

MS Thesis/Project Oral Defense Rubric

This rubric is to be implemented on the day of the MS oral defense. Record all committee member votes on the corresponding Google Form. Consider the thesis/technical project report and the oral portion of the defense when evaluating this rubric.

Criteria	Does Not Pass	Passes Exam	
	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
Goal and Objectives	Research/project goal is not clearly stated and not organized into well-defined objectives and outcomes.	Research/project goal is adequately stated and organized into well-defined objectives.	Research/project goal is clearly stated and organized into objectives with well-defined outcomes.
Literature Review /Background	Disorganized and too brief review; widely known references are missing or not germane to the topic at hand.	Logically crafted review that adequately explores the topic; some references known to experts may be missing.	Well-synthesized exploration of the topic and illustration of the state of the knowledge in the field; references are complete.
Ability to Conduct Research or Produce Creative Work	Proposed work is not novel or creative.	Work is derivative/ incremental in nature.	Work is novel or creative.
Understanding of Engineering / Mathematics / Science (ESM) Concepts and Theories	Student shows incorrect understanding of many ESM concepts. Many calculation/logic errors are present in analysis.	Student shows incorrect understanding of some but not all ESM concepts. Some calculation/logic errors are present in analysis.	Student shows correct understanding of ESM concepts. No calculation/logic errors are present in analysis.
Application of Engineering / Mathematics / Science (ESM) Concepts and Theories	Student incorrectly applies many ESM concepts to the research.	Student incorrectly applies some but not all ESM concepts to the research.	Student correctly and effectively applies ESM concepts to the research.
Results and Conclusions	Conclusions do not flow logically from analysis performed; significance and impact of work is minimal.	Conclusions flow logically from analysis performed; significance and impact of work is satisfactory.	Conclusions flow logically from analysis performed; significance and impact of work is expertly conveyed.
Quality of Written Communication	Writing style is laborious to read with several errors, poor sentence construction and/or poor document structuring.	Writing style is academic and presents information in a concise organized manner; minor grammatical and spelling errors.	Writing style is scholarly, precise, and flows naturally; voice is active and devoid of bias; no grammatical or spelling errors.
Quality of Oral Communication	Disorganized and low-quality presentation; poor communication skills; answers show lack of knowledge and poor critical thinking skills.	Adequately organized presentation; good communication skills; answers show adequate knowledge and critical thinking skills.	Highly engaging conference quality presentation; excellent communication skills; answers show expertise and well-developed critical thinking.