

Scoring Rubric

Biomedical PhD Student Annual Thesis Committee Review Rubric

Student Name: _____

Year in Program: [] Year 1 [] Year 2 [] Year 3 [] Year 4 [] Year 5+

Date of Review: _____

Primary Investigator (PI): _____

Advisory/Dissertation Committee Members Present: _____

Instructions for Faculty: Please rate the student on the criteria below relative to their current year in the program. Use the following scale for all sections. If there is a particular section that cannot be evaluated at a meeting, please indicate N/A and explain why in the open response comments at the end of the rubric.

0 = Unsatisfactory | 1 = Needs Improvement | 2 = Satisfactory | 3 = Good | 4 = Exceed

Section 1: Coursework & Foundational Knowledge (Applicable for Year 1 & 2 Only)

For Year 3 and beyond, this section will be marked "N/A" and its points will not contribute to the total score.

Evaluation Criteria	Score (0 - 4)
I. Academic Performance & Understanding: Core course grades, retention, grasp of complex biomedical principles.	_____

Section 2: Research Progress & Scientific Contribution

Expectations scale up as the student advances within their PhD program.

Evaluation Criteria	Score (0 - 4)
I. Experimental Design, Execution & Data Generation: Rigor, technical execution, troubleshooting, and consistent generation of high-quality, publishable data within the field of study.	_____
II. Data Analysis, Interpretation & Critical Thinking: Accuracy, nuance in interpretation, ability to challenge assumptions, and development of conceptual analytical frameworks.	_____
III. Project Ownership & Independent Advancement: Initiative in problem-solving, driving project aims forward, and conceptualizing novel	_____

Evaluation Criteria	Score (0 - 4)
approaches or research directions with minimal PI input.	

Section 3: Scientific Professional & Communication

Evaluation Criteria	Score (0 - 4)
I. Clarity & Impact of Written Communication: Organization, clarity, and professionalism in proposals, abstracts, or draft manuscripts.	_____
II. Clarity & Effectiveness of Oral Communication: Clarity and engagement in presentations (lab meetings, seminars, conferences).	_____
III. Responsiveness to & Application of Feedback: Active solicitation and strategic integration of constructive criticism to advance research goals.	_____

Section 4: Professional Conduct & Program Engagement

Evaluation Criteria	Score (0 - 4)
I. Professionalism, Ethics & Research Integrity: Upholding high ethical standards, ensuring data reproducibility, reliability, and responsibility.	_____
II. Collaboration, Mentorship & Lab Citizenship: Teamwork, willingness to help/mentor peers, and positive contribution to the lab culture.	_____
III. Initiative & Adherence to Commitments: Organization, timeliness, and proactivity in meeting deadlines across projects.	_____
IV. Program & Community Engagement: Participation in program events, student initiatives, or the broader professional/scientific community.	_____

Section 5: Program Milestones & Future Planning

Evaluation Criteria	Score (0 - 4)
I. Adherence to Program Milestones: Timely completion of qualifying exams, committee meetings, and proactive preparation for future steps.	_____
II. Clarity & Strategic Nature of Future Planning: Feasibility, clarity, and ambition of upcoming multi-year research plans and career path planning.	_____

Committee Scoring Summary & Narrative Feedback

1. Consensus Overall Rating

- [] **Outstanding Progress:** Consistently exceeds highest expectations; clear trajectory for groundbreaking independent research.
- [] **Excellent Progress:** Clearly exceeds expectations; high productivity and significant intellectual growth.
- [] **Good Progress:** Consistently meets or slightly exceeds demanding expectations; minor areas for development.
- [] **Satisfactory Progress:** Generally meets core, rigorous expectations; requires focused attention to maintain trajectory.
- [] **Needs Improvement:** Falls short in critical areas; requires immediate intervention and a detailed Action Plan.
- [] **Unsatisfactory Progress:** Fails to meet fundamental expectations; serious concerns regarding doctoral suitability.

2. Committee Feedback Comments

Please provide concise, actionable feedback highlighting specific achievements and prioritized areas for development next year.

Specific Achievements This Year:

Areas for Improvement / Prioritized Developmental Goals:

3. Required Action Plan (Only for "Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory")

Outline specific, time-bound remediation strategies (e.g., bi-weekly meetings, proposal resubmission date, focused technique training).

Student Perspective

Student Comments: *(Optional opportunity for the student to share perspectives on progress, hurdles, or goals)*

Signatures:

Primary Investigator (PI): _____ Date: _____

Committee Member: _____ Date: _____

Committee Member: _____ Date: _____

Committee Member: _____ Date: _____

Student:* _____ Date: _____

**Student signature indicates review and discussion of the evaluation, not necessarily agreement.*

Meeting Run of Show

PhD Student Annual Thesis Committee Meeting Run of Show

Roles & Responsibilities:

Student

- Prepare and distribute required meeting materials in advance.
- Present research progress, accomplishments, and future plans.
- Discuss challenges, training goals, and professional development needs.
- Respond to committee feedback and recommendations.

Thesis Advisor

- Guide the student's research and scientific development.
- Provide an assessment of the student's progress and performance.
- Discuss research goals, expectations, and areas for growth.
- Support the student in addressing committee recommendations.

Thesis Committee Chair

- Facilitate and oversee the annual committee meeting.
- Guide discussion of the student's research progress and development.
- Ensure committee feedback is clearly communicated.
- Complete and submit the Annual Thesis Committee Meeting Report.

Thesis Committee Members

- Review meeting materials and research progress before the meeting.
- Evaluate the student's research, training, and academic development.
- Provide constructive feedback and recommendations.
- Contribute to committee discussions and approve meeting outcomes.

Order of Events:

Student Meeting with the Thesis Committee (Advisor Absent) | ~10 minutes

The meeting begins with a private discussion between the student and the Thesis Committee. This provides an opportunity for the student to discuss research progress, training experiences, professional development goals, and any challenges or concerns since the previous committee meeting.

Advisor Meeting with the Thesis Committee (Student Absent) | ~10 minutes

Following the student discussion, the Thesis Advisor meets privately with the Committee to provide an assessment of the student's research progress, academic development, laboratory performance, and progress toward degree milestones.

Research Progress Presentation | ~20-30 minutes

The student presents a summary of research activities completed since the previous meeting, including experimental findings, accomplishments, setbacks, and progress toward dissertation objectives. The presentation should also outline plans and goals for the coming year.

Committee Discussion and Questioning | ~20-30 minutes

Following the presentation, the Committee engages the student in discussion regarding research progress, interpretation of results, experimental approaches, and future directions. This conversation provides an opportunity to evaluate the student's scientific development and ensure continued progress toward degree completion.

Review of Training and Academic Progress | ~10-15 minutes

The Committee reviews the student's overall progress toward program requirements, including research milestones, publications, professional development activities, training goals, and anticipated timelines for future degree milestones.

Committee Deliberation and Recommendations (Closed Session) | ~10-15 minutes

The student is excused while the Committee and Advisor discuss the student's progress and development. The Committee identifies strengths, areas requiring attention, and recommendations intended to support the student's continued advancement toward dissertation completion.

Summary of Feedback and Next Steps | ~10 minutes

The student is invited back into the room, and the Committee Chair summarizes the Committee's feedback, recommendations, and expectations for the coming year. Any action items, milestones, or timeline adjustments are reviewed before concluding the meeting.

Total Estimated Duration: Approximately 1.5 to 2 hours.