**Graduate Student Assessment Report – Department of Dairy Science**

***Introduction:***

As part of ongoing and evolving university assessment requirements for graduate students, we will begin use of the attached rubric to evaluate the progress of our graduate MS and Ph.D. students. This evaluation is completed at the following *milestones* for each student.

1. Routine advisory committee meeting
2. Annual meeting of the student with advisory committee.
3. Presentation of the thesis or dissertation proposal to the advisory committee
4. Preliminary Exam (Ph.D.) students
5. Final Defense Examination

***For this assessment, you can print page 2 for the major professor to complete at the time of the each of these milestone events OR you can download an electronic version which includes only the form to be completed.***

Subsequent pages provide some examples to illustrate examples of actions/activities that would justify rankings of Exceptional, Strong, Marginal, or Unacceptable for each of the five assessment criteria

The major professor will gather, summarize, and tabulate evaluation results from each of the committee members and submit the completed summary to either the Graduate Program Director, Mike Akers (2130 Litton Reaves Hall, [rma@vt.edu](mailto:rma@vt.edu)) or Ms. Becky Michael (2770 Litton Reaves Hall, [rlmichael@vt.edu](mailto:rlmichael@vt.edu)). See the following page.

**Student Name (Last name, First Name):**

**Date:**

**Major Professor:**

**Circle One:** Master of Science Doctor of Philosophy

**Check One:** \_\_\_\_ Routine Committee Meeting

\_\_\_\_\_ Annual Meeting w Advisory Committee

\_\_\_\_ Presentation of Proposal to Advisory Committee

\_\_\_\_ Preliminary Exam (Ph.D. only)

\_\_\_\_ Final Defense

**Scoring**: 1 = Unacceptable; 2 = Marginal; 3 = Strong; 4 = Exceptional; NA = not applicable

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| **Assessment Criteria** | **Score** |
| 1. Evaluation & synthesis of relevant literature |  |
| 1. Understanding experimental design related to proposed study |  |
| 1. Effective data collection and analysis of results |  |
| 1. Demonstrates effective oral communication |  |
| 1. Demonstrates effective written communication |  |

**Comments:**

**Scoring Guidelines and Examples**

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| **Assessment Criteria** | **Exceptional (4)** | **Strong (3)** | **Marginal (2)** | **Unacceptable (1)** |
| (1) Evaluation & synthesis of relevant literature | Demonstrates a thorough understanding of current literature and uses multiple, appropriate sources. | Relates and understands current literature. Good scope of information across the discipline. | Aware of current literature and selects appropriate materials but limited in scope. | Knowledge demonstrated not well related to current literature, limited and/or questionable sources of information. |
|  | Synthesizes information to define clear objectives, recognize bias, and pit falls. | Uses some criteria i.e. relevance to the primary question, potential bias to select and judge literature. | Use minimal criterial i.e. lack of direct relevance to the research question. | Does not use apparent criteria to select or evaluate the literature described. |
|  | Superior discussion, accurate, engaging with summaries and conclusions based on fact and logic. | Discussion is sufficient with few errors but weaker foundation and review of literature. | Some major ideas and concepts inaccurately described; conclusion not entirely supported. | Limited discussion of concepts and ideas. Demonstrates a poor grasp of the materials. Conclusions not well supported by presented literature. |

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| **Assessment Criteria** | **Exceptional (4)** | **Strong (3)** | **Marginal (2)** | **Unacceptable (1)** |
| (2) Understanding experimental design related to proposed study | Research questions and study purposes are clearly stated. Evidence of novel thinking supported by the literature cited. | The primary problem or question is clearly defined and solid within the context of the cited literature. | Problem or purpose defined with some evidence of new and innovative ideas mostly supported by the cited literature. | Problem or purpose is not clear and there is a lack of new ideas or apparent creativity. Seems mostly a duplication of prior work |
| Experimental design is appropriate and approaches for statistical evaluation clearly and accurately described. | The design and approach for statistical analysis are fundamentally correct with few adjustments needed. | Design and proposed methodology mostly accurate and appropriate. | Design and experimental approach are not suitable and/or not clearly presented. |
| Strong evidence of originality and imagination. | Some evidence of originality and imagination. | Limited imagination or originality in the research proposed. | No evidence of originality in thought or design. |

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| **Assessment Criteria** | **Exceptional (4)** | **Strong (3)** | **Marginal (2)** | **Unacceptable (1)** |
| (3) Effective data collection and analysis of results | Interpretation and analysis are appropriate, correct methodology strengths and weaknesses, assumptions recognized. | Interpretation and analysis are mostly appropriate and correct but some weaknesses are unrecognized. | Data interpretation is appropriate but somewhat limited. No discussion of assumptions or limitations. | Data interpretation is incorrect or methodology used was inappropriate. |
| Demonstrates the critical evaluation of the results, framed in the context of existing literature. | Articulates responses relevant to the literature, suitable design and data review. | Provides little discussion and fails to explain how the findings integrate with the existing literature. | No real discussion of project findings and relationship with the hypothesis tested. |
| Superior grasp of the material. Conclusions and summary reasoned and clearly supported by the data. | Displays a satisfactory grasp of the material. Conclusions generally supported by the data. | Conclusion and summary not well supported by the findings. | Conclusion and summary not supported by presented findings. |

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| **Assessment Criteria** | **Exceptional (4)** | **Strong (3)** | **Marginal (2)** | **Unacceptable (1)** |
| (4) Demonstrates effective oral communication | Superb presentation skills that defend objectives and hypotheses. Ideas and/or data provided in a clear, insightful well-organized, rational and logical manner. | Good presentation skills, hypothesis testing clear objectives stated but somewhat unclear. Presentation seems rehearsed i.e. less spontaneous. | Demonstrates a need for more reflection and better-developed organization, logic, and flow of concepts and ideas. | Additional necessary to better define key ideas and concepts. Presentation difficult to follow, lack of necessary organization. |
| Responses to questions are thoughtful and well-reasoned. | Response to questions adequate but some hesitation. | Responses to questions, halting with limited confidence. | Response to questions incorrect or not understood. |
| Excellent general presentation skills i.e. voice, eye contact, lack of distracting mannerisms, high quality visuals. | Generally good presentation skills with a few minor flaws. | Presentation skills are rudimentary but demonstrate ongoing success but a need for practice and training. | Poor presentation skills – voice, mannerisms, visuals as well as lack of organization. |

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| **Assessment Criteria** | **Exceptional (4)** | **Strong (3)** | **Marginal (2)** | **Unacceptable (1)** |
| (5) Demonstrates effective written communication | Document written with great clarity and organization. | Document generally well written with only a few minor flaws. | Document has some organizational and clarity flaws but is mostly acceptable with editing. | Document is very poorly organized and difficult to follow. |
| Word choice, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling and grammar are excellent. | Some relatively minor errors with sentence structure, punctuation and grammar. | Word choice is often problematic. Problems with sentence structure and grammar are common. Substantial editing required. | Many sentences are poorly constructed. Meaning is difficult ascertain. Grammar and word choice issues are very common. |
| The narrative is very logical, easy to follow, coherent and a pleasure to read. | The narrative is logically prepared but there are periodic flaws. | The narrative is convoluted and sometimes illogical and difficult to read. | The narrative is poorly prepared, illogical, and so filled with flaws it is painful to read. |