

Evaluation Form and Criteria (to take effect September 2023)

cc: Graduate Student

PhD Preliminary Examination Evaluation
Graduate Program in Biology

Candidate: _____

Title of Research Proposal: _____

Date of Exam: _____

Examining Committee:

Chair: _____ (supervisory committee member)

Supervisor: _____ (supervisor cannot be Chair)

Member: _____

Member: _____

Member: _____

Assessment Criteria (Exceeds, Meets, or Does Not Meet Expectations):

1. Suitability of the proposed research as a Ph.D. dissertation.

Expectations: Proposed research is feasible; the proposed research has good potential to significantly advance the field and to be publishable in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

Assessment: Exceeds Meets Does Not Meet

Rationale and Key Areas for Development:

2. Demonstrated ability to conduct independent research and achieve good research progress for a PhD dissertation.

Expectations: Good quality preliminary results and analyses for at least one part of the proposed research; demonstrates capacity to conduct this aspect of the dissertation with limited direct supervision.

Assessment: Exceeds Meets Does Not Meet

Rationale and Key Areas for Development:

3. Comprehensive and critical literature review of the research topic

Expectations: Frames the research topic into an appropriate historical context of past research; identifies important gaps in knowledge and/or methodology; provides critical analysis and synthesis of the literature. If applicable, explains key recent advancements in knowledge/methodologies and highlights conflicting theories and evidence.

Assessment: Exceeds Meets Does Not Meet

Rationale and Key Areas for Development:

4. Goals, novelty, and significance of the proposed PhD dissertation research

Expectations: States the research question within the context of the literature; clearly states the research goals and/or hypotheses and predictions; provides a strong rationale for the novelty and significance of the proposed research.

Assessment: Exceeds Meets Does Not Meet

Rationale and Key Areas for Development:

5. Understanding of methods and experimental design

Expectations: Demonstrates good knowledge of proposed methods and the pros and cons of alternative methods; clearly explains rationale for proposed experimental design; understands the limitations of the proposed methods and experimental design.

Assessment: Exceeds Meets Does Not Meet

Rationale and Key Areas for Development:

6. Communication skills (oral and written)

Expectations: Research talk has good pace with confident delivery and gives a clear explanation of the proposed research and results-to-date; answers questions clearly, concisely and with good understanding and knowledge; research proposal writing style is clear, concise, logical, well organized, and grammatically correct.

Assessment: Exceeds Meets Does Not Meet

Rationale and Key Areas for Development:

OVERALL EVALUATION:

1. Pass without Reservation (Meets or exceeds expectations in ALL 6 criteria) _____

2. Pass with Reservation (One or two criteria do NOT meeting expectations) _____

The candidate must complete the Remedial Actions specified below, and be assessed by the Examining Committee as having met or exceeded expectations for those criteria.

Due Date (must be within 3 months of this exam):

Remedial Actions Required:

3. Re-examination (Three criteria assessed as NOT meeting expectations) _____

The candidate must complete the Remedial Actions specified below, and undergo a full re-examination within 6 months of the initial examination. Only one re-examination is permitted; if the candidate does not Pass (without or with Reservation), they will be withdrawn from the PhD program.

Re-examination Date (must be within 6 months of this exam):

Remedial Actions Required:

4. Fail (Four or more criteria assessed as NOT meeting expectations); _____

PhD candidates will be withdrawn from PhD program; MSc students attempting to transfer to PhD remain in the MSc program.

Chair of Examining Committee Signature: _____