the course change.

According to the reports of doctoral students and anonymous surveys, the Committee for quality works on increasing the quality of mentorship by organizing lectures and including potential mentors in mentor workshops in the country and abroad, as well as hosting regular themed sessions dedicated to mentor activities and problems.

Periodical revision and supplement of Postgraduate Doctoral Study of Media and Communication is carried out through analysis of the collected results of external and internal evaluation. Due to exceptionally dynamic development of information sciences, there is a continuous modernization of teaching materials and teaching methods and technologies so the study could offer doctoral candidates research of most modern topics in the field of information and communication sciences.