DRAFT PROGRAM
November 2022 – September 2024

OF THE CANDIDATE FOR RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA

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In case of appointment to the post of rector of the University of PrisHtina, I promise that, within 30 days after the appointment, I will transform this draft program into a genuine work program together with my management team, and in consultation with the Governing Council and the Senate of the University, and I will do it in cooperation with these bodies, academic units, staff, students, institutions of Kosovo, development partners, civil society and all interested parties, who see UP, not only as a pillar of higher education in Kosovo, but also as an institution that enjoys a reputation in the region and beyond. If I am elected rector, this work program will be a public document, the realization of which will be available to be followed not only by the Governing Council, but by all the staff and students of the University, as well as the general public.

Vision and Mission

The situation at the University of Prishtina has already been analyzed from all possible perspectives and the problems are well known. There are also strategic documents and action plans that have been drafted by bodies of the University of Prishtina and the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, such as:

1. Education Strategy 2022-2026 (MESTI),
2. Strategic Plan of the University of Prishtina 2020-2022 (approved by the Governing Council),

The vision and mission of the University are formulated in the Strategic Plan of the Governing Council.

Vision: The University of Pristina is a higher education institution, globally recognized for professionalism, integrity, quality teaching and research. In harmony with the needs of the economy and the market, it establishes and maintains quality standards, supporting the mobility and development of academic careers for staff and students, increasing the number of partners and joining the European higher education network.

Mission: The mission of UP is based on academic development, scientific and artistic research and the provision of higher education through programs of strategic and developmental interest to the Republic of Kosovo. The University enables the mobility of

programs, students and academic staff on an ongoing basis, with the aim of reaching the international level and competition in the market. The mission of the university is based on the aspirations of the country's citizens through quality assurance in higher education, academic, scientific, artistic development or disciplines of national interest for the Republic of Kosovo. The University is an autonomous public institution of higher education, which develops academic education, scientific research, artistic creativity, professional counseling and other areas of academic activities. The University has the following goals:

- To act as an institutional and leading center for the advancement of knowledge, creative ideas and science in the higher education system of Kosovo.
- To play the leading role in the development of education, science, culture, society and economy of Kosovo.
- To help in the process of promoting citizen democracy.
- To aim to create and support the highest standards in the field of teaching and learning, scientific research and artistic creativity.
- Use its own resources as efficiently as possible.
- Cooperate excellently and participate in all higher education activities at the national, regional and international level.

Since these formulations are taken from the two-year strategy of the UP, I consider that, as a candidate for rector, I cannot intervene in these two formulations, since even so, the formulations basically carry the message of what a university should be and what effect its activity should produce in society.

Objectives and Lines of Action for the Period November 2022 - September 2024

Relying on the development documents of the UP and on the analysis made for the current situation, 16 objectives have been identified where significant improvement is needed and the lines of action have been defined in each of them.

1. Digitization of Services

The UP administration is not functioning properly, and in many cases there is unnecessary bureaucracy. It is therefore required that the services be digitized. Digitization will be done in a similar way to the e-kosova platform, i.e. the necessary documents for students will be issued by the students themselves. All programs, whether past or present, should be digitized. That is, if a person, whether a former student or a current student, needs to have his study program, he will have the opportunity to download it personally from his SEMS account. Grade certificates and other documents can be downloaded from the student's personal SEMS with the possibility of placing a student-mat in the respective faculty spaces.

2. Founding the Doctoral School, Research-Scientific Work in UP

Knowing that "the mission of a university is not simply the transfer of knowledge, but also the creation of knowledge", our university should definitely have doctoral studies. With the entry into force of the new accreditation manual, the University of Prishtina has not been able to re-accredit doctoral programs (except for two programs at the Faculty of Medicine). The non-functioning of doctoral studies, in addition to causing stagnation in scientific research, has the

risk of our university moving to the college level. The issue of doctorates is a problem that must be solved urgently, and the best way would be to create a doctoral school at the university level, with a hierarchical structure from the rectorate, the faculty, to the program holders. Doctorate programs must be in English, except for programs related to the field of Albanology. Efforts should be made for seeking the possibility of opening doctorates as Joint-Degree with universities from EU countries. In support of this objective is the draft strategy of education published by MESTI; in this draft strategy the provision of grants is foreseen to encourage and support joint projects for interdisciplinary programs. A special budget should be allocated for the operation of the doctoral school, based on the negative evaluations of external experts for the lack of a specific budget for certain doctoral programs and for areas where laboratories are required and to provide either laboratory equipment for research or to have cooperation agreements with EU universities to see where the experimental part of the research can be carried out. In order to monitor and transmit the doctoral work as best as possible, the chairman of the Doctorate Council at the faculty level will automatically be a member of the Doctorate Council at the university level. Academic staff and students (especially those at the doctoral level) in order to do scientific research must first have access to scientific journals, therefore immediately start the subscription procedures in at least 3000 relevant scientific journals. In the draft Education Strategy 2022-2026, which has already been published by MESTI, it is foreseen that MESTI will provide academic staff subscriptions to international electronic libraries.

3. Package of Quality Instruments (Issues Related to the Accreditation Process)

During the evaluation of programs for accreditation by the Kosovo Agency for Accreditation, a number of measuring instruments are required that must be completed. These are:

1. Students' assessment of the subject and the teacher.
2. Intercollegiate evaluation.
3. Evaluation by the dean.
4. Evaluation of study programs by students.
5. Evaluation of study programs by graduates.
6. Evaluation of the dean by the academic staff.
7. Assessment of the academic staff concerning the situation in the faculty/university.
8. Assessment of the administrative staff concerning the situation in the faculty/university.
9. Assessment by advisory boards about the situation in the faculty/university.
10. Self-assessment of course results by the relevant teacher.

Currently, only measuring instrument 1 is mandatory in SEMS. In order to obtain a clearer overview, all these measuring instruments should be made mandatory in SEMS. In the case of the accreditation of doctoral programs, the duration of studies more than double the time, is also a criterion that must be eliminated, because it is one of the special remarks that we have received from international experts, therefore the practice of continuing studies abroad should be removed legal rules. The opening of new programs that are required by the labor market is also an important issue. In order to attract students from abroad, the new master's programs that will be in English.

4. Increasing the Number of Applications in International Projects

UP as a leader of higher education in Kosovo should be much more active in applying to EU projects and other international projects. In order to be competitive and serious in these projects, in addition to the ORSP central office (Office for Research and Sponsored Projects), we must also have its branches in the faculties. In the framework of ORSP, the staff should be increased with at least 7 people, who have expertise in the design of projects with the aim of competing in European projects and beyond. Academic staff who win international projects will be relieved of 1/3 of the teaching load. Likewise, in each academic unit, groups of excellence in research should be created.

5. Services for Society and Community – Linking Scientific Research with Economy and Society

The Kosovo market is in great need of professional expertise; thus, who better than the academic staff of the University of Prishtina would offer this expertise? In order to generate own funds and security in the market, spaces must be created for UP staff to use their knowledge and expertise within UP, with the aim of developing society in general. For this reason, we will start with the procedures for accreditation of laboratories for testing and verification of various products, creating security in the use of products present on the market. The experience of the European Union and neighboring countries have shown that this is a very good way for the University to generate its own funds.

6. Measuring the Performance of the Academic Staff Through the Performance Card

The UP has already started the process of drafting the regulation for measuring the performance of the academic staff and a good job has been done in this direction. Since I am part of the working group for the drafting of this regulation, I know this process in detail. This process should continue and this regulation should be completed within the year 2022 and as early as 2023 the application of this regulation should begin. In order to increase performance, it will reward academic staff who show good performance based on the criteria of this regulation.

7. Election and Promotion of Academic Staff at UP

In the case of the election and promotion of the academic staff, each person who competes must make a presentation in front of an audience in the relevant faculty, so the presentation is mandatory. In order to get the best evaluation, the relevant commission, reviewer, is obliged to participate in the presentation made by the competing candidates. A good basis for the criteria for the election and promotion of the staff is the current regulation for the election procedures related to the appointment, reappointment and promotion of the academic staff. However, one problem that should be noted is that currently a candidate's particular paper is only considered if he is the first author or correspondent. I propose that during the evaluation of published scientific works, the co-authorship of the paper should also be evaluated.

7.1. Invitation for Staff Who Have Completed Their Studies in EU Countries and the USA

Within 5 months of assuming the position, the deans of the UP academic units will be required to declare all extra hours and announce a new competition for academic staff.

8. Tutorial Learning

As is known, tutorial learning is a method of knowledge transfer and can be used as part of a learning process. Tutorial learning is more interactive and specific than learning from a book or lectures. Since tutorial teaching is done in small groups, in this way the possibility of solving problems in a team is created, as well as students' teamwork skills are developed. Also, through the tutorial, students get knowledge from each other about their ideas, such as different approaches to solve certain problems. So, introduce tutorial learning into programs where possible. The tutorial teaching form is also requested by the accreditation experts.

9. Decentralization of the University

Knowing that the University of Prishtina is a large institution, in many cases the procedures, both financial and academic, take a very long time to complete. Therefore, it would be good to decentralize the University, i.e. all the procedures that are allowed by law, pass to the competence of the faculties, such as, e.g. purchases up to 10,000 euros be under the competence of the faculties. In this way, responsibilities will be delegated where most of the University's work takes place and, I believe, we will minimize the possibilities of abuses that can be brought about by the excessive concentration of authorizations in the hands of a small number of people.

10. Increased Visibility

Since one of the factors in the ranking of the university is the visibility, namely the clickability of the web-page, the web-page in the English language should be operationalized as a matter of urgency. Each faculty should have its website in at least two languages, in Albanian and English. The websites of the faculties should be managed by the faculties themselves and not by the central office in the rectorate. Faculties should have the right to have web pages according to the design they want.

11. Completion/Reformatting of the Administration

For several years, the retired persons from the UP administration have not been replaced, therefore there is a shortage of staff in the administration. This lack in many cases causes dysfunction, especially the issue of laboratory workers should be resolved as soon as possible. Programs related to laboratories must definitely have laboratory technicians as part of them.

12. Relationship beween Practical Work and Study Programs.

The results so far have shown that our students, during their studies at UP, mainly create theoretical knowledge and then when they enter the labor market, they have problems finding themselves in real jobs. In order to avoid this phenomenon, we will initiate the idea that in all subjects-fields where practical skills are required, students complete the practical part of that field, preferably every subject should have its practical part as well.

13. Transparency

All important documents and decisions will be published or made available to the general public. Thus, the public will be able to challenge the accuracy of the data in an evaluation report on the admission of academic staff or the reasonableness of each decision of University bodies and academic units, such as the value of a master's or doctoral thesis defended at the University of Prishtina.

14. Plagiarism

The issue of plagiarism, unfortunately, is a very talked-about current issue in UP, starting from student seminars, Bsc or Msc degree theses to PhD theses. We can conclude that in most bachelor's subjects and in some master's programs, students are not at all informed about the problems of plagiarism. For this reason, in the very short term, it will be started with the implementation of the control of all seminars and topics of all levels, submitted at UP, by means of anti-plagiarism software, i.e. a seminar or topic, before it is accepted, will be checked with this system. Any topic that does not pass the anti-plagiarism test will be disqualified. In support of this objective is the draft education strategy published by MESTI, in which it is also planned to provide a long-term contract for the use of anti-plagiarism programs.

15. Meetings with Students "Coffee and Discussion"

The University exists for students, therefore meetings with students will be held at least once a month to see their concerns and ideas regarding the development of the University. In cooperation with the Municipality of Prishtina, the possibility will be seen that urban traffic in Prishtina for UP students is free or at a maximum price of 30% of the current ticket price.

The issue of adding reading spaces and rooms where computers will be used by students will be addressed. Through the Publishing Council, academic staff will be encouraged to translate the best texts for all fields, translating at least one book per program per year.

16. Drafting of the Medium-Term Strategy for the Development of the University of Prishtina

By the end of 2023, we will have a 2024-2030 Strategy for the development of the University of Prishtina. I am convinced that this Strategy will be able to focus on developmental issues and not on those of an emergency nature. This document should show us how we see the University until 2030, how to connect study programs with the labor market, how we should be more competitive with universities in other countries, which academic disciplines we should favor, how to make the University of Prishtina more attractive for young people and how to encourage students from the countries of the region or beyond to come and study at UP, how to improve the infrastructure and, in general, create conditions for the normal functioning of the University.

Conclusion

Regardless of who will be the rector of the University of Prishtina, in the next two years the attention should be focused on building a sound basis for the development of the University of Prishtina. The sound basis means the implementation of laws, statutes and documents that UP itself has created. UP has a 2020-2022 strategy, but this strategy has been implemented extremely little. The invitation for experienced academic people and professionals from the Diaspora and their engagement in UP should be done as soon as possible so that the spirit of the Western school is more present in UP. Such an approach requires high commitment and responsibility from all University bodies and academic units, which, I hope, will not be lacking.