

EUA-IEP Evaluation

UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND PHARMACY FROM TIRGU MURES *Self-Evaluation Report*



1. Introduction

Under the new regulations of the 2011 National Law on Education in Romania, the Romanian higher education system started to reassess the position of each university taking into account the level of teaching and research and criteria related to the management of the universities - institutional capacity and institutional relationship with the external environment.

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș, further named UMFTGM, according to the classification system was categorised as a teaching and scientific research university, accepting on June 2012 the institutional evaluation by The European University Association (EUA) through its Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP). This evaluation represents a good opportunity to analyse the institutional capacity from a critical position in order for improvement or change regarding autonomy and administrative competence.

The self-evaluation group (SEG) nominated by our institution to prepare the self-evaluation report (SER) consists of: Prof. dr. Angela Borda - Vice-rector for International Relation, Quality Assurance and Academic Development – chairperson and contact person of SEG; Prof. dr. Silvia Imre - Quality Assurance Department, Fundamental Pharmaceutical Sciences Department - contact person and academic secretary of SEG; Prof. dr. Dan Doboreanu – Vice-rector for Education; Prof. dr. Tibor Szilágyi – Vice-rector for Research/ Erasmus programme coordinator for The Faculty of Medicine; Senior lecturer dr. Simona Mureșan - Faculty of Medicine; Senior lecturer dr. Cristina Bică - Faculty of Dental Medicine, Head of Dental Medicine Department 1; Teaching assistant dr. Aura Rusu - Committee for Quality of The Faculty of Pharmacy; Ioana Mătea – chief secretary, Faculty of Medicine; Ioana Șuș - student, 6th year, Faculty of Medicine.

The nominated persons of SEG represent the three faculties of the university, the administrative staff and students and they have the full support of the top-level management of the University for preparing the SER. Different administrative and faculty departments were contacted and asked for information and an open attitude and rapid responses characterised this collaboration.

Starting from June 2012, there were two phases of discussions/ meetings regarding the self-evaluation report¹: the top management first meetings in order to present the purpose and to establish the calendar of the self-evaluation process; the parallel meetings with top-management, staff and student representatives in order to inform about the current state of the SER and to get useful feedbacks on dossier content. Meanwhile, relevant information and documents were posted on the university website².

2. Institutional context

The University is located in Țirgu Mureș city, the seat of Mureș County in the north-central part of Romania, being the 16th largest city in Romania. Although not belonging to a large academic city, the university is a reference of the Romanian medical education.

From a historical point of view, medical education in Țirgu Mureș began in 1945 within the Faculty of Medicine of the Bolyai University from Cluj. After the establishment of this University, by Decree no. 407/1945, the Faculty of Medicine was moved to Țirgu Mureș. In 1948, after the Reform of Education, the Medical and Pharmaceutical Institute was established, as an independent Institute, with the following Faculties: Medicine, Paediatrics, Hygiene, Dentistry and Pharmacy. Between 1951 -1958 it had three faculties: General Medicine, Paediatrics and Pharmacy. In 1958-1959 the Faculty of Paediatrics was transformed into a ward and around 1960-1961 the Department of Dentistry started to function again, becoming a Faculty in the academic year 1965-1966. After three decades, the Faculty of Pharmacy ceased its activity between 1986 and 1990. In 1991, the Institute was given the name *The University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Țirgu Mureș*.

¹ <http://www.umftgm.ro/universitate/managementul-calitatii/evaluari-institutionale/eua-iep-evaluation/calendar.html>

² <http://www.umftgm.ro/universitate/managementul-calitatii/evaluari-institutionale/eua-iep-evaluation/documents.html>

The University unfolds its activity as a University whose structure and academic specialisations are accredited under the law. The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș functions as a public institution with legal status, being the only Romanian university in the field of health, that has teaching programmes in Romanian, Hungarian and English as well. The graduates of the study programmes are distinguished depending on the level of academic qualification: bachelor, master, doctoral, or depending on the area of specialisation of skills, according to the division of academic knowledge and professional division of labour.

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș, as an academic institution given by its reputation, is accessible to all Romanian and foreign citizens without any discrimination, and provides, as a centre of excellence, services of knowledge and competence in various forms: initial and continuous training of specialists, research, expertise and consultancy in its area of competence. The education and research processes and services take place in a main campus³, but many hospital facilities, not far located from it, complete the necessary education logistics⁴.

In its own development and evolution, the educational component and scientific research were and still are predominant in training physicians, dentists, pharmacists, midwives, nurses, the University being the axis, from a methodological and practical point of view, of healthcare in the region. As a well-known University, the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș is actively involved in common internationalisation competition of education and research.

Today's educational market conditions (the increasing number of bidders, globalisation, new forms of education, the universities tendency for transformation in institutions which offer mass higher education etc.) make quality assurance services offered by a University to become a major factor in determining its competitiveness and attractiveness.

Through adopted quality programmes and monitoring the extent of their achievement through regular assessments, it is expected that the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș competes with other universities, not only nationally, but in Europe as well. In accordance with the Bologna Declaration, we focus on the development of some criteria and methodologies compared in quality assurance with those of other prestigious universities in Europe. Only then can recognition of the value of the issued diplomas throughout Europe be obtained so that, in the context of European unification, it can face competition with other Universities on the continent.

The recent classification of the university as an **education and research institution** is taken as a present fact, but in the meantime, by taking into account its tradition as a renowned medical school and, nevertheless, its human resources potential, the actual position obliges us to act further.

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș includes today the following education and research units: Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Dental Medicine, Faculty of Pharmacy, Institution organiser of PhD studies (IOSUD) (Appendix 1). There are also 10 research laboratories or centres for research, with external accreditation, such as Drug Testing Laboratory (GLP certified in 2006) or under internal recognition. According to the new University Charter regulations, a Medical and Experimental Research Centre has to be organized in order to serve as an excellence centre of medical research in Țirgu Mureș and it already includes four existing entities.

In the past academic year, The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș had a total of 507 academic staff, 260 administrative staff, 5143 students for undergraduate, master, PhD and post-doctoral studies, and 1293 students for residency studies (Appendices 2 and 3).

³ The map of UMF main campus http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/materiale/prezentare_umf/Harta_UMF.jpg

⁴ The map of Țirgu Mureș with locations of UMFTGM main campus and clinics

http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/materiale/prezentare_umf/Harta_TGM_-_UMF_si_clinici.pdf



3. Norms and values, mission and goals

The **mission** of the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș (UMFTGM) is a distinguished national leader in medical and pharmaceutical education and an outstanding research institute (Appendix 4). These objectives are achieved by training and development of highly qualified human resources; enrichment and dissemination of scientific, cultural, social and ethical values in the medical and pharmaceutical field; promoting critical thinking and spirit in its field of activity among professionals and the general population; scientific and cultural development in the medical and pharmaceutical field; assertion of national scientific values and integration into the European activity; development of consciousness regarding human freedom and principles of democracy. Within the University Charter we undertook a mission and a set of objectives which cannot be developed on a sustainable basis without acquiring some **fundamental values** that the University management must honour and promote in all its decisions: **humanism** – our University has a medical and pharmaceutical profile wherein our main concern is the human being, be it the student or the patient; **diversity** – our community belongs to diverse cultures which, though sometimes distinct, have influenced each other by living in the same geographical area for centuries. A constructive form of interculturalism encompassing these cultures can and should induce a synergistic effect and must become an engine of progress for the University; **freedom of thought and expression** – is not only a right but also a sign of spiritual and professional maturity, as it is inextricably bound to the values of tolerance and mutual respect. This right is guaranteed when it is honestly expressed, without affecting the dignity of others; **recognition of values** – as the most important resource of the University, each member will benefit from the recognition of his or her merits and from the identification of the appropriate forms of professional development; **solidarity** – we belong to a community and it is everyone's responsibility to defend its interests and image. Teamwork is essential, and collective interest must be redefined, keeping it in balance with the personal one.

The mission of the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș (UMFTGM) abides to national regulations and specific **norms** (the **National Education Law** No. 1/2011, **University Charter**⁵, **Internal Regulations**⁶, and **Policies** comprised in the strategic and operational plans⁷), which reflect its mission and goals: **to generate and to transfer knowledge to society, as a teaching and research university**.

However, the current national and international context and the desire of our academic community engaged the new administration team of the university to consider as a **main goal** of their mandate to **become an advanced teaching and research university**. Under these circumstances the current strategic plan (Appendix 4) includes the following **objectives**: **formation and development of knowledge and values** - as a research institution, the University will promote excellence in research, focusing on innovation, resource development and encouraging performance; **transfer of information and professional experience to students** – as a higher education institution, the University will provide outstanding study programmes which should meet the requirements of the labour market in a such way that the brand, “Țirgu Mureș graduate” will be the guarantee of high quality qualification and professional success; **implementation of knowledge in the medical practice** - as health professionals, the academic staff members will develop the brand of a college town and a reference health centre in Romania in their clinical work and in relation with the pharmaceutical industry; the university will ensure that its achievements are in agreement with regional, national and international requirements and priorities; **efficient management** – the top management of the University will ensure effective corporate and entrepreneurial leadership that will lead to implementing concrete measures based on objectives and responsibilities that would be measurable by quantifiable results.

⁵ UMFTGM Charter http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/documente_oficiale/oct2012/Carta_UMF.pdf

⁶ UMFTGM Regulations <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/documente-oficiale-umf/regulamente-metodologii-proceduri.html>

⁷ UMFTGM Public responsibility <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/responsabilitate-publica.html>



Governance and management

Under the provisions of the National Law of Education No. 1/2011, the Charter of the University was renewed this year and was favourably endorsed by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports. The organisation and the leadership of the university have changed, by separating the legislative and the executive powers (Appendix 1) which guarantees extended autonomy. Adopting these changes, the university relies on *democratic governance and participatory management*.

The involvement of the entire academic community in the decision-making process is an objective of the new high-level management team. The first step to achieve this goal was to increase the degree of *decentralisation* by assigning important decision responsibilities to faculties, working committees, departments and administrative positions, using a set of procedures and regulations.

Human resource is the most valuable capital of the University and it is the obligation of the University management to ensure a coherent personnel policy in order to optimise its operation. The *human resource policy* is reflected by strategic elements: assuring career predictability for each teacher - excellence in teaching and research "obliges" the University to find administrative solutions, if appropriate, to ensure career development within the legal framework; high-quality recruitment: careful identification of elite students and residents with scientific skills and teaching potential, in order to offer them the opportunity of an academic career; identifying opportunities to increase the overall revenue for all personnel in parallel with the implementation of performance assessment based on the activity and the degree of involvement in the academic activities; improvement of the staff proficiency by offering specific courses (quality management, academic management, audit, computer and software competencies, foreign languages etc.), and support for staff mobility (scientific events, teaching or research mobility).

The new *quality assurance (QA) policy* in UMFTGM is reflected by the recent reassessment of its quality management system, with the Rector directly responsible for quality in the University. A Vice-Rector is in charge with high-level QA management. Together with the Vice-Rector for International Relations, Quality Assurance and Academic Development, the Department of Quality Assurance is responsible for the sustainability of the quality assurance system (QAS) implementation. The Commission for Evaluation and Assurance of Quality is a requirement of the Law 87/2006 concerning the approval of the Government Emergency Ordinance 75/2005 on quality assurance in education and it is chaired by the same Vice-Rector. The Commission coordinates the application of the procedures, evaluation activities and quality assurance stipulated by law and by Senate decisions, proposes quality improvements, and draws up the annual internal evaluation report. This commission collaborates with the quality assurance working committees of the faculties and with the Department of Quality Assurance.

Academic profile

As previously stated, the mission and, in the same time, the aim of the UMFTGM is to be a *distinguished national leader in medical and pharmaceutical education and an outstanding research institute*. In our strategy and objective which aim at excellence, education and research cannot be separated as they are part of the same process, being interactive and equally valued. They are dynamic and innovative processes, opened to student and community expectations and to the needs of the future.

The key objective of the university in education is to preserve the national and international competitiveness of our teaching methodology, and it is achieved by several means: *the flexibility* of the content of the curricula and their continuous adaptation to the needs of a constantly changing management of diseases; the continuous *upgrading* of the content of the curricula in order to achieve modern, attractive, efficient education, free of overlaps, which will satisfy the requirements of the labour market; the *integration* of the theoretical and the practical activity of the students; *harnessing* the existing educational potential and, in the same time, the *development* of new study programmes at undergraduate, master, doctoral and post-doctoral level; *efficient practical training* and development of adapted practical skills so that at the end, each graduate student will have a package of performed procedures that he or she is able to perform; implementation of *assessment procedures* for students, procedures that have to meet the specificity of the subjects, but also to maximise objectivity and



effectiveness of these assessments; encouraging the permanent *academic mobilities*, which favours a lifelong perspective for educational and professional information exchange.

UMFTGM offers graduate courses in Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy. Within each faculty, short-term education forms are included (nursing, dental technician, pharmacy assistance). Some of these study programmes are consistent with the Bologna process as they unfold graduate, post-graduate and doctoral level teaching. The Bologna recommendation cannot be implemented for all study programmes in medical and pharmaceutical education. For each faculty a diversity of postgraduate courses in master's and doctoral degrees are offered. A special attention is given to develop interdisciplinary master's programmes as the knowledge and skills acquired are essential to entrepreneurial activities. The recently introduced study programmes (medicine in English, kinetotherapy, nutrition and dietetics, sports) and some of the postgraduate study programmes were created with the aim to satisfy the society's needs, which is a key strategy of the university, its contribution towards the society being the most important value.

In order to act in accordance with the Bologna process, one of the priorities of the university is to extensively put into practice the student-centred approach. For the moment this method of active and cooperative learning, in which students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions, discuss, explain or work in teams is implemented mainly in clinical teaching. In order to achieve quality education with emphasis on development of practical skills, a Simulation Centre is about to be shaped. This centre will be the first step for students to develop practical skills but also for training residents and even young doctors.

Of great importance is also the care for speaking foreign languages, for both teachers and students. For this reason the curricula encompass foreign language teaching for students and also UMFTGM provides outstanding medical English courses, examination and certification of knowledge under the PROFEX framework. Foreign languages skills are essential for teaching in the English study programme, to carry out mobility (i.e. under the Erasmus programmes) and last but not least for developing an efficient academic and scientific cooperation with other universities.

UMFTGM offers an adequate frame for education (well-trained teaching staff, infrastructure), while the management is permanently concerned with its improvement, an example of this approach being the future Integrated Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Research Education Centre whose construction will start next year.

As an education and research institute, research is part of our academic activity. The research interests are primarily institutional because they provide increasing international visibility of the university. The main fields of interest in research are: cardiovascular diseases, genetics, haematology, immunology, neurosciences, drug analysis, pharmacokinetics etc.

We believe that our university provides a good environment for research, reflected in the number of financed scientific projects and the number of scientific publications. In our university there are many research groups, some of them interdisciplinary, from which research centres of excellence will be formed. The new management of the university intends to encourage research and for this purpose an internal grant competition was launched whose results will be published at the end of December. Other financial incentives are considered to motivate research results.

A Doctoral School operates within the university providing training for young doctoral researchers. It is a training institutional environment for selecting future members of our academic community and it brings together teachers and PhD students from three main domains: medicine, dentistry and pharmacy. Young PhD students are encouraged to apply for specific grants which allow the funding of their research, but also enable them to manage their research project. Considerable effort is made for the dissemination of these research results by publications, participation in national and international congresses. In accordance with the current Code of Doctoral School this body will suffer major changes, in order to become a structure that promotes research excellence, with high scientific productivity.



In the near future, the most important purpose of UMFTGM concerning research is the establishment of a Research Centre. The goals of this centre are: the multidisciplinary approach in medical science, the ability to establish national and international partnerships and to access funds, to facilitate publications and to create an environment where teachers, researchers and students can work together. This Research Centre will allow an increase of the visibility of the university and a better national classification.

Academically-related activities

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș has a unique position within the local community due to its national and international prestige, being the symbol of the scientific involvement of the city. Meanwhile, the university is a regional pole and a reference model in Romania, especially for emergency medicine and paediatric cardiovascular surgery. The goal of UMFTGM is to remain a strong presence in the community and to maintain the "brand" represented by its name as a reference for prospective employers or authorities. In this respect, the aims of our university are: 1) *education and research in health sciences oriented to elements with the greatest potential to significantly and rapidly improve the health of the population* which is the main final result of our activities; 2) *dissemination of the research and education results to those involved in the health system* by implementation of a lifelong learning system, well-adapted for theoretical and practical training oriented to the health care beneficiaries' needs; 3) *extending the collaborations with economic partners*, such as medicine producers (five national or international pharmaceutical companies have their factories in Țirgu Mureș), UMFTGM has to identify the existing needs of these partners and to adapt its offer, and, nevertheless, to find new frames for common research projects or student training; 4) *defining new strategies or develop the existing strategies for permanent connections with the local/ regional and national authorities and involvement in public debates* - the local authorities must be brought and kept near us, a university cannot develop or will always have barriers if the relationship between its management and the local authorities is not fully functional: developing a strategic plan for participation in debates organised by local or national authorities regarding health, education, local and regional development, legislation; the increasing of the number of our members from the management of the university and academic community elected as members of national councils and ministry boards and committees in order to bring our vision and experience to national visibility level; reassessment of the public relations by organising a functional and professional public relations department, which can give exact details to the media and can provide a protocol service in relation to each event that occurs in the University.

Funding

The University has budgetary and extra budgetary funding to cover the material and logistic costs and salaries. The project of the budget (income and expenses) is prepared annually, realistically, in accordance with the development strategy of the faculty and is approved by the management of the university. Investment policies and financial management are rigorously defined and planned according to the law and public responsibility. The funds are managed for the exclusive use of education and scientific research, according to criteria approved by the Ministry of Education. The balance between government funding, regular and special funding, and self-financing of the university, in the past 5 years, has changed by increasing the percent of self-financial resources three times (fees, research projects, services, etc.) (Appendix 7). The main target of the financial policy of UMFTGM remains the discovery of new extra-budgetary resources, including fund raising activities at Community level, since UMFTGM is acknowledged as a national medical brand. A special emphasis is laid on the increasing of the number of research contracts with pharmaceutical companies and paid services to the society (consultancy, expertise, sporting activities).

Local, regional, national and international position

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș is a leading medical institution in Romania. The aim to provide state-of-the-art medical training for undergraduate and doctoral students, to offer high quality post-graduate education means that the centre of gravity of the University is at national level. The internationally acknowledged scientific research and the existing collaborations with institutions



from abroad provide the international dimension of the University. The English language study programmes, the student and staff mobilities enhance the participation in the international network of academic life. The University aims to significantly improve its research performance and become an internationally acknowledged research university. The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș is the only university in Romania which provides medical education also in Hungarian language. By this, it has a special local and regional impact, training medical doctors and pharmacists who can speak to patients belonging to the large Hungarian minority in Romania in their native language.

Our vision is to build a university for the future! Keeping tradition, valuing diversity and based on continuity, the University will take the advantage of opportunities of modern education, health care and research. It will be a growing, internationally visible and financially sustainable institution. The University will provide stimulating intellectual environment for the personal and professional development of the students and staff.

The recent classification of Romanian universities included the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș in the teaching and research oriented university group. While this classification confirms the high level of teaching and clinical activity, the University will focus on significant development of scientific research, with the long-term objective of becoming an advanced research university with high international recognition. As part of this strategy, important inter-institutional cooperation will be implemented on the basis of common values and objectives. The rationale of the strategic choices made by the University is the engagement to significantly develop research and education performance to attain excellence in these fields (Appendix 4).

4. Governance and activities

Governance and management practice

Analysis of management practice

The new UMFTGM organisational chart (Appendix 6) includes the structure of high level management, legislative (Senate) and executive (Administrative Board), the main institutional entities for education and research (Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Dentistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, Doctoral School) and for administrative activities (general administration, university general secretariat, departments, compartments and offices). The legislative power is held by **the Senate**, meaning that the Senate is the highest decision and deliberation forum of the university. It includes representatives from all three faculties, and from both study lines (Romanian and Hungarian), students (Romanian, Hungarian and representatives from the English study line). The students represent 25% of the total members of the Senate. The Senate is led by the President of the Senate. The **Administrative Board**, led by the Rector, provides operational management and applies the strategic decisions of the Senate. The Administrative Board consists of the rector, 3 vice-rectors, 3 deans, the director of the Doctoral School (with a position of vice-rector), the Administrative General Manager and student representatives. The President of the Senate represents the Senate in the relationship with the Administrative Board. In the same time the Rector is permanently and officially invited to the Senate meetings. A collaborative relationship is established between the Rector and the President of the Senate which does not include subordination. There is a Management Agreement between the Senate and the Rector. The Senate elaborates and adopts the University Charter, the institutional and operational regulations of the University, approves the Institutional Development Strategic Plan and Operational Plans, submitted by the Rector, and also the budget. Through its different **working groups**, the Senate monitors how the strategic and operational plans are carried out. All the decisions of the Senate are published on the website of the university⁸. The Chief Secretary of the University distributes the Senate's decisions within the University through the

⁸ Senate decisions <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/senat/hotarari-ale-senatului-umf.html>

administrative structures. The Rector leads the Administrative Board which is in charge to provide operational management and apply the strategic decisions of the Senate. This is carried out by means of regulations, methodologies and procedures, which are published on the website⁹. Its decisions are public¹⁰. The **Ethics Committee** plays an important role in ensuring the ethical standards and scientific merit of education and research.

Each faculty has its own management structure, the **Faculty Council**, which includes the dean, vice-deans, the heads of faculty departments, the representatives of each department and students. The Faculty Council is led by the Dean, which is appointed by the Rector and is responsible for the management of the faculty. Each faculty department is ruled by the **Department Council**, coordinated by a Director of Department. Each department is further organised into disciplines - small organisation bodies which include staff with related education and research activities, led by the **head of discipline**. In addition, the **working committees** of the faculties coordinate and evaluate different activities, such as quality assurance, study programme evaluation, counselling and career guidance, research, student issues etc.

At all levels, students are involved in the governance and management of the university. They have representatives in the Senate, Administrative Board, Faculty Councils, committees and they have the same right to vote as any other teaching staff member.

The present governance system provides a **high level of decentralisation**, especially in the operational management: the educational activities (teaching) and research are planned and proposed by the Administrative Board, on the basis of strategic and operational plans of the faculties, and approved by the Senate; the proposals for competitions for free academic positions are sent to the next management structure by the Department Council, after consulting the heads of disciplines, then approved by the Faculty Council and the Administrative Board; the selection and promotion of teaching staff are held at faculty level and managed by a commission approved by the Faculty Council and Administrative Board, under national and university rules and regulations; the competition results are approved by the following management structures: Faculty Council, Administrative Board and Senate; the selection of administrative staff is organised by the management of each administrative department and approved by the Administrative Board; decisions regarding the selection of students (criteria, number of places for admission for each study programme) are approved by the Senate; the financial issues are approved by the Administrative Board and the Senate; development of services to society is made after management analysis in the Administrative Board and approved by the Senate.

The **selection of students** is of particular interest. For undergraduate study the selection of future students is made by an entrance examination. An important university asset is its excellent ranking and reputation which sustains the capacity to attract students from all over the country and even from abroad. This entrance examination is organised in accordance with the National Law on Education no. 1/2011, other national regulations, and specific admission regulations of the university which are included in the Admission guide¹¹. The entrance examination is announced and publicised in the press, television, posters, and educational fairs and also by organising the "Open Gates Days" of the university. All the information regarding the methodology of the examination, the bibliography, details of examination process and other important information are published in advance on the website of the university with the aim to ensure transparency of this competition. The organisation of the entrance examination is managed by a Central Commission appointed by the Rector who is also its President. The Commission includes members of the Administrative Board, teaching and administrative staff and representatives of the students, approved by the Senate. This Commission is endorsed with the full responsibility for the proper organisation of the competition. The entrance examination is held to fill the number of places

⁹UMFTGM regulations <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/documente-oficiale-umf/regulamente-metodologii-proceduri.html>

¹⁰ Administrative Board regulations <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/consiliu-de-administratie/hotarari-ale-consiliului-de-administratie.html>

¹¹ Admission guide http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/admitere/admitere2012/ghidul_admiterii_2012.pdf



funded from National Budget, number which is approved by the Minister of Education and Research, and also the tuition fee places. The number of places are proposed by the University Senate and approved by the Minister of Education and Research, according to the ARACIS regulation regarding the capacity of the university for education. The entrance examination is mandatory for all type of studies. The examination for admission at study programmes is of multiple choice question type. Places are taken in descending order of the averages obtained at the examination. However, in order to assure a better level of knowledge of the selected students, the management of university has already started preliminary discussions regarding the improvement of the entrance examination (multidisciplinary examination).

The rational use of **university funding** is delineated by the Administrative Board by taking into account the Annual Budget of revenues and expenditures and the institutional budget and it is set in operational terms. The Administrative Board submits the Annual Budget to the Senate for approval. In this regard the Administrative Board of the University will conduct an analysis of the budget of the institution, identifying the categories of mandatory and predictable expenses (staff costs, general operating costs, costs incurred by co-financing and investment projects in progress etc.), and the resulting difference is oriented to the institutional development (investment in infrastructure and research facilities and modernisation of education). The management policy of the university encourages the departments to identify and develop their own fundraising strategy through specific activities, funds that shall remain largely in the possession of the departments for their own development, to reward performance, for mobility etc.

Nevertheless the **development of services** for the society is a priority of UMFTGM. The management of UMFTGM, by its practice, intends to maintain and develop our University as a symbol of scientific involvement of the city of Țirgu Mureș and to provide well qualified graduates for the society. To maintain this fame the university, by its specific means, aims to increase its visibility in the national and international academic world and especially in the extra-academic environment. The main beneficiaries of the medical and pharmaceutical graduates are not only the patients but also the whole society. And due to the possibility of free movement within the European space, and also due to the globalisation trend of the society, the range of beneficiaries widens. In this context the university continuously attempts to identify the existing needs of the society and to adapt its offer to those needs by creating new educational programmes and/or by implementing the lifelong learning principle. All these aspects are discussed during analysis meetings of the Administrative Board and the proposals are submitted to the committees of the Senate in order to be further analysed by the Senate and to generate/ modulate important regulations of our University (strategic and operational plans).

Human resources policy and practice

The development of human resource of UMFTGM represents a necessary, ongoing and strategic process. This activity is based on two main areas: selection and training of the new staff and improving the existing one.

Proper selection (recruitment) and promotion of the academic staff is one of the most important duties. This selection is accomplished in accordance with the National Law on Education Nr.1/ 2011 and also with specific internal Regulations and Procedures for teaching staff selection. It is the task of the Vice-Rector responsible for didactic activities, in agreement with the Administrative Board to foresight the needs for teachers. Each year, the current needs for academic staff are evaluated from the level of each discipline. The heads of disciplines of all the faculties are invited to report their needs for recruitment or for promoting teaching staff. These proposals are collected, discussed and approved in the Department Council and Faculty Council. The proposals from all faculties are then discussed and approved by the Administrative Board of the university and then by the Ministry of Education. The positions approved by the ministry are published in a nationally available journal "Monitorul Oficial" so that transparency of the process is ensured. Both selection and promotion of the teaching staff are carried out by competition, according to specific criteria for each academic degree. These criteria (national and also internal), the



whole methodology¹² and the results of competition are approved by the Senate in accordance with art. 303 paragraph 1 of the National Law on Education no. 1/ 2011. Before each competition, information is published on the university website¹³.

The elaboration of the UMFTGM strategy for human resources development is affected by several problems: the number of students that varies from one year to the next, the unfavourable economic context with major influence on budgetary/ extra-budgetary financing sources, recent consequences of the economic crisis on human resources in public institutions – in universities, no recruitments or limitations for hiring teaching staff; changes in the national retirement policy. An additional harsh limitation concerning promotion of the teaching staff is the new criteria for attending professor and associate professor positions stipulated by CNADTCU National Council. This obligation, together with the new national policy regarding teaching staff retirement, did not allow the increase in number of professors and associate professors in our university. Also, the number of PhD Coordinators has decreased because a significant number of such coordinators have retired. In our opinion these facts have had a bad impact in carrying out our goal: to consolidate our position as a higher education and research institute. Another limitation with consequence especially in the recruitment of new teaching and administrative staff is the lack of financial motivation. The low salaries in public administration do not motivate young graduates to occupy positions in the university.

A synthetic description of the past performance regarding academic staff (number of full time academic staff/ part time academic staff, teacher demographics characteristics etc.) is found in appendices 2 and 3. In the previous academic year, The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș had a total of 507 academic and 260 administrative staff. As it can be seen from the numerical data, in the past 5 academic years the number of students has increased constantly and the number of academic staff has slightly varied, but the increased ratio is still at a level which allows us to maintain the quality of our processes in an efficient internal financial environment. The full academic staff of UMFTGM has a balanced structure regarding gender (56.7% women, 43.3% men) and 21.3% are young full time academic staff (less than 35 years old). The tendency of aging in the past 5 academic years could be explained in terms of national regulations which provided drastic hiring limitations and raised the eligibility criteria for competitions. The dynamic of promotion and retirement has led to an almost constant level of professors and associate professors percentage (around 25%). The research staff consisted mainly of members of the academic staff involved in research projects financed by international/ national grants/ contracts and, recently, by internal competition. The introduction in 2008 and 2009 of new study programmes (Balneo-physio-kinetotherapy, Nutrition-Dietetics, Physical Education and Sports, Medicine study programme in English) emphasised the needs of teachers with very different specialisations, a situation that will be increased in the future when these students are in senior years of study. The existence of a traditional Hungarian language study programme creates a particular aspect in providing the necessary personnel, specific only for our university in comparison with other medical universities in Romania. Therefore, the ratio of students/ teachers, full time academic staff/ part time academic staff is and will be a dynamic process, requiring appropriate teaching staff strategy at institutional level.

The human resources development strategy at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș (Appendix 4) takes into account the future needs and a strategic desire, a competitive and well-determined staff, which will lead to: 1. *Improving employment of teaching staff*: achieving and maintaining an occupancy level close to 70% in as many disciplines as possible, through appropriate involvement of heads of disciplines and departments, with a rationale proportion for study programmes in three different languages (Romanian, Hungarian, English); 2. *The optimisation of the educational pyramidal hierarchy* - avoiding syncope or massive flow in hiring teachers; the application of rigorous local/ national performance standards for promotion at each hierarchical level. 3. *Increasing the quality and performance of full time academic staff* - ensuring continuous training of young teachers with

¹² http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/documente_oficiale/oct2012/Metodol_posturi.pdf

¹³ <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/concursuri-posturi-didactice.html>

permanent courses of modern techniques of teaching and examination; - internships and exchanges for academic staff; - improvement of the university database to transparently assess and quantify the scientific and research activity for each department or discipline. 4. *Attracting young competitive teachers* - providing opportunities for a university career; - the integration of doctoral students and residents in teaching and research activities, especially in departments with low occupancy level.

Cooperation with universities and professional and scientific societies

At local and regional level, UMFTGM represents a symbol, tradition of competence, effectiveness and national visibility of the academic profile of the region. There is a tight collaboration with Petru Maior University and Sapientia University from Țirgu Mureș, in terms of teaching or scientific research activities and result dissemination. Cooperation with these technical universities has led to technological innovation and development of high-tech products. UMFTGM is also part of the community life, having traditional partnerships with local and regional government authorities, education and cultural institutions.

Collaboration with all medical universities from Romania and other national research centres has added value to the activities of the University and improved its national visibility (Appendix 11 List of institutional projects). A special collaboration agreement with the University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Victor Babeș" from Timișoara was recently signed¹⁴. As part of its national recognition among universities and professional and scientific societies, important national congresses or seminars of national scientific or professional societies are organised by UMFTGM, such as The 14th National Congress of Pharmacy in 2010¹⁵, The National Congress of the Society of Anatomy in 2009, The National Conference in Surgery in 2009, the annual course of the Committee for European Education in Anaesthesia etc. In 2012, UMFTGM was accepted to host the National Meeting of the Rectors and Deans from the Romanian medical universities¹⁶.

There are also ongoing international collaborations with research universities in Europe and the rest of the world¹⁷. Nevertheless, there are also several personal links with foreign laboratories. The aim of our university is to raise these collaborations to institutional level and to initiate collaborative EU grants. The University is participating in the ERASMUS¹⁸ and CEEPUS¹⁹ programmes both as a beneficiary and a provider of many exchange mobilities with more than 25 universities from abroad. UMFTGM signed the Erasmus Charter in 2006 and since then more than 280 outgoing students and teaching mobilities at different universities have been registered, but only 22 incoming mobilities which reflect somewhat a deficiency regarding international visibility of our university together with the fact that the English study programme was only introduced in 2008 (Appendix 12). UMFTGM is affiliated with 4 international organisations²⁰.

By analysing the policy of our management we can characterise it as valuable, flexible and indebted to its traditional values – multicultural medical education and reference for particular medical scientific research. The management acts in accordance with internal analysis, internal and external audits, external evaluations, academic community consultancy in order to reduce the risks, find proper solutions, find opportunities. The major changes and adopted strategies in 2012 already have results on the consciousness of our community which feels that the University has a better approach of the management and the continuation of bottom-up management, the coherent and transparent decision making and communication processes are guaranteed.

¹⁴ http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/relatii_internationale/acorduri_de_cooperare.pdf

¹⁵ <http://www.cnfr2010.ro/index.html?&setLanguage=EN>

¹⁶ <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/media/noutati/stiri-detalii/articol/intalnirea-rectorilor-universitatilor-de-medicina-si-farmacie-din-romania-si-a-decanilor-facultatilor.html>

¹⁷ http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/relatii_internationale/acorduri_de_cooperare.pdf

¹⁸ http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/relatii_internationale/lista_acorduri_bilaterale.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.umftgm.ro/relatii-internationale/programe-internationale/ceepus.html>

²⁰ <http://www.umftgm.ro/relatii-internationale/afilieri-la-organizatii-internationale.html>



Academic profile – Analysis of research and educational programmes and approaches

The range of specialisations provided by UMFTGM currently includes study programmes in Medicine, Dentistry, and Pharmacy: graduate studies, postgraduate courses in master's and doctoral degrees and professional training. The study programmes for Medicine, Dentistry, and Pharmacy encompass 360 and 300 ECTS, respectively, which corresponds to the completion of the first two cycles with a graduation examination. Short-term education forms are also available, with 60 ECTS for each academic year. The newly created study programmes (medicine in English, kinetotherapy, nutrition and dietetics, sports) and some of the postgraduate study programmes satisfy the needs of the society. The master's programmes are interdisciplinary and allow the gain of knowledge and specific skills for entrepreneurial activities, clinical laboratory activities, quality control of drugs, food and environment protection. The Doctoral School provides a very good environment for young researchers training in different areas of medical sciences (Appendix 10).

An academic year consists of two semesters, of 14 weeks each and followed by a three-four week examination period. There is an additional examination period in September. Each curriculum is well harmonised with similar national study programmes, and annually analysed within specific boards of the faculties, however optional courses make the educational offer of our university particularly attractive. Through the detailed syllabus, available on the University website, the content, the outcomes, the evaluation method for each course, ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) are assigned to each course. At the beginning of each semester, the students are informed about the content of the curricula, outcomes and evaluation method. The exams for finalisation of study programmes are organised in September, the bibliography of the graduation examination for Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy study programmes being the same as for national admission to medical and pharmaceutical residency.

One of the priorities of the university is to extensively put into practice the student-centred education approach: students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions, discuss, explain or work in teams, this being mainly developed in clinical teaching. In the meantime, many disciplines started to reassess the education process by introducing lab classes for student projects to improve communication, teamwork, self-teaching, problem-solving based learning. A new education approach is related to learning on medical models, before actual clinical practice - a Simulation Centre is about to be created for medical students. There are also modern teaching procedures based on multimedia tools, with a special emphasis in histology, histopathology, physiopathology, methodology of research in medical and pharmaceutical sciences, drug industry and biotechnology. However, there are several institutional projects of UMFTGM which include the development of e-learning platforms and one of these platforms is expected to be finalised in 2014. On the other hand, the curricula include foreign language teaching for students; UMFTGM provides outstanding medical English courses, examination and certification of knowledge under the PROFEX framework being aware that, as a part of the international dimension of the University, there are students with professional foreign language skills (proved during students' international mobilities and after graduation on the international labour market).

The University uses quality assurance instruments to evaluate the students' assessment regarding the quality and content of the courses. Starting this academic year, this activity is managed by the new Department of Quality Assurance, expecting a higher rate of student participation. The students are asked to fill an evaluation questionnaire²¹ regarding education processes at different disciplines. The analysis of past evaluations emphasises a satisfactory level of the student's position and synthetic data are provided in the annual report on quality. An important drop-out rate of students is registered for short-term study programmes, especially in the first year of study, as can be seen from parallel analysis provided for the past two academic years (Appendix 3). The management analysis concludes possible solutions related to this subject: a more selective admission examination; a better activity of the tutors; extracurricular classes for students with difficulties in attaining examination requirements.

²¹ List of UMFTGM regulations and procedures <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/managementul-calitatii/departamentul-de-asigurare-a-calitatii/documente.html>



The degree of insertions on the labour market is relatively high for Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy study programmes, demonstrating the needs of the society for this kind of specialists. However, the hiring limitations in public institutions affected the last three generations of new medical doctors who completed their residency. From another perspective, the new Nutrition and Dietetics specialists started to change the way of thinking of the Romanian society on the importance of the quality of food and management of nutrition for the healthy or ill population. Another study programme, midwifery, has been internally re-evaluated and the results determined the UMFTGM management to stop offering this programme. In the meantime, for a better assessment of the degree of insertion, the present system of data collection regarding Alumni has to be improved.

As a key element for efficient study programmes is the good balance between students and academic staff (Appendix 3). Even if the number of students (undergraduate, master, doctorate, post-doctorate) and study programmes has increased in recent years, the ratio students/ academic has slightly increased, but it is still at the level of a high quality education process.

Also remarkable is the fact that the teaching competency of our academic staff represents a strategic point for University educational programme strategy. The Academic Staff Teaching Training Department offers the necessary preliminary pedagogical training for the young teachers. On the other hand, the University sustains training through inter-institutional teaching mobilities, both nationally and internationally. The international experience of our staff has already been reflected in new procedures for delivering their knowledge by modern teaching methods, as well as evaluation methods. A high percentage of academic staff are certified under the PROFEX framework (medical English language courses and examination) organised in our institution, the acquiring of foreign languages skills being essential for high quality teaching in English, to carry out international mobility and, as a consequence, to develop an efficient academic and scientific cooperation with universities from abroad.

Research is part of our academic activity and it is the main tool to assess the international visibility of our university. The main fields of interest in research are: cardiovascular diseases, genetics, haematology, immunology, neurosciences, emergency medicine, drug analysis, pharmacokinetics etc. Priority research areas are identified using statistical data provided by local and global health care organisations. Those research areas are promoted where members of the academic community have already gained experience and there is adequate research infrastructure. By international training and collaboration new fields of research are continuously added to the existing range.

The research infrastructure includes dedicated research laboratories (i.e. Laboratory for Bio-valves, Micro-Electrophysiology Laboratory, Drug Testing Laboratory, Laboratory for developing open source platforms etc.) with adequate, modern equipments or small research entities under the responsibility of different disciplines. Many research projects are conducted under partnerships with other universities, institutions or research laboratories.

Even if our university provides a good environment for research, reflected in the number of financed scientific projects (Appendix 11) and scientific publications, it does not reflect the existing potential. For this reason, the new management of our university started to analyse the results and needs of each research group or research laboratory, some of them interdisciplinary, in order to implement the research strategy for 2012-2016 which includes the accreditation of research centres of excellence inside the future Medical and Experimental Research Centre. This Research Centre will allow an increase of the visibility of the university and a better national classification. On the other hand, in order to stimulate the research of young academic staff, an internal grant competition was launched in 2012 and the results will be published at the beginning of December. The research activities under contract with economic partners are particularly encouraged, being a source for funding and technological transfer development. Other financial incentives are considered to motivate research results, such as subvention for participation at high impact scientific events.



Academically-related activities

A key element in the lifelong learning system is the professional training for medical residency, the direct beneficiary being the national public health system and the Ministry of Health. The University also implemented a system for continuous training of medical personnel in the field of several advanced diagnostic and therapeutic techniques. There are education programmes for health and prevention jointly organised with the Public Health Agency, and also professional associations for practitioners in medicine and pharmacy. These lifelong learning programmes are intended to reduce regional and Europe-wide discrepancies by providing sustainable tools for continuing professional training of health care providers and increasing patient access to quality, state-of-the art health care.

The University brings its contribution to the sustenance of emergency medical services in the local and national community. An important partnership between our university and the city hall is the organisation of the national conference for doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers (the latest edition, The Fifth Conference of PhD Students and the Second Conference of post-doctoral researchers in Medicine and Pharmacy, July 4-6, 2012). There is a partnership with the County School Inspectorate and pre-university education network directly or through student organisation. The University is co-organiser of many local campaigns regarding health problems such as blood donation, hypertension, diabetes, etc. Taking advantage of its excellent sports facilities the University runs partnerships for sporting activities, some of them with national and international impact.

The university resources and capability are used for knowledge transfer and collaborations with external economic partners and the local and regional government. Many pharmaceutical companies are located in Țirgu Mureș. The educational and practical training programmes of the University take into account the needs of these companies. Through partnerships with hospitals and outpatient clinics the University aims to achieve the students' practical training being genuinely integrated in the current professional, social and cultural environment. European projects such as the Erasmus Practical Placement programme support this objective at international level, and can also develop cooperation among universities and companies.

Collaboration with the local universities, Petru Maior University and Sapiientia University, can lead to technological innovation and development of high-tech products. It is important to mention that UMFTGM has been involved in a preliminary discussion for a possible future regional research centre of IBM in Țirgu Mureș.

Over the years, the University has been invited to take part in the debates organised by local or national authorities regarding health, education, local and regional development, legislation. Permanent connections with the local/ regional and national authorities are achieved by the fact that the members of the university management and academic community are elected as members of national councils and ministry boards and committees (CNFIS, UEFISCDI, ANCS, ARACIS, CNATDCU, etc.)

For the dissemination of the results of research and education activities, the University Press Țirgu Mureș Publishing House was founded in 1999. It publishes textbooks, monographs, medical practice guides, etc. It was accredited in 2001 by the National Research Council of Romania (CNCSIS) and two important ISI and B+ category journals are edited²².

Student support services

As part of its strategy, UMFTGM offers a variety of support services for students, but it is constantly focused on their improvement and the addition of new ones, being aware that a good quality of the education environment is reflected in education results. At the beginning of each academic year, *the information containing curriculum and bibliography* are published on the UniWeb platform and the public website of the university, as well. Other up-to-date and easily accessible information is available on the university website at each faculty, Doctoral School or Master's domain (institutional regulations and decisions, timetables, curriculum, practical training, news, etc.)²³.

²² <http://rrml.ro/> and <http://www.ammjournal.ro/index.php/AMM>

²³ <http://www.umftgm.ro/facultatea-de-medicina/foreign-students.html>



The University provides free access learning resources for each study programme in libraries and resource centres, both in classical and electronic format. The UMFTGM *library* set up a new, modern and functional building in 2010 and offers fast documentation services for students, teachers, doctoral students and researchers, access to international databases²⁴, either from own subscriptions or through the National Authority of Scientific Research. The UMFTGM library has continuously extended its cooperation with home or foreign similar libraries and today it offers over 190.000 volumes and periodicals.

In order to help the student reach the academic standards, access to subject-specific laboratories is offered: a) The university has 7 *medical virtual training laboratories*: 4 laboratories for Medical IT and Biostatistics, 2 virtual microscopy laboratories, 1 virtual electrophysiology laboratory and 1 computer-assisted medical training laboratory. b) Students have access to the university *Anatomy Museum* and *Pathology Museum*. c) *The Integrated Centre of Oral Care* provides the logistics for all the clinical disciplines specific for Dentistry: waiting rooms for patients, oral-dental diagnostic centre, and radiology. It has 4 clinics for specific Departments: Preventive and Community Dental Medicine, Odontology-Parodontology, Oral Rehabilitation and Prosthetics, Paediatric Dentistry-Orthodontics. d) For pharmacy students, the university has a *Botanical garden*, divided into 3 parts: Dendrology Park, Botanical Garden and Medical Herb Garden. e) Specific student research is possible at the *Experimental Station*, with 6 rooms for the breeding of experimental animals and 4 rooms for experimental medicine.

There are six active student organisations in our university: The Students' League of Țirgu Mureș (LSTGM)²⁵, The Hungarian Students of Țirgu Mureș Organisation (MMDSZ)²⁶, Dental Medicine Student Organisation (OSMD), The Association of Pharmacy Students (ASF), Emergency Medicine Student Organisation (OSMU)²⁷, and Surgery Student Society of Romania (SSCR)²⁸. LSTGM and MMDSZ represent the students in their relation with the university decision-making bodies. Apart from that, they organise national student exchanges, like TransMed, InterDENTis and InterFarma programmes, and international professional and research exchanges: SCOPE, SCORE. Students can also be granted international scholarships: ERASMUS, CEEPUS and scholarships granted by the Hungarian Government and Balassi Institute (Appendix 12). There are two international student congresses organised each year with the full support of the University: Marisiensis and Tudományos Diákköri Konferencia. LSTGM organises simulation of entrance examination, as well as simulation of residency entrance examination. OSMU and SSCR organise specific training for students, such as: Basic Life Support, Advanced Life Support, Surgery Summer Camp, Basic Surgical Skills, Knots&Sutures Workshop, and Trauma Camp. Through these organisations, students can get involved not only in scientific activities, but also in social campaigns: "Donează sânge, fii erou!", Teddy Bear Hospital, "0% Diabet, 100% Sănătate", anti-tobacco campaigns, anti-HIV campaigns, StuDance.

In order to encourage the communication with the members of the academic staff, as well as to increase students' trust in the university, a *tutoring system*²⁹ is implemented. Its main aim is to facilitate students' integration and to help them make didactic, cultural and social choices, and also to improve their academic results, but there is need of higher determination of the tutors. A *Centre for Professional Counselling and Orientation*, providing psychological support, help for preparing for the examinations, for planning the residency and doctoral studies was also created.

The UMFTGM *Department of Social Services* provides support for students with social problems and also deals with other students' specific activities: managing campus facilities, dealing promptly with campus students' problems and utility providers or getting the sanitary approvals. The students' social problems are monitored by the vice-rector in charge of the social activity and the relationship with the all student organisations.

²⁴ <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/directia-administrativa/biblioteca/informare-online/interogare-baze-de-date-de-specialitate.html>

²⁵ <http://www.lstgm.ro/>

²⁶ <http://www.mmdsz.ro/>

²⁷ <http://osmu.ro/>

²⁸ <http://mures.sscr.ro/>

²⁹ i.e. <http://www.umftgm.ro/facultatea-de-farmacie/informatii-studenti/informatii-specifice-facultatii/sistemul-tutorial.html>

Excellence, merit, study and social *scholarships* are awarded. Scholarships are awarded to each teaching series, on specialisations, in ratio with the number of students. The selection is performed according to the final results of the previous academic year. Social scholarships are granted on demand, taking into account the student's family income.³⁰ The students with exceptional research results are stimulated (i.e. academic achievement scholarship), and those with learning problems are supported (i.e. tutoring)³¹.

UMFTGM organises the social programme for students entitled "*Volunteering for the Benefit of the University (VIFU)*". Based on this programme, an organisational framework that allows students to undertake work on behalf of the university to be able to cover part of tuition fees has been created. The *UMFTGM canteen* is a modern self-service building. The competitive prices, correlated with the student's subsidy, have led to an increase in the number of students who choose to have their meals here. *UMFTGM Sports Facilities* is at international standards, with volleyball and basketball courts, fitness room, 4 tennis courts, 2 soccer fields, where students have access during and after sports classes. Student competitions are also organised here³².

Funding

The UMFTGM is a public higher education institution whose funding resources are mainly budgetary ones (basic funding, the complementary and supplementary ones, funding from research grants and special allocation). It also has extra budgetary funding (own funds). Relatively low budgetary resources do not allow big institutional development and, therefore, a shift to identifying alternative sources from other public funds (ministries or authorities other than the Ministry of Education), international or public resources and private partnerships, is required. The main objective that has to be implemented in this regard is to establish an efficient allocation of resources in order to support areas of strategic interest for the university.

UMFTGM, as a public academic institution, is mainly financed from governmental/ public funds. Financial resources of the university also come from the own income of the institution (fees, rents); sponsorship, donations; scientific activity; special government funding; micro-production (publisher); students accommodation and external (non-refundable funding). The total budget of the institution in 2011 was 57,041,663 RON, with a real balance between the public funding and the self-financing of the university (Appendix 7).

UMFTGM has an organised financial – accountant service, with a general administrative director responsible for the good administrative function, involved in the strategic management of the institution. The University Senate has the responsibility to analyse and to approve the structure of the total institutional budget sent by the Administration Board. The allocation of funding for teaching to faculties over the last five years is presented in Appendix 7 and is well balanced taking into account the number of students and the specificity of each study programme.

The research projects represent the best external financing opportunities. Thereby, in the past three years, UMFTGM has been successfully included in 15 main research projects (4 as leader and 11 as partner), with a total budget of 42,191,322 RON (Appendix 11).

A priority of the University is the transparent funding management and a real interest in obtaining new sources of financing in order to sustain and enhance the excellence research. This trend includes the internal grants competition organised for the first time in 2012 and the implementation of a new monitoring system for research funding.

³⁰ http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/documente_oficiale/oct2012/Reg_acordare_burse.pdf and

http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/documente_oficiale/oct2012/Regulament_de_acordare_a_burselor_de_ajutor_social.pdf

³¹ http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/documente_oficiale/oct2012/Metodol_stimul_studentilor.pdf

³² <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/directia-administrativa/serviciul-social/baza-sportiva-umf.html>



5. Quality assessment practices

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Țirgu Mureș is a higher education and research, multicultural institution with medical and pharmaceutical education in Romanian, Hungarian and English. Since 2005, the university has implemented its own well-defined policy on quality assurance (QA). The **Quality Assurance Policy (QAP)** is in accordance with the university development, national and international standards. In our university the quality assurance instrument is its own **Quality Assurance System (QAS)** based on key principles that are found in the **Quality Manual of the University (QM)** and its appendices, which is for the first time drafted in our university and now under consultancy within our community. QAS works on all levels including all specific entities of the University, QA being a part of our academic life. The University is constantly concerned with the improvement of the tools that provide QA in accordance with external national and international standards by adopting policies and procedures, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of study programmes, student assessment and collaboration with other universities. The involvement of students in QAS through active participation in decision-making processes at faculties' level and teaching evaluation was an important step in optimising internal QA.

UMFTGM has internal structures, policies and strategies for the QA management and activities of teaching, learning and research, and it develops an own culture of quality. **The Committee for Evaluation and Quality Assurance (EQAC)** manages QAS and is coordinated by the Vice-Rector of Quality Assurance. The EQAC includes 9 members: academic staff representatives who are not involved in managerial positions, students, representatives of the University Union and Employees³³ and it has specific regulations approved by the Senate. **The Quality Assurance Department (QAD)** is a new QA functional structure with a role regarding the coordination and implementation of QA, supporting the EQAC³⁴. It is organised and operates in accordance with its regulations approved by the Senate. Together with the Vice-Rector for Quality Assurance, the Department of Quality Assurance is responsible for the sustainability of the quality assurance system (QAS) implementation. A specific compartment covers the **internal audit** activities.

EQAC is a requirement of Law 87/ 2006 concerning the approval of the Government Emergency Ordinance 75/ 2005 on quality assurance in education. The Committee coordinates the application of the procedures, evaluation activities and quality assurance stipulated by law and by Senate decisions, proposes quality improvements, and draws up the annual internal evaluation report. This committee collaborates with the **Quality Assurance Working Committees of the Faculties (QACF)** and with the Department of Quality Assurance.

EQAC develops and coordinates the implementation of QA procedures, proposes solutions and strategies to improve the quality of education, assessing cross-institutional performance indicators. The **Annual Report** regarding internal QAS evaluation is developed by **EQAC** and validated by the Senate (and subsequently published on the university website). The annual report conclusions represent the basis for QA operational activities for the following year in order to minimise or eliminate the weaknesses identified by specific measures.

At faculty level, QA activity as a whole is led by the Dean who collaborates with the coordinator of the **Quality Assurance Committee of the Faculty (QACF)**. Depending on the specific need, QACF collaborates with working groups approved by the Faculty Council in order to collect evaluation data.

Even if the QAS of UMFTGM has a well-established structure at all levels, the insufficient personnel with only QA activities (i.e. for Quality Assurance Department) represents a cause for some difficulties of its functionality.

The activity of all the entities of the University which have included the QA in their competencies is harmonised with the mission of the University and development goals according to the Strategic Plan.

³³ <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/managementul-calitatii/comisia-de-evaluare-si-asigurare-a-calitatii-pe-universitate/structura-si-componenta.html>

³⁴ <http://www.umftgm.ro/prezentare-umf/managementul-calitatii/departamentul-de-asigurare-a-calitatii/obiective.html>



“The primary aim of a university performance evaluation system should be institutional improvement through quality assurance in every process and action”. QA priorities of UMFTGM are focused on the education and research processes; therefore there is a current need for completing the administrative and management instruments for QA. At present, UMFTGM is in the middle of the process of designing and developing the mechanisms, procedures and planning QA tools in order to introduce the ISO 9001 system. The need to improve traceability, codification and efficiency of internal documents, together with the revision of whole internal regulations and procedures represents the reason of this implementation. EQAC is responsible for this activity and is supported by QAD. To improve the understanding of the QA system, more than 60 persons belonging to our University staff (teaching and administrative staff) attended the QAS and audit courses organised in our university this year.

Data collection and analysis regarding quality evaluation are developed in a systematic way and the results of evaluation are subjected to discussion within the Faculty Councils and University Senate and corrective measures are formulated.

The **assessment of study programmes** is carried out for each study programme in order to fulfil the European requirements by level of qualification: bachelor, master, residency and doctoral studies. There is a Board of curriculum revision and development in each faculty which cooperates with EQAC. The external evaluation of study programmes is carried out by ARACIS. In 2010, UMFTGM was successfully evaluated by ARACIS (Appendix 6),

The **research evaluation** is based on the number and quality of the research results: scientific articles and books, research grants and projects, patents, attendance at national and international scientific events, the number of research centres with national or international recognition/ accreditation, research funding. Each discipline, department, faculty reports the scientific activity annually and the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research develops an annual report regarding scientific research of the University. The same vice-rector analyses and proposes the research plan, including inter-institutional collaborations, which has to be approved by the Senate. At University level, it collaborates with EQAC to identify the research priorities, strategies and research objectives for each institution/ faculty/ department/ individual.

Academic staff evaluation is conducted under a **performance evaluation system** based on a self-assessment form, approved annually by the University Senate, the teacher’s performance since the latest assessment period conducted by the head of the discipline and the student’s assessment. Starting this year, the assessment process of the teaching staff by the students is done over the UniWeb platform. Student feedback is an important factor in the positive development of the teaching process. The quality of teaching staff and activity is also evaluated through the following indicators: the use of modern teaching and communication techniques (laptop, projector) and interactivity (e-format courses, using online simulators – e.g. ExPharm - experimental pharmacology, Torvs - molecular databases, Visible Human Project - virtual anatomy, virtual microscopy, virtual Physiology etc.), the degree of occupancy of the academic positions, the proportion of teaching staff with a national or international doctoral degree, the number of doctoral coordinators, the ratio of young teaching staff, mobility and internships in foreign countries, joint research programmes with other faculties of the university, language skills in foreign languages. The statistical analysis of the results of the academic staff performance is included in the annual report of the University.

The **quality of student education** is a key objective in our academic activity, starting with admission which is based on clear methodologies, respecting the principle of equality of opportunity for all candidates. In the first year, the students receive the **Study Guide** (which includes the curriculum and the general and specific objectives of the specialisation). **Tutoring programme** is functional, one **tutor** being assigned for each year of study. The programme also specifies the tutors’ tasks and tutorial activity reporting requirement. The students have access to other useful tools in QA, namely **Student Satisfaction Assessment Questionnaire** - whose results are evaluated by QAD and further analysed in the Administrative Board meetings, with corrective or preventative measures where appropriate.

The curricula are consistent with ESG and distinct for each specialisation. The curriculum includes compulsory and optional courses, with differentiated number of ECTS. The curricula are



subjected to analysis each year: to attain a logical sequence of subjects in order to provide the required professional skills and abilities in each subject; to improve the range of optional courses; to balance the ratio of courses/ practical works/ seminar hours, etc. Student examination is an important element of the education process, as the evaluation results reflect the acquiring of knowledge and the quality of the teaching activity. Student assessment is done professionally according to our The Rulebook of Didactic and Professional Activity of Students³⁵.

Infrastructure, learning resources and student support

The QM regarding infrastructure is based on planning the resources by taking into consideration the existing ones, quality evaluation of the investments, efficient use of infrastructure by assigning the lecture/ seminar rooms and laboratories by monitoring the load of each location (Appendix 8).

Support and stimulation of student performance are achieved through social and merit scholarships and excellence grants. The student events have the full support of the University in order to improve communication within the student community, the training quality, the participation of students at national and international scientific events and, nevertheless, the visibility of the University. The Career Counselling and Guidance Boards of the faculties, together with the tutors, offer assistance on a variety of issues (adaptation to academic life, career development for students and graduates). Finally, EQAC always takes into account feedback from employers, labour market representatives, professional organisations, feedback from students/ graduates/ employees regarding the quality of the students.

In the education process, the students have access to several types of laboratories and resources: teaching laboratories (at each subject level), research laboratories (at faculty level), virtual medical education laboratories and University Library, a modern and functional building, in a continuous development and modernisation of its activity and services, in order to support education, research and practice. Other important facilities for students benefit are the Integrated Dental Medicine Centre, The Experimental Centre, The Botanical Garden, etc. Adequate social services are available: newly renovated and furnished accommodation rooms, access to all facilities provided by the university for social, cultural and sporting activities. There is a continuous concern in this respect.

Public information. Public information is available on the University website and is constantly updated, offering transparency and impartiality. The University meets its obligation to provide information on curricula, learning outcomes, qualifications, procedures for teaching, learning and assessment used and newly available learning opportunities (post-graduate courses, master's courses, etc). In addition to the information provided on the website there are other media used such as the Handbook for prospective international students (Appendix 9), brochures, Open Day events and other promotional activities.

QAS implementation has proved so far to be beneficial for the development of educational and research activities of UMFTGM. Currently, the QAS development is underway, the implementation of ISO 9001 having also started. Positive aspects were recorded primarily in the educational process (new specific policies and procedures, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of study programmes, assessment of students and teaching staff), scientific research (definition of research priorities, strategies and research objectives, exploitation of research results, evaluation of research quality), infrastructure development and management processes. The internal evaluation process allows an extensive analysis of the results and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the university as an instrument of management decisions. The economic and social changes bring new challenges to UMFTGM that can be overcome only through efficient operation of QAS, leading to changes in Operational and Strategic Plans.

6. Strategic management and capacity for change

³⁵ http://www.umftgm.ro/fileadmin/documente_oficiale/oct2012/Regulament_activitate_didactica_stud.pdf

The weaknesses and threats are permanently used by the UMFTGM management as instruments of future decisions and strategies. The strengths as consequences of achieving the strategic goals derived from permanent analysis, together with identified opportunities prove management capacity for change and development. The present EUA evaluation is also seen as an opportunity to improve the UMFTGM management mechanisms. The SWOT analysis derived from the self-evaluation is presented below.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses
• UMFTGM – academic life symbol of Țirgu Mureș city • UMFTGM categorised by the Ministry of Education as a university for education and research • The range of specialisations adapted to the multicultural environment (study programmes in Romanian, Hungarian and English) • Well-trained teaching staff with experience in teaching and research • The management structure and the transparency of decisions • Prestige and efficiency of the medical activity in the university clinics • Internal competition for grants and rewards for research • International recognition for medical training proved by the increased number of foreign students • The existence of nationally and internationally acknowledged scientific journals published under University endorsement (1 ISI Journal and 1 BDI B+ journal) • The Annual National Conference for doctoral students in Medicine and Pharmacy initiated and held by UMFTGM since 2007 • Broad access to information (modern new library, online resources for scientific documentation, UMFTGM website) • The existing facilities for teaching, student accommodation and extra-curricular activities • Special student support services (academic achievement scholarships, the programme <i>Volunteers for the benefit of the University</i>)	• Insufficient educational facilities compared to the current number of students • Imbalance between the research infrastructure of the faculties • Insufficient external non-governmental funding • The QAS is insufficiently understood by academics and students • Low scientific production (scientific articles published in high impact journals, research grants won by competition) • Reduced number of academic staff in some disciplines • Reduced number of teaching staff members fulfilling current criteria necessary for promotion to higher academic positions (professor, associate professor) • Insufficient administrative staff for regular quality assurance activities • A relatively slow updating of the curricula • Dysfunctionality in terms of timing and duration for some processes (i.e. public acquisition, data collecting from some disciplines or departments) • Unsatisfactory results regarding data collection and labour market insertion analysis of Alumni • The admission criteria not selective enough • Poor determination of tutors • The University website is still not available in foreign languages with a direct consequence on the international visibility of our activity as a whole • Poor habit of the staff to access the information on the website
Opportunities	Threats
• The provisions of the Education Law which	• The changes in the National legislation

Strengths	Weaknesses
allow a larger autonomy for university development and management • The increase of self-funding resources as a pre-requisite for better strategic actions • The new medicine study programme in English as an opportunity to test the institutional capacity for further international education • The institutional projects in progress, human resources, quality assurance and learning orientation • Ongoing national and international partnerships, traditional bilateral cooperation • The increased number of bilateral agreements • The recently approved project for the Integrated Centre for Biomedical and Pharmacy Education • The established frame for the Research Centre of the University allowing a new management of University research	• The decrease of government financial support for higher education and research with significant reduction in infrastructure investment opportunities for education and research • The significant reduction of national research funding • The risk of failure to comply with national standards for hiring or promotion of the teaching staff • Relatively low income of teachers which results in the poor interest for an academic career and the risk of teaching staff leaving the system • The low number of doctoral supervisors with the consequence on scientific results, recruitment of future teachers • High rate of student dropout, especially in the first year of study, in some study programmes • The hiring limitations for public institutions

7. Conclusions

UMFTGM has contributed significantly to the area of Romanian higher education in medicine and pharmacy through the quality of the Alumni, scientific events, the national and international visibility of the academic staff in terms of scientific results and through contributions to the decisions regarding the higher education system.

The recent national classification of UMFTGM and the present self-evaluation report, together with the goal to comply with the criteria for an advanced research and education university, have underlined a need to reassess the main concerns in each of the main areas of University activity.

The institution is viewed positively both inside and outside the universities in Romania, by students, stakeholders, local or national authorities (including evaluation agencies).

Even if the management of UMFTGM is seen to work properly, there is a need for a more effective development strategy of University, including consultation processes to overcome any of the deficiencies highlighted and to improve the understanding of the University mission and goals by University staff, students and external stakeholders.

The next stage of our development is focused mainly on creating a better environment for research. The low production of scientific projects and articles needs to be overcome by a more consistent strategy for selecting project themes and delivering the results. The future University Research Center, the already established internal grant competition, the rewards for excellence of research and other motivational tools represent the key element for the next future.

The education process has positive results, obtained with proper support. However, there are aspects to be improved by effective feedbacks in teacher-student relationship in order to improve education efficiency, a more realistic curricula evaluation to avoid overlapping and outdated



knowledge, a more case-oriented approach in the content of the courses, more project-oriented practical works, especially in the last academic years.

The administrative processes have to follow documented procedures with effective traceability but avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy, and the QAS has to become fully functional.

For the next period, a specific plan to address weaknesses is adopted, with the following elements:

- Increasing the number of teaching spaces, laboratories by: a new building of the Faculty of Pharmacy – construction works are to start in March 2013; construction of a modular, multifunctional amphitheatre with 800 seats – project; opening of the Centre for Simulation and Practical Skills for students in 2013.
- A structural reorganisation of existing research infrastructure by establishing specific laboratories, according to research areas and organization of a Medical Research Centre to allow cross-disciplinary research and inter-institutional collaboration.
- Promoting public-private partnerships, research contracts with the business environment.
- Supplying medical, consulting and research services for nongovernmental organisations and institutions.
- Training sessions of academic staff and students regarding the QAS.
- Stimulating research/ publication by: allotting research funds; internal research grants funded from own revenues with a view to publishing the research results; awards for the research results; funding the academic staff's participation in international scientific events with papers accepted for publication; raising the index of medical journals of the university; the use of promotion criteria related to publications; promoting funding opportunities through national and international grants; reorganisation of the Department for European Projects and Research; increasing the quality of doctoral theses by new criteria related to the publications necessary for acceptance of the thesis.
- Increasing the number of academic staff in some sub-departments by: attracting top graduates in academic work; part-time employment of young graduates; extending the doctoral students' contribution to the teaching activities
- Increasing the number of teaching staff members fulfilling current criteria necessary for promotion to higher academic positions (professor, associate professor) by: creating a research environment required for the publications of articles necessary for promotion; financial support for the habilitation theses and research mobilities.
- The reorganisation of the QA department and recruitment and training of administrative staff to cover the regular quality assurance activities.
- Curricula improvement by: revision of the curricula for each subject and focussing them on skill and competence acquirement; the introduction of a Record book of practical skills and a portfolio for each student containing performed duties; improvement of Curriculum Committee activity for analysing existing curricula and updating them to current requirements; harmonization of the curricula with those of other medical universities across the country.
- With respect to the dysfunctionality of some processes (i.e. public acquisition, data collection from some sub-departments or departments), the remedy plan includes: implementation of work procedures, control/ quality standards; implementation of an online registration platform of scientific activity for each member of the teaching staff.
- In order to improve data collection and alumni labour market insertion analysis, the Alumni Society of



the university will be organised, together with a framework for contacting alumni, initiated at the time of awarding the graduation diploma, and an accurate record of residents and their evolution within the residency programme.

- Reorganisation of the student's admission system, including changes of criteria and examination subjects.
- Encouraging tutors by quantifying their activity in the annual assessment of the teaching staff.
- The web platform is already under re-construction and it will allow the website to be viewed in Romanian, Hungarian and English, including a mobile phone format. The faculties' management has to increase the conscience of university staff to get information regularly from the University website, too.

Rector,
Prof. dr. Leonard Azamfirei

Tirgu Mures
December 12th, 2012


