

Medicinska fakulteta Univerze v Mariboru je dopolnila 20 let

The Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor Celebrates 20 Years

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Izvleček

Medicinska fakulteta Univerze v Mariboru (MF UM) je bila ustanovljena 2. 10. 2003. Svet RS za visoko šolstvo je 3. 12. 2003 potrdil univerzitetni študijski program »Splošna medicina«, nakar se je jeseni 2004 v ta program vpisalo prvih 89 študentov. Od tedaj pa do konca leta 2023 je študij z diplomo zaključilo 1090 študentov. Svet RS za visoko šolstvo je 15. 4. 2005 s sklepom podal soglasje k izvajanju novega doktorskega študijskega programa »Biomedicinska tehnologija MF UM«. V študijskem letu 2005/06 so vpisali prvo generacijo podiplomskih doktorskih študentov, od tega 29 v prvi in 16 študentov v drugi letnik. Od tedaj pa do konca leta 2023 je bilo na MF UM promoviranih že 156 doktorjev znanosti. Nacionalna Agencija RS za kakovost v visokem šolstvu je MF UM 9. 1. 2020 podelila akreditacijo EMŠP »Dentalna medicina«. Prva

Abstract

The Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor (MF UM) was established on October 2nd, 2003. The Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education ratified the university study programme "General Medicine" on December 3rd, 2003, whereupon in autumn 2004, the first 89 students enrolled in this programme. Since then, and until the end of the year 2023, 1,090 students will have completed their studies with a degree. The Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education gave consent, with an agreement, to the implementation of the new doctoral study programme "Biomedical Technology" at the MF UM on April 15th, 2005. In the academic year 2005/06, the first generation of postgraduate doctoral students was enrolled, specifically, 29 students in the first and 16 students in the second study year. From

generacija 20 študentov »Dentalne medicine« se je vpisala v študijskem letu 2021/22. V začetku je MF UM delovala na številnih lokacijah. 30. 9. 2004 ji je bila predana v uporabo obnovljena stavba na Ljubljanski ulici 5, 27. 1. 2006 pa še stavba na Magdalenskem trgu 5. Temeljni kamen za novo stavbo na Taborski ulici 8 so položili 20. 6. 2011. Gradnja je trajala dve leti in tri mesece, nakar je bila stavba predana v uporabo 18. 9. 2013. MF UM obsega 36 kateder in 11 inštitutov. Strokovne službe so organizirane v tri centre: Center za študentske in študijske zadeve in mednarodno sodelovanje, Center za ekonomske in splošne zadeve in Center za pravne in kadrovske zadeve.

then, and until the end of 2023, there will have been 156 Doctors of Science promoted at the MF UM. The Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education bestowed the accreditation of the UMSP "Dental Medicine" programme on the MF UM on January 9th, 2020. The first generation of 20 students of "Dental Medicine" enrolled in the academic year 2021/22. In the beginning, the MF UM operated in numerous locations. On April 30th, 2004, the renewed building at Ljubljanska Ulica 5 was handed over for use, and on January 27th, 2006, the building at Magdalena Trg 5 followed. The foundation stone for the new building at Taborska Ulica 8 was laid on June 20th, 2011. The construction lasted for two years and three months, whereupon it was handed over for use on September 18th, 2013. The MF UM includes 36 university departments and 11 institutes. Professional services are organized into three departments: the Student and Study Affairs and the International Cooperation Department, the Economic and General Affairs Department and the Legal and General Affairs Department.

FROM AN IDEA TO ESTABLISHMENT

The first more realistic discussions and endeavours for the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor (MF UM) began in the last decade of the 20th century.

Professional successes and appointments of the first clinical wards in the Maribor General Hospital (MGH), upon the suggestion of the Medical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, were the foundations for further professional growth of the Maribor Teaching Hospital and its transformation into the University Clinical Centre (UCC) Maribor.

Physicians of the MGH, and later the UCC Maribor, have strengthened their pedagogical abilities also when working with students of the Medical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, who have been coming to the MGH for clinical practice in greater numbers already from 1990 onwards. Pedagogically, they have also cooperated with the former Graduate School of Nursing Studies and later the Higher School of Medical Sciences, which then developed into the Faculty of

Health Sciences, as well as with the Medical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana.

The decision to establish a medical faculty in Maribor has been decisively supported by the university management. A special work group under the management of Acad. Prof. Emeritus Željko Knez has analysed the laboratory capacities for the implementation of pre-clinical subjects—during the first academic years, students attended them at numerous faculties of the University of Maribor.

At the then Maribor General Hospital, Assist. Prof. Gregor Pivec, Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc and Full Prof. Vojko Flis joined forces to lay the foundations for the later development of the faculty. In this process, a key role at the national level was played by the Mariborian member of Parliament, Prof. Rudolf Moge.

In the preparation of the MF UM curriculum report, a group of experts cooperated: Acad. Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc, Assist. Prof. Vojko Flis, Full Prof. Eldar M. Gadžijev, Full Prof. Borut Gorišek, Full Prof. Elko

Borko, Full Prof. Alojz Gregorič, Full Prof. Dušanka Mičetić Turk, Assoc. Prof. Kazimir Miksić, Assist. Prof. Radovan Hojs, Assist. Prof. Erih Tetičkovič, Assist. Prof. Zmago Turk and Assist. Prof. Iztok Takač. The liable person of the programme was Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc. The MF UM was established by the Ordinance on the Transformation of the University of Maribor, which was unanimously adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia on October 2nd, 2003. On December 3rd, 2003, the Higher Education Council approved the university study programme “General Medicine”, which is why we celebrate the Day of the Mariborian Faculty of Medicine on December 3rd each year.

The first dean of the MF UM was Acad. Prof. Emeritus Ivan Krajnc, who managed the faculty from its very emergence in the period of the launch of the study programmes “General Medicine” and “Biomedical Technology” until 2020, when Full Prof. Iztok Takač took over the function of acting dean.

Shortly after its establishment, the faculty bodies were formed: the Senate, the Academic Assembly (AA) and the Managerial Board.

The first president of the AA was Senior Doctor Prof. Emeritus Elko Borko (2003–2004), who was succeeded by Senior Doctor Assoc. Prof. Borut Gorišek (2004–2007). After him, the function of the president of the AA was taken over by Full Prof. Iztok Takač (2007–2022). After his election as dean, the function of the president of the AA was taken over by Full Prof. Mirt Kamenik (2022–present).

The MF UM includes 36 university departments and 11 institutes. Professional services are organised into three departments: the Student and Study Affairs and the International Cooperation Department, which is managed by MSc Milena Orož Črešnar, the Economic and General Affairs Department, which is run by Vesna Krajnc and the Legal and General Affairs Department, which is led by MSc Jelka Rakun.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PREMISES

In the beginning, the MF UM operated in numerous locations, on the premises of the rectorate of the UM,

the University Clinical Centre Maribor and the Public Health Institute Maribor.

Important acquisitions in the first period of the faculty operation are restorations of the building at Ljubljanska Ulica 5 for the needs of anatomy and physiology (handed over for use on September 30th, 2004) and of the building at Magdalena Trg 5 (handed over for use on January 27th, 2006), which have laboratories for biochemistry, biophysics, cell biology, pharmacology with toxicology and genetics.

With the understanding of the University Clinical Centre the MF UM, by adapting the premises in the basement of the new ENT (ear, nose, throat) ward, it became equipped as the most modern simulation centre in this part of Europe (handed over for this purpose on November 3rd, 2009), and the former ENT ward also provided the premises for clinical skills training (OSCE–laboratory, handed over for use on June 11th, 2010). On October 29th, 2010, the premises of the laboratory for multiphoton microscopy were also handed over for this purpose.

Immediately after the beginning of studies, the activities for the construction of our own building began, which would facilitate qualitative and modern medical studies. With the understanding of the Municipality of Maribor (MOM), we had the possibility to choose between three locations. We decided on the location at Taborska Ulica 8, primarily due to the vicinity of the Maribor Teaching Hospital, the UCC MB, although this location was the most demanding in terms of construction. From the very beginning of the formation and preparation of documents that were needed for the acquisition of European means and also when choosing the architect, Professor Boris Podrecca, we have been led by a central thought—the building should be constructed qualitatively and in the spirit of the latest achievements. The mastermind of the current building in this location was Engr. Igor Recer. The then-Ministry of Education and the Government of the RS classified the construction of the new MF UM among state projects for European means, which was of vital importance for assuring financial means. During the following two years, we chose a construction contractor.

The faculty management has, after having obtained authorisation from the UM rectorate, chosen the

contractor, in accordance with the decisions of the National Review Commission. For contractors, the companies Begrad and Granit were chosen, who performed the entrusted task perfectly.

The construction has been completed without annexes or additional works and without additional funding, for which we would like to show our gratitude to the president of the construction committee, Full Prof. Zdravko Kačič, to the chief secretary of the UM, Assist. Prof. Mojca Tancer Verboten, as well as Ms. Petra Ujčič, Mr. Goran Nikolić, university architect Full Prof. Uroš Lobnik and the president of the tender commission and contract caretaker for the implementation of works, Assist. Prof. Bogdan Čizmarević. Besides the dean, Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc, along with colleagues from MF UM professional services, have done enormous and excellent work. All of them together had to simultaneously take care of ensuring undisturbed study activities at various locations, for which our gratitude also goes to the then-rector of the UM, Full Prof. Danijel Rebolj, who facilitated all of this.

The foundation stone for the MF UM was laid on June 20th, 2011, by the then-president of the Republic of Slovenia, Danilo Türk, PhD. The academic year 2013/2014 already began on the new premises.

The new building of the MF UM, with 12,000 m² of usable area, was given for use on September 18th, 2013, which means that it was built in a record time of just two years and three months.

The new MF UM consists of two parts. In the pedagogical part, students and professors have the most modern simulators, virtual patients, laboratories for classes in clinical skills, electronic tables for anatomy classes, contemporary equipment for diagnostics of digestive system diseases and gynaecological illnesses, contemporary ultrasound devices, devices for diagnostics and treatment of muscular system diseases, telemedicine technology, video conference equipment, 3D technology and more at their disposal. In the research laboratories, we have numerous new laboratory instruments for various disciplines, from pathology to physiology, molecular biology, pharmacology, microbiology, biochemistry, chemistry and genetics.

THE UNIFORM MASTER'S DEGREE STUDY PROGRAMME "GENERAL MEDICINE"

In October 2004, we enrolled the first 89 students of general medicine in the then-still university study programme "General Medicine". On May 5th, 2008, the Higher Education Council of the Republic of Slovenia confirmed the renewed uniform master's degree study programme (UMSP) "General Medicine", with the Bologna Declaration adopted, whereupon we, in the academic year 2009/2010, enrolled 96 students in this programme.

The UMSP "General Medicine" programme lasts for six years or 12 semesters, comprises 5,775 hours of theoretical and practical study and is evaluated with 360 ECTS points. Students may, with 52 obligatory subjects, also choose between 35 optional subjects, allowing them to develop their knowledge and abilities in-depth. The principal characteristic of the UMSP "General Medicine" programme is the close intertwining of subjects within individual study years (horizontally), as well as between study years (vertically). The role of the connector is represented by the PBL modules (Engl. problem-based learning), which we started to implement in the Slovenian area at our faculty. On the basis of central problems in the form of a spiral, they cover all areas of medicine, from knowledge of the foundations of theory and practice to training in a clinical environment and the gradual achievement of independence, which leads students onto an independent professional path as a physician. The internationally comparable UMSP "General Medicine" programme offers students, under the guidance and supervision of teachers, an abundance of practical work with the patient and facilitates, as well as an international exchange of students and professors between medical faculties within the European Union and even outside it. We provide students with appropriate basic and clinical knowledge and skills, and we also educate them in terms of high ethics and appropriate behaviour for a future physician. Our fundamental goal is to prepare students for independent work as physicians.

Full Prof. Radovan Hojs has served as the vice dean for educational activities and student affairs since the

very beginning. By the end of 2023, 1,090 students will have graduated from the MF UM.

The numbers of enrolment posts and enrolled students and graduates in the period 2004-2023 are shown in Table 1.

THE UNIFORM MASTER'S DEGREE STUDY PROGRAMME "DENTAL MEDICINE"

The Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA) bestowed the accreditation of the UMSP "Dental Medicine" programme on the MF UM

on January 9th, 2020, for an indefinite period of time. However, the "Dental Medicine" programme was postponed from the academic year 2020/21 to the academic year 2021/22 due to financial difficulties. Thus, we enrolled the first generation of 21 students in the "Dental Medicine" programme in the academic year 2021/22.

In the academic year 2022/23, the number of enrolled students was 25, and in the academic year 2023/24, it was 28 students.

The implementation of pre-clinical and medical subjects in the first and second years proceeds without problems, as they are implemented by higher education teachers of our MF UM, whereas we turned to the Faculty

Table 1: Enrolment posts, number of enrolled students and number of graduates of the MF UM in the period 2004–2023.

YEAR	UMSP GENERAL MEDICINE SPLOŠNA MEDICINA			UMSP DENTAL MEDICINE DENTALNA MEDICINA		
	POSTS	ENROLMENT	DEGREE	POSTS	ENROL.	DEGREE
2004–2005	80	89	–			
2005–2006	80	94	–			
2006–2007	86	98	–			
2007–2008	86	96	–			
2008–2009	86	95	–			
2009–2010	86	96	–			
2010–2011	86	98	33			
2011–2012	96	112	44			
2012–2013	86	103	64			
2013–2014	86	101	82			
2014–2015	86	101	88			
2015–2016	86	97	93			
2016–2017	86	97	86			
2017–2018	86	94	105			
2018–2019	86	89	86			
2019–2020	86	104	92			
2020–2021	106	124	78			
2021–2022	106	120	102	20	21	
2022–2023	106	119	73	20	25	
2023–2024	110	115	64	24	28	
TOTAL	1802	2042	1090	64	74	

of Dental Medicine, University of Rijeka, Croatia for help and cooperation with the implementation of professional clinical subjects due to a lack of habilitated teachers from the area of dental medicine in northeastern Slovenia.

The function of acting vice dean for dental medicine is performed by Prof. Emeritus Dušanka Mičetić Turk.

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME “BIOMEDICAL TECHNOLOGY”

On April 15th, 2005, the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education gave consent to the implementation of the new doctoral study programme “Biomedical Technology” of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor. Thus, in the academic year 2005/06, we enrolled the first generation of postgraduate doctoral students, specifically, 29 students in the first year and 16 students in the second. The study content and literature have been regularly updated over the years, including additional optional subjects, and in 2019, the study programme “Biomedical Technology” was coordinated with the guidelines of the Doctoral School of the University of Maribor.

The goal of the doctoral study programme “Biomedical Technology” is to educate experts who will be able to independently use and develop research methodology in their chosen interdisciplinary area and who will be capable of independent interdisciplinary research and development in various areas of contemporary medicine and engineering. The aim of the programme is further to educate experts who will be able to transfer their knowledge even to the most demanding levels of pedagogical processes—at the university level.

The doctoral study programme “Biomedical Technology” (3rd level) lasts for three years or six semesters and is evaluated with 180 ECTS points, which facilitates the inclusion in international exchange programmes with students in countries that use the ECTS system. In the first year, besides obligatory content, representing 33 ECTS points, students also earn 27 ECTS points of optional content, for which they can choose three basic elective subjects from a set of six basic elective subjects. In the second year, there

are 48 ECTS points specified for obligatory content and 12 ECTS points specified for elective content, for which students can choose two elective subjects from a set of more than sixty elective courses. The third year is intended exclusively for the production of a doctoral dissertation.

The subjects in postgraduate studies in the “Biomedical Technology” programme are horizontally and vertically connected: the horizontal connection of subjects is assured so that a student in an individual year chooses logically related subjects that will provide the theoretical foundation for the production of the doctoral dissertation. Vertically, the subjects are upgraded so that the subjects of the first year serve as a base that the second-year subjects build upon, and together, they represent the theoretical foundation for the production of a doctoral dissertation.

The conditions for the completion of doctoral studies are having completed all study obligations with a value of 180 ECTS points, having written a doctoral dissertation and having completed a successful public defence. A candidate gains the title “Doctor of Science” posterior to having successfully completed the postgraduate programme for the acquisition of a doctorate in biomedical technology.

The function of vice dean for postgraduate studies has been performed by Full Prof. Pavel Skok since the very beginning.

From the establishment up to now, 154 Doctors of Science (status as of November 6th, 2023, of which two are still awaiting promotion, expected on November 21st, 2023) have been promoted at the MF UM.

The numbers of enrolment posts and enrolled students in postgraduate studies and PhD students in the period 2004-2023 are shown in Table 2.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

We also need to emphasise the diverse international activity of our young faculty. We have signed agreements for the cooperation of students and teachers with Erasmus and Tempus programmes.

Currently, we have signed Erasmus+ bilateral agreements with 52 medical faculties in the EU, and

Table 2: Enrolment posts, number of enrolled students in postgraduate studies and number of PhD students at the MF UM in the period 2004–2023.

YEAR	POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME »BIOMEDICAL TECHNOLOGY«		
	ENROL. POSTS (1st year + direct enrol. to 2nd year)	ENROLMENT	DOCTORATE OF SCIENCE (by calendar years)
2004–2005	30	–	0
2005–2006	30	45	0
2006–2007	45	44	1
2007–2008	45	37	3
2008–2009	45	29	2
2009–2010	55	25	2
2010–2011	55	43	6
2011–2012	55	37	7
2012–2013	37	18	6
2013–2014	37	19	9
2014–2015	37	8	9
2015–2016	37	11	12
2016–2017	45	28	12
2017–2018	45	30	16
2018–2019	46	29	12
2019–2020	46	30	17
2020–2021	46	20	5
2021–2022	51	29	15
2022–2023	51	31	7
2023–2024	51	20	13
TOTAL	889	533	154

six Erasmus+ bilateral agreements for the medical area outside of the EU.

The function of vice dean for international cooperation was at first performed by Assist. Prof. Bogdan Čizmarević, then by Prof. Emeritus Breda Pečovnik Balon, and now by Assoc. Prof. Faris Mujezinović.

THE STUDENT COUNCIL OF THE MF UM

The highest representative body of the students of the MF UM is the Student Council (SC) of the

Faculty of Medicine of the UM. It consists of student representatives for all study years. According to the Statute of the University of Maribor, the Student Council is the only representative body for the opinions and interests of all students. It consists of two members from each study year (a president of the study year and a representative), two students who have completed their studies but have not yet graduated, two postgraduate students and the president of the SC or the vice dean for student affairs, who manages the Council and is a member by function. Any student with an active status at the MF can become a member of the SC. In the period from the establishment of

the MF UM up to now, the function of vice dean for student affairs has been performed by nine students. Currently, the function of vice dean for student affairs is performed by Enej Vidovič.

THE JOURNAL ACTA MEDICO-BIOTECHNICA

In 2008, the MF UM started publishing its own scientific research journal, Acta Medico-Biotechnica (AMB). Full Prof. Dušica Pahor was appointed as managing editor and she is also the vice dean for scientific research activities, the president of the commission for habilitations and the president of the commission for scientific research affairs at the MF UM.

The journal has been published regularly twice a year for 15 years. By the end of 2023, 31 issues will have been published with a total of 260 articles. In the journal, numerous articles have been published whose authors were students of the MF UM. Thus, AMB also importantly contributed to the inclusion of students in the research work done at the MF UM.

THE MIXED ACADEMIC CHOIR OF THE MF UM

The mixed academic choir of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor is one of the oldest organised extracurricular activities within the central faculty and provides the possibility of creative activity and socialising to students who wish to enrich their study years with their own cultural participation.

The mixed academic choir of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor was established in 2005 based on the initiative of the then-student of the Faculty of Medicine Jakob Zapušek, who was simultaneously the president of the choir, as well as its first conductor. In 2011, the guidance of the choir was taken over by the then-aspiring and today internationally renowned conductress and choirmaster Rahela Durič Barić. At the beginning of the new season in 2013, her place was filled by Polona Bončina, who prepared the choir for the opening of the new

season. Then, in the same year, she was succeeded by Petra Beršnjak (now Gobec), who successfully led the choir for the following five seasons until 2018. That year, the choir began to operate under the baton of its current artistic director Viljem Babič.

The choir consists of regular students of the Faculty of Medicine of the UM and counts 31 active members. The mixed academic choir of the MF UM is part of the central organisation of the Maribor Medical Students' Association and, as such, cooperates and co-creates the socio-cultural life of the organisation.

THE MOST IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS ABOUT THE MF UM

So far, five important publications have been issued in which, from different perspectives, the history of the MF UM's emergence, construction and operation is outlined.

In 2014, the book "Ten Years of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor" was published by the MF UM. The managing editor was Acad. Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc and the editorial board consisted of Acad. Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc, Milan Golob and Elvira Žibrat. The authors Full Prof. Breda Pečovnik Balon, Prof. Emeritus Elko Borko, Prof. Emeritus Viljem Brumec, Tone Brumen, Assist. Prof. Bogdan Čizmarevič, Assoc. Prof. Vojko Flis, Full Prof. Radovan Hojs, Milan Golob, Kristijan Jejčič, Acad. Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc, Mr. Prof. Rudolf Moge, Full Prof. Dušica Pahor, Assist. Prof. Gregor Pivec, Full Prof. Danijel Rebolj, Full Prof. Ivan Rozman, Full Prof. Pavel Skok, Senior Doctor Aleksander Sterger, Assist. Prof. Andraž Stožer, Full Prof. Ludvik Toplak and Elvira Žibrat have accurately described the circumstances of the emergence and the first ten years of the MF UM operation on 199 richly illustrated pages in nine chapters with 39 subchapters.

In 2019, the UM Publishing House published the monograph publication "Portraits of higher education teachers who take the credit for the emergence of the Faculty of Medicine in Maribor who were employed in the Maribor General Hospital and habilitated up to the year 2002", issued by the MF UM. The chief and managing editor was Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc, and

the editorial board consisted of Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc, Full Prof. Radovan Hojs, Full Prof. Pavel Skok, Full Prof. Dušica Pahor, Full Prof. Breda Pečovnik Balon, Assist. Prof. Bogdan Čizmarević and Elvira Žibrat. The material was prepared and collected by Elvira Žibrat. In the monograph, 41 biographies of the most deserving higher education teachers, who have made a mark from ideation to the establishment of the MF UM in 2003 and who were habilitated until the year 2002, are represented. With their vision, they paved scientific and pedagogical paths in Maribor.

In 2021, the Dr. Adolfa Drolca Maribor Health Centre issued the publication “Dental Medicine Studies in Maribor” with Senior Doctor Gorazd Sajko as the chief editor and author. In it, the author wanted to reliably argue the entire course of development of the uniform master’s degree study programme “Dental Medicine” at the MF UM. Chronologically extremely accurately arranged material in the form of formal documents, electronic messages and telephone screen recordings was collected by Maruša Fugger. The book contains 186 pages and is divided into annual periods from 2015–2021.

In 2022, the monograph “The Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor: Monograph on the Establishment”, edited by Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc and Senior Doctor Assist. Prof. Gregor Pivec, was published by the University Publishing House of the University of Maribor and issued by the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Maribor. On the editorial board were Full Prof. Vojko Flis, Full Prof. Ivan Krajnc, Full Prof. Dušanka Mičetić Turk and Full Prof. Iztok Takač. The review was performed by Assist. Prof. Martin Bele, Full Prof. Anton Crnjac and Full Prof. Stojan Potrč and the design is by Dušan Pogačar. In the monograph, 11 authors present the historical foundation, professional fundamentals and administrative and chronological course of the emergence of the MF UM and its programmes in seven chapters on 340 richly illustrated pages.

In 2023, Aleksandra Kovač issued a dissertation with the title “Gateway to a new faculty of medicine” with the subtitle “An institutional analysis of the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Maribor in Slovenia”, which

she successfully defended on June 21st, 2023, at the University Twente in the Netherlands. The dissertation was published by the publishing house CHEPS/UT and printed by the company Ipskamp Printing, based in Enschede in the Netherlands. The dissertation minutely analyses the events connected to the establishment of the MF UM in the period 2001–2004. The author was, at the time of the accreditation of the new faculty, employed at the UM rectorate, which is why she had access to key personalities and documents. The dissertation encompasses 350 pages, the content is divided into 13 chapters, and it is written in English with the abstract provided in Dutch.

A VISION OF THE MF UM AND A VIEW INTO THE FUTURE

Our mission, of which the essence is the education of physicians, dentists and doctors of science, among other things, also includes striving for an interdisciplinary and universal approach to solving the challenges with which we are faced in Slovenia, Europe and the world. Among them surely belongs an extremely negative demographic picture, the aging of the population, the consequences of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, the consequences of the recent flooding, facing the waves of migrants, climate changes and the energy crisis. Last but not least, there is a crisis of values also present all over the world, new challenges related to artificial intelligence, various movements for equality, a decent life and family planning, and primarily health, which has never been or is no longer accessible to the majority of the world population. In light of these challenges, the MF UM is aware of its social responsibility and will also further strive to keep its fundamental mission—educating physicians, dentists and doctors of science who will take care of the physical and mental health of our population with pride and a full measure of knowledge, responsibility and empathy.

In the short term, we plan for the accreditation of the study programme “Pharmacy”, which we intend

to present to the SQAA in 2024. For this purpose, we appointed Assoc. Prof. Uroš Maver as the acting vice dean for pharmacy. Additionally, the short-term plan includes the implementation of all six study years of dental medicine, which presents a considerable challenge given the usual lack of habilitated teachers in this area in northeastern Slovenia.

The medium-term plan encompasses the expansion of teaching activities to regional hospitals and healthcare institutions, wherein it is necessary to habilitate enough teachers who will be able to qualitatively implement primarily practical classes for students in their environment. In this way, more young physicians will be able to stay in the environment from which they originate. In the medium-term plan, we have also included the preparation of material foundations for the expansion of the MF UM to new grounds, where it will be necessary to create a municipal spatial plan and acquire a construction license with which we will perhaps be more successful with renewed appeals to the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation for the financing of new buildings.

For the long-term plan, we intend to prepare the foundations for the beginning of studies also in English, as all medical faculties in the region already offer such services, whereas, in Slovenia, we have fallen behind them for over a decade. Medical studies in English will attract numerous young people and

talented secondary school graduates from all over the world, and many among them will be able to recognise the quality of residence in our environment, so we hope that they will also remain with us as a physician in their vocation.

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