

**Vladimir Ivović, PhD, Assistant Professor  
candidate for the position of the Dean**

**University of Primorska  
The Faculty of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Information Technologies  
The Electoral Commission for conducting the dean's election  
Glagoljaška 8, 6000 Koper**

**SUBJECT: Action plan of the UP FAMNIT Dean candidate for the mandate period 2023 – 2027**

#### PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATE



Vladimir Ivović was born on May 19, 1966 in Aleksinac, Serbia. He finished elementary and high school in Niš. He graduated from the Faculty of Biology, of the University of Belgrade (Department of Ecology) in 1995 and received his Master's degree in 1999. From 2000 to 2004, he completed his PhD studies as a scholarship holder of the Greek State Foundation (IKY) at the WHO Laboratory of Clinical Bacteriology, Parasitology, Zoonoses and Geographical Medicine of the Faculty of Medicine in Heraklion, Crete, Greece. In November 2004, he defended his PhD thesis entitled "Distribution, bionomics and status of the species *Phlebotomus neglectus* (Diptera, Psychodidae) as the most important vector of leishmaniasis in the Eastern Mediterranean" at the Faculty of Biology, of the University of

Belgrade. From 1996 to 2005, he worked in the Laboratory of Medical Arachno-entomology of the Institute of Medical Research in Belgrade. From 2006 to 2011, he headed the Laboratory of Molecular Biology and Diagnostics of Parasitic Diseases in the National Reference Laboratory for toxoplasmosis at the Department of Parasitology of the Institute of Medical Research, University of Belgrade.

During his professional career, he completed his training in France at the Laboratory of Parasitology of the Faculty of Pharmacy in Reims (France), at the Department of Epidemiology and Microbiology of Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven (USA) and at the Istituto Superiore di Sanita in Rome (Italy). Since 2013, Dr. Ivović has been a lecturer and researcher at the University of Primorska in Koper (Slovenia), where he teaches the courses Animal Physiology, Entomology, Methodology and Communication in Biological Sciences, Ecology of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Seminar and Introduction to Microbiology. As a national and regional expert on phlebotomine sand flies, the exclusive vectors of leishmaniasis, Assistant Professor Dr. Vladimir Ivović led or participated in several national and international projects (CLIMOS, EDEN, Vectornet, EurNegVec and national ARRS and CRP projects). As part of the Erasmus + LIFE project, he lectured at the Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University in Bangkok. He has authored or co-authored 38 articles published in extenso and participated in more than 50 presentations at scientific conferences at home and abroad. He was the head of the Department of Biodiversity and a member of the UP FAMNIT Senate from 2019 to 2022. The greatest achievement he accomplished during his Chair of the Department mandate was writing, preparing and applying for accreditation of the PhD program in Conservation Biology, which was later approved.

Since October 2022, he has served as Deputy Chair of the Department of Biodiversity and Coordinator of the PhD Program in Conservation Biology, as well as a member of the Senate and KIN UP FAMNIT.

## MOTIVATION LETTER

Dear colleagues,

Ten years ago, as a fellow of the European Molecular Biology Organization, I visited UP FAMNIT for the first time. I met a new, young Faculty with wonderful young teaching and professional staff, people full of ambition, with new ideas, who not only wanted to acquire new knowledge but also to pass this knowledge on to new generations of students. I felt the desire to become part of this extraordinary collective myself and to share my personal knowledge, acquired in 15 years of scientific research work, with future young conservation biologists.

In the meantime, I realized that I could contribute to the development of the Department of Biodiversity and FAMNIT with the experience and knowledge I acquired at the University of Belgrade as Chair of the Department and member of the Senate. During my tenure as Chair of the Department of Biodiversity, I had a positive impact on the work and operation of our Department. The biggest success, besides the accreditation of the PhD program in Conservation Biology, was the creation of a good atmosphere among colleagues in the department, which had an impact on more successful teaching and research.

I am sure that as Dean of UP FAMNIT I would also create a good, productive mood, especially by encouraging better and more intensive cooperation between departments and by introducing a more effective system for motivating all staff.

Kind regards,

dr. Vladimir Ivovic



## ACTION PLAN

The proposed work program is based on the key documents of the University of Primorska that form the basis for our work, namely the Medium-Term Development Strategy of the University of Primorska 2021-2027. This is implemented through the Action Plan for the Medium-Term Development Strategy of the University of Primorska 2021-2027. In my program, I highlight important content sections, which I have divided into seven key areas that I would like to develop and strengthen during my mandate.

### 1. STRATEGIC GOALS AND DIRECTIONS

The UP and UP FAMNIT are based on the constitutional values of the Republic of Slovenia. Their basic guideline is excellence and the function is guided by the national programs for higher education, the strategic documents of the Republic of Slovenia and the guidelines for the development of the European Higher Education and Research Area. Flexibility, responsibility, openness, innovation, self-criticism, diversity and academic freedom are values and basic working principles that I represent and follow both in my teaching and in my scientific work. In this spirit, I will advocate for:

- an increase in the number of study programs which will be implemented at the highest level of quality in both Slovenian and English,
- an increase in scientific research activity and production in order to reach the highest level of quality and global standards,
- support and development of the entire staff and
- improvement of work processes and infrastructure.

### 2. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY

Within the framework of educational and pedagogical activities, I highlight various aspects that are important for the realization of both the strategic goals and the work program that I have set for my term. I highlight important strategic activities:

- enforcing and promoting educational excellence,
- developing and updating study programs,
- ensuring and developing an inclusive and equitable environment,
- supporting accessibility of studies for individuals with special status at the system level,
- concern for the ethical functioning of everyone,
- strengthening the internationalization of education.

The development and updating of study programs pursue the proposed goals in terms of monitoring national and global needs for the professions of the future and the needs dictated by the labor market.

The updating of study programs, courses and extracurricular activities should aim to make them internationally comparable and allow interdisciplinarity.

At the same time, collaboration and integration between the different departments of the faculty is crucial to make study programs and their content interdisciplinary and offer greater choice.

During my tenure, I will also work to promote students and faculty staff exchanges from international universities. I will promote collaboration and contact building in the international educational and scientific research environment.

### 3. SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Pedagogical and scientific-research work are inseparable. Experience, skills and new knowledge are the foundation for good, quality teaching. A broad base of knowledge and continuous improvement of the teaching staff ensures high-quality teaching and highly qualified future employees. Therefore, it is very important that our university teachers and colleagues are involved in research programs and actively participate not only in the implementation of activities, but also in writing and reporting projects. Therefore, in the future, I will maximally support applications for calls with interdisciplinary projects in which colleagues from different departments participate. I also believe that motivation is very important in applications and that the most successful applications should be rewarded accordingly.

Therefore, I will strive to do the following during my tenure:

- improving and updating the supportive environment for scientific and research activities,
- securing and increasing funding for scientific activities through projects and with the faculty's own resources,
- improving the evaluation of achievements in the acquisition of scientific projects (rewards),
- encouraging writing projects and applying for national and international calls for proposals,
- reintroducing the project administrative service within UP FAMNIT as a supportive environment for applying for and completing projects,
- motivating the teaching staff of UP FAMNIT to publish the results of scientific research,
- the best practices in interdisciplinary research should be shared among faculty departments,
- the establishment of a fund for highly qualified domestic and foreign researchers and the provision of seed money for their work,
- to strengthen internationalization and international cooperation in science by promoting excellence in science and involvement in the international environment.

#### 4. FUNDING AND FINANCIAL STABILITY OF THE FACULTY

From the most recently published Annual Report for 2021, adopted at the 51st Correspondence Session of the UP FAMNIT Senate (February 15 - February 17, 2022), it appears that the revenue from the budget of the Ministry of Education and Culture for educational and research activities represents on average 88.63% of the funds from the state budget of the Republic of Slovenia. In addition, UP FAMNIT receives 7.90% of its funds from the European budget. I will work to increase these funds to 10% by encouraging the applications of colleagues from all Departments to international tenders.

I believe that the implementation of the financial plan and the control of the allocation of funds to the departments of the Faculty must continue to be transparent and proportional, so I will work for this.

#### 5. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

In order to achieve the most important goals in both educational and scientific areas, it is necessary to maintain the optimal structure of the entire staff. At UP FAMNIT, there are no deviations from previous years in this regard, as the staff is replenished proportionally. At UP FAMNIT we have a relatively young staff, which does not mean that it will not be necessary to rejuvenate it in the near future. On the contrary, a young, perspective and ambitious staff brings new ideas, introduces innovations in teaching and research, and brings new positive energy to our Faculty. Therefore, when it is necessary and when all financial conditions are guaranteed, I will do my utmost to recruit research and teaching staff not only from our country but also from abroad. In the future, we will also look for new staff among the most outstanding students.

I would also maximally support and enable the professional development of all faculty colleagues, regardless of their educational background. I would pay special attention to personnel with strong career potential, who would contribute to better and more efficient work of all faculty members and establish themselves in the scientific environment at home and abroad.

UP FAMNIT is a faculty with a strong international teaching and research activity, and this will continue in the future. Many foreign lecturers, researchers and other colleagues are employed at the faculty, bringing new perspectives and knowledge through cultural diversity and integration. I will strive to continue to work together to create a positive work environment that provides opportunities for professional development for all employees at UP FAMNIT.

#### 6. ENSURING SUITABLE POSITION OF STUDENTS

Although the tutoring system at UP FAMNIT works well, I think we should set up a system that not only helps students adjust to the academic environment, but also guide and inform them about opportunities and trends in the job market.

The Student Council also works within the framework of UP FAMNIT, which needs to be even more actively involved in the work of the faculty. Student participation is extremely important, as it ensures quality in all areas that are critical to students during their studies.

The Covid 19 pandemic was a personal and societal challenge for all of us. As a result of the crisis caused by the great changes in the labor market, the number of students in need is also increasing, and they must be systematically provided with adequate support and assistance. Of course, we must not forget about students with special needs, whose progress in fulfilling their student duties must be better monitored and corrected if necessary.

In addition to quality teaching and state-of-the-art tools for students' knowledge acquisition, I propose that special attention be paid to improving students' working, living and leisure conditions. While students in Koper have areas that are open every day of the week, the rooms in Izola (Livade Campus) are still inadequately arranged. We often hear from students that they would like to have a place where they can relax with more entertainment content and organize social activities. I am aware that there is not enough space at UP FAMNIT. Therefore, I will work for the Faculty to try to find a suitable solution for the students together with the Koper Municipality or the Izola Municipality.

## 7. ENSURING AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY SYSTEM

It is important to realize that each faculty is special and unique and that the specific implementation of strategies to ensure and improve the quality system will vary depending on the needs and goals of the faculty. It is essential to adapt these strategies to the specific goals and requirements of UP FAMNIT.

By following strategic actions, Faculty can establish a solid foundation for ensuring and continuously improving its quality system, ultimately leading to improved educational experiences and outcomes for students. Here I would like to highlight:

- the development of a clear and concise quality policy that expresses the faculty's commitment to quality education and the establishment of measurable objectives that are consistent with this policy and reflect desired outcomes;
- documenting all quality-related processes, procedures and guidelines in a clear and accessible manner and standardizing procedures and ensuring that they are regularly monitored and updated to reflect any changes or improvements;
- implement a systematic approach to collecting, analyzing, and using data for quality improvement, using multiple sources such as student feedback, assessment results, graduation rates, and employment outcomes to gain insight into the effectiveness of educational processes;
- conduct continuous review and improvement of quality systems and processes by periodically evaluating the effectiveness of teaching methodologies, designed curricula, and student support services;
- conduct internal audits to assess the conformance of quality systems, procedures, and practices, ensuring compliance with established standards and identifying nonconformities;
- involving various participants in the work of the faculty, such as Faculty staff, students, alumni, employers, and other experts who can contribute to quality improvement;
- invest in the professional development of employees to improve their skills and knowledge of quality systems and practices;

- promote open and transparent communication channels within the faculty by regularly informing faculty employees and students of updates, changes, and improvements related to the quality system;
- transparent and justified evaluation of staff and systematic regulation of the evaluation process; and
- recognizing achievements and successes related to quality improvement, creating a positive environment and motivating all colleges to actively participate in quality improvement efforts at UP FAMNIT.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned below the word "Respectfully,".

Izola, 16. 05. 2023