The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Biomedical Informatics
PhD Qualifying Exam Research Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Student name: _________________________  Date of Presentation: ______________  Chair: ___________________
Evaluator: ____________________________

The domains below will be evaluated for the written abstract dissertation research proposal and the proposal presentation. Please circle the items that most closely describe the skills demonstrated by the student. Circle the highest level of item and choose an Overall Score for each category. If there is an even split for a given category, please select the most conservative Overall Score, i.e., if two are selected in 3 and two are selected in 4, choose an Overall Score of 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor (1)</th>
<th>Fair (2)</th>
<th>Good (3)</th>
<th>Outstanding (4)</th>
<th>Overall Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>• Limited breadth and depth of understanding of the area of study</td>
<td>• Sufficient breadth or depth (but not both) of the subject</td>
<td>• Sufficient breadth and depth of understanding</td>
<td>• Solid breadth and depth of knowledge</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Information used from only 2-3 sources and not integrated</td>
<td>• Information used from 5-10 sources and not integrated</td>
<td>• Information from multiple (more than 10) sources used, but not integrated</td>
<td>• Able to integrate information from multiple sources</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not evaluate background literature</td>
<td>• With some help, could synthesize and evaluate background literature</td>
<td>• Could identify and discuss key background for the study</td>
<td>• Able to describe, discuss, critically evaluate relevant background information</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not understand implications of existing research</td>
<td>• Limited understanding of implications of existing research</td>
<td>• Some attempts at discussing implications of most important research findings</td>
<td>• Could draw clear conclusions from and discuss implications of most important research findings</td>
<td>□ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>• Research questions are unfocused</td>
<td>• Able to formulate purposeful research questions, but has difficulty explaining rationale</td>
<td>• Research questions are well-stated with adequate rationale</td>
<td>• Very significant and novel hypotheses</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No hypothesis is provided</td>
<td>• Hypotheses are imprecise/poorly stated</td>
<td>• Hypotheses are well-stated with adequate rationale</td>
<td>• Very significant and novel research questions</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No rationale is provided</td>
<td>• Significance of hypotheses is unclear</td>
<td>• Significance of hypotheses and research questions is clear and well stated</td>
<td>• Strong, clear rationale/justification for hypotheses/research questions</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### PhD Qualifying Exam Research Proposal Evaluation Rubric

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| **Research Design and Data Analysis Plan** | - Does not describe research design to test the hypotheses  
- Does not identify appropriate data analysis plan  
- Does not identify limitations and assumptions in the research design  
- Unaware of alternative approaches | - Research design is explained, but lacks theoretical support  
- Rationale for selected data analysis is not well established  
- Awareness of some weaknesses in research design  
- Some awareness of alternative approaches | - Research design is supported with theory and is adequate to address the hypothesis  
- Planned data analysis methods are generally sufficient to address the hypotheses but need some modification  
- Could identify strengths and weaknesses of research design and planned data analysis  
- Demonstrates understanding of alternative approaches | - Able to identify and logically discuss strengths and weaknesses of research design  
- Planned data analysis is well-described and highly sufficient to address the hypotheses  
- Understands the theory and practice of planned data analysis  
- Appropriately compared and discussed alternative research approaches |
| **Communication** | - Abstract did not follow standard format  
- Grammatical errors and misspellings  
- Arguments are incomplete or poorly organized  
- Did not understand/ address the questions asked  
- Poor oral communication skills | - Sub-standard writing resulting in lack of clarity  
- No grammatical errors or misspellings  
- Some portion of the arguments are logical and organized  
- Understood most of the questions but provided only partial answers  
- Oral presentation was clear, but student had to read the slides most of the time | - Abstract was largely well written  
- Some discontinuities during the oral presentation  
- Arguments are logical and organized  
- Understood questions and provided adequate answers;  
- Could be readily understood | - Abstract was clearly written in the appropriate format  
- Poised and polished in the oral presentation  
- Arguments are articulated and well organized  
- Understood the questions and provided clear, thorough answers  
- Engaged the committee and other audience in a collegial discussion |

**Additional comments:**
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
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