

PhD Proposal Defense

Instructions for faculty committees

The following rubrics were developed by a subcommittee of the PhD in Education & Human Development faculty, reviewed and adopted by the faculty in May 2019.

These rubrics define what the faculty expect of candidates in relation to the student learning outcomes (SLO's) associated with the Dissertation Proposal and the final Dissertation. The rubrics are a significant portion of our program assessment scheme, which is being developed in accordance with program needs, university and HLC guidelines.

The scoring guide should be completed by the candidate's faculty committee, reviewed by the committee with the candidate, and submitted to Scott Bauer directly after the proposal or final defense meeting (not after required revisions or based on final submission). This will provide us with formative data for program improvement. As guidance, please consider the following when scoring:

- Since our scores of 2 and 3 are labeled "met" and "fully met," this roughly equates to "pass" with minor revisions in terms of the Graduate School rating form. The candidate will not be asked to participate in another defense meeting with the committee.
- A rating of "1" – partially met – is roughly equivalent to "pass with conditions," generally requiring considerable revision. At the committee's discretion, the corrected proposal or dissertation may be required for review by either the primary advisor alone, or the entire committee. Also at the committee's discretion, another defense meeting maybe required, though this would be untypical.
- A rating of "0" – not met – requires major revision to the document and another defense meeting.

Each committee has the discretion to provide the summative judgment of its choice on the Graduate School rating form based on a holistic assessment of the document and meeting.

PhD Program Goal:

To prepare candidates to serve as scholars and researchers who will in turn prepare researchers and future scholars for institutions of higher education (IHEs) or organizations focused on research.

Student learning objectives:

Graduates of the PhD in Education & Human Development program will be able to...

- 1 Apply theories of learning and development to understand fundamental questions involving education, communities, and/or families
- 2 Identify and analyze an issue related to equity
- 3 Apply a critical lens to interrogate existing research and theoretical perspectives
- 4 Critically apply theories, methods, and knowledge to address questions in their primary field
- 5 Demonstrate skills and knowledge at a level required for college and university teaching
- 6 Plan and conduct research of significance
- 7 Demonstrate skills in oral and written communication sufficient to publish and present work in their field or prepare grant proposals

Dissertation Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Component	SLO	Fully met (3)	Met (2)	Partially Met (1)	Not met (0)
Research problem, questions and significance Score: _____	2	Thoroughly describes the research problem, precisely identifies research question(s) and describes their significance to equity and advancement of the field of inquiry and practice	Begins to develop a reasonable description of the research problem, identifies question(s) and describes significance to equity and advancement of the field of inquiry and practice, but one or more of these require elaboration or clarification	A statement of the research problem, question(s) and possible significance are presented but not well developed. Research question(s) may not be researchable.	Research problem, question(s) and significance are undeveloped or missing
Conceptual framework Score: _____	4	Clearly identifies or develops a conceptual model that defines constructs studied and their purported relationships. Framework is used to ground the study within what is already known and helps establish what the present study will contribute to the knowledge base and/or practice.	Begins to identify or develop a conceptual model that defines constructs studied and their purported relationships. Framework could usefully ground the study within what is already known and help establish the significance of the study, but these connections require elaboration.	The conceptual framework is evident but needs to be further grounded in the relevant knowledge base..	A conceptual framework grounded in the literature is undeveloped or missing
Review of relevant research Score: _____	3	Provides a substantial synthesis of literature from related fields. Places work within larger context.	Provides a meaningful summary of the literature. Shows understanding of relevant literature	Fails to cite important or relevant scholarship. Misinterprets research findings.	Provides little or no relevant scholarship.
Methodology Score: _____	6	Identifies and justifies appropriate methodologies and research techniques. Research plan is suitable to study	Identifies appropriate methodologies and research techniques to answer research question(s) but arguments for	Many details of method are missing or vague, or the methods require modification to be appropriate for	The methodologies described are either not suited or poorly suited to test questions / hypotheses. The

		purposes. Project is feasible.	justification and suitability are not present or significant adjustments are required before proposal is feasible.	answering the research question(s).	methodology is under-developed and/or is not feasible.
Clarity, organization, grammar and references Score: _____	7	The manuscript is well structured with clear transitions and flow of thought. Sentences and paragraphs are grammatically correct. Uses subheadings appropriately. Manuscript properly cites references. Reference list matches citations	The manuscript is well structured but requires revision to provide clearer transitions and flow of thought. The writing is grammatically correct with only occasional errors, but some sections lack clarity. Manuscript properly cites references. Reference list matches citations with few omissions.	The manuscript requires substantial revision to provide effective structure, transitions and flow of thought. The manuscript contains frequent grammatical errors and/or many sections lack clarity. Citations and/or reference list need editing.	The manuscript is poorly written and confusing. Ideas are not communicated effectively. Formatting and/or references need considerable revision.
Oral presentation and response to questions Score: _____	7	Presentation provides a thorough and clear overview of the proposed study. Candidate listens carefully, is open to critique, seeks to understand queries and responds fully to questions.	Presentation describes the study but clarifying questions are necessary to fully understand the study. Candidate is responsive to questions, but is at times closed to critique or fails to seek understanding.	Presentation provides an overview of the proposed study but lacks detail on important aspects. Candidate is unresponsive to some questions or fails to seek understanding on suggestions for improvement.	Presentation provides only a cursory overview of the proposed study or lacks significant details. Candidate is unresponsive to question and closed to critique or suggestions.

General comments, recommendations:

PhD Proposal Defense Scoring Report

Candidate name: _____ Date of defense: _____

Primary advisor : _____ Meeting chair: _____

Rating scale: Fully met (3) Met (2) Partially Met (1) Not met (0)

Component	Notes
<p>Research problem, questions and significance</p> <p>Score: _____</p>	
<p>Conceptual framework</p> <p>Score: _____</p>	
<p>Review of relevant research</p> <p>Score: _____</p>	
<p>Methodology</p> <p>Score: _____</p>	
<p>Clarity, organization, grammar and references</p> <p>Score: _____</p>	

Component	Notes
Oral presentation and response to questions Score: _____	

Revision requirements:

Additional comments: