



**SOUTH-WEST UNIVERISTY „NEOFIT RILSKI“**  
**FACULTY OF PEDAGOGY**  
DEPARTMENT “EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND SPECIAL  
PEDAGOGY”

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**PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION**  
**DOCTOR'S PROGRAM**

SCIENTIFIC FIELD: **PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES**

PROFESSIONAL DIRECTION **1.2. PEDAGOGY**

DOCTORAL PROGRAM: **THEORY OF EDUCATION AND DIDACTICS**

EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE: **PhD**

NCR LEVEL: **8**

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION: **RESEARCHER**

TRAINING PERIOD: **3 /THREE/ OR 4 /FOUR/ YEARS**

FORM OF EDUCATION: **REGULAR / SELF-STUDY/ PART-TIME**

THE QUALIFICATION CHARACTERISTIC IS INITIATED **2024**  
WITH EDUCATIONAL PLAN IN:

**BLAGOEVGRAD, 2025 г.**

# **QUALIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS OF DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

## **THEORY OF EDUCATION AND DIDACTICS**

### **1. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

The status of a doctoral student is acquired after participation in the legally regulated competition procedure or submission of a project for a doctoral dissertation. By order of the rector, the scientific supervisor of the doctoral student is appointed. The training in full-time and independent form lasts up to three years, and in the part-time form - up to four years. There are mainly three types of activities accompanying the implementation of the curriculum: research, educational and pedagogical. The doctoral student reports on the implementation of the activities according to his / her individual curriculum through quarterly and annual reports. Upon successful fulfillment of the curriculum requirements, the doctoral student is given the right to dissertation defense.

Upon successful completion of the research work leading to the enrichment of pedagogical theory and practice, and after a positive opinion of the supervisor, the doctoral student acquires the right to publicly defend his dissertation before a scientific jury. The overall preparation of the graduates of this educational-scientific degree allows them to be competitive on the labor market, to creatively transform the pedagogical reality.

The opportunity to continue their education and receive the educational and scientific degree in the doctoral program "Theory of Education and Didactics" is given to graduates of the Master's degree in one of the following specialties:

- Pedagogy
- Pedagogy and educational management
- Preschool pedagogy
- Preschool pedagogy and foreign language
- Primary school pedagogy
- Primary school pedagogy and foreign language
- Preschool and primary school pedagogy
- Special pedagogy
- Social pedagogy
- Another major with a teaching component

### **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM**

The main objectives of the preparation of the doctoral student in accordance with modern regulations are:

- In-depth study of the methodological and theoretical foundations of pedagogical science;
- Mastering the methodology, methodology and tools of conducting research in the field of pedagogical theory and practice;
- Formation of creative abilities and professional competence for successful implementation of independent research, teaching and expert management activities;

- Achieving and maintaining a high quality of doctoral training in accordance with modern transformations in the development of pedagogical science and the challenges of professional practice;
- Creating prerequisites for active international contacts of doctoral students with scientists from other countries in order to acquire progressive experience and good pedagogical practices, raising the prestige of the educational institution by translating world standards into research.

### **3. GENERAL QUALIFICATION AND SPECIALIZATION OF THE PROGRAM**

The objectives of the doctoral program "Theory of Education and Didactics" are aimed at acquiring professional research competencies from the eighth level of the National Qualifications Framework: realization of independent research activity requiring in-depth fundamental general methodological training in the field of pedagogical theory and practice. This presupposes that the graduate ONS "Doctor" in this program has basic competencies for creative research, for teaching in all levels of our educational system, for expert and managerial activities in various pedagogical institutions.

Attention is focused on stimulating and developing innovative, flexible and critical professional-engaged thinking, related to the creative understanding and interpretation of scientific and pedagogical knowledge, with the formation of readiness for independent professional development and mastering the peaks in professional mastery.

### **4. ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

#### **4.1 Knowledge (theoretically and /or factually)**

Successfully defended and acquired ONS "Doctor" must have diverse and in-depth knowledge in the field of theory and methodology of education and training, creative skills and competencies, characterized by combinability and variability, and the ability to apply them in complex and non-standard pedagogical situations.

Knowledge:

- related to mastering the methodological foundations of pedagogical science and the approaches for their use in the design and implementation of research activities;
- knowledge of the processes of differentiation and integration in the pedagogical scientific field, of the modern pedagogical directions;
- knowledge and analysis of the development of the conceptual and terminological system of pedagogical science;
- to compare and analytically evaluate the structures and technology of implementation, the contributions of various scientific developments in the field of pedagogy and their role in enriching the practice of teaching and education in accordance with the current needs of public life;
- to discover, identify and formulate current pedagogical problems, to substantiate alternative hypotheses, to substantiate key ideas and ways for their implementation, to know the parameters for the formation of a sound concept for research solutions, to know the methods, techniques and techniques applicable to research;
- specialized and conceptual knowledge, supporting the critical analysis and the good systematization of innovative solutions in the pedagogical field of research;

- potential for expansion and creative transformation of the existing knowledge in the field on the basis of essential interrelations and interactions with border scientific fields;

- knowledge with the highest degree of complexity, enabling one to conduct authentic, original research, representing a contribution to pedagogical science.

#### **4.2. Skills (cognitive and practical)**

- ability to identify problems significant for the practical activity, to theoretically substantiate their relevance, to design and implement systematic and comprehensive research in the selected specific field;

- skills for conducting a purposeful literature review on the research topic, for quick orientation in the flow of scientific and pedagogical information, for finding, extracting, arranging, synthesizing and evaluating innovative ideas from various scientific sources;

- skills for multifaceted analysis and successful solution of discussion problems in the field of research or innovation, improvement of standard models and approaches, development of innovative solutions by combining different original strategies and technologies;

- mastering methods and tools for forecasting the changing pedagogical reality, for innovative thinking, generating new ideas with good applicability in practice, development of rational algorithms for activity:

- to master the scientific style of presentation/ written and oral 7, to be able to consistently, logically, accurately, and argumentatively express their thoughts;

- to correctly cite the used scientific works and to observe the rules of scientific ethics

- good technical design and exposure of the results of the conducted empirical research; ability to prepare scientific articles, abstracts, reports, studies, etc. with appropriate schematic, graphic illustration, for the development of teaching aids);

- public speaking skills, and the ability to communicate through different media in front of different audiences

- to treat with respect the work of his colleagues, to objectively and fairly assess the qualities of their scientific developments, to be able to adequately analyze other people's views on individual issues;

- developing skills for individual or group creative participation in research, for endurance, precision and rigor, adequacy, adaptability and intellectual flexibility.

- to master the classical and innovative educational technologies in his research and teaching work in higher education

- to continuously improve his professional and pedagogical training in sync with the requirements of modernity;

- skills for creating and leading teams, for involvement in project activities, for rational allocation of time and management of human and financial resources; to solve complex complex problems by applying interdisciplinary approaches, new research methods and tools

- to be able to creatively apply the scientific achievements of pedagogical science in practice.

- to possess skills for creating and leading teams, for involvement in project activities, for rational allocation of time and management of human and financial resources; to solve complex complex problems by applying interdisciplinary approaches, new research methods and tools;

### **4.3 Independence and responsibility**

- permanent improvement of the range of knowledge and skills in the professional field in which he / she conducts research;
- creation and interpretation of new creative products through own research or other scientific activity;
- ability to provide regular effective planning and implementation of pedagogical and research activities;
- development of reflective skills, ability to self-assess the achievements in the research activity;
- skills for creative design, implementation and adaptation of the individual research process in accordance with modern requirements, in order to achieve sustainable results for pedagogical practice.

### **4.4 Learning competence**

- formation of interests in the chosen professional field and of positive personal motivation for activity;
- developing the capacity for systematic acquisition and use of a significant amount of information from various channels, presenting the current scientific achievements in various theoretical or practical fields
- mastery of universal intellectual skills related to understanding and practical application of knowledge in the field of theory and practice of education and upbringing;
- ability to use modern digital technologies for accumulation and systematization of important scientific information
- ability to work in a team; ability for self-control and adequate self-assessment in the implemented activities;
- ability to recode the acquired scientific information;
- presentation skills.

### **4.5. Communicative and social competencies**

- dialogicity and ability to create a good socio-psychological climate;
- developing qualities and skills that require high activity, personal responsibility, independence and initiative in a variety of pedagogical situations;
- demonstration of general abilities in connection with the design, organization and participation of projects for conducting authoritative scientific forums - conferences, symposia, seminars, round tables, etc ;
- ability to fully communicate and exchange experiences with colleagues from other universities at national and international level, to use some of the most common European languages in their own research;
- skills for using modern information technologies in pedagogical research.

### **4.6. Professional competencies**

- creative use of techniques in the professional field related to various heuristic strategies applied in basic and applied research;
- carrying out competent expert assessments on complex issues in the relevant field, often in conditions of lack of information, as well as the ability to clearly, convincingly and effectively present ideas and conclusions to the social environment;

- development of aspiration and ability to achieve sustainable results in the activity, for continuation of the research at higher and higher levels, which should contribute to the development and modernization of the pedagogical theory and practice.

## 5. FIELDS OF PROFESSIONAL REALIZATION

The professional realization of the graduates of the doctoral program presupposes various possibilities:

- researchers in research centers and units;
- consultants in schools and centers for work with children, in governmental and non- governmental organizations;
- teachers in higher schools;
- children's or primary school teachers, senior, head teachers (methodological)
- specialists in various research institutes, units for extracurricular and extracurricular activities, centers for support of personal development, centers for educational support;
- specialists in the field of inclusive education - resource teacher, expert;
- social pedagogues and social workers to work with different age groups of individuals, families, groups and communities;
- state experts at the Ministry of Education and Science, RWU, Social Assistance Agency, State Agency for Child Protection, Regional Department of Education/ RWD /, Regional Directorate of Social Assistance / RDSP /, Directorate of Social Assistance / DSP /, Municipal structures, management structures, director of educational or social institutions, or expert in social work, etc.;
- specialists and experts in the system of the Ministry of Interior Children's pedagogical rooms, Directorate for Execution of Sentences and Probation Services; Refugee Agency; Employment Agency.

# GENERAL CURRICULUM FOR DOCTORAL TRAINING

## CONTENT OF CURRICULUM

№	ACTIVITIES	Form of training and realization			Form of recognition
		CREDITS	HORARIUM	Lectures, seminars, laboratory exercises, self-preparation, participation, other	Exam, current assessment, discussion, certificate, report, protocol, certification, other
<b>I. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY</b>					
1.	Philosophical Fundamentals of Pedagogy	10.0	300	15 lectures, 45 seminars (60 academic hours / 240 self-study)	I exam

3.	Project management and design	3.0	90	15 lectures (15 academic hours / 75 self-study)	I exam
4.	Methodology of pedagogical research	9.0	270	15 lectures, 45 seminars (60 academic hours / 65 self-study)	II exam
5.	Elective course 1	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	II exam
6.	Elective course 2	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	III exam
<b>TOTAL :</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>1140</b>		
<b>II. RESEARCH ACTIVITY</b>					
1.	Development and presentation of a scientific thesis	9	270	270 individual work	Report, minutes of a scientific meeting
2.	Development of a dissertation project – first stage. Research and review of literature, presentation of a concept and tools for research.	16	480	50 consultations 430 individual work	Report, minutes of a scientific meeting
3.	Development of a dissertation project – second stage (conducting research for the dissertation)	16	480	30 consultations 450 individual work	Report, minutes of a scientific meeting
4.	Discussion and analysis of the results of research for the dissertation	16	480	30 consultations 450 individual work	Discussion / presentation
5.	Research activity – preparation and publication of studies, article or scientific communication. Participation in projects	9	270	30 consultations 240 individual work	Report and certificate
6.	Participation in scientific forums (national or international)	7	210	10 consultations 200 individual work	Report and certificate
<b>TOTAL :</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>2190</b>		
<b>III. PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY</b>					
1.	Teaching work – seminars, practical or laboratory classes	9	270	Seminar, practical or laboratory exercises	Report, verification of head of the department
2.	Students' tutorials			consultations	Report, verification of head of the department
<b>TOTAL :</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>270</b>		
<b>IV. OTHERS – pre-approbation and approbation</b>					
1.	Introduction to the dissertation defense procedures	10	300	(300 individual work)	Interview
2.	Discussion of the dissertation. Completion of dissertation	20	600	(600 individual work)	<b>defense</b>
3.	Preparation for approbation. Approbation	30	900	(900 individual work)	<b>defense</b>
<b>TOTAL :</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>1800</b>		

	<b>TOTAL (for the entire duration of the training):</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>5400</b>		
<b>ELECTIVE COURSES</b>					
1.	Docimology	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	
2.	Ontodidactics	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	
3.	Pedutology	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	
4.	Computer (multimedia) didactics	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	
5.	Pedagogical Futurology	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	
6.	Modern educational technologies	8.0	240	30 lectures, 30 seminars (60 academic hours / 180 self-study)	

### **Admission conditions for defense of a doctoral dissertation**

The educational and scientific degree “Doctor” is acquired after fulfilling the obligations under Art. 46, para. 2 of Higher Education Act, Art. 9, para 2 of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, section II of the Regulations for the Application of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and according to the Terms and conditions for acquiring the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” of the Internal Rules for development of the academic staff of the South-West University “Neofit Rilski”.

### **CURRICULUM NOTES:**

1. The individual educational, research, pedagogical and other types of activities in this General Curriculum shall be specified in the individual work plan of each enrolled doctoral student by academic year, indicating details of the relevant hours, forms of implementation, and other relevant information.
2. The general curriculum reflects all the requirements provided for in the Higher Education Act, the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Internal Rules for development of the academic staff of the South-West University “Neofit Rilski”.



3. The doctoral student's curriculum must provide opportunities to achieve the minimum national requirements of the relevant scientific field.

## **DESCRIPTION ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES**

### **MAJOR: THEORY OF EDUCATION AND DIDACTICS**

### **QUALIFICATION «DOCTOR'S»**

#### **Philosophical Fundamentals of Pedagogy**

**ECTS credits:**10

**Type of the course:** compulsory

**Hours per week:** 1-lectures,3-seminars

**Assessment form:** exam

**Leading department:** Faculty of Pedagogy, Department of Education Management and Special Pedagogy

**Lecture:** Assoc. Prof. Veska Gyuviska, PhD, Department of Social Pedagogy

e-mail: [v\\_guviiska@abv.bg](mailto:v_guviiska@abv.bg)

#### **ANNOTATION:**

This course is designed for doctoral students in the Faculty of Pedagogy. It is built on key ideas related to philosophical readings of Pedagogy. It covers a set of 10 lectures on original ideas by thinkers from different times, but the main focus is on Modernity and Postmodernity. These include ideological movements such as social constructivism, behaviourism, positivism, Marxism, deconstructivism, etc. The lecture course includes both typically pedagogical concepts and ideas interpreted in a philosophical perspective. It is aimed at the possibility of building a philosophical culture and way of thinking in PhD students, as well as stimulating casuistry, Socraticism, problem solving in Pedagogy. It is addressed to the elaboration of professional reflection in PhD students and has also a pragmatic function to build on a pedagogical fundamental base of ideas and concepts at another code level.

**Objective:** Doctoral students to acquire knowledge of the basic methodological role that philosophy plays in the development of educational science as a whole.

**Tasks :** As a result of the training in this subject PhD students should be able to:

- handle the conceptual apparatus of pedagogy at a new code level
- critically analyse philosophical concepts on educational issues
- put into practice experimental ideas in pedagogy
- develop professional reflection when working with a scientific text
- successfully use philosophical ideas on educational issues and enrich their scientific culture

**Teaching methods:** It is mainly conducted through lectures. The content is presented in a problem-based and interactive mode. Certain ideas are posed in a discussion-oriented manner, for which the PhD students have prior attitude and skills. The presentation is illustrated with models and with reference to relevant real-life case studies.

Students learn some of the content through independent work with the scientific literature.

As a result of the study of the issues in this discipline, students should acquire knowledge and certain competences concerning:

- ✓  The methodological significance and role of "Philosophy" for Pedagogy as a science;
- ✓  The ability to navigate the conceptual schemes and educational strategies involved;
- ✓  The ability to successfully apply theoretical models to a specific scientific text;
- ✓  Awareness of the need for philosophical knowledge about pedagogy as a pathway to professional and scientific thinking.

## **Project management and design**

**ECTS credits:** 3

**Type of the course:** compulsory

**Hours per week:** 1-lectures,3-seminars

**Assessment form:** exam

**Leading department:** Faculty of Pedagogy, Department of Education Management and Special Pedagogy

**Lecture:** Assoc. Prof. Ivan Todorov, PhD, Faculty of Economics

e-mail: [ivanK.todorov@swu.bg](mailto:ivanK.todorov@swu.bg)

### **ANNOTATION:**

The course "Project preparation and management" introduces doctoral students to the main aspects of project development, which are the basis for organizing and managing projects when applying for European Union programs.

**The purpose** of the course "Project preparation and management" is to provide doctoral students with in-depth knowledge about effective project development, the management process of project creation and implementation, as well as the development of the project budget.

**The main tasks** that should be solved during the implementation of the curriculum are:

1. Acquisition of theoretical knowledge about the nature, content, and role of projects in the development of the organization's activities;
2. Acquisition of skills in reading and interpreting regulatory documents, which are an integral part of building a project proposal;
3. Acquire the skills to fill out the basic documents that are used when submitting a project proposal;
4. Getting acquainted with the organization of project implementation, monitoring, and control, reporting, and evaluation of the project.

**Teaching methods:** to ensure high-quality training of doctoral students and achieve their goals, teaching the discipline "Preparation and project management" flexibly combines various methods and forms of training: lectures on knotty topics, case studies, and independent work. The forms of control are also adapted to the nature of the discipline-conducting control checks in the form of discussing case studies during classroom sessions and drawing up a project proposal.

**Expected results:** doctoral students gain knowledge about the main categories and concepts in project design, implementation, and control. To get acquainted and form a certain level of practical ideas for the application of forms, techniques, and methodologies in the construction of a project proposal, as well as knowledge of their areas of application.

## **Methodology of pedagogical research**

**ECTS credits: 9**

**Type of the course:** compulsory

**Hours per week:** 1-lectures,3-seminars

**Assessment form:** exam

**Leading department:** Faculty of Pedagogy, Department of Education Management and Special Pedagogy

**Lecture:** Assoc. Prof. Valentina Chileva, PhD, Department of Preschool and primary school pedagogy

E- mail: valentinach@swu.bg

### **ANNOTATION:**

The discipline is intended for doctoral students, full-time, part-time and independent form of study. Its study is motivated by the need to obtain a system of basic knowledge about the methodology of scientific research and the development of one's own scientific works and publications.

**The goal** of the program is, based on world standards, to create in doctoral students the participants a system of knowledge about scientific research and to motivate them to prepare and conduct their own scientific research activity.

#### **Tasks:**

-To master basic competencies for the methodology of scientific research theoretically and/or empirically;

-To present the typology, structure and design of scientific research;

-To create basic skills for the selection and application of quantitative and qualitative scientific research methods;

-To create motivation for the preparation and presentation of one's own scientific research work - report, article, dissertation, etc.

Scientific Supervisor of the Doctoral Program:.....

**Assoc. Prof. Snezhana Popova, PhD**