

Department of Psychology

Thesis/Dissertation Oral Exam Rubric

Purpose

The purpose of this rubric is to give thesis and dissertation students a clear understanding of the criteria that will be used to guide the assessment of the quality and progress of their scholarship and to provide faculty with guidelines for completing the final assessment.

Application

This rubric will be shared with students as part of their program's introduction to the thesis/dissertation process. It includes descriptions of expected levels of performance for each skill that is assessed. ***It is expected that a thesis/dissertation that is approved by the candidate's committee would be evaluated as being above the "emerging" category in all areas for the thesis defense and dissertation proposal, and above the "developing" category in all areas upon completion of the dissertation. However, there is no minimum passing score associated with individual criteria.*** The rubric is used for feedback and assessment in the thesis and proposal stages, and for final assessment at the dissertation defense stage.

Implementation

While this rubric should be a foundation for the thesis/dissertation process and will be provided to students at the early stages of their thesis and dissertation, it will be formally implemented during the oral exam process for the final thesis defense, the dissertation proposal defense, and the final dissertation defense. The rubric will be distributed at the start of the defense meeting and filled out by committee members at the end of the defense. **The rubric is collected by the committee chair following the meeting and given to Michelle in the PY office immediately following the meeting.** Rubric information will be summarized by the DGS and provided to the committee chair. *Other written feedback by committee members can be sent to the chair separately (e.g., in the dissertation text). The committee chair is responsible discussing feedback with the student.*

Name _____ Date _____ Meeting (Circle one) Thesis Prelim Dissertation

Skill	Criteria Exemplary Scholarship		Criteria Developed Scholarship			Criteria Developing Scholarship			Criteria Emerging Scholarship	
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Presentation Content	Introduction provides clear and concise organization. Main purpose of research is identified and well argued. Hypotheses are clear. Method is laid out. Primary results are presented and tied to research questions and theoretical foundations. Importance of results to the field is discussed.		Main points are explained and provide sufficient detail. Method and hypotheses are clear. Main theories are discussed/reviewed. Results are detailed. Discussion/interpretation places results in broader context.			Introduction outlines the main issues. Some details are missing. Method/results are generally clear. Discussion and conclusions adequate, but lack detail.			Introduction is underdeveloped. Purpose is unclear. Main sections missing critical information.	

Skill	Criteria Exemplary Scholarship		Criteria Developed Scholarship			Criteria Developing Scholarship			Criteria Emerging Scholarship	
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Presentation Organization	Excellent organization. Introduction outlines full presentation. Main points lead directly from one to the other. Clear summary and conclusions.		Good organization. Introduction provides an overview of presentation. Transitions are adequate.			Overall organization is appropriate. Some abrupt content changes are noted.			Difficult to follow. Moves back and forth through main ideas	

Skill	Criteria Exemplary Scholarship 10 9	Criteria Developed Scholarship 8 7 6	Criteria Developing Scholarship 5 4 3	Criteria Emerging Scholarship 2 1
Presentation Mechanics	Slides are creative and provide a balance between words and illustrations. Theoretical models are well diagramed. Designed to highlight main points as well as subtle issues of interest.	Slides are well constructed and informative. Convey an appropriate amount of information. Easy to read and follow main points.	Slides are organized and present the relevant information. Too many words on most slides. Little effort to make them engaging.	Individual slides do not follow an overall plan. Numerous errors and formats are evident.

Skill	Criteria Exemplary Scholarship 10 9	Criteria Developed Scholarship 8 7 6	Criteria Developing Scholarship 5 4 3	Criteria Emerging Scholarship 2 1
Delivery	Natural, confident delivery that enhances message and generates interest in the topic. Clear and without distractions. Engages audience.	Good overall delivery and pace. Clear articulation, minimal distractions. However, fails to generate enthusiasm for issue. Good eye contact.	Satisfactory delivery. Some distracting pauses and gestures, a few filler words. Pace a little fast or slow. Little eye contact.	Poor articulation. Distracting gestures, too many filler words. Appears to be reading.

Skill	Criteria Exemplary Scholarship 10 9	Criteria Developed Scholarship 8 7 6	Criteria Developing Scholarship 5 4 3	Criteria Emerging Scholarship 2 1
<i>Ability to Answer Questions</i>	Questions are answered completely with full explanations provided for all answers. Alternatives are fully considered and addressed. Exhibits flexibility when presented options.	Questions are understood and answered completely. Explanations are provided for most answers. Alternative possibilities are considered.	Generally understands the questions and provides basic answers. Does not consider alternatives. Some parts of questions are not addressed.	Questions are poorly understood. Answers are insufficient.