

**EVALUATION OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN BRAZIL: THE CASE OF THE
FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF RONDÔNIA (UNIR)**

**AVALIAÇÃO DOS PROGRAMAS DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO NO BRASIL: O CASO
DA UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE RONDÔNIA (UNIR)**

**EVALUACIÓN DE PROGRAMAS DE POSGRADO EN BRASIL: EL CASO DE LA
UNIVERSIDAD FEDERAL DE RONDÔNIA (UNIR)**

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed the *stricto sensu* graduate programs of the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR), considering institutional offerings and the scores assigned by CAPES between 2017 and 2020. The research sought to answer the following question: What are the active *stricto sensu* graduate programs offered by the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR), and how have these programs been evaluated by CAPES during the 2017–2020 period? A qualitative approach was adopted, with a descriptive character and basic nature, grounded in bibliographic and documentary procedures. The deductive method was employed to interpret institutional data and official reports. The results indicated the existence of 31 *stricto sensu* graduate programs, with scores ranging from 3 to 5, including UNIR's own courses and those in partnership with associated institutions. It was observed that the university plays a crucial role in expanding higher education within the state, although there is a concentration of programs, especially doctoral ones, on the Porto Velho campus. CAPES evaluations revealed satisfactory ratings, demonstrating the institution's commitment to academic quality. Inter-institutional partnerships emerge as important strategies to expand offerings and integrate knowledge; however, challenges remain regarding decentralization, researcher retention, and incentives for applied research.

Keywords: Postgraduate Programs. Evaluation. *Stricto Sensu*. Qualis.

RESUMO

O estudo analisou os programas de pós-graduação *stricto sensu* da Universidade Federal de Rondônia (UNIR), considerando a oferta institucional e os conceitos atribuídos pela CAPES no período de 2017 a 2020. A pesquisa buscou responder: Quais são os programas de pós-graduação *stricto sensu* ativos ofertados pela Universidade Federal de Rondônia (UNIR) e como esses programas têm sido avaliados pela CAPES ao longo do período 2017-2020? Adotou-se abordagem qualitativa, com caráter descritivo e natureza básica, fundamentada em procedimentos bibliográficos e documentais. O método empregado foi dedutivo para interpretar dados institucionais e relatórios oficiais. Os resultados indicaram a existência de 31 programas de pós-graduação *stricto sensu*, com conceitos variando entre 3 e 5, incluindo cursos próprios da UNIR e em parceria com

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instituições associadas. Observou-se que a universidade desempenha papel crucial na interiorização da educação superior no estado, ainda que haja concentração dos programas, especialmente de doutorado, no campus de Porto Velho. A avaliação da CAPES revelou conceitos satisfatórios, evidenciando o compromisso institucional com a qualidade acadêmica. As parcerias interinstitucionais surgem como estratégias importantes para ampliar a oferta e integrar saberes, porém desafios permanecem quanto à descentralização, fixação de pesquisadores e incentivo à pesquisa aplicada.

Palavras-chave: Programas Pós-graduação. Avaliação. *Stricto Sensu*. Qualis.

RESUMEN

El estudio analizó los programas de posgrado *stricto sensu* de la Universidad Federal de Rondônia (UNIR), considerando la oferta institucional y los conceptos atribuidos por la CAPES en el período de 2017 a 2020. La investigación buscó responder: ¿Cuáles son los programas de posgrado *stricto sensu* activos ofrecidos por la Universidad Federal de Rondônia (UNIR) y cómo han sido evaluados estos programas por la CAPES a lo largo del período 2017-2020? Se adoptó un enfoque cualitativo, con carácter descriptivo y naturaleza básica, fundamentado en procedimientos bibliográficos y documentales. El método empleado fue deductivo para interpretar datos institucionales e informes oficiales. Los resultados indicaron la existencia de 31 programas de posgrado *stricto sensu*, con conceptos que varían entre 3 y 5, incluyendo cursos propios de la UNIR y en colaboración con instituciones asociadas. Se observó que la universidad desempeña un papel crucial en la interiorización de la educación superior en el estado, aunque existe una concentración de los programas, especialmente de doctorado, en el campus de Porto Velho. La evaluación de la CAPES reveló conceptos satisfactorios, evidenciando el compromiso institucional con la calidad académica. Las alianzas interinstitucionales surgen como estrategias importantes para ampliar la oferta e integrar saberes; sin embargo, persisten desafíos en cuanto a la descentralización, la retención de investigadores y el fomento a la investigación aplicada.

Palabras-chave: Programas de Posgrado. Evaluación. *Stricto Sensu*. Calidad.

1 INTRODUCTION

The responsibility for the evaluation of *stricto sensu graduate programs* in Brazil, covering master's and doctoral degrees, is attributed to the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), an autarchy linked to the Ministry of Education. This evaluation is carried out systematically and periodically, within the scope of the National Graduate System (SNPG), with the disclosure of the grades assigned to the programs in operation occurring at the end of each quadrennium. The evaluation process aims to ensure the quality of academic training, stimulate scientific excellence, and promote the development of graduate studies in the country (CAPES, 2024).

The last CAPES Quadrennial Evaluation referred to the period from 2017 to 2020, with its final results published at the end of 2022. Currently, the evaluation cycle corresponding to the 2021–2024 quadrennium is underway, whose activities take place throughout 2025, including stages such as data collection, classification of intellectual production, and analysis by area committees (CAPES, 2025). This evaluation process is essential for the permanence of *stricto sensu graduate programs* within the SNPG scope, being conducted by 50 specific evaluation areas.

The results are expressed through concepts ranging from 1 to 7: programs that receive a score of 1 or 2 are deaccredited and enter the process of deactivation, while those with grades between 3 and 7 remain active. On this scale, concept 3 represents compliance with the minimum quality criteria required, while concept 7 is attributed to excellence programs with international recognition (CAPES, 2024).

Considering the relevance of the theme and the complexity of the Brazilian reality, the present study aimed to analyze the *stricto sensu* graduate programs of the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR), considering its institutional offer and the concepts attributed by CAPES in the evaluations carried out. Despite the institutional advances and the various researches focused on themes such as institutional evaluation, there is a gap with regard to the systematic and in-depth analysis of the graduate programs of this nature offered by UNIR, especially with regard to the evaluation of these programs by CAPES.

This gap becomes even more relevant in view of the recent expansion of these programs, with the approval of new courses after the last quadrennial evaluation. In view of these circumstances, the present study proposes to investigate the following research question: What are the active *stricto sensu* graduate programs offered by the Federal

University of Rondônia (UNIR) and how have these programs been evaluated by CAPES over the period 2017-2020?

To answer the research problem, the study adopted a descriptive methodology regarding its objectives, characterized as a research of a basic nature. The approach to the problem was qualitative, seeking to understand phenomena from the interpretation of data and information. The methodological strategies used were predominantly bibliographic and documentary, with the analysis of spreadsheets and data extracted from official sources, giving the study an empirical and theoretical foundation. Regarding the method of approach, the deductive method was chosen, which starts from general premises for the analysis of specific aspects, providing a logical and coherent structure to the development of the research.

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study was designed to ensure scientific rigor and consistency in data analysis. As for the objectives, the research is classified as descriptive, as it sought to characterize and analyze existing information without direct interference in the phenomenon studied. In relation to nature, it is a basic research, aimed at expanding scientific knowledge, without immediate application in production processes.

Regarding the approach to the problem, the qualitative perspective was adopted, since the study involves the interpretation of subjective characteristics of the phenomenon, focusing on the understanding of the dynamics of social and institutional relations. Although it considers data that can be quantified, the main focus is not on numerical representativeness, but on interpretative analysis, aiming at deepening the understanding of the investigated context.

As for the methodological procedures, the research is bibliographic and documentary, based on previously consolidated sources and institutional documents. The deductive method was used because it allows the analysis of information from general concepts, evolving to specific conclusions about the reality studied, ensuring logical coherence to the investigative reasoning.

The data analyzed were secondary, as defined by Tafla et al. (2022), which characterizes them as information previously collected by other people or institutions and made available for consultation and use in research or analysis. This characteristic

distinguishes them from primary data, obtained directly by the researcher during the investigation.

2.1 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA:

To ensure the relevance and quality of the information analysed, the following criteria were established:

Inclusion: Any *stricto sensu graduate programs* (master's and doctorate, academic and professional) linked to the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR), registered on the Sucupira Platform, and belonging to the Northern Region of Brazil.

Exclusion: Any programs of private or public institutions of *stricto sensu courses* that were not affiliated or worked in partnership with the Federal University of Rondônia were excluded from the analysis.

2.2 DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING PROCEDURES

Data collection took place between July and August 2025, exclusively through the Sucupira Platform, an electronic system developed by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), which provides information on the evaluation and monitoring of graduate programs in Brazil. The collection and preparation process was structured in three sequential stages:

1. Data Filtering and Selection:

Initially, the data were located on the Sucupira Platform, using filters referring to the geographic region (North), the selected institution (Federal University of Rondônia – UNIR) and the desired academic levels (master's and doctorate). Then, additional filters were applied by major areas of knowledge and academic degree, ensuring the extraction of the most relevant information for the study.

2. Organization and Tabulation:

The collected data were organized in tables, graphs and charts, using Microsoft Excel resources for calculations and visual structuring, complemented by freely accessible graphic tools, such as Canva, for the elaboration of illustrations and explanatory images.

3. Analysis and Interpretation:

In the final stage, the interpretative and descriptive analysis of the organized data was carried out, based on the deductive method. This analysis sought to identify patterns, trends, and relevant characteristics, associating them with the context of the study. This last phase

took place between the end of August and the beginning of September 2025. The resulting interpretations are detailed in the Results and Discussion section of this article.

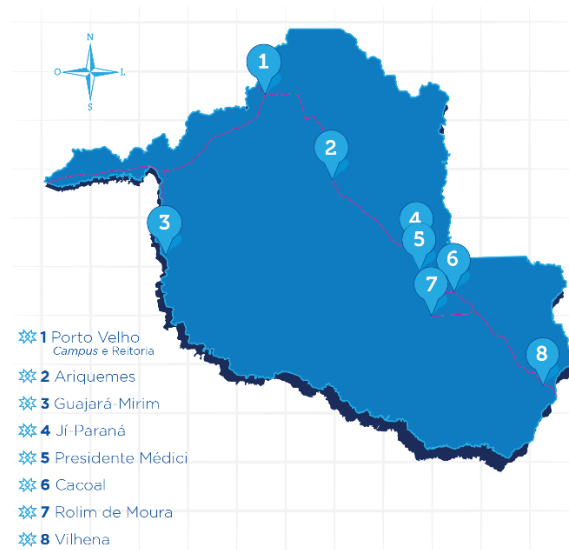
3 RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Based on the proposed objectives, the established theoretical framework and the methodological procedures adopted, this section presents and discusses the main results obtained in the research. The analysis seeks to highlight the information extracted, interpreting it in the light of the previously defined categories, in order to provide a consistent understanding and aligned with the investigated problem. In addition to exposing the data organized in tables, graphs and charts, this section also presents critical reflections based on the theoretical basis, ensuring coherence between the empirical findings and the scientific foundation that guides the study.

The Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR), together with the Federal Institute of Rondônia (IFRO), constitute two public institutions of higher education in the state. UNIR, the oldest, was created on July 8, 1982, through Federal Law No. 7,011, in the context of the transformation of the then Federal Territory of Guaporé into a federative unit (Brasil, 1982). Initially, the first campus was implemented in the capital, Porto Velho, and, later, the process of interiorization began, which resulted in the creation of the other campuses currently existing. To identify the courses offered and the respective CAPES evaluations, it is necessary to consider both the availability of each campus and its geographical location and structure. In this sense, Figure 1 presents the map of the state of Rondônia with the distribution of the university's campuses.

Figure 1

Distribution of the Campuses of the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR)



Source: Federal University of Rondônia, (2025).

As shown in Figure 1, the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR) currently has eight campuses distributed in different mesoregions and microregions of the state. The definition of these locations was strategically planned to ensure educational coverage throughout the territory of Rondônia, offering undergraduate courses and graduate programs. The largest and most complete campus is the José Ribeiro Filho, located in the capital, Porto Velho. It concentrates the largest number of undergraduate courses, in addition *to lato* and *stricto sensu graduate programs*. This campus covers both the university complex located on the banks of the BR-364, towards Acre, and the administrative headquarters of the institution, the Rectory, located in the center of the city. Together with the Jorge Vassaliakis campus, located in Guajará-Mirim, the José Ribeiro Filho campus serves the administrative region of Madeira-Mamoré, the most populous in the state (UNIR, 2025).

In addition to these two, the campuses located in the other regions of the state stand out: the Ariquemes Campus, which serves the Jamari Valley region; the Ji-Paraná and Presidente Médici Campus, responsible for the central region. In the region known as the coffee hub, there is the Professor Francisco Gonçalves Quiles Campus, in Cacoal. The Rolim de Moura Campus serves the population of the Zona da Mata, while the Vilhena Campus includes the Southern Cone region, on the border with the state of Mato Grosso (SEPOG, 2025). In this way, UNIR consolidates itself as the only public university in the state of Rondônia. The offers of graduate programs on these campuses can be seen in table 1.

Table 1

UNIR's Graduate Programs by major areas of knowledge

Grandes Áreas	Áreas do Conhecimento	Grau Acadêmico	Nomes dos Programas de Pós-graduação
Ciências Biológicas	Ecologia	Mestrado Acadêmico	Conservação e uso de Recursos Naturais
Ciências Humanas	Psicologia	Mestrado Acadêmico	Psicologia
	Educação	Mestrado/Doutorado Profissional	Educação Escolar
	Políticas Públicas	Mestrado Profissional	Políticas Públicas
	Geografia	Mestrado/Doutorado Acadêmico	Geografia
	Educação	Mestrado Acadêmico	Educação
	História Regional do Brasil	Mestrado Acadêmico	História da Amazônia
	Filosofia	Mestrado Acadêmico	Filosofia
Ciências Sociais Aplicadas	Comunicação	Mestrado Acadêmico	Comunicação
	Ciência da Informação	Mestrado Profissional	Gestão da Infor. e Preserv. do Patrimônio na Amazônia
	Administração	Mestrado Acadêmico	Administração
	Administração	Mestrado Acadêmico	Administração e Contabilidade
Linguística, Letras e Artes	Letras	Mestrado/Doutorado Acadêmico	Letras
	Literatura Comparada	Mestrado Acadêmico	Estudos Literários
Multidisciplinar	Políticas e desenv. de Territórios	Mestrado/Doutorado Acadêmico	Desenvolvimento Regional e Meio Ambiente
	Engenharia, Tecnologia e Gestão	Mestrado Acadêmico	Gestão de Agronegócios e Sustentabilidade
	Ensino de Ciências e Matemática	Mestrado Acadêmico	Ensino de Ciências da Natureza
	Ciências Ambientais	Mestrado Acadêmico	Ciências Ambientais
	Sociais, Culturas e Humanidades	Mestrado/Doutorado Profissional	Direitos Humanos e desenvolvimento da Justiça
	Ensino de Ciências e Matemática	Mestrado Acadêmico	Educação Matemáticas
	Políticas e desenv. de Territórios	Mestrado Acadêmico	Agroecossistemas Amazônicos

Source: Prepared by the author based on Sucupira (2025).

The university currently offers 21 *stricto sensu* graduate programs, comprising master's and doctoral degrees. The courses have a minimum duration of 12 months, in the case of master's degrees, and a maximum of 48 months for doctorates. The training available is predominantly in the face-to-face modality, and in some cases there are disciplines taught at a distance, covering both professional and academic programs. Of the total, 17 programs are academic in nature, while 4 are aimed at professional qualification. Of the major areas in table 1, the Multidisciplinary concentrates the largest number of programs, totaling seven. Among these, only the Human Rights and Justice Development course has a professional character.

Similarly, the area of Human Sciences also brings together seven programs, of which only School Education and Public Policies are specifically intended for qualification for the professional market, while the others maintain a strictly academic nature. In addition to the programs offered entirely by UNIR, the institution participates in initiatives in cooperation with other public and private universities, institutes and development agencies, resulting in a collaborative network of advanced training. Table 2 shows which are these courses and universities that lead these programs.

Table 2

UNIR's graduate programs in association with other universities

Programas de Pós-graduação	Grau Acadêmico	Instituições de Ensino Superior Envolvidas
Biologia Experimental	Mestrado/Doutorado Acadêmico	FUNDAÇÃO OSWALDO CRUZ - FIOCRUZ/RONDÔNIA 
Educação na Amazônia	Doutorado Acadêmico	UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PARA - UFPA 
Administração Pública em Rede Nacional	Mestrado Profissional	ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DOS DIRIGENTES DAS INSTITUIÇÕES FEDERAIS DE ENSINO SUPERIOR 
Saúde da Família	Mestrado Profissional	ASSOCIAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE SAÚDE COLETIVA - ABRASCO 
Matemática em Rede Nacional	Mestrado Profissional	SOCIEDADE BRASILEIRA DE MATEMÁTICA 
Ensino de Ciências e Matemática em Rede	Doutorado Profissional	UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE RORAIMA - UFRR 
Ensino de Física	Mestrado Profissional	SOCIEDADE BRASILEIRA DE FÍSICA 
Biodiversidade e Biotecnologia	Doutorado Acadêmico	UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PARA - UFPA 
Gestão e Regulação de Recursos Hídricos	Mestrado Profissional	UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL PAULISTA - UNESP ILHA 
Educação Inclusiva	Mestrado Profissional	UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL PAULISTA - UNESP PRESIDENTE PRUDENTE 

Source: Prepared by the author based on Sucupira (2025).

Table 2 presents the programs developed in partnership, totaling ten courses linked to UNIR through inter-institutional agreements. With the exception of Experimental Biology, Education in the Amazon and Biodiversity and Biotechnology, all the others have a professional nature. Most of these programs are offered in a national network and have a multidisciplinary character, allowing, in some cases, the entry of candidates without specific training in the area, given the thematic scope and curricular flexibility. Thus, between courses offered only by UNIR and agreements with other institutions, the university has 31 *stricto sensu* graduate courses, for which the grades of these programs can be seen in table 3.

Table 3

Concept courses (grades) of the CAPES evaluation (2017-2020)

CURSOS OFERTADOS E NOTAS NA AVALIAÇÃO CAPES (2017-2020)	CURSOS OFERTADOS	NOTAS CAPES (2017-2020)	CAMPIS
	Gestão de Agronegócios e Sustentabilidade	A	Francisco G. Quiles (Cacoal/RO)
	Educação Matemática	3	Ji-Paraná/RO
	Ensino de Física	5	Ji-Paraná/RO
	Gestão e Regulação de Recursos Hídricos	4	Ji-Paraná/RO
	Educação Inclusiva	3	Ji-Paraná/RO
	Administração Pública em Rede Nacional	3	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Psicologia	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Educação Escolar	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Educação na Amazônia	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Políticas Públicas	A	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Comunicação	A	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Biologia Experimental	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Desenvolvimento Regional e meio ambiente	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Ensino de Física	5	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Matemática em Rede Nacional	5	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Geografia	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Biodiversidade e Biotecnologia	5	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Educação	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Gest. da Inform. e Preservação do Patrim. Amazônia	A	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Administração	3	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Letras	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Saúde da Família	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Estudos Literários	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Direitos Humanos e desenvolvimento da Justiça	4	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	História da Amazônia	A	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Conservação e uso de Recursos Naturais	3	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Filosofia	3	José Ribeiro Filho (Porto Velho/RO)
	Agroecossistemas Amazônicos	3	Rolim de Moura/RO
	Ciências Ambientais	3	Rolim de Moura/RO
	Ensino de Ciências da Natureza	3	Rolim de Moura/RO
	Ensino de Ciências e matemática em Rede	A	Rolim de Moura/RO
	Administração e Contabilidade	A	Vilhena/RO

Source: Prepared by the author based on data extracted from the sucupira platform (2025).

As shown in Table 3, the Porto Velho Campus concentrates the highest percentage of graduate courses in all major areas of knowledge. In second place, with a lower number and distributed in a balanced way, the campuses of Rolim de Moura and Ji-Paraná stand out. The Cacoal and Vilhena campuses offer only one master's program each, while the others do not have *stricto sensu* courses.

The evaluations carried out by CAPES attribute grades ranging from 1 to 7, with grades 1 and 2 indicating insufficiency and implying the discontinuity of the program, while grade 3 corresponds to compliance with the minimum requirements for its maintenance and grade 7 represents programs with international recognition. Currently, the university has 9 programs

evaluated with concept 3, representing 28.1% of the total offered. Programs with grade 4 correspond to 37.5%, totaling 12 of the 31 existing courses. Finally, the courses considered to be of excellence, with a score of 5, represent the lowest percentage, 12.5%, and all of them are linked to partnerships between UNIR and other institutions. This group brings together 4 courses belonging to three programs, considering that the Professional Master's Degree in Physics Teaching is offered on two different campuses: José Ribeiro Filho, in Porto Velho, and Ji-Paraná, thus accounting for two offers of the same program.

In addition, there are programs that have not yet had grades assigned, being identified by grade **A**, which represent 21.9% of the total offered, corresponding to seven programs distributed among all campuses of the university. The "Authorized" classification indicates that such programs have not yet been evaluated, possibly due to the creation after the period of the last analysis, carried out between 2017 and 2020, with the first classes starting in 2021 and 2022 for most of these programs (CAPES, 2025).

One of the most notable particularities of UNIR's *stricto sensu programs* is the offer of only one doctoral program outside the capital, the Professional Doctorate in Science and Mathematics Teaching Network, coordinated by the Rolim de Moura campus. It should be noted that this program is not entirely UNIR's, as it is developed in partnership with the Federal University of Roraima (UFRR), which assumes the coordination of activities. The Federal Universities of Acre (UFAC) and the Federal University of Amapá (UNIFAP) also participate in this association, contributing to the joint execution of the program between universities in the north.

In view of the data presented, it is observed that the Federal University of Rondônia plays a strategic role in the internalization and diversification of graduate studies *stricto sensu* in the state, contemplating different areas of knowledge and training modalities. The distribution of programs, although concentrated in certain campuses, shows efforts to meet regional demands, while CAPES evaluations demonstrate a predominantly satisfactory scenario, with emphasis on the maintenance of programs with high concepts and the expansion of inter-institutional partnerships. These aspects reinforce the importance of UNIR as an inducing agent of scientific and technological development in the Amazon, contributing to professional qualification and to the consolidation of an integrated academic network focused on excellence.

4 DISCUSSION

The preparation of this article, in addition to disseminating information on the evaluations of the graduate programs of the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR), seeks to contribute to the formulation of public policies and institutional strategies that encourage the expansion and consolidation of these programs in all campuses. The geographic division of the state, which guided the location of the campuses, proved to be relevant in allowing greater population reach, bringing the production of scientific knowledge closer to the various regions of Rondônia. This internalization represents an important step towards democratizing access to advanced training, promoting inclusion and regional development.

However, some reflections are necessary: would such actions be sufficient to guarantee the permanence of researchers in the programs? Why do three UNIR campuses still not offer master's/doctoral courses? After completing the undergraduate or graduate program, how can the university strengthen the bond with its graduates, stimulating the continuity of training and contributing to the development of their careers? These issues point to the need for more robust institutional policies, which involve strategies for retaining researchers, fostering applied research and encouraging the creation of new graduate centers.

Another relevant point concerns the concentration of the offer of doctorates: currently, only the Rolim de Moura campus has a program of this level outside the capital, Porto Velho. This centralization raises questions about the measures that are being adopted to decentralize the offer, expanding opportunities in other regions of the state.

Contributing to this discussion is Cardoso's dissertation (2023), which highlights UNIR's graduate studies in geography and discusses the importance of these programs in a general context, where despite the challenges imposed by the Amazonian context, characterized by logistical difficulties, infrastructure limitations, and scarcity of resources, UNIR has demonstrated resilience by maintaining and expanding its actions, reinforcing its role as an inducing agent of scientific and social development. It is expected, therefore, that the institution will advance in the implementation of new policies, enabling the creation of programs in different areas and campuses, in order to consolidate a more comprehensive, inclusive and excellence-oriented academic network.

Another pertinent reflection through these results is regarding the form of evaluation used: What are the guidelines and parameters used by CAPES to evaluate graduate programs?

CAPES uses, as the main guidelines for the evaluation of *stricto sensu graduate programs*, the Qualis Periodicals System and other mechanisms derived from bibliometric indicators, such as the impact factor, the *H index* and indexing in international databases (*Web of Science*, *Scopus*, *SCImago*, among others). These instruments are used to measure the quality of the scientific production linked to the programs, largely determining the final grade awarded by CAPES. Thus, the more publications by professors and students in journals classified in the upper strata (A1, A2, A3, A4), the better the evaluation of the program tends to be (CAPES, 2025).

Corroborating this discussion is Gabardo, Rachem, Hamada (2018), who argue that the Brazilian evaluation system, although necessary for the regulation and promotion of research, has become excessively bureaucratic, standardized and decontextualized, especially in areas such as Law, in which the criteria of indexation and international impact do not reflect the reality of national scientific production. For them, the rigid and uncritical use of foreign indexes (such as JCR and SJR) generates distortions, discourages methodological and linguistic diversity, and artificially favors the concentration of scientific production in certain centers and journals.

The authors also consider that CAPES should recognize that Qualis is not only a technical instrument for measurement, but a regulatory mechanism with a broad impact on the national scientific environment. Therefore, its application must observe the principles of Administrative Law, such as transparency, predictability, good faith, non-retroactivity of criteria and democratic deliberation. In addition, the need for a more participatory and contextualized action is mentioned, capable of respecting the specificities of each area of knowledge (Gabardo; Cracking; Hamada, 2018).

5 CONCLUSION

The analysis developed in this article allowed us to understand the structure and distribution of the *stricto sensu graduate programs* offered by the Federal University of Rondônia, as well as the evaluations attributed by CAPES and the challenges inherent to their expansion in the Amazonian context. The results showed that UNIR plays a fundamental role in the interiorization of higher education, ensuring the presence of courses in different regions of the state, with a total of 31 *stricto sensu graduate programs* with grades from 3 to 5, although there is still a significant concentration of programs, especially doctorate, on the campus of the capital, Porto Velho.

It was also found that most of the programs present satisfactory concepts in the evaluations, reflecting the institutional commitment to academic quality, while interinstitutional partnerships are consolidated as relevant strategies to expand the offer and promote the integration of knowledge. However, challenges remain regarding the decentralization of graduate studies and the creation of policies aimed at retaining researchers, encouraging applied research and encouraging the permanence of graduates in academic life and the creation of more graduate programs on campuses that do not yet have them, namely, Jorge Vassilakis Campus, in Guajará-mirim; Ariquemes and Presidente Médici Campus.

In view of this, it is concluded that, despite the barriers imposed by the Amazonian scenario, UNIR has advanced in the consolidation of a *stricto sensu* training network that contributes to the scientific, technological and social development of the region. To reach an even more robust level, it is essential to implement institutional policies that favor the balanced expansion of programs between campuses, ensuring equity in access and strengthening the university's mission as a promoter of knowledge and sustainable regional development.

As a contribution to the strengthening of science in this area of knowledge and corroborating this discussion, it is suggested that in future studies some pertinent themes be discussed and addressed, such as: Decentralization of UNIR's graduate programs; strengthening inclusion and diversity policies at the university; and the role of federal universities in the Brazilian Amazon as propellers of science and welcoming spaces.

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