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UNIVERSITY OF GALATI

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT EVALUATION REPORT

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Introduction

The history of higher education in University of Galati includes the following stages of evolution: 1974 - the creation of the *University of Galati* by uniting the *Polytechnic Institute* with the *Pedagogical Institute* and 1991 - the *University of Galati* becomes "*Dunarea de Jos*" *University of Galati*.

The university has the mission to promote national and universal cultural values and accomplishes its mission by achieving some certain criterias. The general strategic objectives of University of Galati aim to continuously implement and improve the standards of quality management in higher education. University of Galati has 14 faculties in its structure and a Cross-Border Faculty answers to the social needs of the Republic of Moldova and it collaborates with partner higher education institutions, like the State Universities of Cahul, Comrat, and Chisinau. Cross-border education means mobility and mobility offers teaching through discovery, exchange of experience, and, especially communication

In report last five years achievements are summarized as follows: Between 2019 and 2023, the university's faculties organized the admission contest based on file for the undergraduate study programmes. To promote the education, offer and admission, the university annually organised a series of Educational Fairs in the counties of Galati, Braila, Buzau, Tulcea, Constanta, Vaslui, and in different cities like Tecuci, Slobozia

At the DJUG level, the number of budget seats for admission in the 1st cycle of university studies was relatively constant between 2019 – 2023, between 1542 in the academic year 2018 – 2019 and 1520 in the academic year 2023 – 2024.

At the DJUG level, the number of budget seats for admission in the 2nd study cycle decreased compared to the reference year (920 seats). In the next period, it was between 873 and 844, with a decrease of 8.26% in 2023 – 2024 than in 2018 – 2019.

With regards to the total number of students who attend master's programmes, there is an increase of 2.65% in 2024 compared to 2019, with annual fluctuations represented by increases and decreases. The highest annual increase was registered in 2020 (with 3.92% than 2019) and the highest decrease in 2021 with 1.65%. In 2018, there were 98 doctoral supervisors in 16 fields and now, in DJUG, there are 145 doctoral supervisors in 19 fields.

It is stated in self-study report that It can be observed, the situation of the number of employed graduates has been relatively constant in the last five years and, even though the number of graduates who accepted to fill in the questionnaire slightly varies from one year to another, around 75% of graduates got hired, and 65% among them are hired in the field of the graduated studies.

The admission for residency is a competition nationally organised, with a unique topic and bibliography. In the university center of Galati, on January 1st, 2020, there were 757 bachelor graduates of medicine faculties/programmes from the



country, including DJUG, enrolled in the residency training programme for the first specialisation (1st year – 393; 2nd year – 194; 3rd year – 104; 4th year – 41; 5th year - 25) and 46 medical specialists for the second specialisation with tuition fee. There are also foreign students at the residency, 17 in dental medicine and 8 in medicine. In 2020, in DJUG the residency training was ensured by 52 residency training supervisors and 42 tutors, tenured academics of the university. In the university center of Galati, on January 1st, 2022, there were 921 bachelor graduates of medicine faculties/programmes from the country, including DJUG, enrolled in the residency training programme for the first specialisation (1st year – 311; 2nd year – 454; 3rd year – 52; 4th year – 79; 5th year – 24; 6th year – 1) and 48 medical specialists for the second specialisation with tuition fee. In 2022, there were 38 residents enrolled, non-EU citizens, at residency with tuition fee.

The Lifelong Learning and Technology Transfer Department organises continuous training programmes for adults to develop knowledge and professional skills in a flexible manner, adapted to the economic and social requirements. The department offers the following types of courses: continuous training courses, post-university and professional training programmes, professional conversion programmes, qualification courses, development courses, University for Seniors (U3A), and University for Juniors.

The department offers undergraduate study programmes in accredited fields. The admission to distance/part-time learning is carried out based on the admission methodology. Beginning in 2016, the Faculty of Judicial, Social and Political Sciences together with the Lifelong Learning and Technology Transfer Department established the University for Seniors

The Research, Development, and Innovation Office was established on March 1st, 2020, The Scientific Research Council was established for the new component for the 2020-2024 mandate. The council is led by the operational group, consisting of: the Vice-rector for the research, development, innovation activity and partnership with the economical-social environment, the Director of the Council for Doctoral Studies, the Director of the Reform's multidisciplinary research platform and the Chairman of the Committee for scientific research of the university Senate. The council has 24 members: doctoral school representative, faculty representatives, as well as student representative. In the Scientific Research Council, 4 specialized committees' function: the Committee for management and evaluation of research, development, and innovation activity, the Committee for scientific research funding, the Committee for organising and infrastructure of research units and the Committee for internationalization and promoting international visibility in research. The university's research activity is carried out in research units. After the 2017 evaluation, at the university level, 31 scientific research/artistic creation units have been accredited that carry out RDI activities in fundamental fields: *Engineering sciences, Mathematics and natural sciences, Humanities and arts, Economics and social sciences and Sports and physical education science*. In 2022, the revaluation of the research units of "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati (DJUG) was done, and 34 research units have been accredited at institutional level in different fields.



The REXDAN research infrastructure has two major components: a research vessel and a fixed center with 18 laboratories. The REXDAN research vessel carries out research activities in multiple fields: chemistry, biology, physics, environmental sciences, ecology, bathymetry, topography, atmospheric chemistry, sustainable development, etc. regarding water, sediments, earth, air, biodiversity, bathymetry, hydromorphology, etc. and covers a large geographical area: 2000 km of the navigable sector of the Danube, including the coastal area.

Since May 2020, the Research, Development, and Innovation Office has drafted monthly reports about the RDI research results carried out by the university's academic. The reports contain data extracted from the Clarivate Analytics – Web of Science, SCOPUS, ResearchGate and Google Scholar platforms and are approved by a 6-member committee: the Vice-rector for the research, development, innovation activity and partnership with the economical-social environment, the Vice-rector for didactic activity and quality assurance, 2 members of the Senate's Scientific Committee; 2 representative members of ReForm – UDJG. After approval, the reports are brought to the attention of the university's academic community through StaffAcad.

The IC institutional reporting documents were verified in 4 distinct stages, aiming the correctness of the National Council for the Accreditation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates score for the university's academics (professor and associate professor) for the declared fields, the correlation between the records centralized in the Institutional table and the individual annexes on articles, patents, sports performance and artistic creation, verification of the articles/patents declared in the Institutional-articles-patents table, verification of a number of 28 individual records of academics in 20 fields randomly selected by the National Council for the Financing of Higher Education.

As a result of the project implementation, the institutional potential for attracting European funding has been highlighted and an enabling environment for responsible and dynamic multidisciplinary cooperation has been developed to increase the competitiveness of research units by providing specialized knowledge transfer consultancy services.

The national metaranking is a ranking mechanism designed based on the analysis of international university rankings, recognized by the International Ranking Expert Group, Inventory of International Rankings (IREG) in which Romanian universities are present, according to the methodology established by the Order of the Minister of Education no. 3095/2022 of February 7th, 2022, for approving the Methodology for conducting the national metaranking exercise. Compared to the previous methodology used for conducting the metaranking between 2016 – 2020, the 2021 version proposed a formula that facilitates a higher accuracy for differentiating the position of each Romanian higher education institution, compared to the others in the national hierarchy, the differences between scores being highlighted at the level of four decimal places and not at the level of a whole number, as in previous years.



A grant of 50.000 RON was awarded to each faculty, according to the Guidelines for the general conditions for awarding internal grants to researchers in DJUG, approved by the Administration Council. The total value of the 14 grants was 700.000 RON with implementation until the end of 2022. In 2018, 6 grants for young researchers were awarded, and in the evaluation of the research activity of the beneficiaries of the research grants awarded from the university's own revenues, amounting to 50.000 RON each, it was found that the assumed objectives and indicators were met.

Horizone Europe is the main funding programme of the EU for research and innovation, being one of the biggest research and innovation programmes in the world, with a budget of 95.5 billion euros. This programme facilitates collaboration and consolidates the impact of research and innovation on the development, support and implementation of EU policies, at the same time taking into consideration global challenges.

DJUG succeeded in attracting funds through numerous types of projects carried out in national competitions, concluded with contracting authorities of the Romanian Government or through projects carried out in programmes financed from external sources, as well as with national and foreign economic operators. Compared to 2013 – 2018, when a number of 364 projects were carried out with a contracted value of 257 988 338 RON, DJUG values being 233 700 904,62 RON). Now, DJUG is implementing as beneficiary and partner: 23 international research and cooperation projects, 19 projects contracted under operational programmes, 18 research projects contracted under national programmes, and 13 projects with complementary funding.

The university financially supports both the dissemination abroad of the research results and the documentation and research activity abroad, etc. For this purpose, between 2018 and 2023, significant amounts have been allocated to fund the participation of academics in scientific events and the payment of fees for the publication of research results.

DJUG obtained 18 patents between 2018 and 2023 and submitted 76 documentations for national patents. Also, in the aforementioned period, DJUG submitted 7 documentations for international patents. Patent RO 131180 B1 - Spreadable vegetable product and process for its production was surrendered to S.C. SANO VITA S.R.L., by patent assignment contract authenticated under no. 6866/14.12.2020. Compared to 2013 – 2017, the period in which the university gained the right to intellectual property on a number of 21 patents awarded by the State Office for Inventions and Trademarks, between 2018 and 2023 there was a decrease of 14%.

According to this ranking, at scientific realizations for 2022, four of the 238 top researchers from Romania are from DJUG. They are Academician Eugen Victor Cristian RUSU, Director of the Council for Doctoral Studies, Professor Liliana Celia RUSU, Ph.D., from the Faculty of Engineering, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Professor Constantin APETREI, Ph.D., from the Department of Chemistry, physics, and environment, Faculty of Sciences and Environment, and Professor Lidia BENEĂ, Ph.D., from the Faculty of Engineering, field of Materials Engineering. In 2021, the higher education institution of Galati was represented



at global level in the same manner by these four professors.

The learning resources available at the DJUG level on resource categories are books, journals, electronic documents, doctoral theses, standards, patents, inventions, etc. It must be mentioned the purchasing of online scientific databases.

The university's balance sheet at the end of 2023 showing that the institution's assets/liabilities of 523,638,061.00 RON and a value of net/assets/equity of 470,534,851.00 RON. Romanian state scholarship holders, in the amount of 75 EUR for undergraduate students and 85 EUR for master's students.

The accommodation rates are differentiated according to the level of comfort and are approved by the University Senate. The student dorms have a number of 920 rooms, and the total accommodation capacity is 3000 places.

International Cooperation, Foreign Students and University Extensions Office is actively involved in the internationalization policy of DJUG that the university constantly promotes and develops.

A step towards the integration and globalization road is the establishment and carrying out of programmes taught in foreign languages. There are agreements with EU and non-EU universities DJUG has a total of 61 active agreements in place: EU countries – France, Italy, Poland – exchange of students and academics; Spain - participation in EAIE Barcelona, an opportune event for the development and strengthening of inter-institutional relations, as a result of which 5 cooperation agreements were concluded. non-EU countries – Albany, Algeria, Brazil, China, Egypt, Switzerland, Jordan, India, Japan, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Cuba, Malaysia and Republic of Moldova and Ukraine

University students regularly benefit from the expertise of guest professors from prestigious universities from Belgium, Bulgaria, Turkey, Tunisia, Finland, France, Italy, Germany, Portugal, Japan, etc. to hold lectures in various fields of activities. In the mentioned period, over 150 international academics have visited our university. In 2022, the first important steps have been taken for the university to participate in a *European Universities Alliance*, formed by 10 higher education institutions.

Notes from evaluation Meeting

20.05.2024

Monday

Time 14.00-14.30 ARACIS evaluation panel meeting with the representatives (rector, vice rectors, directors of doctoral schools, deans, institutional contact person, contact persons for study programs, student representatives)

Rector made a welcoming speech and stated out that they have more desire for learning and improvement for the success of their university. Additionally, he



pointed out that to make it happen they made lots of works for this evaluation.

During her welcoming speech, Quality Committee Coordinator pointed out that how busy schedule they had during preparation of self-study report and finally with a perfect coordination to finish it.

ARACIS coordinator is also emphasized that he also hopes very good results to improve university and make it better for the end of evaluation period.

Time 14.30-15.00 Meeting with the institutional contact person and the self-evaluation report team

Meeting started with ARACIS directors opening speech and Prof Elena Mereuta talked as representative quality commission. She stated out that it was very difficult to be coordinated and tough gathering information from departments in a very limited period of times. She believes that they realized a good work and expecting to get some comments on this report that they make them happy.

Another professor from food engineering pointed out they have given huge effort to prepare institutional capacity evaluation. Another one also added he was involved with the evaluation process of the university in last five years (Chapter 5). Prof. Rusu (IOSUD Director) who is in charge of preparing chapter 4 made an explanation about how his team showed a great effort to make it done. Food science and industrial engineering representatives were in charge of preparing Annex part, quality management also prepared C part of the report.

Aracis director made his comments and pointed out that it is clearly visible people are very fragmented and to form a one good thing. Even they don't have enough time to finish this work on time, it is very time consuming they worked together to make things easier. Elena on the other told that there are three people in quality department. Each department of university have representative in each committee. It is becoming more dynamics. Practically monitoring realized through departmental and institutional basis. One of the professors also informed us existing a project about how to make documentation in order to be evaluated by ARACIS and for disseminating the knowledge. Another member of team also stated out that faculties are supposed to teach instead of administrative works he said there no standard for them at ARACIS level, so they don't have time class and similar things in the case of administrative works.

Student's participation to evaluation of quality management has a crucial importance to make their own contribution to the cases. In the final accreditation report, there were variety of recommendation existed. So, the council made their best effort to realize these recommendations.

The representative of doctoral program explained that some information which are given for preparation report was expired. These datas will not be valid for



university and also IOSID level as well. New data obtained in very short time with a result of coordination and processed for the report. Elections of doctoral school and representatives were also discussed in this session as well. It is stated that quality committee in faculty level offer responsibilities and their structure syndicates, students, faculties, and others. Another discussion about improvement of curriculum content and how to improve them. It is mentioned that generally curriculum content is offered to students to receive their commands. But for the first-year students, it has a crucial importance how to survive instead curriculum improvement. Each faculty present its evaluation report every year. Actually, they also ask data from doctoral level. If there are problems with the students, this can be solved with the committees by using their feedback.

It is also stated that rector leads a report preparation regarding to present status of the university for each year.

Opportunity in this committee can be explained as the employers and students are part of it. The organization named Liberty Galati Economical which is a old member of this committee is suffered about bureaucracy. On the other hand, green steel project representative mentioned about including his project with the curriculum, they are promoting university's technical learning in each level. They are all very satisfied about the how this committee works. It is pointed out that existence of international consortium having 9 countries to improve quality concepts.

Meeting 15.30-16.00 Economic and Financial Department

Meeting opened with the introduction of ARACIS representative and then structural organization of this department has been asked. Departmental organizations have two subdivisions as financial and administrative. Administration is in charge of control campus and cantina as well. Another topic is the budget were discussed. Budget is made by accounting department. They explain their contact with the ministry also they explained how they are managing administrative problems. They are being inspected by internal and external auditing service. Internal auditing is realized through internal trained stuff and external auditing is through professional agency.

Meeting 16.00-17.00 Graduates

Meeting has started with the ARACIS representative's opening speech. Room was full of the young and senior graduates. They started to introduce themselves and made their comment about how satisfied with the education, university, and faculties during their studies. General sense is the faculties are very easy to communicate with, life in campus, keeping their relations after graduation. A Moldova origin graduate who is residential, working in the local hospital, graduated from economics, and working as an entrepreneur stated out that he has 20 % of the present market for special agricultural products. He is also stated out that transversal competency is supposed to be given at the university level like critical analysis. An art student graduate who works as an artistic director is



stated that he is employing students from his university. A Graduate from Food Science and Engineering talked about good infrastructure existence and how easy to work and make research at his department. A law school graduate who is working as both Judge and assistant professor emphasized that practical parts were missing but presently this is compensated and improved a lot. Basically, graduates are totally satisfied with the education during their studentship and all graduates are aware of continuous learning and improvements concept importance which can be explained with the lifelong learning concepts.

Meeting 17.00-18.00 General meeting with Employers

Graduates of university of Galati are employing new graduates as well. One of the employers ask for help from human resource to employ new graduates and she pointed out that she is hiring from university for eight years. She has an entertaining company employing graduates from almost each faculty of the university. Another PhD from Galati said that he has a risky waste management company and offering good salary for the employees. Another employer said that he has 68 employees in his company, and all are from University of Galati. Another employer said that they are aiming to train graduates according to their needs and offering scholarship during their master studies and hiring them after graduation. Representative of steel company mentioned that they are employing 15 graduate each year for the last two years. This company has 700 employee and most of them from university of Galati. Another representative has a catering company pointed that he has two employees from the university and their competencies much higher than the graduates from other universities in Romania. An owner of IT company told that 80% of his employees are from University Galati also added there is high migration of people on this domain out of country. Another owner of an IT company mentioned they are offering internship opportunity to employ after graduation. An inspector of county school said that they have 70 employees from University of Galati. It is important improve pedagogical performance of the graduates. Another school inspector used a similar statement and pointed out that they have 5800 employees (primary, secondary, high school teachers) all are educated from University of Galati. As recommendation it is stated out that graduates need more practical applications. They are sponsoring some scientific activities and awards. The university has website for graduates to access different job opportunities.

21.05.2024

TUESDAY

10.00-10.30 meeting with the carrier counselling guidance center

Representative of the center has given information about the last five years activities for each normal part like training work, workshop. Variety of activities has been carried in this period which is truly impressive. And also it is pointed out that There are many volunteer student for didactic activities. In this part there



was a question about how students are being motivated for all this and it is replied as by offering them scholarship. Also asked how they guidance students depending on their needs, and it is explained these needs are classified as normal needs and special needs bases.

Vice dean for students explained about recruitment of student new students, organization of new students. Another professor from food engineering department told that first- and second-year students are not interact with the lessons so carrier center should apply a methodology to keep them in university.

10.30-11.00 Meeting with Ethical Commission

Just after opening speech ethical commission representative made explanation about activities. How often they are having meeting and how they determine the content of meeting. They generally are having meeting on weekly bases and last ethical issue was about one week ago from faculty of sport and not finalized yet. How students can be member of commission question is replied as by election. Another question was how commission threats submission without sign is replied as analyzing the situation depending how serious the case is or not.

11.00-12.00 Meeting with the Students

Meeting started with introducing all students themselves, they were basically representative of each department of the university, they explained how satisfied with service of carrier center, one foreign student pointed out that they criticized, facilities in dormitories and cantina is supposed to have better conditions like cantina working hours should be modified.

13.00-14.00 Meeting with Teaching Staff

Faculties are basically from each department of the university Meeting was almost interactive mode. They mentioned that they are using mobility programs Erasmus etc. They made some critics about evaluation methodology by department, faculty etc. Evaluation instruments are discussed. Evaluating of teacher by students are also another issue. Students are not attending to course are evaluating teacher. This is not fair. They have also talked about existence of academic award which make them content. They complained about self-study report and pointed out that same evaluation sheet is being used for each field which is not supposed to be like that and this case should be specified. Also assistant professor and full professor are being evaluated with the same document. This issue has been discussed a lot. Another issue is the faculties which some of them make research and some of them not.

14.00-15.00 Meeting with PhD Study Council

Just after opening, the head of Phd study council gave information about how they work and how they determine the topics. Each department's strategic targets about topics will be PhD study. Erasmus, mobility agreements and cotutel activities were explained. How many cotutels are presently being carried out is



asked and they replied as Portugal, France, etc. They have extension in Italy. Question about if department employing Phd students after finishing their studies. Every semester 1 and each year 2 of them are being employed according to objective selection criteria

15.00-16.00 Meeting with the Research Centre/lab representative

After opening speech, they made explanation about how they are managing technical maintenance of the facilities that they have in their labs also informed about if they have sufficient fund to survive, if they can find fund easily when it is necessary. Another representative also mentioned about funding is not a problem, but technician is a very serious problem for the laboratories. Establishing collaboration between private sector and university is also explained with the examples from university.

16.00-20.00 Site Visit

We have visited infrastructure of the university as an evaluation team. Firstly, we started with the electric electronic faculty automation lab for students, polymeric materials lab, mechanical engineering department, materials and metallurgical engineering department, food science and engineering department, naval architecture department and low school. Our visit continued with the library, kinesiology department, new research and development centers on media and communication, new research center for cars, faculty of pharmacy and medicine and at the end a REXDAN research facility functioning as research and development center for Danube River. It was important to see in this site visit using of cutting-edge technologies for the benefit of students.

General Conclusion and Recommendations

University Galati is about 75 years old and Naval Engineering, Food Science and Mechanical Engineering departments are backbone of the university. Final transformation of the university goes back to 1973.

Self-assessment report has been prepared in detailed and provides the opportunity to answer all possible questions. As a part of evaluation process, meetings and site visit (notes were given in previous pages) were carried out with the panel members, PhD students, academic staff, ethics and quality commission and employers of the doctoral graduates. All meetings were very productive. All the questions asked were answered and the suggestions were received very positively. It is clear that this is just because of very good coordination and collaboration between each stakeholder of the university. My observations and recommendations about evaluation of the University of Galati are listed below:



1. Each unit of the University of Galati has a competent and experienced teaching staff, having a high level of scientific activity and a good international visibility.
2. Infrastructure of departments in terms of research equipment and installations is very good, this allowing the realization of a qualitative research activity
3. PhD students are satisfied with the learning environment and socio-cultural facilities, positively appreciate the relationships with mentors and access to research infrastructure, being optimistic about career prospects
4. Collaborations with the socio-economic environment are good, especially with research institutes in the field, and international collaborations are numerous and diverse
5. The Doctoral School are doing their best to meet all the conditions for a quality education and research. They stated about cotutel opportunities as well. Doctoral school provides students to an interdisciplinary study opportunity. This is very beneficial for the students.
6. PhD students emphasized that interdisciplinary character of the doctoral school is an important attractive point for the university. They stated out that they have all totally satisfied with the PhD supervisors' competency. most of the students have been to abroad and have very useful internship experience during their PhD studies. They also mentioned that research teams offering new horizons to the students. Some students are supported by the private company and some of them are supported by the research grants and different programs like Erasmus, EU Horizon Projects
7. PhD students were mentioned that there is a strong relationship between the students and the advisors. The advisors always guide the students not only the research but also in every field. They also stated that they have good relationship with the doctoral schools. Since many of them have a PhD while working at the company, they get the support from their company and they don't need to doctoral school.
8. Ethics Commission is functioning as it is supposed to be.
9. REXDAN research center is an asset not only for the university but also to country. It has to be supported.
10. It is also pointed out by the student that cantin working hours can be modified for offering better service.
11. Kinesiology department is another asset to university, it has to be supported.
12. It is discussed during the meeting that same form is being filled by full time professors and assistant professor for performance evaluation; as it is stated there this case can be modified.
13. It is a great encouragement of employing PhD students in their department after their graduation as a faculty member.



All graduates, students, employees, faculties of the university have a deep loyalty to their institutions. University Galati is not a top-level university according to given rankings in self-study report but there are many respected faculties are clearly showing tremendous effort to make their institution higher ranks. University is presently leading to apply cutting edge technologies like we observed through the REXDAN research center, and departments laboratories.

In the light of all these observations, I consider that University of Galati deserves "High Trust" level grading as a result of evaluation.

Respectfully,

Prof. Dr. Gültekin Göller