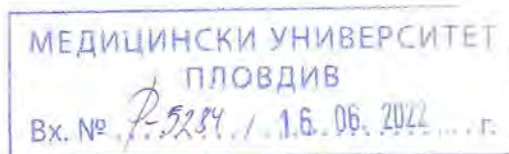


STATEMENT



by

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolay Nikolov, MD, PhD  
Medical University-Pleven, Clinic of Rheumatology,  
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About: Dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree 'Doctor'  
professional field 7.1 medicine; 7. Healthcare doctoral program 03.01.18  
Rheumatology

Author: Dr. Zguro Anastasov Batalov  
doctoral student of independent preparation Department: Propaedeutics of Internal  
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“Blocking the JAK / STAT signaling pathway as a new therapeutic option in  
patients with systemic sclerosis”

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Mariela Geneva-Popova, Ph.D.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the doctoral student

The presented set of materials on paper / electronic media is in accordance with Article 115 (1) of the Procedure for "Doctor" in MU - Plovdiv; Regulations of MU-Plovdiv from 06.11.2014 and includes the following documents:

- Application to the Rector of MU-Plovdiv for disclosure of the procedure for defense of the dissertation
- CV in European format with the signature of the doctoral student
- notarized copy of the diploma for higher education
- orders for enrollment in doctoral studies, interruption of studies (due to maternity) and for continuation of studies; for deductions with the right to protection
- order for conducting an exam from the individual plan and the respective protocol for passing the exam or doctoral minimum in the specialty

- Minutes of the department council for preliminary discussion of the dissertation and the decisions taken for opening the procedure and for the composition of the scientific jury
- dissertation work
- abstract
- list of scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation - copies of scientific publications - list of participations in scientific forums
- list of cited observations
- declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents - other documents related to the course of the procedure

The doctoral student has submitted 6 articles, 3 reviews, 4 scientific reports in Bulgaria, 2 abroad.

The documents meet the requirements for the implementation of a procedure for the defense of dissertation work.

Presentation of the doctoral student with emphasis on biographical data in connection with the procedure.

## 2. Relevance of the topic

The dissertation deals with a topical issue in rheumatology. Progressive systemic sclerosis is an extremely serious and debilitating disease that greatly affects the patient's quality of life. Its treatment is of great socio-economic importance and as such needs new drugs to combat its serious consequences.

## 3. Knowledge of the problem

The doctoral student shows in-depth knowledge in the field of issues, which is illustrated by a detailed and well-structured literature review, which broadly addresses issues related to the problem. Each of the results is compared with the available data in the world literature.

## 4. Research methodology

The chosen research methodology is properly selected, the tasks are accurate and specific.

## 5. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation and contributions

The dissertation is written on 179 standard typewritten pages, correctly structured, 21 figures and 13 tables are included to illustrate. In the bibliographic list cites 219 sources, both Bulgarian and international.

The introduction clearly presents and addresses the problem.

The goals and tasks are clearly and concretely formulated, argumentatively related to the topic.

The literary review is comprehensive, it reflects the accents related thematically with the study. The presented scientific work is well structured, shows in-depth study of the problem. Its scientific value is due both to the analysis of the current problem with the lack of a sufficient number of drugs for the treatment of MSDs.

## 6. Assessment of the publications and personal contribution of the doctoral student

Dr. Batalov has presented a total of 14 scientific publications related to his dissertation, of which 3 reviews (1 in English), six articles (4 in English), 4 scientific papers in Bulgaria and 2 international communications. Dr. Batalov's publications meet the requirements for obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor

## 7. Abstract

The presented abstract qualitatively and fully reflects the main results achieved in the dissertation and is made according to the requirements.

## CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for implementation of PhD and the Regulations of MU - Plovdiv. The presented materials and dissertation results fully comply with the specific requirements adopted in connection with the Regulations of MU - Plovdiv for application of "doctor".

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Dr. Zguro Anastasov Batalov has in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty of rheumatology, demonstrating qualities and skills for independent research.

Due to the above, I confidently give my positive assessment of the research presented by the above-reviewed dissertation, abstract, results and contributions, and I invite the esteemed scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree 'Doctor' to Dr. Zguro Anastasov Batalov in the doctoral program in Rheumatology.

Заличено на основание  
Чл. 5 §1, б. "В" Регламент (ЕС) 2016/679

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Assoc. Prof. Nikolai Nikolov, Ph.D.