

Student Name: _____

Faculty Name: _____

MS Thesis

This form is intended to provide a common set of criteria for the assessment of the written M.S. Thesis. Each committee member should complete this form after the oral thesis defense.

Please rate each attribute on the following scale: **1 = Introductory**, **2 = Intermediate**, **3 = Advanced**, **4 = Expert**, with Expert defined as the proficiency expected of a Ph.D. recipient and Introductory defined as the proficiency of someone who has not acquired skills beyond that of a Bachelor's degree. Please note any additional comments below.

Introduction	
Identifies an original and meaningful research topic	
Hypotheses or approaches are presented that are tightly aligned to the question	
The literature review is accurate and places the research question in proper context	
The literature review demonstrates the ability to discriminate between the most important/informative papers and less important/informative ones	
The introduction is written in a manner that is accessible to both specialists and non-specialists in the field	
Methods	
The methods selected are appropriate to the research question	
Methods are described in sufficient detail that the experiments and/or simulations could be reproduced by others	
Methodological challenges are recognized and workable solutions or alternative approaches are proposed	
Results and analysis	
Experiments and/or simulations were effectively carried out to generate data that are sufficient in quantity and relevance to address the research question	
Data are thoughtfully and carefully analyzed in an objective manner	
Figures and tables present results in an easily interpretable fashion	
Discussion and conclusions	
Conclusions drawn are adequately supported by the data	
Discussion connects the results to issues in the literature and conveys the significance of the findings to the field of study	
Strengths and weaknesses in the work are discussed	
Mechanics	
Any errors in spelling or grammar are sufficiently minor that they do not affect comprehensibility	
Literature citations in the text and bibliography are accurate	
Professionalism	
Thesis work is conducted and presented in a responsible and ethical manner	

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M.S. Thesis Oral Defense

This form is intended to provide a common set of criteria for the assessment of the M.S. Thesis Oral Defense. Each committee member should complete this form after the defense.

Please score the following elements of the M.S. Thesis Oral Defense according to the rubric below. *Expert* is the proficiency expected of a Ph.D. recipient and *Introductory* defined as the proficiency of someone who has not acquired skills beyond that of a Bachelor's degree.

	Score	Comments
Material relating to thesis		
Command of literature, background		
Verbal communication		

M.S. Thesis Oral Defense Rubric Criteria

Criteria:	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced	Expert
Material Relating to Thesis	Little theory development, methods unclear or unjustified.	Simplistic theory, may disregard difficulties. Methods are fairly clear. Experiments and/or simulations are carried out effectively under supervision.	Builds on existing theory, is well developed. Methods are very clear and well justified. Experiments and/or simulations are carried out effectively requiring limited supervision.	Insightful, developed theory, methods are extensively described and supported. Experiments and/or simulations are carried out effectively with no supervision.
Command of Literature, Background	Research background is limited; incomplete knowledge of previous work; may be unaware of key studies in the field, and studies that challenge the student's perspective.	Research background is somewhat limited, may be unaware of some relevant studies. Is beginning to show familiarity with the literature, but may omit some competing work. May not address gaps and/or limitations of previous studies.	Research background is comprehensive, with clear familiarity of the literature. Is aware of most work in the field, providing a balanced view of background research where relevant. Student can identify some of the limitations of previous studies and begin to articulate how the project will address the limitations and gaps in the literature.	Research background is extensive, clear fluency with the literature. Student is aware of all major sources, and may cite unexpected sources. Student can speak at length of the limitations of previous studies, and articulate how the project will address the limitations and gaps in the literature. Provides a comprehensive, balanced perspective.
Verbal Communication	Has difficulty speaking clearly, is difficult to follow. Responses to	Student speaks somewhat clearly, may be slightly hard to follow. Responses to	Speaks fairly clearly, explanations are generally understandable. Is able	Speaks clearly, providing clear explanations. Has well-reasoned, complete responses to questions and criticism.

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	questions or criticism are off topic or very limited.	questions and criticism may be incomplete or flawed.	to answer nearly all questions and respond to criticism.	
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