

STUDENT:
ADVISOR:

DATE:

Public Policy Dissertation Proposal Defense Rubric

Table 3: Rubric for Dissertation Proposal Defense

	Unacceptable (1)	Proficient (2)	Distinguished (3)	SCORE
Statement of problem	No evidence provided to support the significance of the proposed study. The problem/project is not relevant to the field of Public Policy broadly defined. A description of the approach for investigating the problem is not provided, is unsound, or is incomplete.	The proposed study is relevant to the field of Public Policy. The proposed evidence is likely to provide support for the significance of the problem. The proposed approach for investigating the problem is appropriate.	The proposed study has a strong theoretical basis and the findings can be generalized to other populations. The proposed research plan is likely to produce abundant and compelling evidence to support the significance of the study for the field of Public Policy. The proposed work has the potential to make a significant contribution to the field.	
Review of the literature	The material reviewed is not relevant to the goals/focus of the proposed study. The material reviewed is out of date, omits seminal work, or is insufficient. The quality of the material reviewed is marginal or not appropriate for scientific research.	The proposal is well organized, integrates findings from many sources. The review is thoughtful and provides clarification of the proposed area of study and supports the chosen methodology. Articles cited are relevant, timely, and/or seminal.	Extensive review that includes summaries, synthesis, and critiques of rigorous evidence-based sources. The review provides strong support for the aims of the proposed project and the research design and methodology selected.	
Theory	The proposal does not adequately articulate a explanatory theory to motivate stated hypotheses or descriptive aims of the dissertation.	The proposal articulates either a novel or existing theory that includes some discussion of assumptions and causal processes that logically leads to a set of testable hypotheses or descriptive aims.	The paper develops novel theory to advance the field of public policy or extends an existing theory in novel ways. Includes discussion of assumptions and causal processes that logically generate testable hypotheses or motivate descriptive aims.	
Methodology	Significant aspects of the design and methodology are inappropriate for the problem/hypotheses under study.	Appropriate development of new methodology or application of existing methodology for the problem/ hypotheses under study	Study design and proposed methodology are appropriate and represent the quality necessary for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Has completed Human Subjects forms if needed.	

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Quality of writing	Examples include the following types of errors Did not adhere to style requirements of student's discipline of emphasis. Numerous errors in spelling, typing, grammar and format. The writing is poorly organized and lacks clarity. Writing is not of the expected professional quality. Citations not used appropriately with numerous errors.	Few or minor errors in style requirements. Minimal errors in spelling, typing, grammar, and format. Some organizational and clarity errors but they do not detract from the ability to accurately convey ideas. Citations used appropriately with few errors.	Very few or no apparent errors in style requirements. Very few to no apparent errors in spelling, typing, grammar and format. Well-organized, clearly and accurately conveys ideas. The writing is of professional quality. Citations used appropriately with very few to no errors.	
Oral Component	The presentation had significant errors or omissions. Responses to questions were inappropriate or demonstrated lack of understanding of the literature and study findings. The presentation did not follow a logical sequence. The presentation was not well-paced. The presenter did not demonstrate confidence and/or ability to engage the audience.	The presentation had few errors or omissions. Responses to questions were appropriate or demonstrated a good understanding of the literature and study findings. The presentation followed a logical sequence. The presentation was well-paced. The presenter demonstrated confidence and/or ability to engage the audience.	The presentation was accurate and comprehensive. Responses to questions were appropriate or demonstrated an in- depth understanding of the literature and study findings. The presentation followed a logical sequence. The presentation was well-paced and of professional quality. The presenter demonstrated excellence in the ability to engage an audience.	
Addressing Limitations of Proposal	Stated limitations of the proposed study are inaccurate or insufficient. Student fails to recognize key barriers to study and/or is unresponsive to feedback during proposal defense.	Stated limitations of the proposed study are appropriate. Student is aware of potential barriers and responsive to feedback and suggestions from committee	Stated limitations of the proposed study are clear and well thought out with strategies to address barriers. Student is highly responsive to feedback and engages in collaborative problem solving with committee.	
			TOTAL	
			AVERAGE	