

Opinion

From Assoc. Prof. Dr. Desislava Konstantinova, PhD

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Regarding: Competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. "Healthcare and Sports," in the professional field 7.2.

"Dentistry," and the scientific specialty "Orthodontics," announced on 29.11.2024 / State Gazette issue 101/, for the needs of the Department of Orthodontics at the Faculty of Dental Medicine, Medical University – Varna, and the order of the Rector of MU – Varna No. P-109-107/29.01.2025.

Documents for participation in the announced competition within the legally established period have been submitted by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Christina Ivanova Arnautska, PhD, Associate Professor in the Department of Orthodontics, Faculty of Dental Medicine, Medical University – Varna. The documents are meticulously arranged and presented in an orderly manner, facilitating their analysis.

Educational and Career Development:

Assoc. Prof. Christina Ivanova Arnautska was born on 21.09.1974 in Varna. In 1993, she graduated from the Third High School of Mathematics "Acad. M. Popov" Varna. In 1999, she obtained a Master's degree in Dentistry from the Faculty of Dental Medicine - Sofia. From 2001 to 2006, she specialized in orthodontics and worked as an orthodontist at Dental Center I Ltd. in Varna. Since 2008, she has been a regular assistant at the Department of Prosthetic Dentistry and Orthodontics, Faculty of Dental Medicine, Medical University – Varna. In 2013, she defended her dissertation titled "Diagnosis and Prediction of the Retention of Canine Teeth," supervised by Prof. Vera Krumova. From 2014 to 2016, she was a Chief Assistant in the same department. In 2016, she obtained the academic title "Associate Professor" and became the head of the Department of Orthodontics. In 2011, she completed a Master's program in Health Management at Medical University – Varna. She has been practicing clinical orthodontics in her own private practice since 1999.

Scientific Activity:

For participation in the competition, Assoc. Prof. Arnautska has presented the following:

I. *Habilitation thesis titled "Postnatal Development of the Orofacial Region and*

Prevention of Orthodontic Anomalies. " The monograph addresses important aspects of the prevention of dental and jaw deformities in childhood and is of utmost importance for the proper development of skeletal and dental relationships in the orofacial region. Early intervention of deviations or prevention of harmful habits leads to the self-correction of several deformities, reducing the need for long-term and burdensome treatment for the patient while maintaining oral health. Assoc. Prof. Arnautska presents her work in four chapters. In Chapter 3, she emphasizes the factors influencing the shaping of the facial area. Genetic and epigenetic factors are analyzed, as well as environmental factors shaping the orofacial complex at different stages. From an orthodontic perspective, malocclusion is a feature that can be strongly influenced by environmental factors. Deviations in occlusion are the result of both genetic and external factors. The ideal occlusion is the result of proportional growth between the cranial base, maxilla, and mandible, and includes a harmonious connection between the skeletal bases and soft tissues (perioral musculature, lips, and tongue). The general morphology of the craniofacial bones and teeth is largely genetically determined, although it is also influenced by environmental factors. Assoc. Prof. Arnautska emphasizes the importance of understanding the norm and temporary deviations, the methods for orthodontic examination, and the clinical experience of the orthodontist for interpreting results. These factors determine the accuracy of diagnosis and the formulation of an individualized treatment plan. It is also crucial to understand the characteristics of each orthodontic appliance, its advantages, and disadvantages. The monograph provides numerous theoretical and practical guidelines for orthodontic specialists, highlighting the significance of early diagnosis, prevention, and interceptive treatment. The concepts of "prevention" and "early orthodontic treatment" are thoroughly discussed according to different schools and theories in orthodontics. The monograph systematically and in-depth explores the theoretical issues of the growth and development mechanisms of the orofacial region, which have not been analyzed so comprehensively in Bulgarian orthodontic literature. II. Assoc. Prof. Arnautska has presented **23 scientific works, including 9 peer-reviewed and indexed in globally recognized databases and 14 publications** and reports published in non-peer-reviewed journals or edited collective works. Additionally, beyond the bibliometric requirements for obtaining the academic title of "Professor," she **has submitted 5 publications.**

The works are categorized into the following scientific directions:

1. Growth and development of the Orofacial Region. Prevention and early treatment of orthodontic deformities - monograph.

2. Prevalence of dental caries and its relationship with orthodontic deformities - publications 7.1 and 7.4.
3. Premature loss of primary teeth and its relation to space loss in the dentition - publications 7.2, 8.10, 8.11, and 8.12.
4. Study of the relationship between TMD and CMD problems and occlusion - publications 7.3, 8.2, and D3.
5. Oral breathing and its effect on the Orofacial Region – publications 7.5, 7.6, 7.8, 7.9, and 8.6.
6. Etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of OSA - publications 7.7, 8.8.
7. Comprehensive treatment of defects in the Orofacial Region – publication 8.1.
8. Combined orthodontic-surgical treatment for impacted teeth - publications 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, and 8.9.
9. Study of the anatomy of the nasomaxillary sinus and materials for restoring the height of the alveolar bone – publications 8.7 and D1.
10. Relationship between posturology and orthodontic deformities - publications 8.13, D4, and D5.
11. Orthodontic biomechanics – publications 8.14 and D2.

I fully accept all the contributions presented by Assoc. Prof. Arnautska in all directions.

III. A list of **57 participations** in Bulgarian and international scientific forums, including lectures, reports, and posters, and evidence of completed postgraduate qualification courses has been provided.

IV. A report on 12 citations, of which 11 are in Scopus and WoS databases and one citation in a monograph.

V. The candidate provides evidence of an **IP Factor = 3.11**, which meets the requirements for the academic title "Professor."

VI. Assoc. Prof. Arnautska provides evidence that she has supervised **6 successfully defended doctoral students**.

Teaching Activity:

The teaching load report of Assoc. Prof. Arnautska (File No. 112-514/05.12.2024) shows that her teaching experience began on 29.09.2008. In the last four years, she has taught the following hours:

2020/2021 - 165 hours.

2021/2022 - 169 hours.

2022/2023 - 168 hours.

2023/2024 - 221 hours.

The certificate of teaching experience (No. 099-4908/09.12.2024) confirms that as of the issuance date, she has 16 years, 3 months, and 3 days of teaching experience.

Participation in Projects:

Assoc. Prof. Christina Arnautska has presented a certificate No. 110-143/21.01.2025 for participation as a member of the research team in the completed project No. 20011 "Study of Vestibular Function using Static and Dynamic Posturography in Patients with Craniofacial Deformities," funded by the Science Fund of Medical University – Varna, in the position of Researcher, under the agreement with registration No. FN-4/26.01.2021.

Personal Impressions:

I have known Assoc. Prof. Arnautska since the beginning of her professional career. She has always been a responsible and responsive colleague and specialist, inspiring and motivating both young and experienced colleagues. She is a respected and beloved teacher who possesses an innovative spirit and a desire for continuous improvement. I have witnessed the scientific growth of Assoc. Prof. Christina Arnautska, which is the natural result of her tireless energy, creative spirit, and work ethic.

Conclusion:

After thoroughly reviewing the documentation provided and making a comprehensive assessment of the scientific and teaching activities of the participant in the competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the scientific specialty "Orthodontics," and knowing her academic erudition and professional collegiality, I believe that the candidate, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Christina Ivanova Arnautska, DMD, fully meets the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulation for the Appointment to the Academic Position of "Professor" from the Rules of MU – Varna.

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Varna

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