

GRADUATE STUDENT THESIS/DISSERTATION PROPOSAL EVALUATION

The attached evaluation tool (rubric) is designed to assist program faculty in the evaluation of their degree program's ability to successfully prepare their students to propose graduate research. The rubric includes four broad evaluation criteria, and encourages the addition of criteria important to individual departments/programs. Evaluation of a thesis/dissertation proposal can be an integral part of graduate student learning outcomes assessment conducted by graduate programs. It is applicable to all programs that have a thesis or dissertation requirement.

This evaluation tool is intended to:

- provide students, prior to submitting their proposal, with a clear understanding of the aspects of their proposal deemed most important to their graduate program
- provide clear and concise feedback to students on how well their proposal does in meeting those program objectives, at a time when the feedback can be used to improve the final product
- encourage conversations among departmental colleagues about improving graduate student learning outcomes and assessment
- serve as a model for a "tool" that can be used by graduate programs both as they prepare their students to meet program learning objectives and as they report on their success in required assessment reports.

Instructions:

1. Major Professors and students should review and become familiar with the criteria in the evaluation tool, as a guide, prior to the preparation of a thesis/dissertation proposal.
2. The rubric should be scored by the Major Professor at the time the first complete draft of the proposal is submitted.
3. The feedback provided by the scored rubric should be discussed directly with the student.
4. This cover page (page 1) should also be completed (providing a summary of the scored ratings below for each of the criteria in the rubric) by the Major Professor.
5. This coversheet should be delivered to the program director (or department chair) and retained in a secure file in the appropriate department/program office for use as a valuable tool in graduate student learning outcomes assessment (student identifiers are optional).
6. The student should keep the rubric page(s) as feedback for thesis/dissertation proposal development.

Student ID: _____ **Student name:** _____

Program: _____

Degree: M.A. ____ M.S. ____ Ph.D. ____

Date of Proposal review: _____

Proposal Score Summary by Criterion

Assessment Criteria: 1: _____ 4: _____
 2: _____ 5: _____
 3: _____ 6: _____
 Overall judgment: _____

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Student ID: _____

Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Rubric

Instructions for scoring: Use the check boxes for detailed feedback, then make global judgments for each criterion rating and overall assessment.

| Criterion | Does not meet expectations = 1 | Meets expectations = 2 | Exceeds expectations = 3 | Score |
|--|--|---|---|-------|
| 1. Mastery of theories and concepts in the field demonstrated in problem statement and literature review | <input type="checkbox"/> Arguments are sometimes incorrect, incoherent, or flawed <input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are poorly defined <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited critical thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects limited understanding of subject matter and associated literature <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited understanding of theoretical concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation is weak <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate statement of hypotheses | <input type="checkbox"/> Arguments are coherent and reasonably clear <input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are clear <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates acceptable critical thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects understanding of subject matter and literature <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates understanding of theoretical concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation is adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Generates adequate hypotheses | <input type="checkbox"/> Arguments are superior <input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are well defined <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits mature, refined critical thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects mastery of subject matter and associated literature. <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates mastery of theoretical concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation is excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Generates well-reasoned and well-supported hypotheses | |
| 2. Mastery of methods of inquiry | <input type="checkbox"/> Design inappropriate to questions <input type="checkbox"/> Confused or ineffective plan for analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks anticipation of regulatory compliance requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> Design reasonable for questions <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for analysis reasonable, acknowledges some limitations <input type="checkbox"/> Considers regulatory compliance | <input type="checkbox"/> Design, analysis plan, excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for analysis goes beyond the obvious, acknowledges limitations and critically considers alternatives <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates regulatory compliance | |
| 3. Quality of writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing is weak <input type="checkbox"/> Numerous grammatical and spelling errors apparent <input type="checkbox"/> Organization is poor <input type="checkbox"/> Style is not appropriate to discipline | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing is adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Some grammatical and spelling errors apparent <input type="checkbox"/> Organization is logical <input type="checkbox"/> Style is appropriate to discipline | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing is publication quality <input type="checkbox"/> No grammatical or spelling errors apparent <input type="checkbox"/> Organization is excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Style is exemplary | |
| 4. Originality and potential for contribution to discipline | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited potential for discovery <input type="checkbox"/> Limited extension of previous published work in the field <input type="checkbox"/> Limited theoretical or applied significance <input type="checkbox"/> Limited publication potential | <input type="checkbox"/> Some potential for discovery <input type="checkbox"/> Builds upon previous work <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable theoretical or applied significance <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable publication potential | <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional potential for discovery <input type="checkbox"/> Greatly extends previous work <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional theoretical or applied significance <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional publication potential | |
| Additional criterion #1: | | | | |
| Additional criterion #2: | | | | |
| Overall judgment | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations | <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds expectations | |

Comments: