

In the name of God

Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education
Supreme Council for Planning Medical Sciences

Educational Regulations for the Doctorate Program in General Medicine

Approved in the sixty-seventh session of the
Supreme Council for Planning Medical Sciences

July 23, 2017

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The educational regulations for the Doctorate Program in General Medicine, which has been approved by the Secretariat of the General Medical Education Council, consists of 13 chapters, 93 articles, and 96 notes, and was ratified in the sixty-seventh session of the Supreme Council for Planning Medical Sciences on July 23, 2017.

These regulations are effective from the beginning of the academic year 2017-2018 for students entering the university from this date onwards. It is mandatory and as of this date, all regulations and directives conflicting with it will be invalidated for students subject to these regulations.

Approved and signed by:

Dr. Tahereh Changiz

Secretary of the General Medical
Education Council

Dr. Seyed Mansour Razavi

Secretary of the Supreme Council
for Planning Medical Sciences

Dr. Bagher Larijani

Educational Deputy and Secretary of
the General and Specialized Medical
Education Council

The decision issued in the sixty-seventh session of the Supreme Council for Planning Medical Sciences on July 23, 2017, regarding the educational regulations of the General Medicine Doctorate Program is appropriate and should be communicated to the executing units.

Dr. Seyed Hassan Hashemi

Minister of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education
and President of the Supreme Council for Planning Medical Sciences

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions have been uniformly accepted in the regulations of all levels of education and are referenced according to the relevant level. They are an integral part of the regulations, and any modification or interpretation contrary to them is not permissible.

University of Medical Sciences

It is an educational, research, and service institution that, in addition to its primary duty of training human resources in various medical fields, is involved in conducting research, providing health and medical services, and serves as the final referral center in these matters.

Each university of medical sciences consists of a medical school and at least two other schools.

School of Medical Sciences

It is an independent educational, research, and service institution that, in addition to its primary duty of training human resources in various medical fields, is involved in conducting research, providing health and medical services, and serves as the final referral center in these matters.

School

A school is a unit of a university that consists of at least three departments, such as the school of medicine, school of dentistry, and school of public health.

College in the Medical Department

It is a higher education institution comprised of departments of education at the associate degree level in medical fields, providing necessary facilities and equipment for offering educational programs in those fields.

Institution

An institution in higher education is a general concept that applies to any of the higher education and research centers established with official authorization from the Ministry of

Science, Research, and Technology or the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education.

Department

It is responsible for education, research, and/or providing medical services related to a specific field or branch, such as the health department, physiology department, and surgery department.

Testing Group

The National Education Assessment Organization divides university entrance exam candidates into specific groups based on their chosen fields. Each of these groups is referred to as a testing group.

Program

A program is a coordinated and coherent set of interrelated subjects in a field that is presented to students within a specific system and a defined period of time to ultimately lead to the attainment of a recognized university credential. Academic programs in the Iranian higher education system in the following academic levels are offered:

- Post-Diploma Certificate (associate degree)
- Bachelor's Degree (continuous and non-continuous)
- Master's Degree (non-continuous)
- General Medicine (GP)
- Ph.D.
- Clinical Specialty (Residency)
- Subspecialty

Education Administration

The term "Education Administration" refers to an administrative unit within a school or university that is responsible for all educational matters related to students, including enrollment (registration), course selection, conducting exams, collecting grades, and announcing results.

Professor/Instructor

Any academic staff member responsible for teaching theoretical or practical courses is referred to as a professor or instructor.

Field of Study (Major)

A field of study is one of the sub-branches of scientific groups (e.g. medical sciences, humanities, basic science, engineering, agriculture, and arts), which is distinctly defined in terms of subject matter and must have at least one specific functionality. In two distinct fields of study, common courses should not exceed 30% of the total credits without considering general courses.

Specialization

Each branch within a field of study overseeing a specific expertise is referred to as a specialization. The difference in courses between two specializations within the same field should not be less than 7% and not exceed 30% of the total credits without considering general courses.

Courses

University courses are classified based on content into general and specialized courses (basic and specialized in the field) and based on their interrelation into continuous (prerequisite) and independent courses. They are further categorized as mandatory and elective courses based on the necessity of selection, and in terms of teaching methods, they are divided into theoretical, practical, theoretical-practical, apprenticeship, internship, and clinical internships.

Note.

- Courses that are taught in theoretical and practical forms are taught independently of each other, each having a separate code and grade.
- Courses that are taught in theoretical-practical form are considered as one course, sharing a common code and grade.

General Courses

These courses are offered to develop students' general knowledge and cultural insight based on Islamic culture, beliefs, and familiarity with scientific methods. These courses are

mandatory for all students in all fields of medical sciences at the levels of post-diploma (associate), bachelor's degrees (continuous and non-continuous), and general medicine programs.

Specialized Courses

These courses are divided into two categories: basic courses and professional courses.

- **Basic Courses:** These courses are designed to prepare students by expanding their knowledge, strengthening their scientific foundation, enhancing their insight, and better understanding of professional courses.
- **Professional Courses:** These courses are solely taught to enhance the scientific and practical skills of a specific field.

Compensatory Courses

If a student has not completed certain courses in the previous level, they are required to make up for those courses in addition to the prescribed credits, as determined by the department and in accordance with the relevant curriculum.

Core Courses

These are essential courses that must be completed for graduation and cannot be substituted with other courses.

Non-Core Courses

They can be selected from a set of courses based on regulations and educational programs.

Prerequisite Courses

These are courses that must be completed to take another course. Compensatory or mandatory courses may serve as prerequisites, while elective courses cannot.

Independent Courses

These are courses that can be chosen without the need to select or complete other courses.

Blended Learning

Blended learning is an instructional strategy that combines face-to-face (in-person) and e-learning (online) teaching methods.

Theoretical Courses

Courses that are presented in a classroom setting.

Practical Courses

Courses that are conducted in workshops, laboratories, clinical skills centers, or relevant departments of the school.

Clerkship Courses

Courses conducted in authentic workplace environments (such as hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities) or simulated settings (clinical skills centers) to impart practical skill training to medical students.

Internship Courses

Courses held in genuine work settings to enhance proficiency in practical skills for medical students.

Clinical Rotation Courses

Courses designed to deliver practical skill training within the context of healthcare service provision for medical students.

Chapter 1

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Article 1. The admission requirements for the general medicine doctorate program are as follows:

1.1. Acceptance in the entrance exam.

1.2. Holding a high school diploma from the old system or a pre-university diploma from the new system, inside or outside the country, approved by the Ministry of Education based on the new high school education system or equivalent to seminary education according to the approved regulations of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution.

1.3. Being eligible to continue education according to the current laws and regulations of the country, and meeting the general requirements for admission to higher education as per the approved regulations of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution.

1.4. Having complete physical and mental health according to the approved regulations of the Supreme Council for Medical Sciences Planning.

1.5. Committing to serve based on the regulations and laws of free education or payment of tuition fees according to the tariff and regulations issued by relevant authorities.

Note 1. If a student does not meet the necessary physical and mental health requirements for the general medicine doctorate program as specified in the nationwide entrance exam booklet by the National Assessment Organization, they will not be allowed to study in the general medicine doctorate program based on the opinion of the Medical Council of the university.

Note 2. Presenting a high school diploma certificate from the old system or a pre-university diploma certificate from the new system at the time of registration and no later than the end of the first semester, and presenting the original high school diploma or pre-university diploma certificate no later than one year after initial registration is mandatory.

Note 3. Payment of tuition fees does not exempt graduates of the general medicine doctorate program from fulfilling other specific legal obligations.

Article 2. Accepted candidates of the entrance exam are required to visit the relevant university for registration and course selection within the specified deadlines set by the National Assessment Organization or the university. Failure to register in the first semester after exam results will be considered withdrawal from studies.

Article 3. The student is obligated to visit the educational administration for registration and course selection each academic semester at the time specified by the university. Failure to register without notice and a valid excuse for one semester will be considered dropping out, leading to the student's expulsion.

Note 1. In exceptional cases where a student justifies their dropout, they must provide reasons in writing to the educational administration no later than one month before the end of that semester. If the justification for dropping out is approved by the Educational Council of the university, that semester will be considered part of the student's permissible study period, and an academic leave will be granted for that semester.

Note 2. A student who drops out and wishes to receive their academic documents must fulfill all legal obligations of their study period.

Article 4. A student in the general medicine doctorate program will not have the right to register and continue their studies in more than one major (field of study) and at one or multiple universities, whether public or private. In case of violation, as determined by the Committee for Supervision of the Proper Implementation of Educational Regulations of the relevant ministry, the student will be deprived of continuing their studies in one of the chosen majors, their academic records will be invalidated, and the student will be required to pay all expenses related to the dropped major according to the specified tariffs to the respective university.

Note. Students with exceptional talents and outstanding abilities are exempt from the provisions of this article and are subject to their own regulations and guidelines.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Article 5. The education of the general medicine doctorate program is based on a unitary (credit) system.

Article 6. In the unitary system, the value of each course is assessed based on the number of units (credits) assigned to that course, and a student's pass or fail in a course is limited to that specific course.

Article 7. Each unit of a course represents the amount of theoretical study for 17 hours, practical (or laboratory) work for 34 hours, apprenticeship for 51 hours, and internship for 68 hours during one academic semester or summer term and is taught according to the approved program by the Supreme Council for Medical Sciences Planning.

Article 8. The general medicine doctorate program includes the following stages:

- First Stage: Basic Science
- Second Stage: Clinical Preliminaries (Physiopathology)
- Third Stage: Clinical Clerkship
- Fourth Stage: Clinical Internship

Article 9. In the first and second stages of the general medicine doctorate program, each academic year consists of two academic semesters and, if necessary and feasible, one summer term. Each academic semester comprises 17 instructional weeks, and the summer term consists of 6 instructional weeks, adhering to the provisions of Article 7.

Note 1. The duration of end-of-semester or end-of-summer term exams is not considered part of the 17 or 6 instructional weeks.

Note 2. In exceptional and necessary cases such as natural disasters, impossibility of the instructor's presence due to illness, and similar circumstances, upon the proposal of the relevant school and approval by the Educational Council of the university, a course or courses can be taught for a shorter period than 17 weeks for all students who have enrolled in that

course or courses. This is conditional on ensuring that the total hours of each unit of the course do not fall below the amount specified in Article 7 of these regulations, and attendance in all classes is mandatory according to the hours allocated for each unit.

Article 10. In the clinical stages of the third and fourth years, each academic year consists of several clinical training components and relevant theoretical courses. The number of components in the clinical stages during each academic year is determined by the Educational Council of the university based on the training duration required for each component.

Article 11. All universities and schools of medical sciences are obliged to implement the approved curriculum and syllabus by the Supreme Council for Medical Sciences Planning.

Note. The arrangement of courses, considering prerequisites, organizing students' educational programs throughout the course, teaching methods, rearranging detailed materials, introducing new topics in a course, and selecting resources are the responsibilities of universities and schools of medical sciences. Resources for comprehensive exams in basic science, comprehensive pre-internship exams, and clinical competency exams are determined by the relevant ministry.

Article 12. At the end of the first stage, a comprehensive exam in basic science is held, and passing this exam is a requirement for entering the next stage.

Note 1. The requirement for participating in the comprehensive exam in basic science includes passing a minimum of 46.5 units (credits) from basic science courses, including all basic science courses except floating courses between basic science and clinical preliminaries, and earning a minimum of 8 units of general courses. Achieving an overall average of 12 from the aforementioned courses (46.5 units of basic science as well as 8 units of general courses) is also required.

Note 2. If grades for certain courses that a student has completed and taken exams for are not announced at the time of introduction to the comprehensive exam in basic science, the student will participate conditionally in the exam. If the student fails in that course after the grade announcement or does not meet the conditions for participating in the exam as per Note 1, the result of their exam will not be considered valid. The mentioned exam will not be counted as one of the attempts for that student, and they will not be allowed to participate

in the next comprehensive exam until they obtain a passing grade in the failed course and achieve the necessary average.

Article 13. Participation in the comprehensive exam in basic science is allowed up to three times. If a student fails to pass this exam, they will be deprived of continuing their studies in the general medicine doctorate program.

Note 1. Unjustified absence from the comprehensive exam in basic science is considered as one attempt at taking the exam.

Note 2. A student who is deprived of continuing their studies in medicine due to failing the comprehensive exam in basic science can change their major according to the guidelines for changing majors for students in general medicine doctorate programs, dentistry, and pharmacy who are deprived of continuing their studies in the general doctorate program, approved by the 22nd session of the Supreme Council for Medical Sciences Planning on July 19, 2003, to another field at undergraduate (continuous or non-continuous) or associate degree levels.

Article 14. The condition for admission to the third stage is the passing of a minimum of 29 units of the specialized courses of the second stage, all floating courses between basic science and clinical preliminaries, and obtaining an overall average of 12 from the aforementioned courses (29 units of the specialized courses of the second stage as well as 15 units of the floating basic courses).

Article 15. The clinical clerkship includes training in outpatient healthcare services in hospital clinics and healthcare service centers in the country, clinical education of hospitalized patients, and theoretical courses.

Note. During the clinical clerkship period, completing a minimum of 21 months of clerkship according to the approved program is mandatory for all students.

Article 16. At the end of the third stage, a comprehensive pre-internship exam is held, and passing this exam is a requirement for entering the internship period.

Note 1. The requirement for participating in the comprehensive pre-internship exam includes passing specific theoretical units of the internship stage (31 units), passing clinical clerkship units (63 units equivalent to 21 months), passing theoretical units floating between clinical preliminaries and clerkship (7 units from specialized courses), achieving an overall average of 14 from these courses, passing all general courses, and registering the thesis topic.

Note 2. If grades for some courses and wards that a student has completed and taken exams for are not announced at the time of introduction to the comprehensive pre-internship exam, the student will participate conditionally in the exam. If the student fails in that course or ward after the grade announcement or does not meet the conditions for participating in the exam as per Note 1, the result of their exam will not be considered valid. The mentioned exam will not be counted as one of the attempts for that student, and they will not be allowed, even conditionally, to participate in the next comprehensive exam until they obtain a passing grade in the failed course or ward and achieve the necessary average.

Note 3. Successful candidates of the comprehensive pre-internship exam will be ranked based on a formula as follows:

$$\text{Comprehensive Pre-Internship Rank} = [\text{Adjusted score of the pre-internship exam based on the average} + (\text{average of the first three stages} \times 2)] \div 3$$

They will have priority in choosing available wards for completing the internship period.

For example, if a student's average in the first three stages is 15 and their score in the pre-internship exam is 180 out of 200, their adjusted score in the pre-internship exam based on the average will be 18. Their rank, according to the formula above, will be calculated as follows:

$$[(15 \times 2) + 18] \div 3 = 16$$

Article 17. Participation in the comprehensive pre-internship exam is allowed up to three times. If a student fails to pass this exam, they will be deprived of continuing their studies in the general medicine doctorate program.

Note. Students who are deprived of continuing their studies in medicine due to failing the comprehensive pre-internship exam can change their major to a continuous bachelor's degree, noncontinuous bachelor's degree, or associate degree according to the guidelines outlined in Note 2 of Article 13.

Article 18. The duration of the internship period is 18 months, and completing 17 months of internship according to the approved program is mandatory for interns. During the internship period, a student must take one month of leave. Passing the clinical competency practical exam is a requirement for graduation; therefore, students during or at the end of the internship period must participate in this exam within the specified educational years and obtain a passing grade.

Note. The minimum overall average for the internship period is 14.

Chapter Three

COURSE UNITS AND DURATION OF STUDY

Article 19. The minimum number of course units required for completion of the general medicine doctorate program is specified by the approved regulations of the program established by the Supreme Council for Medical Sciences Planning.

Article 20. In each academic semester of the first and second stages of the general medicine doctorate program, a student must select a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 20 credits (course units).

Note 1. In the final academic semester of each of the first and second stages, the student is exempt from the minimum requirement of 12 units.

Note 2. If the overall average of a student's grades in an academic semester is at least 17, with the advisor's approval and the school's agreement, they can select up to a maximum of 24 credits in the following semester.

Note 3. In cases where a student has a maximum of 24 remaining units to complete each of the first and second stages, if they have not been conditionally enrolled in the previous semester, with the approval of the school, they can complete all those units in that semester.

Note 4. During the summer term, a student is not allowed to select more than 6 credits.

Article 21. Candidates accepted through the nationwide university entrance exam whose raw scores in one or more subjects fall below a specified threshold, as determined by the Educational Council of the university, must pass the prerequisite courses specified by the university in addition to those listed in the approved program during the first or second academic semester, as required by their field of study.

Note 1. The type of course, number of credits, detailed content, method of presentation, and timing of teaching prerequisite university courses are the responsibility of the Educational Council of the accepting university and are based on the recommendations of departments.

Note 2. Providing university prerequisite courses and their execution in universities, including recording grades in student transcripts, incorporation into semester averages, academic probation, and overall student grades, are governed by higher education regulations, similar to university courses.

Note 3. The National Organization of Educational Testing (NOET) provides the universities concerned with the raw scores of successful candidates in each subject after announcing the results of the entrance exam.

Note 4. The maximum duration of study for students who have completed a minimum of 8 units of university prerequisite courses is extended by a maximum of one academic semester.

Article 22. The maximum allowable duration of study in the general medicine doctorate program is 10 years, with the first 5 years dedicated to completing the first and second stages of medical education, and the remaining 5 years allocated to completing the third and fourth stages.

Note 1. A student who fails to pass the comprehensive basic science exam within the first 4 years of the medical education program or complete the first and second stages of medical education within the first 5 years will be deprived of continuing their studies in the medical field. However, if the average grades of courses completed are at least 10, they may switch to another field in associate or (continuous or non-continuous) bachelor's levels according to the guidelines outlined in Note 2 of Article 13.

Note 2. A student in their academic program who cannot progress from the clinical phase to the internship phase within 3 years from the start of the clinical phase or complete the third and fourth stages of medical education within 5 years and obtain a passing grade in the clinical competency practical exam may be granted an extension of up to 12 months with the approval of the university's educational council, provided that their maximum allowable study period has not ended.

Chapter Four

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

Article 23. Student attendance is mandatory in all sessions related to each course, as well as in clinical clerkships and internships. Failure to attend any of the sessions will be considered as an absence.

Article 24. The number of hours a student is absent in each theoretical course should not exceed 4/17, in practical and laboratory courses 2/17, and in clerkships and internships 1/17. Otherwise, the student will receive a grade of zero for that course or ward.

Note 1. Absences up to the specified limit in Article 24 will be permitted if substantiated by documented evidence and deemed justifiable by the instructor. The determination of whether student absences are considered justified or unjustified will be at the instructor's discretion and confirmed by the school.

Note 2. If a student's absence in any course or ward exceeds the specified limit in Article 24 but is deemed justified by the university's educational council, that course will be dropped. In this case, meeting the minimum requirement of 12 units per semester is not mandatory, but the mentioned semester will be considered a complete semester within the student's academic years.

Article 25. An unjustified absence in an exam for any course or ward will result in a grade of zero for that course or ward, whereas a justified absence in an exam for a course or ward will result in the course or ward being dropped. The assessment of the justification for an absence during an exam falls under the purview of the university's educational council.

Chapter Five

ADDING AND DROPPING COURSES

Article 26. During each academic semester of the first and second stages, a student is allowed to drop a maximum of two courses, add two new courses, or exchange two enrolled courses with two others within the first two weeks after the start of the semester, ensuring that the total number of units taken does not surpass the limit outlined in Article 20.

Note 1. Absence during the initial two weeks of any course, whether due to dropping, adding, or any other reason, is prohibited. Should such a situation arise, it will be counted as part of the student's maximum allowable absences, and the regulations stated in the aforementioned Article 24 will be enforced.

Note 2. Dropping and adding courses are not permitted during the summer term.

Article 27. In case of necessity, a student in the first and second stages of medical education can drop only one of their theoretical or practical courses up to 5 weeks before the end of the academic semester with the approval of the relevant department of education, provided that firstly the student's absence in that course does not exceed the limit specified in Article 24, and secondly, their remaining units do not fall below 12.

Article 28. Dropping all courses taken in a semester is only permissible until before the start of the final exams of that semester if, according to the educational council of the school, the student is unable to continue studying in that semester. In this case, that semester will be considered as a study leave for the student. The calculation of this study leave within the student's allowable study years is at the discretion of the school's educational council.

Note. Dropping all courses taken in the summer term is permissible until before the start of the exams of that term with the approval of the school's educational council.

Article 29. Dropping and switching wards in each of the clinical clerkship and internship stages is only permissible within the timeframe determined by the school's department upon approval by the school's educational council.

Chapter Six

STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS EVALUATION

Article 30. The evaluation of a student's progress in each course is based on attendance, participation in class activities, educational activities, and the results of exams between semesters and at the end of the semester, with the instructor or instructors of each course being responsible for evaluating the student in that course.

Article 31. The evaluation of a student's progress in clinical clerkships and internships is done considering the following:

31.1. Observing Islamic and professional ethics, maintaining academic integrity, and having good relations with patients, visitors, and ward staff.

31.2. Regular and full-time presence in the ward and relevant classes, and performing assigned shifts according to the ward's schedule.

31.3. Precision and sense of responsibility in carrying out assigned tasks according to ward regulations, including preparing and completing patient files.

31.4. Increasing skills and utilizing knowledge gained from clinical clerkships and internships.

31.5. Participating in the final exam of the ward and achieving the required grade.

Article 32. Holding a written exam at the end of each course in the first and second stages of medical education and theoretical courses of clinical clerkship is mandatory.

Note. Clinical ward exams are conducted at the conclusion of each clinical clerkship and internship period in a ward.

Article 33. The result of a student's academic progress evaluation based on the provisions of Articles 30 and 31 is determined as a grade. The student's grade in each course or ward is specified numerically between zero and twenty.

Note. The evaluation result for medical ethics courses is determined qualitatively and is not included in the GPA calculation.

Article 34. The minimum passing grade for basic science and general courses is 10, and the minimum passing grade for each of the specialized courses and wards related to the third and fourth stages of medical education is 12. A student who fails to achieve the minimum passing grade in any of the courses or wards must reselect that course or ward at the earliest opportunity. However, all grades, whether passing or failing, are recorded on the student's transcript and included in the GPA calculation.

Note. If a student, after retaking a course or ward, achieves a grade of 16 or higher on their first attempt, their previous failing grade will be removed, and it will not be considered in the semester or overall GPA calculation. The use of this provision is limited to 4 times throughout the general medicine doctorate program. If a student fails again on their first attempt after retaking a course or ward, their grade will not be removed even if they achieve a grade of 16 or higher in subsequent attempts.

Article 35. Instructors of each course or ward are obliged to submit the final grade of the student in that course or ward to the department within a maximum of ten days after the examination of that course.

Note. After the announcement of the grade by the department of education of the school, the student can submit their objections in writing to the department of education within a maximum of three days for necessary consideration.

Article 36. The Department of Education or relevant unit in each university is required to submit the final grades within a maximum of two weeks after the last examination of each semester, following the review of students' objections and rectification of possible errors, to the General Department of Education of the university.

Note. Grades, once announced to the General Department of Education of the university, are not subject to change.

Article 37. At the end of each academic semester, the average grades of the student in that semester and their overall average grades up to the end of that semester are calculated. At the end of each stage of the general medicine doctorate program, the overall average grades of the student in that stage are also calculated and recorded in their transcript.

Note 1. To calculate the average grades, the number of units for each course or ward is multiplied by the grade for that course or ward, and the sum of these products is divided by the total number of units for which the student received a passing or failing grade.

Note 2. The summer term is not considered an academic semester. The grades for courses taken during the summer term are only considered in calculating the overall average for the corresponding stage.

Article 38. The average grades of a student in any semester of the first and second stages of medical education must not be less than 12; otherwise, the student's registration for the next semester will be on probation.

Note 1. In cases where the number of units offered by the university is less than 12, that semester will not be considered part of the student's academic year; however, if there is a decrease in the average, it will be considered a probationary semester. In cases where due to student problems or in the last semester in any stage of medical education, the number of units is less than 12 units, that semester will be considered part of the student's academic years, and if there is a decrease in the average, it will also be calculated as a probationary semester.

Note 2. The university is obligated to inform the student in writing and their parents each time about the probationary registration issue and keep a copy of it in the student's file. With this description, any negligence in notifying them by the university or lack of knowledge by the student will not prevent the implementation of regulations.

Article 39. A student who enrolls on probation is limited to selecting a maximum of 14 units in that semester, including the final semester of both the first and second stages of medical education.

Note. In exceptional cases, during the final academic semester of both the first and second stages of medical education, taking into account the remaining units and the student's academic performance, the decision to allow a probationary enrolled student to take more than 14 academic units lies with the university's educational council. However, this number should not exceed 20 units under any circumstances.

Article 40. A student who remains on probation for three consecutive semesters or four alternate semesters during the first and second stages of medical education will be ineligible to continue their studies. However, if their overall average of passed units is at least 10, they may transfer to another field following the guidelines outlined in Note 2 of Article 13 for associate or (continuous and non-continuous) bachelor degrees.

Article 41. A student who fails to achieve the required average at the end of each stage of the general medicine doctorate program as stipulated in Chapter Two of the educational regulations, and if their allowable study period in that stage has not ended, can retake courses or wards where they received less than 12 or 14 grades as necessary for compensating the average deficiency. Otherwise, they will not have the right to enter the next stage or to graduate. It is obvious that repeated course grades will be recorded in the student's transcript in addition to previous grades and will be included in the overall average calculation.

Note 1. If a student repeats courses or wards with grades below 14 to compensate for the average deficiency in each of the third and fourth stages of the general medicine doctorate program and achieves grades higher than 14 but the overall average deficiency of that stage is not compensated, they can repeat the same courses and wards despite having grades higher than 14 until the deficiency in the corresponding stage is compensated. It is understood that repeated course grades will be recorded in the student's transcript in addition to previous grades and will be included in the overall average calculation.

Note 2. If a student repeats courses or wards with grades below 14 to compensate for the average deficiency in each of the third and fourth stages of the general medicine doctorate program and achieves grades higher than 14 but the overall average deficiency of that stage is not compensated, they can repeat the same courses and wards despite having grades higher than 14 until the deficiency in the corresponding stage is compensated. Repeated course grades will be recorded in the student's transcript in addition to previous grades and will be included in the overall average calculation.

Note 3. If a student repeats some courses or wards where they received grades below 12 or 14 to compensate for the overall average deficiency in each of the stages of the general medicine doctorate program and fails in a repeated course or ward, after considering all passing and repeated grades, their previous passing grade will be taken into account as a criterion for action. The student can proceed to the next stage if their overall average reaches the threshold; otherwise, if the overall average of that stage does not reach the threshold,

they will fail in that course or ward and must repeat it despite having previously obtained a passing grade.

Note 4. A student who is unable or unwilling to take advantage of the opportunity mentioned in this article or cannot compensate for their overall average deficiency provided that the minimum overall average of the units they have passed is 10, can switch to another field following the guidelines outlined in Note 2 of Article 13 for undergraduate degrees, i.e. associate or (continuous and non-continuous) bachelor.

Article 42. A student who is unable to continue their studies due to probationary enrollment exceeding the limit can, after fulfilling or canceling the commitments made during their academic period, take part in the nationwide entrance exam for re-enrollment. If accepted by the receiving university, they may align the completed units from the previous field with the new program and have some or all of them recognized in compliance with the applicable regulations.

Chapter Seven

ACADEMIC LEAVE AND WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDIES

Article 43. After completing one semester of study, a student can take up to a maximum of 2 consecutive or alternate academic semesters during the first and second stages of medical education and up to a maximum of 6 consecutive months in each of the clinical clerkship and internship stages, considering academic leave periods.

Note 1. The approval of academic leave for a student in the first semester falls under the jurisdiction of the university's educational council.

Note 2. The duration of academic leave is considered part of the student's maximum allowable study period in each stage.

Note 3. A student in the clinical internship stage is required to take one month of academic leave.

Article 44. A written request for academic leave must be submitted at least two weeks before the start of registration for each semester in the first and second stages, and at least two weeks before the start of each rotation (ward) for each of the third and fourth stages by the student to the university's education department.

Note 1. Should a request for academic leave be submitted beyond the designated timeframe, the university's educational council will be responsible for making the decision.

Note 2. The university's education department is required to inform the student in writing of their decision regarding the request for academic leave, after gathering input from the relevant school, prior to the registration deadline.

Note 3. The student bears the responsibility for any consequences arising from taking academic leave.

Article 45. Pregnant female students enrolled in education have the option to take a maximum of two semesters of maternity leave without it being included in their academic study duration, as long as they adhere to the relevant rules and regulations.

Article 46. Students with an approved valid medical certificate from both the Medical Council and the university's educational council are eligible to take a maximum of one semester of academic leave without it being included in their study years.

Article 47. A student seeking to withdraw from studies must personally submit their withdrawal request to the university's education department. In this scenario, the student is permitted to withdraw their request only once, up to one month before the end of that semester. That semester will be considered as a leave for them, and they are not permitted to continue their studies during that period. Following this deadline, their withdrawal from studies will be processed, and the student will forfeit the right to resume their studies.

Note. A student who withdraws from their studies and wishes to receive their academic documents must fulfill all their legal obligations during their study period.

Chapter Eight

TRANSFER

Article 48. Transfer refers to relocating a student's place of study from one university to another within the same field and at the same educational level.

Article 49. Student transfer, contingent upon the agreement of both the originating and destination universities, is subject to the following conditions:

49.1. The applicant's continuation of education at the originating university should be free from any educational and disciplinary restrictions.

49.2. The applicant must have completed a minimum of two semesters of their educational program at the originating university.

49.3. The remaining credits (units) of the student for the destination university should be at least half of the total credits required for the program.

49.4. The average grades of the completed courses by the applicant must be at least 12.

49.5. The entrance exam score of the applicant in the year of admission should not be lower than the score of the last admitted student in the same year in the field and allocation in the destination university.

Note 1. The transfer of students who have committed to specific executive departments is allowed upon fulfilling the conditions specified in Article 49 and obtaining approval from the relevant executive department.

Note 2. The transfer of newly admitted students from Tehran to other cities and from top-tier 1 universities to non-top-tier 1 universities is feasible upon acceptance, provided that both the originating and destination universities consent to the transfer.

Article 50. Under the circumstances outlined below, student transfers to the place of residence or the nearest location to the family's permanent residence, under conditions distinct from those specified in Article 49, except for condition (1), are implemented:

50.1. In the event of the death or disability of the family's primary breadwinner to a degree where legal authorities recognize the student as the family's guardian.

50.2. When the student suffers from an incurable illness or significant disability that, as determined by the school's medical council, renders them incapable of living independently, and there is documented evidence necessitating their transfer.

50.3. In the case of the official and permanent marriage of a female student, where the husband's place of study or employment is in another city, as confirmed by the relevant authorities.

Note 1. Each scenario outlined in this article must have occurred subsequent to the student's enrollment at the university.

Note 2. The employment of the student's spouse in Tehran should be permanent or contractual with the government. Private sector employment will be considered next in priority if there is availability, subject to approval by the Transfer Council.

Note 3. For government employees (permanent or contractual), submission of an employment order is required. In the case of a spouse with a freelance occupation, a certificate of employment and residence must be validated by legal authorities or law enforcement.

Note 4. In exceptional circumstances, if the female student is studying in Tehran and her husband is enrolled in a different city, and if the female student's field of study is unavailable in her husband's city of study, the husband may be transferred to Tehran.

Note 5. The validity of each situation mentioned must also be verified by the receiving university.

Article 51. Transfer of students to any of the universities in Tehran is prohibited except in cases mentioned in Article 50.

Article 52. Transfer from private universities to public universities is prohibited, but transfer in the opposite direction with the consent of both originating and destination universities while adhering to relevant regulations is permissible.

Article 53. The transfer of children of faculty members is subject to their own rules and regulations.

Article 54. The transfer of Iranian students studying abroad to domestic universities and higher education institutions is subject to their own rules and regulations.

Article 55. A student requesting a transfer must submit their transfer request in writing, stating the reason, at least 6 weeks before the start of the academic semester to the education department of the originating university.

Article 56. If the originating university agrees to the transfer of an eligible applicant, it is obligated to send its approval along with the request and the student's detailed grades to the destination university within a maximum of one week. The destination university must notify the originating university of its decision at least two weeks before the start of registration.

Note. Upon approval for transfer, all student records are transferred from the originating university to the destination university, and the student's communication with the originating university ceases.

Article 57. In the case of transfer, credits with grades of 12 or higher will be accepted. The responsibility for accepting credits with grades between 10 and 12 lies with the destination university. However, there is a permissible limit on non-acceptance of course credits for transfer students, allowing them to complete their remaining credits within the designated study period.

Note 1. All academic grades, whether accepted or rejected, and educational records of transfer students, including probation status at the originating university, are documented in the student's transcript and factored into their overall GPA.

Note 2. The non-acceptance of courses with grades below 12 applies to the stage at which the student is enrolled at the time of transfer and does not extend to previous stages.

Article 58. The graduation certificate for transfer students is issued by the destination university, indicating the number of credits completed by the student, the total credits earned at both the originating and destination universities, along with the GPA and educational history of the student.

Article 59. The transfer of a student during their study period is permissible only once.

Article 60. In situations where a student is temporarily compelled to change their place of study, they may, with the consent of both the originating and destination universities, temporarily switch their place of study as a guest student for a specified period.

Article 61. The transition from guest status in daytime to evening courses, from in-person to online universities, from public to private universities, and vice versa is not allowed.

Note. In exceptional circumstances, to prevent an extension of students' study duration, a public university student, with approval from the university's education council, can take some courses as a guest student in the tuition-paying sector of the same university or another institution, subject to relevant regulations.

Article 62. Guest status for a student at a university is contingent upon the student having completed a minimum of two academic semesters at the originating university.

Note. Newly admitted students from Tehran to other cities and from top tier 1 to non-top tier 1 universities can attain guest status upon their admission with the agreement of both the originating and destination universities.

Article 63. A student in a university can have guest status to enroll in one or more courses upon approval from both the originating and destination universities, as long as the total number of course units is fewer than 10 and the total course units taken by the student in a semester at the university is between 12 and 20.

Note. The guest student at the destination university must inform the relevant department at the originating university of their selected course units, whether for a single course or full-time study, and adhere to the destination university's requirements.

Article 64. The total number of units that a student takes as a guest (for a single course or full-time study) in one or more universities must not exceed 40% of the total course units required for the program.

Note 1. The course units completed by a guest student at the destination university are documented in the transcript at the originating university, and their grades are factored into both semester and overall GPAs.

Note 2. The minimum passing grade for a guest student at the destination university is 12, and any course units completed with grades lower than 12 must be repeated.

Article 65. If a student completes between 30% and 40% of the total course units in their guest student program with a GPA of 15 or higher, and with the agreement of both the originating and destination universities, they may exceed the 40% limit of the total course units in the guest program.

Note 1. If a student experiences academic failure (with a GPA falling below 15 in any semester of guest study), their guest status will be revoked, and they will return to the originating university.

Note 2. Managing educational matters for a guest student during the guest period exceeding 40% is the responsibility of the originating university and necessitates coordination with the destination university.

Note 3. Conducting comprehensive basic science exams, comprehensive pre-internship exams, and practical clinical competency exams for a student during the guest period exceeding 40% is the responsibility of the destination university, with coordination from the originating university.

Note 4. The graduation certificate for students who have completed more than 40% of the total course units as guest students will be issued by the originating university.

Article 66. The graduation certificate for a guest student will always be issued by the originating university.

Chapter Ten

MAJOR CHANGE

Article 67. A general medicine doctoral student, during their course of study, can switch their major to another field if they meet the following conditions and obtain the consent of the relevant university:

67.1. The applicant's continuation of study in the previous major complies with educational regulations.

67.2. The student has completed at least one academic semester and no more than one-third of the total course units in the program.

67.3. The applicant's entrance exam score in the year of enrollment is not lower than the score of the last admitted student in the same year and major at the desired university.

67.4. Considering the maximum allowable study period, they have the capacity to fulfill the required course units in the new major.

Note 1. Major changes for students unable to continue medical studies are conducted following the guidelines outlined in Note 2 of Article 13.

Note 2. Major changes for students affiliated with specific executive bodies are permissible upon meeting all conditions of this article and obtaining approval from the relevant executive body.

Note 3. Major changes to majors with specific conditions detailed in their selection criteria are contingent upon meeting the specified requirements.

Note 4. A student is allowed to change their major once during their studies, except for cases mentioned in Note 1 of this article.

Article 68. Major changes must take place at equivalent academic levels; otherwise, changes can only be made from a higher level to a lower level while following the regulations outlined in Article 67.

Article 69. Upon approval of a major change request, the student must register and select courses in the new major in the first semester following approval. Once registered, they are not permitted to switch back to their previous major.

Note 1. The student remains bound by the educational regulations of the previous major until registration in the new major.

Note 2. Failure to register for the new major by a specific deadline will be considered as withdrawing from the major change request, and the right to change majors will be forfeited until the end of the program.

Article 70. If a student meets the conditions for both transfer and changing majors simultaneously, the change of major alongside the transfer is allowed.

Note. Simultaneous major change with transfer between the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education to the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology, and vice versa, is acceptable if the requirements for changing majors and transfer are satisfied.

Article 71. The courses completed by a student in the previous major are assessed and equated in the department of the new major. Only courses that align with at least 80% of the content of the new major, as determined by the department, and have a grade no lower than 12, will be accepted.

Note 1. Accepted courses are documented in the student's transcript, and their grades are factored into the overall GPA calculation. However, grades for courses not accepted are retained in the transcript without impacting the GPA. In cases where the overall GPA of the unaccepted units is below 12, it will be considered a probationary semester in the student's academic record in the new major, as determined by the university's educational council.

Note 2. If the number of unaccepted course units is such that it hinders the student from fulfilling the required units for the new major within the permissible study period, their request for a major change will not be granted.

Article 72. An applicant seeking a major change must submit their request along with the necessary documents at least 6 weeks before the start of the academic semester to their university's education department.

Article 73. If a student encounters an illness or accident during their studies that, as determined by the university's medical council and confirmed by the educational council, impedes their ability to continue in the general medicine doctoral program or benefit from it, they are not permitted to proceed in the general medicine doctoral program. They may switch their major to another field with the closest entrance exam score, while adhering to other regulations. In this scenario, the student will be exempt from complying with the regulations of Article 67 except for clause one.

Note. In instances where a student develops mental or behavioral disorders or physical illness or disability during their studies to an extent that they are unable to continue in any of the related testing groups, they may change their major to another field within the testing group that has the closest entrance exam score, upon approval from the destination university following consent from the university's medical council and educational council.

Chapter Eleven

ACCEPTANCE OF COURSE UNITS

Article 74. Equating and accepting courses that a student has previously completed at universities or other educational levels is permissible under the following conditions:

74.1. The student is allowed to participate in the entrance exam for the new major based on their academic background.

74.2. The previous university and its academic records are endorsed by the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education or the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology.

74.3. The educational content of the completed courses matches the courses of the new major with a minimum of 80% content overlap, as determined by the relevant department, and each course must have a grade of at least 12.

74.4. The student's studies at the previous university align with the approved program of the High Council for Planning of the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education or of the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology.

Note 1. Equating specialized courses at the same level or from higher levels to lower levels is feasible.

Note 2. Equating and accepting courses are done by the relevant departments at the destination university.

Article 75. Grades of accepted courses by the student are excluded from the calculation of the semester GPA but will be factored into the calculation of the overall GPA of the student.

Note. For every 20 units of accepted courses, one semester will be deducted from the student's maximum allowable study period.

Chapter Twelve

THESIS

Article 76. The thesis is a component of the general medicine doctoral program, requiring students to conduct research under the guidance of an advisor within their academic field.

Article 77. Students in the general medicine doctoral program must choose and register their thesis topic from the start of the clerkship period until before the comprehensive pre-internship exam.

Note. Failure to register the thesis topic within the specified timeframe will result in students being unable to take part in the comprehensive pre-internship exam until the topic is registered.

Article 78. The advisor is selected based on the student's request, the advisor's consent, department approval, and endorsement by the research council of the school.

Note 1. The advisor must hold at least an assistant professor rank. In exceptional cases, with approval from the school's research council, academic staff other than professors may also act as advisors.

Note 2. Under special circumstances and with approval from the school's research council, a student may have more than one advisor for interdisciplinary research purposes.

Article 79. If necessary, based on the advisor's recommendation, a faculty member, distinguished expert, or researcher can be appointed as a consultant advisor after approval by the school's research council.

Note. The maximum number of theses that each advisor in the general medicine doctoral program can supervise simultaneously is determined by dividing the total number of incoming students each year by the total number of faculty members in the school, then multiplying by 2. In schools with a high faculty count, this calculation may lead to a reduction in the maximum number of theses per faculty member. Therefore, each faculty member,

based on their academic rank and with the approval of the school's research council, can concurrently supervise up to 3 theses from students who entered in the same year.

Article 80. The choice of the thesis topic must be directed by the advisor.

Article 81. The thesis topic must not be repetitive, indicating that a thesis with a similar or different title but identical content has not been submitted at the relevant university within the last 5 years.

Note. In exceptional circumstances and with the consent of the school's research council, in areas that may necessitate further exploration within a timeframe shorter than mentioned above, it is acceptable to have a thesis with a similar title and content.

Article 82. Each student is required to choose a topic for their thesis.

Note. Group selection of the thesis topic by a maximum of 3 students is allowed after obtaining approval from the advisor and endorsement from the school's research council, provided that the following conditions are met:

- A. The research topic's scope and importance should align with the number of students involved.
- B. The division of the research topic should enable each student to work on an independent section of the thesis.

Article 83. The registration process for the thesis topic involves the following steps:

- A. Selection of the thesis topic with guidance from the advisor.
- B. Confirmation of the uniqueness of the thesis topic by the school's research deputy.
- C. Approval of the proposed thesis outline by the relevant department.
- D. Submission of the proposed thesis outline by the department to the school's research deputy for approval by the research council.
- E. Notification of the advisor upon receiving approval from the research council to begin the thesis.

Note. The time gap between registering the thesis topic and its defense should not be less than one year.

Article 84. Each thesis is required to contain the following components:

- A. Abstract in Persian and English: covering the importance and scope, materials and methods, results, and conclusion
- B. Introduction: explaining the significance of the research, providing general information on the research field, and outlining research objectives
- C. Literature review
- D. Methodology: detailing the research type, research setting and materials, sample size and sampling method, data collection method, data analysis method, types of statistical tests used, and work procedures
- E. Results: including the use of statistical tests, tables, graphs, and presentation of results
- F. Discussion and conclusion: analyzing the obtained results, comparing them with findings from other studies, exploring reasons for discrepancies in results with other studies, addressing research limitations and shortcomings, drawing conclusions, and making recommendations
- G. References

Article 85. While writing the thesis in English is allowed, it is essential to include an abstract in Persian in addition to the abstract in English.

Article 86. The thesis evaluation committee, responsible for the final decision on the theses, is composed of the following members:

1. Advisor(s)
2. Consultant advisor (if applicable)
3. School's Research Council representative
4. Representative from the relevant department of the thesis
5. One member from the faculty or specialized researchers and experts, selected by the relevant department

Note. The academic rank of the advisor(s) and faculty members should be at least assistant professor. In specific cases, with approval from the school's research council, a lecturer may act as an advisor. A specialized doctoral degree (PhD) is required for researchers and experts.

Article 87. The evaluation of the thesis is carried out by the evaluation committee on a scale of 0 to 20, with grades categorized as follows:

- Excellent: Grades between 19 to 20
- Very good: Grades between 17 to 18.99
- Good: Grades between 14 to 16.99
- Unacceptable: Grades below 14

Note. Theses can receive an excellent grade if they involve research, have been published in reputable scientific journals nationally or internationally, or have been accepted for publication in such journals. It is crucial that the article presentation or acceptance for publication takes place before the thesis defense and final grading.

Article 88. Every student must defend their thesis in the final semester of their studies. Failure to do so within the specified study period and achieve a passing grade, despite completing all course requirements of the educational program, will result in expulsion.

Article 89. The number of units and the grade for the thesis in the last semester of study are documented, and the student is not bound by the maximum allowable units in the final semester of study.

Article 90. A student's graduation is confirmed upon completion of all course units, including the thesis, and passing the clinical competency exam, whichever occurs later.

Article 91. All rights derived from the thesis are owned by the university.

Chapter Thirteen

COMPLETION OF STUDIES

Article 92. A student who completes all course units and educational stages of the general medicine doctoral program, including the thesis, in accordance with the approved program under the provisions of these regulations, and passes the clinical competency exam, will be conferred the designation of a graduate of the general medicine doctoral program.

Article 93. These regulations, comprising 13 chapters, 93 articles, and 96 notes, were ratified during the sixty-seventh session of the Supreme Council of Medical Sciences Planning on July 23, 2017. It is obligatory for students enrolling in the university from the academic year 2017-2018 onwards. Upon implementation, any prior regulations and notifications conflicting with these regulations will be nullified for this student cohort.

Translated and edited by:

Mokhtar Rangaviz, MA in TESOL

Chief Expert for International Affairs

Office of Vice President for International Affairs

Iran University of Medical Sciences (IUMS)

rangaviz.iums@gmail.com

+98 910 765 7679