

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE OPERATION OF THE INTER-INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMME OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the Department of Biology, in collaboration with the School of Medicine of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens, the Hellenic Pasteur Institute, the Biomedical Sciences Research Center “Alexander Fleming”, the National Centre for Scientific Research “Demokritos”, and the National Hellenic Research Foundation, entitled “Athens International Master’s Programme in Neurosciences”

ARTICLE 1. SUBJECT MATTER – PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of the Inter-Institutional Programme of Graduate Studies (IPGS) “Athens International Master’s Programme in Neurosciences” is to provide high-level postgraduate education leading to a Postgraduate Studies Diploma – Master of Science (M.Sc.) in the scientific field of Neurosciences.

1.2 The IPGS leads to:

- the award of a Postgraduate Studies Diploma in Neurosciences (M.Sc. in Neurosciences), following full and successful completion of the studies prescribed by the curriculum.

1.3 The degree is awarded by the Department of Biology of the School of Science of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA), with reference on the degree awarded to the names of all collaborating Departments and Schools of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and all participating Research Centres.

1.4 Postgraduate students shall acquire knowledge in Molecular and Cellular Neurobiology and training in neuroscience research, enabling them to pursue successful careers in academic institutions and research centres, biotechnology, the pharmaceutical industry, education, and other related fields.

ARTICLE 2. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNING BODIES OF THE IPGS

The bodies competent for the operation of the IPGS, pursuant to Law 4957/2022, are the following:

2.1 At University level

At University level, the competent bodies are the Committee for Graduate Studies and the Senate.

2.2 At IPGS level

At IPGS level, the competent bodies are the following:

2.2.1 Committee of the Programme of Studies (CPS)

The Committee of the Programme of Studies (CPS) is established by decision of the Senate of NKUA, which has undertaken the administrative support of the IPGS, following recommendations by the Assemblies of the collaborating Departments or by the competent bodies of the collaborating institutions, and consists of members of the Teaching and Research Staff (TRS). The number and composition of its members are determined in the Cooperation Protocol of the IPGS. Where the IPGS includes domestic or foreign institutions that do not provide education and degrees equivalent to those of HEIs, each such institution may be represented on the CPS by one (1) member, appointed by the competent body of that institution and participating in the teaching activities of the IPGS. The CPS shall comprise seven (7) members in total: one from each of the Department of Biology, the School of Medicine of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens, the Hellenic Pasteur Institute, the Biomedical Sciences Research Center “Alexander Fleming”, the National Centre for Scientific Research “Demokritos”, and the National Hellenic Research Foundation.

Emeritus Professors of the Department or of the collaborating University Departments and Research Centres may participate in the CPS, provided that they undertake teaching duties in the IPGS.

The responsibilities of the CPS are to:

- a) recommend to the Senate, through the Committee for Graduate Studies, any necessary amendment to the IPGS and any extension of its duration;
- b) appoint the Director and the members of the Steering Committee of the IPGS;

- c) establish committees for the evaluation of applications submitted by prospective postgraduate students and approve their enrolment in the IPGS;
- d) allocate teaching duties among the instructors of the IPGS and request the Assemblies of the collaborating Departments to assign auxiliary teaching duties in the IPGS to their doctoral candidates, under the supervision of an instructor of the IPGS;
- e) establish examination committees for the assessment of postgraduate students' theses and appoint the supervisor for each thesis;
- f) certify the successful completion of studies and award the Postgraduate Studies Diploma;
- g) approve the annual report of the IPGS following a recommendation by the Steering Committee (SC); and
- h) exercise any other competence provided for by law.

2.2.2 Steering Committee (SC)

The Steering Committee (SC) consists of the Director of the IPGS and four (4) members of the Teaching and Research Staff (TRS) of the collaborating Departments and/or Emeritus Professors whose academic field is relevant to that of the IPGS and who undertake teaching duties in the IPGS. The members of the SC are appointed by decision of the Committee of the Programme of Studies of the IPGS. The SC is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the operation of the Programme and, in particular, shall:

- a) prepare the initial annual budget of the IPGS and any amendments thereto and recommend its approval to the Research Committee of the Special Account for Research Funds (ELKE), with the exception of the quarterly revisions of annual budgets referred to in Article 239(3)(b);
- b) prepare the Programme's annual report and recommend its approval to the Committee of the Programme of Studies;
- c) approve expenditure and may delegate this competence to the Director of the IPGS;
- d) approve the award of scholarships, whether or not involving reciprocal obligations, in accordance with the provisions of the decision establishing the IPGS and the Regulations for Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies;
- e) recommend to the Committee of the Programme of Studies the allocation of teaching duties and the assignment of teaching duties to the categories of instructors referred to in Article 83;
- f) recommend to the Committee of the Programme of Studies the invitation of Visiting Professors in order to meet the teaching needs of the IPGS;
- g) prepare a draft amendment to the curriculum and submit it to the Committee of the Programme of Studies; and
- h) recommend to the Committee of the Programme of Studies the redistribution of courses among academic semesters, as well as matters relating to the qualitative enhancement of the curriculum.

2.2.3 Director of the IPGS

The Director of the IPGS shall be selected from among the members of the Teaching and Research Staff (TRS) of the collaborating Departments, with priority given to persons holding the rank of Professor or Associate Professor, and shall be appointed by the CPS for a two-year term, which may be renewed without limitation.

The Director of the IPGS shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) chair the CPS, draw up its agenda, and convene its meetings;
- b) submit to the CPS matters concerning the organisation and operation of the IPGS;
- c) submit to the other bodies of the IPGS and of the HEI matters relating to the effective operation of the IPGS;
- d) serve as the Scientific Coordinator of the Programme and exercise the corresponding responsibilities;
- e) monitor the implementation of the decisions of the bodies of the IPGS and of the Internal Regulations for Postgraduate and Doctoral Study Programmes, as well as the execution of the budget of the IPGS; and
- f) exercise any other responsibility provided for in the decision establishing the IPGS.

The Director of the IPGS and the members of the SC and CPS shall not be entitled to remuneration or any other compensation for the exercise of the responsibilities assigned to them in connection with the performance of their duties.

2.3 Secretariat support of the IPGS

- a) The Secretariat of the Department of Biology (the coordinating Department) is responsible for the secretarial and administrative support of the IPGS.
- b) As the IPGS has its own resources, it shall, in accordance with the legislation in force, engage external collaborators for scientific, secretarial, and administrative support, who shall operate under the supervision of the Secretariat of the Department of Biology.

ARTICLE 3. CATEGORIES AND NUMBER OF ADMITTED STUDENTS

3.1 The IPGS accepts graduates of Greek universities or recognised equivalent institutions abroad, as well as graduates of Technological Educational Institutes (TEIs) in a related academic field.

3.2 The maximum total number of students admitted to the Postgraduate Studies Programme is set at thirty (30).

3.3 In addition to the above number of admitted students, one (1) member belonging to the categories of Special Teaching Staff, Laboratory Teaching Staff, or Special Technical Laboratory Staff may be admitted each year, provided that the work performed by that member at the Institution is relevant to the academic field of the IPGS.

3.4 Scholarship holders of the State Scholarships Foundation, as well as foreign scholarship holders of the Greek State in the same or a related academic field to that of the IPGS, shall be admitted without examinations, provided that they meet the admission terms and requirements of the Programme as specified in these Regulations.

ARTICLE 4. ADMISSION PROCEDURE

4.1 Students are selected in accordance with the legislation in force, the Regulations for Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies of NKUA, and the provisions of these Regulations.

4.2 Every January, following a decision of the CPS, a call for applications for admission of postgraduate students to the IPGS shall be published and posted on the website of the IPGS and on the websites of the collaborating institutions. Applications, together with the required supporting documents, shall be submitted to the Secretariat of the IPGS within the deadline specified in the call, which may be extended by decision of the CPS.

4.3 The CPS shall appoint an admissions selection committee consisting of at least three members of the Teaching and Research Staff (DEP) who have undertaken teaching duties in the IPGS.

4.4 The required supporting documents are:

- Application form;
- Curriculum vitae;
- Photocopy of both sides of the applicant's identity card;
- Copy of degree certificate or certificate of completion of studies;
- Official transcript of undergraduate courses;
- Certificate of English-language proficiency. Adequate knowledge of English shall be documented by one of the following: a degree from an educational institution in an English-speaking country or from an English-language IPGS; a Certificate of Proficiency in English; a TOEFL certificate with a score of at least 500 points (or 300 under the new scoring system); an IELTS certificate with a score of 6.5 or higher; or the State Certificate of Language Proficiency (Level B2);
- Letters of recommendation;
- Scientific publications, if any;
- Evidence of professional or research activity, if any; and
- Recognition of a foreign academic qualification.

4.5 For students from foreign institutions who do not submit a certificate of recognition of their academic qualification issued by the Hellenic National Academic Recognition and Information Center (DOATAP), the following procedure shall apply:

The CPS shall appoint a committee responsible for determining whether a foreign institution or a type of qualification awarded by a foreign institution is recognised.

The committee shall verify whether the foreign institution or type of qualification awarded by the foreign institution is included in the relevant Register of Foreign Institutions maintained and updated by DOATAP.

If the foreign institution is included in the list of institutions referred to in Article 307 of Law 4957/2022, the candidate shall be required to submit a certificate of the place of study, issued and sent by the foreign university.

If the certificate states that the place of study, or part thereof, was within Greek territory, the qualification shall not be recognised unless the part of the studies completed in Greek territory was undertaken at a public HEI.

4.6 Candidates shall be evaluated and students selected by the admissions selection committee. The selection criteria shall include: (a) evaluation of the curriculum vitae (degree grade, grades in relevant courses, previous postgraduate education, practical placement/training within the ERASMUS framework, research experience, thesis, publications, letters of recommendation, language proficiency, etc.); (b) examinations in basic knowledge of cell biology, biochemistry, molecular biology, genetics, and physiology of the nervous system; and (c) an interview.

4.7 On the basis of the overall criteria, the admissions selection committee shall draw up the candidates' ranking list and submit it to the CPS for approval. The CPS shall subsequently, through the Director of the Programme, submit the relevant minutes to the Secretariat of the Department of Biology.

Successful candidates shall enrol with the Secretariat of the IPGS within thirty (30) days of the CPS decision.

In the event of a tie (following mathematical rounding to the nearest whole unit on a 100-point scale), tied candidates shall be admitted, provided that their number does not exceed ten per cent (10%) of the maximum number of admitted students.

If one or more successful candidates fail to enrol, the next candidates on the approved ranking list, if any, shall be invited to enrol in the IPGS in the order in which they are ranked.

ARTICLE 5. DURATION OF STUDIES

5.1 The duration of studies in the IPGS leading to the award of the Postgraduate Studies Diploma is four (4) academic semesters, including the period required for the preparation of the Master's Thesis.

5.2 Part-time study is available following a reasoned application by the student and approval by the CPS.

The following students are entitled to apply for part-time study:

- a) students who can provide evidence that they work at least twenty (20) hours per week;
- b) students with disabilities and special educational needs;
- c) students who are concurrently athletes and, during their studies, belong to sports clubs registered in the electronic register of sports clubs referred to in Article 142 of Law 4714/2020 (Government Gazette A' 148), maintained by the General Secretariat of Sports, subject to the following conditions:
 - ca) for each year in which they achieve a placing from 1st to 8th in national championships in individual sports involving at least twelve (12) athletes and eight (8) clubs, or compete in teams in the two (2) highest divisions of team sports, or participate as members of national teams in European Championships, World Championships, or other international competitions under the auspices of the Hellenic Olympic Committee; or
 - cb) if they participate at least once, during their period of study in the programme for which they request part-time status, in the Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, or Deaflympic Games. Students falling under this subparagraph may enrol as part-time students following an application approved by the Dean's Council of the School.

The duration of part-time study shall not exceed twice the duration of full-time study. The maximum duration of studies shall also apply in this case.

5.2 An extension may be granted following a reasoned application by the student and approval by the CPS. The extension shall not exceed the number of semesters of the normal duration of studies in the IPGS. Accordingly, the maximum permissible period for completion of studies is set at eight (8) academic semesters.

5.3 Students who have not exceeded the maximum period of study may, following a reasoned application to the CPS, suspend their studies for a period not exceeding two (2) consecutive semesters. A suspension of studies may be granted for serious reasons, including military service, illness, maternity, absence abroad, and similar circumstances.

The application must be duly reasoned and accompanied by all relevant supporting documents issued by competent public authorities or bodies establishing the grounds for suspension. Student status shall be suspended for the duration of the interruption of studies, and participation in any educational process shall not be permitted. Semesters during which student status is suspended shall not count towards the prescribed maximum duration of full-time study.

At least two weeks before the end of the suspension period, the student shall be required to re-enrol in the Programme in order to continue his or her studies with the rights and obligations of an active student. Students may, upon application, terminate the suspension and return to the Programme only where they had requested a suspension for two consecutive academic semesters. An application to terminate the suspension must be submitted no later than two weeks before the beginning of the second semester of suspension.

5.4 The duration of any suspension or extension of the period of study shall be considered and approved by the CPS on a case-by-case basis.

ARTICLE 6. CURRICULUM

6.1 The IPGS commences in the winter semester of each academic year.

6.2 A total of one hundred and twenty (120) European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits are required for the award of the IPGS degree. All courses are taught weekly (2 to 3 hours) and, where appropriate, include lectures, seminars, discussions, etc.

6.3 The language of instruction and the language in which the Master's Thesis is written shall be English.

6.4 During their studies, postgraduate students are required to attend and successfully complete postgraduate courses, engage in research activities and scientific writing, and prepare a Master's Thesis.

6.5 The Master's Thesis is undertaken during the 3rd and 4th semesters of study and is credited with fifty eight (58) ECTS credits.

6.6 The curriculum also includes two practical research-training placements in the laboratories of the Programme's instructors in order to acquire the required laboratory/research experience, under the supervision of an instructor of the IPGS. Each practical placement, which constitutes a course of the IPGS and also includes lectures on research techniques, methods, and technologies, lasts two (2) months, corresponds to ten (10) ECTS credits, and is compulsory.

6.7 Courses shall be taught in person or by distance learning, in accordance with the legislation in force and the provisions of Article 7 of these Regulations.

6.8 The curriculum is structured as follows:

The courses, teaching and research activities, laboratory exercises, and all other educational and research activities required for the award of the postgraduate degree are set out in Tables 1, 2, and 3 below:

Table 1 – Courses of the 1st Semester

Course	ECTS
Developmental Neuroscience	5
Gross and Microscopic Anatomy of the Nervous System	5
Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience	5
Neurophysiology	5
Research Training Exercise – Research Technologies I	10
Total ECTS for the 1st Semester	30

Table 2 – Courses of the 2nd Semester

Course	ECTS
Neurobiological Basis of Diseases of the Nervous System	4
Neuropharmacology	4
Behavioural Neuroscience in Animals	4
Neuroimmunology	4
Computational Neuroscience	4
Research Training Exercise – Research Technologies II	10

Total ECTS for the 2nd Semester	30
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Table 3 – Courses of the 3rd and 4th Semesters

Course	ECTS
Ethics and Neurosciences	2
Research Thesis Project	58
Total ECTS for the 3rd and 4th Semesters	60

In addition, symposia, one-day scientific meetings, and online conferences may be organised within the framework of the Postgraduate Studies Programme.

6.9 Course Content / Course Descriptions

Gross and Microscopic Anatomy of the Nervous System

Course Overview

An interdisciplinary study of the nervous system, based on the premise that disorders of the nervous system can be explained through neuroanatomical mechanisms. The course covers general principles of development and connectivity, neurotransmitters and their receptors, blood circulation, the principal neuronal nuclei, and the neural pathways of the central nervous system.

More specifically, the course includes the following:

- Major topographical landmarks of the brain;
- Description of the principal anatomical components and functions of the systems of the cerebral cortex;
- Basic interrelationships among major brain structures;
- Identification of brainstem nuclei;
- Identification of brainstem neural pathways;
- Identification of the major somatomotor systems;
- Identification of the major somatosensory systems;
- Identification of the central sensory systems (visual, auditory, and vestibular pathways);
- Identification and understanding of the cranial nerves;
- Identification and understanding of hypothalamic subnuclei and the autonomic nervous system;
- Identification and understanding of the limbic system and the diencephalon;
- Identification and understanding of the basal ganglia;
- Identification and understanding of cerebral blood circulation, the ventricular system, and the meninges;
- Understanding of basic histochemical methods that enable neurons to be identified on the basis of the neurotransmitters they express; and
- Understanding of the basic concept of in situ hybridisation for the study of gene expression in chemically identified neurons, enabling molecular investigation of the healthy and diseased nervous system.

Developmental Neuroscience

Course Overview

This course aims to: (a) introduce participants to the major issues in developmental neurobiology; (b) familiarise students with the broad range of research approaches, tools, and methodologies currently used to study the development of the mammalian nervous system; (c) discuss neural stem cells during development and in adult life; and (d) encourage students to develop the skills required for meaningful assessment of experimental strategies and research articles.

More specifically, the course lectures include the following:

- Neural induction;
- Neural tube formation and structure;
- Neurogenesis in the cerebral cortex and cerebellum;
- Regulatory mechanisms of cell-cycle progression and exit;
- Neural migration and differentiation;

- Axon guidance and cell-adhesion molecules;
- Trophic factors and programmed cell death during development of the nervous system;
- Synapses: formation, function, and plasticity;
- Development of neural networks;
- Development of the neuroimmune system;
- Gliogenesis, myelination, and remyelination; and
- Neural stem cells in developmental and regenerative neurobiology.

Cellular and Molecular Neurobiology

Course Overview

This is an introductory course in molecular and cellular neurobiology. Basic principles of the organisation and function of the nervous system are discussed, with frequent reference to pathologies of the nervous system as well as other diseases.

More specifically, the course lectures include the following:

- Cellular neurobiology;
- Synapse formation and neuroplasticity;
- Intracellular protein trafficking and cytoskeleton-related processes;
- Interconnections involved in the formation of neural circuits for the transmission of electrical signals;
- Binding of small molecules to their receptors in the regulation of intracellular responses;
- Major intracellular signalling pathways;
- Molecular biology of sensory systems; and
- Brain metabolism.

Neurophysiology

Course Overview

This two-week course focuses on cellular and molecular neuroscience. It covers the mechanisms regulating neuronal excitability, dendritic and synaptic function, plasticity, and neural circuits. It is an intensive course in cellular neurophysiology. Its principal aim is for students to understand the principles of signal generation and the regulation of signal transmission at both cellular and circuit levels.

More specifically, the course covers the following:

- Ion channels;
- Membrane potential, the Nernst equation, and the Goldman equation;
- Electrotonic potential;
- Passive membrane properties;
- Action potential;
- Sodium, potassium, and calcium channels and currents;
- Mechanisms of presynaptic release;
- Synaptic transmission: transmission based on G-protein pathways;
- Neuromuscular junction;
- Synaptic transmission I: glutamatergic excitation;
- Synaptic transmission II: GABAergic and glycinergic inhibition;
- Synaptic transmission III: synaptic integration;
- Neural circuits: recording methods and analysis; and
- Modulation of neural circuits.

Research Training Exercise – Research Technologies I

Course Overview

These courses are designed to train students in research-oriented scientific thinking and in core research technologies. They include hands-on training in the research laboratories of Programme instructors or professors and researchers collaborating with the Programme, as well as lectures on research technologies.

The courses include lectures in the following subject areas:

- Molecular biology of -omics;

- Elements of Bioinformatics (large databases);
- Drug development.

Molecular Biology of -omics

The course covers the basic principles of next-generation sequencing (NGS) technologies, the analysis of omics data and the resulting fundamental changes in approaches to problems in the biological sciences, mass spectrometry and applications including differential proteomics, identification of post-translational modifications and analysis of protein complexes, as well as metabolomics. It also addresses the multi-stage process of experimental and computational analysis, which must be carefully designed and standardised for accurate and broad application in neurophysiology research.

In addition, biochemical, biophysical, and biological assays that can be used for high-throughput screening of chemical and biological libraries are described, with the aim of identifying regulators of protein aggregation. The course also covers the design, development, and outcomes of recently developed biotechnology platforms for the production of highly diversified chemical libraries and for the identification of chemical compounds that prevent pathogenic protein misfolding and aggregation.

Elements of Bioinformatics (large databases)

The aim of the course is to familiarise students with experimental technologies, bioinformatics algorithms, and programming environments applicable to different questions and data types. Particular emphasis is placed on the integration and functional interpretation of molecular models that determine phenotype in the biological question under investigation, as well as on the reliable linkage of molecular and phenotypic markers.

More specifically, the following are discussed with participants:

- Next-generation sequencing technologies from the perspective of computational analysis (de novo/reference genome-based assembly, filtering, signal estimation, differential expression, statistical selection, variant calling);
- Microarray technologies and their processing (noise correction, signal estimation, normalisation, filtering, and statistical selection);
- Bioinformatics methods for multilayer and functional characterisation of nucleotide and amino-acid sequences (reading frame, prediction of gene function, homology testing);
- Translational bioinformatics data analysis highlighting the biological mechanisms involved in the biological question under investigation; and
- Target prioritisation and diagnostic stratification through methodologies for adding small-molecule “signatures” to diagnostic classification, pharmacogenomic analysis, and combination therapy.

Neurobiological Basis of Diseases of the Nervous System

Course Overview

The course covers general principles relevant to a range of disorders of the nervous system, as well as the description, pathology, and molecular basis of specific diseases. These general principles include:

- Protein misfolding and aggregation;
- Protein degradation;
- Inflammation;
- Neurotoxic and neurotrophic pathways.

Examples of diseases of the nervous system covered include:

- Alzheimer’s disease;
- Parkinson’s disease;
- Motor neuron disease;
- Schizophrenia;
- Depression;
- Trinucleotide repeat disorders;
- Epilepsy;
- Addiction;
- Cancers of the nervous system;
- Brain and spinal cord injury.

Neuropharmacology

Course Overview

This course includes lectures on drug synthesis and discovery, as well as principles of neuropsychopharmacological preclinical and clinical research. Students have the opportunity to present specific neuropsychopharmacological topics and to prepare exercises in pharmacological experimental design and analysis. An interactive approach using polling devices is employed to teach the foundations of neuropsychopharmacology.

The course includes the following:

- Antipsychotics;
- Antidepressants and mood stabilisers;
- Antiepileptic drugs;
- Cognitive enhancers;
- Drugs of abuse;
- Antiparkinsonian drugs and drugs for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases;
- Neuroimaging ligands.

Behavioural Neuroscience in Animals

Course Overview

This course explores key topics and major questions in the field of animal behaviour, including its molecular and cellular mechanisms. Topics include the genetic basis of behaviour, development of behaviour, forms of learning, decision-making, social interaction, and sexual and parental behaviour. The purpose of the course is to familiarise students with animal models that mimic human emotional and cognitive functions.

More specifically, the course includes the following:

- Attention and habituation;
- Learning and memory I: Aplysia – molecular concepts;
- Learning and memory II: mammals – hippocampus;
- Learning and memory III: LTP – place cells;
- Learning and memory IV: adult neurogenesis;
- Learning and memory V: Drosophila;
- Emotions and the limbic system;
- Brain reward system;
- Prefrontal cortex: decision-making, working memory, and behavioural monitoring;
- Social interaction and aggression in non-mammalian species;
- Social interaction and aggression in mammals;
- Maternal and paternal behaviour;
- Effects of early-life experiences on emotion and cognitive abilities.

Neuroimmunology

Course Overview

This course combines basic research and clinical experience in neuroimmunology in order to examine the involvement of the innate and adaptive immune systems in the central nervous system under physiological and pathophysiological conditions. Lectures cover general principles of the peripheral immune system and the immune system of the central nervous system, neuroimmune interactions in both health and disease, animal models for the study of autoimmune and neuroinflammatory diseases of the central nervous system, human neuroimmune disorders, and clinical experience with recent immunotherapies used for their treatment.

Specifically, the Neuroimmunology course includes the following:

- Basic principles of the immune system;
- Cell migration into the central nervous system and antigen presentation;
- The immune system of the central nervous system and its functions in physiology and pathology;
- Neurodegeneration and neurorepair;
- Animal models as models of human neuroinflammatory diseases;
- Human neuroimmune diseases;

- Immunotherapeutic approaches to neurodegenerative diseases.

Computational Neuroscience

Course Overview

Computational neurobiology lies at the intersection of neurophysiology, neuroanatomy, mathematical modelling, and computer science. Its primary goal is to describe how the brain “computes” by simplifying neuronal biology into mathematical equations. Like most scientific fields, it also contains elements of philosophy and art. Emphasis is placed on mathematical descriptions and computational techniques used to study and understand neurons and their networks. Weekly assignments enable students to learn through direct experience.

The course provides an introduction to this field, with the aim of stimulating students’ interest, and covers the following:

- Mathematical models in neurophysiology;
- Theory of membrane potential;
- Electrical analogues of the cell membrane – the Lapique model;
- Theory of the action potential;
- Cable theory and the multi-compartment neuron model;
- Models of synaptic transmission (AMPA, NMDA, GABAA, GABAB);
- Models of synaptic plasticity (LTP/LTD, STDP, Hebbian, etc.);
- Neural network models;
- Computational tools (NEURON and MATLAB).

Research Training Exercise – Research Technologies II

Course Overview

These courses are designed to train students in research-oriented scientific thinking and in core research technologies. They include hands-on training in the research laboratories of Programme instructors or professors and researchers collaborating with the Programme, as well as lectures on research technologies.

The courses include lectures in the following subject areas:

- Microscopy and neuroimaging;
- Experimental animal models in neurosciences.

Microscopy and Neuroimaging

Teaching and practical training are provided in a broad range of imaging tools and technologies currently used to study the morphology, function, and dysfunction of the nervous system in both animal models and humans. The course covers the basic principles of microscopy (optical and electron microscopy), nuclear imaging and magnetic resonance imaging, image processing and analysis, as well as advanced neurophysiological and functional neuroimaging approaches that link microscopic analysis with behaviour.

More specifically, lectures include the following topics:

- Introduction to techniques for imaging human brain function;
- Anatomical neuroimaging;
- Live imaging of cellular dynamics;
- Fluorescence resonance energy transfer (FLIM-FRET);
- Fluorescence recovery after photobleaching (FRAP, in vivo FRAP);
- Mechanosensors;
- Confocal and multiphoton microscopy;
- Imaging of the nervous system in living experimental animals (intravital imaging);
- Calcium imaging;
- Optogenetics;
- Neurophysiology: electroencephalography and magnetoencephalography (EEG/MEG);
- PET/SPECT imaging;
- Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI);
- Electron microscopy;
- Image processing (ImageJ, Imaris, Icy);

- Image-data analysis (MATLAB);
- Functional imaging, data processing and analysis (SPM); and
- Processing of data from neurophysiological experiments (EEGLAB).

Experimental Animal Models in Neurosciences

This course adopts an interdisciplinary approach to functional neurobiology and its tools, including transgenic animals, RNA interference, and the utility and contribution of models used in research. Each model is considered in relation to the following dimensions:

- Utility and contribution of the model;
- Manipulations for the generation of transgenic animals;
- Neurochemical models;
- Models of cognitive and neurodegenerative disorders.

More specifically, lectures include the following:

- Neuronal culture models: advantages, utility, transfections, neurochemical models and examples, and culture systems;
- *C. elegans*: advantages for neurological research, transgenics, RNAi, signalling, ageing, and disease models;
- *Drosophila*: advantages in neurological research, transgenics, neurogenetic tools, sensory and cognitive models, models of neurodegenerative and cognitive diseases, and pharmacogenetics;
- Mice: advantages in neurological research, transgenics, cognitive models and methodology, neuropharmacology, neurodegenerative models and applications; rat models, cognitive models, and neuropharmacological models.

Ethics and Neurosciences

Course Overview

Recent advances in neuroscience have substantially improved our understanding of brain function. However, the investigation of the brain's complexities frequently intersects with ethical and public-policy issues. This course aims to present and discuss philosophical, social, and scientific approaches to major bioethical issues related to neuroscience research. Topics include ethics and brain organoids; ethical issues in neuroscience research involving animals; the effects of pharmacological and surgical interventions on the brain; consent to participation in neuroscience research; treatment versus enhancement of brain function; brain imaging and mental privacy; the neurobiology of decision-making; consciousness; personal identity; end-of-life management; and death.

Specifically, Ethics and Neurosciences includes:

- The beginning of life and the brain – the moral status of the embryo and the path to personhood;
- Ethics and brain organoids;
- Ethics and neuroscience research involving animals;
- Ethics and neuroscience research involving humans;
- Ethics and brain-modifying drugs;
- Informed consent in neuroscience research and its applications;
- Neuroscience and law;
- Personhood, personal identity, and the social brain;
- Ethics, brain imaging, and mental privacy;
- Consciousness, unconsciousness, and death;
- Ethics and neurotechnology: implants, brain-machine interfaces, and brain engineering;
- Film – screening of a film related to ethics and neuroscience, followed by discussion.

Master's Thesis

Course Overview

This is an eleven-month course involving the conduct of research on a topic in neuroscience. The research is carried out in the research laboratories of Programme instructors or of professors or researchers collaborating with the Programme.

In parallel, students attend seven two-hour statistics classes covering:

- Introduction to hypothesis-testing analysis;

- Data randomisation procedures;
- Common distributions and analysis of the central limit theorem;
- Parametric and non-parametric tests;
- Multiple-comparison problems (false-positive results);
- Linear, logistic, and Cox models.

Courses from other Postgraduate Studies Programmes

During the 2nd semester, students may select up to two (2) related courses from another Postgraduate Studies Programme of NKUA or of another HEI. In such cases, the maximum number of ECTS credits that may be recognised is eight (8).

ARTICLE 7. DISTANCE EDUCATION

7.1 Synchronous distance education

The educational process of the IPGS may also be organised using synchronous distance-education methods.

The organisation of courses and other educational activities by means of synchronous distance education shall apply to courses and educational activities which, by their nature, can be supported through distance-education methods and do not include practical, laboratory, or clinical training requiring the physical presence of students.

The Digital Governance Unit of NKUA is responsible for supporting the distance-education process and for matters relating to the protection of personal data.

7.2 Asynchronous distance education

The educational process may be delivered using asynchronous distance-education methods, provided that such methods do not account for more than twenty-five per cent (25%) of the ECTS credits of the IPGS.

NKUA maintains an electronic platform that is accessible to persons with disabilities and through which asynchronous distance-education services are provided. Educational material may be uploaded to the electronic platform for each course and may include notes, presentations, exercises, indicative solutions, and recorded lectures, provided that the legislation in force on the protection of personal data is observed. All educational material of any kind is provided exclusively for students' educational use and is protected by Law 2121/1993 (Government Gazette A' 25), subject to the applicable statutory requirements.

ARTICLE 8. EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

8.1 The educational work of each academic year is structured into two semesters, winter and spring, each of which comprises at least thirteen (13) weeks of teaching and three (3) weeks of examinations. Courses taught during the winter and spring semesters are re-examined during the September examination period.

8.2 If a scheduled class cannot be held, a replacement class shall be arranged. The date and time of the replacement class shall be posted on the website of the IPGS.

8.3 Attendance at courses, laboratories, etc. is compulsory. A postgraduate student shall be deemed to have attended a course, and shall therefore be entitled to participate in its examinations, only if he or she has attended at least 80% of the course hours. Otherwise, the postgraduate student shall be required to attend the course again in the following academic year. If a student's absences exceed 20% across all courses, the question of his or her deregistration shall arise. The matter shall be examined by the CPS, which shall notify its decision to the Secretariat of the Department of Biology.

8.4 Postgraduate students shall be assessed, and their performance in the courses they are required to attend under the IPGS shall be evaluated, at the end of each course by written and/or oral examinations and/or assignments and/or interim progress examinations, written coursework, laboratory exercises, or a combination of the foregoing. The method of assessment shall be determined by the coordinators of each course. Where written or oral examinations are used as assessment methods, the integrity and impartiality of the procedure must be ensured. Grades are awarded on a scale from 1 to 10. Examination results shall be announced by the course coordinators and sent to the Secretariat of the IPGS and the Department no later than four (4) weeks after the course examination. If the above deadline is repeatedly exceeded by course coordinators, the Director of the IPGS shall inform the CPS accordingly.

8.5 The percentage contribution of laboratory exercises, assignments, and seminars to the final grade of each course shall be determined separately for each course, following a recommendation by the course coordinators, and shall be stated in the Study Guide of the IPGS.

8.6 In order to address emergency needs or circumstances constituting force majeure, alternative methods of assessment may be applied, including written or oral examinations by electronic means, provided that the integrity and impartiality of the assessment procedure are ensured.

8.7 Alternative methods may be applied for the assessment of students with disabilities and special educational needs following a decision of the CPS and a recommendation by the Department's Committee for Persons with Disabilities, taking into account the relevant guidance of the Accessibility Unit for Students with Disabilities.

8.8 Students enrolled in second-cycle study programmes organised by distance-education methods may be assessed through remote examinations, provided that the integrity and impartiality of the assessment procedure are ensured.

8.9 In cases of illness or recovery from a serious illness, the instructor is encouraged to facilitate the student in any manner that the instructor considers appropriate (for example, a remote oral examination). During oral examinations, the instructor shall ensure that he or she is not alone with the student being examined.

8.10 Courses in which a student has not obtained a passing grade must be repeated. However, a laboratory or practical exercise that is graded independently shall be retained and need not be repeated, provided that attendance at it was deemed successful.

8.11 A grade may be corrected only where an obvious clerical error or calculation error has occurred, following a written statement by the responsible instructor and a decision of the Department Assembly.

8.12 If a student fails the same course more than three (3) times, the procedure prescribed by the legislation in force shall be followed.

8.13 Written examination scripts shall be kept compulsorily and with due care by the person responsible for the course for two (2) years. After that period, the scripts shall cease to have effect and, under the responsibility of the CPS, relevant minutes shall be drawn up and the scripts destroyed, unless related criminal, disciplinary, or other administrative proceedings are pending.

8.14 In calculating the final degree grade, account shall be taken of the weighting of each course in the curriculum, expressed by the number of ECTS credits allocated to that course. The number of ECTS credits of each course shall also constitute the weighting coefficient of that course. The final degree grade shall be calculated by multiplying the grade obtained in each course by the corresponding number of ECTS credits and dividing the sum of the resulting products by the total number of ECTS credits required for the award of the degree. This calculation is expressed by the following mathematical formula:

$$\text{Degree grade} = [\sum_{k=1}^N (GC_k \times EC_k)] / TE$$

where:

N = number of courses required for the award of the relevant degree

GC_k = grade for course k

EC_k = ECTS credits for course k

TE = total ECTS credits required for the award of the relevant degree

In order to obtain the Postgraduate Studies Diploma, each postgraduate student must attend and successfully pass all compulsory courses and the required number of elective courses offered by the IPGS and complete a Master's Thesis, thereby accumulating one hundred and twenty (120) ECTS credits.

ARTICLE 9. PREPARATION OF THE MASTER'S THESIS

9.1 The Master's Thesis (MT) shall be assigned after the student has attended all courses in the curriculum and has successfully passed two courses in each semester, four courses in total.

9.2 The MT shall be individual and original, shall be research-oriented, and shall be prepared in accordance with the writing guidelines posted on the website of the IPGS.

9.3 The CPS shall draw up a list of topics for Master's Theses, including the name of the supervisor. The candidate shall submit an application stating the proposed title of the thesis he or she wishes to undertake. If more

than one student applies for the same topic, the supervisor shall select which student to accept into his or her laboratory. The CPS shall subsequently appoint a three-member examination committee for each student, one member of which shall be the supervisor. The language in which the Master's Thesis is written shall be English.

9.4 The title of the thesis may be changed following an application by the student and with the consent of the supervisor, submitted to the CPS of the IPGS. The application must also include a brief justification for the change.

9.5 In order for the thesis to be approved, the student must defend it before the three-member examination committee.

9.6 The Supervisor and the members of the three-member examination committee for the Master's Thesis shall be appointed from among the following categories of persons who have undertaken teaching duties in the IPGS:

- a) members of the Teaching and Research Staff (TRS), Special Teaching Staff, Laboratory Teaching Staff, and Special Technical Laboratory Staff of the collaborating Departments or other Departments of NKUA, another Higher Education Institution (HEI), or a Higher Military Educational Institution, as additional employment beyond their statutory duties where the IPGS charges tuition fees;
- b) Emeritus Professors or retired members of the Teaching and Research Staff (DEP) of the collaborating Departments or other Departments of NKUA or another HEI;
- c) affiliated professors;
- d) appointed instructors;
- e) visiting professors or visiting researchers; and
- f) researchers and specialised scientific personnel of research and technological bodies referred to in Article 13A of Law 4310/2014 (Government Gazette A' 258), or of other research centres and institutes in Greece or abroad.

By decision of the CPS, supervision of Master's Theses may also be assigned to members of the Teaching and Research Staff, Special Teaching Staff, Special Technical Laboratory Staff, and Laboratory Teaching Staff of the collaborating or other Departments who have not undertaken teaching duties in the IPGS.

9.7 Master's Theses approved by the examination committee shall be mandatorily uploaded to the "PERGAMOS" Digital Repository, in accordance with the decisions of the Senate of NKUA.

9.8 Where an MT contains original, unpublished results, only the abstracts may, upon application by the supervisor co-signed by the postgraduate student, be made available on the website, with the full text being made available at a later date.

ARTICLE 10. OBLIGATIONS AND RIGHTS OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

10.1 Postgraduate students shall enjoy all rights and benefits provided to first-cycle students, up to and including the expiry of any extension of studies granted to them, with the exception of the right to receive free textbooks.

10.2 The Institution shall ensure that students with disabilities and/or special educational needs have access to the recommended textbooks and to teaching (<https://access.uoa.gr>).

10.3 The NKUA Career Office provides students with counselling support on matters relating to studies and career development (<https://www.career.uoa.gr/ypiresies/>).

10.4 Postgraduate students are invited to participate in and attend research-group seminars, journal-club discussions, laboratory visits, conferences and scientific meetings in fields related to that of the IPGS, lectures, and other scientific events of the IPGS, among other activities.

10.5 The CPS may decide to deregister postgraduate students if they:

- exceed the maximum permitted number of absences;
- have failed a course or courses and have not successfully completed the Programme in accordance with these Regulations;
- exceed the maximum duration of study in the IPGS as specified in these Regulations;
- have breached the provisions in force concerning the handling of disciplinary offences by the competent disciplinary bodies;
- fail to pay the prescribed tuition fees; or
- submit an application for their own deregistration.

10.6 If a postgraduate student is deregistered from the IPGS, he or she may request a certificate listing the courses successfully completed.

10.7 Students may participate in international student-exchange programmes, such as ERASMUS+ or CIVIS, in accordance with the legislation in force. In such cases, the maximum number of ECTS credits that may be recognised is thirty (30). This option is available after completion of the first semester of study. Students must submit an application to the CPS and comply with the terms of the relevant programme.

The IPGS may also be attended by students participating in international student-exchange programmes, such as ERASMUS+, in accordance with the cooperation agreements in force.

10.8 Students may undertake practical training by participating in workshops and Winter, Spring, or Summer Schools organised by the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), the Network of European Neuroscience Schools (NENs), CIVIS, or other scientific bodies. The practical training shall carry the number of ECTS credits determined by the organisation arranging the relevant activities. These ECTS credits shall not count towards the ECTS credits of the regular curriculum. Practical training may also be undertaken through exchange programmes, such as Erasmus+, in accordance with the legislation in force.

10.9 During the 2nd semester, students may select up to two (2) related courses from another Postgraduate Studies Programme of NKUA or another HEI. In such cases, the maximum number of ECTS credits that may be recognised is eight (8).

10.10 Postgraduate students of NKUA may enrol in an IPGS of the same or another HEI in Greece or abroad within the framework of educational or research cooperation programmes, in accordance with the legislation in force.

10.11 Concurrent enrolment in an undergraduate programme and a postgraduate programme, or in two (2) Postgraduate Studies Programmes of the same or another Department of the same or another HEI, is permitted.

10.12 For each postgraduate student attending the IPGS, the CPS shall appoint an instructor of the Programme belonging to one of the collaborating institutions (a professor of any rank, a lecturer, or a researcher of any rank) as Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor shall be responsible for monitoring and reviewing the postgraduate student's academic progress.

10.13 At the end of each semester, every course and every instructor shall be evaluated by the postgraduate students (see Article 19).

10.14 Postgraduate students may request the issuance of a Diploma Supplement in Greek and English.

10.15 In order to participate in the IPGS "Athens International Master's Programme in Neurosciences", postgraduate students shall pay tuition fees amounting to one thousand (1,000) euros per semester. The fee shall be paid at the beginning of each semester.

ARTICLE 11. EXEMPTION FROM TUITION FEES

11.1 Students of the IPGS who satisfy the economic or social criteria and the requirements of academic excellence during first-cycle studies, in accordance with the legislation in force, shall be exempt from tuition fees. Such exemption shall apply to participation in only one IPGS. In all cases, students exempted from tuition fees shall not exceed thirty per cent (30%) of the total number of students admitted to the IPGS in each academic year.

11.2 An application for exemption from tuition fees shall be submitted after completion of the student-selection procedure for the IPGS. Under no circumstances shall a candidate's financial circumstances constitute a ground for non-selection to the IPGS.

11.3 Persons receiving a scholarship from another source, as well as citizens of countries outside the European Union, shall not be entitled to an exemption.

11.4 The criteria for exemption from tuition fees shall be examined by the Tuition Fee Exemption Committee, which shall issue a reasoned decision accepting or rejecting the application. The decision shall be approved by the CPS, and the Secretariat of the Department of Biology shall be informed.

11.5 Where the legislation in force establishes an age criterion, it is recommended, for reasons of sound administration and equal treatment, that 31 December of the year of birth be deemed to be the student's date of birth.

11.6 Members of the Special Teaching Staff, Special Technical Laboratory Staff, and Laboratory Teaching Staff categories who are admitted in excess of the normal admission quota pursuant to provision 3.3 of these Regulations shall be exempt from payment of tuition fees.

11.7 Where members of the same family up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are simultaneously enrolled in an IPGS of the Institution, a reduction of fifty per cent (50%) in the tuition fees payable may be granted.

ARTICLE 12. SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Students may receive scholarships and awards in order to support the completion of their studies.

12.1 Scholarships are divided into the following categories:

a) Merit scholarships for Greek students. These are granted in the form of an exemption from the tuition fees for one semester where at least twenty (20) students are enrolled in the IPGS and fewer than thirty per cent (30%) of the students are exempt from tuition fees on the basis of economic and social criteria.

At least one scholarship, in the form of an exemption from the tuition fees for the 2nd semester, shall be awarded to a Greek student who has successfully passed all courses of the 1st semester, has achieved an average grade of at least eight (8), and has the highest average grade in the cohort.

At least one scholarship, in the form of an exemption from the tuition fees for the 3rd and 4th semesters, shall be awarded to a Greek student who has successfully passed all courses of the 2nd semester, has achieved an average grade of at least eight (8), and has the highest average grade in the cohort.

b) Merit scholarships for foreign students.

These are granted in the form of an exemption from the tuition fees for one semester where at least twenty (20) students are enrolled in the IPGS.

At least one scholarship, in the form of an exemption from the tuition fees for the first semester, shall be awarded to a foreign student provided that the grade of his or her first degree is at least eight (8).

At least one scholarship, in the form of an exemption from the tuition fees for the 2nd semester, shall be awarded to a foreign student who has successfully passed all courses of the 1st semester, has achieved an average grade of at least eight (8), and has the highest average grade in the cohort.

At least one scholarship, in the form of an exemption from the tuition fees for the 3rd and 4th semesters, shall be awarded to a foreign student who has successfully passed all courses of the 2nd semester, has achieved an average grade of at least eight (8), and has the highest average grade in the cohort.

The beneficiary may change from one semester to the next.

Eligibility requirements

Applicants must not hold a salaried position in the public or private sector and must not receive a scholarship from any other body during the relevant period. Greek applicants shall submit to the Programme Secretariat a solemn declaration signed through the gov.gr platform containing the following statement: "I do not hold a salaried position in the public or private sector and I do not receive a scholarship from any other body during the relevant period." Foreign students shall submit a simple signed declaration in English.

Criteria

- Academic performance in courses (average grade of at least eight (8));
- Successful completion of all courses in accordance with the curriculum;
- Individual and family income.

In the event of a tie, individual and family income shall be taken into account. If both the grade and income are identical, selection shall be made by drawing lots. If a student declines the scholarship, it shall be awarded to the next student in the ranking.

Procedure

Following the relevant call, students shall submit to the Secretariat of the School/Department an application, mandatorily accompanied by the following supporting documents:

1. Official transcript;

2. A solemn declaration signed through the gov.gr platform containing the following statement: “I do not hold a salaried position in the public or private sector and I do not receive a scholarship from any other body during the relevant period”;
3. A recent tax assessment statement (individual and family).

The SC of the IPGS shall examine the applications, decide on the award of scholarships, and inform the Committee of the Programme of Studies.

12.2 Awards for Excellence. The IPGS may confer awards for excellence upon the top three students of each cohort upon completion of the courses of the 1st and 2nd semesters and also following timely completion of the Programme. The awards carry no financial benefit. Each award shall be signed by the Director of the IPGS and the Chair of the Department.

Eligibility requirements

1. Average grade in the courses of the 1st and 2nd semesters greater than or equal to eight (8).
2. Completion and successful examination during the February examination period (1st semester) and the June examination period (2nd semester) within the normal years of study (1st and 2nd semester of each cohort).

Procedure

Following submission of the June grades, the CPS shall review the grades of the students in the cohort and, provided that the above requirements are met, shall rank the students in descending order of their average grade and confer awards upon the top three (3) students.

Average Grade: In all cases involving the award of scholarships or awards, the average grade shall be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Average grade} = [\sum_{k=1}^N (GC_k \times EC_k)] / TE$$

where:

N = number of courses in the semester(s), as applicable;

GC_k = grade for course k;

EC_k = ECTS credits for course k;

TE = total ECTS credits of the semester(s), as applicable.

ARTICLE 13. INFRASTRUCTURE AND FUNDING OF THE IPGS

13.1 For the proper operation of the IPGS, teaching and seminar rooms, auditoria equipped with audiovisual facilities, and laboratories of the collaborating Departments and institutions shall be made available.

13.2 The administrative and secretarial support of the IPGS shall be provided by the Secretariat of the Department of Biology.

13.3 Funding of the IPGS may derive from:

- a) tuition fees;
- b) donations, sponsorships, and financial contributions of any kind;
- c) bequests;
- d) resources from research projects or programmes;
- e) own resources of the Higher Education Institution (HEI);
- f) the State budget or the Public Investment Programme; and
- g) any other lawful source.

13.4 Tuition fees shall be paid by the student or by a third-party natural or legal person on the student's behalf, where this is provided for in the decision establishing the IPGS.

13.5 The resources of the IPGS of the HEI shall be managed by the Special Account for Research Funds (ELKE) of NKUA.

13.6 The resources of the IPGS shall be allocated as follows:

- a) an amount corresponding to thirty per cent (30%) of total revenue derived from tuition fees shall be withheld by the financial department of the University. This amount includes the percentage retained in favour of the financial department of the University for the financial management of the IPGS. Where the revenue of the IPGS derives from donations, sponsorships and financial contributions of any kind, bequests, or resources from research projects or programmes, the deduction in favour of the financial department of the University applicable to revenue from the corresponding sources of funding shall be made;
- b) the remaining amount of the total revenue of the IPGS shall be used to cover the operating expenses of the IPGS.

ARTICLE 14. ASSIGNMENT OF TEACHING DUTIES / INSTRUCTORS IN THE IPGS

14.1 Teaching duties in the IPGS shall be assigned, by decision of the CPS, to the following categories of instructors:

- a) members of the Teaching and Research Staff), Special Teaching Staff, Laboratory Teaching Staff, and Special Technical Laboratory Staff of the collaborating Departments or other Departments of NKUA, another Higher Education Institution (HEI), or a Higher Military Educational Institution, as additional employment beyond their statutory duties where the IPGS charges tuition fees;
- b) Emeritus Professors or retired members of the Teaching and Research Staff (DEP) of the collaborating Departments or other Departments of NKUA or another HEI;
- c) affiliated professors;
- d) appointed instructors;
- e) visiting professors or visiting researchers;
- f) researchers and specialised scientific personnel of research and technological bodies referred to in Article 13A of Law 4310/2014 (Government Gazette A' 258), or of other research centres and institutes in Greece or abroad; and
- g) scientists of recognised standing possessing specialised knowledge and relevant experience in the academic field of the IPGS.

14.2 All categories of instructors may be remunerated exclusively from the resources of the IPGS. Remuneration or any other benefit from the State budget or the Public Investment Programme is not permitted. The amount of remuneration for each instructor shall be determined by decision of the CPS. In particular, instructors who are members of the Teaching and Research Staff may receive additional remuneration for work provided to the IPGS, provided that they fulfil their minimum statutory obligations as specified in Article 155(2) of Law 4957/2022. The preceding sentence shall apply mutatis mutandis to members of EEP, EDIP, and ETEP, provided that they fulfil their minimum statutory obligations.

14.3 The Committee of the Programme of Studies may request the Assemblies of the collaborating Departments to assign auxiliary teaching duties in the IPGS to their doctoral candidates under the supervision of an instructor of the IPGS.

14.5 Teaching duties in the IPGS shall be assigned by decision of the CPS.

Decisions of the CPS on the allocation of teaching duties must include the following information:

- a) the full name of the instructor;
- b) his or her status/capacity (e.g. member of Teaching and Research Staff), Special Teaching Staff, Laboratory Teaching Staff, and Special Technical Laboratory Staff, etc.);
- c) the type of teaching duty assigned to each instructor (course, seminar, or laboratory); and
- d) the number of teaching hours per course, seminar, or laboratory.

14.6 Teaching duties shall be allocated before the beginning of the academic year for both the winter and spring semesters. If teaching duties cannot be allocated simultaneously for both academic semesters, the decision shall be taken before the beginning of each academic semester. The assignment of teaching duties may be amended during the academic year by a reasoned decision of the CPS.

14.7 Instructors who are on educational leave or whose duties are suspended may provide teaching services to the IPGS if they consider that their schedule permits, provided that, in the circumstances, this is substantively and practically feasible; this matter shall be determined by the competent authority on a case-by-case basis.

ARTICLE 15. AWARD OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDIES DIPLOMA

15.1 A student completes the studies required for the award of the Postgraduate Studies Diploma by completing the minimum number of courses and ECTS credits required for the degree and by successfully completing the Master's Thesis. The CPS shall certify completion of the studies for the purpose of awarding the Postgraduate Studies Diploma.

15.2 Upon completion of the above procedure, the postgraduate student shall be issued a certificate of completion of studies, shall cease to hold student status, and shall cease to participate in the University's collective administrative bodies.

15.3 The Postgraduate Studies Diploma certifies successful completion of the studies and shall state the final grade to two decimal places according to the following scale: Excellent (8.5 to 10), Very Good (6.5 to less than 8.5), and Good (5 to less than 6.5).

15.4 The form of the Postgraduate Studies Diploma, according to the type of IPGS, shall be common to all Departments and Schools of NKUA and shall be included in the Institution's Regulations for Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies.

15.5 Within the framework of the IPGS, a Postgraduate Studies Diploma in "Neurosciences" shall be awarded.

ARTICLE 16. OATH-TAKING CEREMONY

16.1 Taking the oath does not constitute a constitutive requirement for the successful completion of studies; it is, however, a necessary prerequisite for issuance of the written degree certificate. The oath-taking shall take place within the framework of a meeting of the Committee of the Programme of Studies and on the premises of the Department or School, in the presence of the Director of the IPGS, the Chair of the Department or his or her Deputy, and, where possible, a representative of the Rector.

16.2 A request to hold an oath-taking ceremony for postgraduate students in the Great Hall of the University's Main Building shall be considered by the Rector on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the facilities available at the relevant time and the number of graduates taking the oath, as notified by the Secretariat of the IPGS to the Directorate of Education and Research.

16.3 Postgraduate students who have successfully completed the IPGS may, in exceptional cases (studies, residence or employment abroad, health reasons, etc.), apply to the Secretariat of the Department of Biology for exemption from the obligation to take the oath. Exemption from the oath-taking requirement shall be approved by the Director of the IPGS and the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, International Relations and Outreach.

ARTICLE 17. EVALUATION OF THE IPGS

17.1 Evaluation by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education

The IPGS shall be evaluated as part of the periodic evaluation/accreditation of the Department organised by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). In this context, the overall assessment of the work carried out by each IPGS shall be evaluated, including the degree to which the objectives set at its establishment have been achieved, its sustainability, the absorption of graduates into the labour market, the extent of its contribution to research, its internal evaluation by postgraduate students, the advisability of extending its operation, and other data relating to the quality of the work produced and its contribution to the national strategy for higher education.

If, at the evaluation stage, the IPGS is found not to meet the requirements for continuation of its operation, it shall continue to operate until the graduation of students already enrolled, in accordance with the decision establishing it and the Regulations for Postgraduate and Doctoral Study Programmes.

17.2 Internal evaluation

The internal evaluation of the IPGS shall be carried out annually by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU). All persons involved in implementing the activities and actions of the IPGS shall participate in the internal evaluation process, specifically students, members of the teaching staff, administrative and technical support staff, and the internal evaluation committee established for this purpose by the CPS of the IPGS.

The internal evaluation procedure shall be conducted in accordance with the legislation in force, the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System, the guidelines and standards of HAHE, and the questionnaires prepared by the CPS.

The internal evaluation of the IPGS shall include an assessment of teaching activities and of all its academic functions and actions.

More specifically, the following shall be evaluated:

- a) the content of the Curriculum in light of the most recent research in the specific academic field of the IPGS, so as to ensure the contemporary character of the IPGS;
- b) the workload associated with the courses, as well as students' progress through and completion of postgraduate studies;
- c) the extent to which students' expectations are met by the Curriculum, the study-support services provided, and the learning environment; and
- d) the courses of the Programme on a semester basis through questionnaires completed by students of the IPGS.

Evaluation results shall be used to improve course content and reduce overlap, and to make changes to teaching staff in order to achieve the maximum educational benefit. Evaluation of the IPGS is intended to promote the sustainability of the Programme, a high standard of studies, improvement of the services provided, and the effectiveness of its instructors.

The results of instructors' evaluations shall be communicated to the instructors concerned, and the results of course evaluations shall be communicated to the course coordinators.

ARTICLE 18. DURATION OF OPERATION OF THE IPGS

The IPGS shall operate until the academic year 2034–2035, provided that it meets the criteria of internal and external evaluation in accordance with the legislation in force.

ARTICLE 19. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Students already enrolled shall complete their studies in accordance with the decision and the Regulations in force during the year in which they were admitted to the Programme.

For matters not regulated by the legislation in force, the Regulations for Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies of NKUA, or these Regulations, the competent bodies of the IPGS shall decide.

These Regulations shall be posted on the “Diavgeia” Transparency Programme.