

Faculty Rubric for Evaluating Graduate Student Oral Exam Performance

Assessment of Proficiency	1 (Unacceptable)	2 (Fair)	3 (Very Good)	4 (Outstanding)
Knowledge of the field and ability to synthesize and analyze evidence (1b, 2, 3a)*	Gaps in basic knowledge. Does not understand basic concepts, processes, or conventions of the discipline. Does not understand or misses relevant literature. Misrepresents or misuses sources.	Displays a basic understanding of the field but limited ability to critically evaluate information. Literature review is adequate but not critical.	Displays a solid understanding of the field and can critically evaluate information from various sources. Uses appropriate, standard theory, methods and techniques. Some exploration of interesting issues and connections.	Demonstrates thorough mastery of the field as well as creativity in drawing on multiple sources; exceptional ability to critically evaluate information from the breadth of the field. Displays a deep understanding of relevant literature.
Oral Communication skills (1b, 2d)*	Argument is weak, inconsistent, contradictory, unconvincing or invalid.	Provides solid, expected results and answers. Clear and coherent but unable to extrapolate more deeply.	Gives a solid argument with novel or fresh insights. Original with clear and coherent details.	Compelling, exciting, and persuasive. Has a point of view and a confident, independent, authoritative voice.
Written communication skills (1b, 2, 3a, 4)*	Academic writing lacks structure and organization. Writing lacks clarity and arguments are weak or poorly structured.	Writing is adequate. Structure, organization, and clarity are adequate. Ideas and arguments are presented clearly.	Writing is clear, well-organized, and elucidates ideas effectively. Arguments are compelling and convincing.	Concise, elegant, engaging, interesting, sophisticated, and original. Connects components seamlessly.
Experimental design and analysis (1b, 2) *	Unable to articulate an argument. Does not effectively evaluate details of experimental and statistical design and analysis.	Provides a coherent response with some logic gaps or inconsistencies in approach. Demonstrates elementary ability to design and analyze experiments.	Shows understanding and mastery of subject matter. Demonstrates ability to design and analyze complex experiments using advanced techniques.	Exhibits mature, independent thinking. Demonstrates command and authority over the material. Demonstrates ability to design and analyze complex experiments using novel approaches.
Original research contribution (4)*	No independent research. Question or problem is trivial, weak, unoriginal, or previously solved.	Demonstrates competence but is not very original or significant. Displays little creativity, imagination, or insight.	Has a compelling question or problem. Argument is strong, comprehensive, and coherent. Has some original ideas, insights, and observations.	Argument is focused, logical, rigorous, and sustained. Proposed project is original, ambitious, creative, significant, and thoughtful. Asks new questions or addresses an important question or problem.

* Numbers in parentheses correspond to proficiencies from the Field Assessment Plan.