

Evaluation Rubric for **Thesis and Thesis Defense for MS** in the  
Animal and Dairy Sciences Graduate Programs,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Name of the Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Examination \_\_\_\_\_

**The mentor fills in the committee's assessment of the student's performance on this exam under the criteria listed below and sends the completed form to the student and to the Graduate Program Manager.**

<b>Assessment Criteria (circle one)</b>	<b>Does not meet Expectations</b>		<b>Meets Expectations</b>		<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>	
<u>Research Problem</u> : Clearly states the research problem in the context of the literature in the area of study. Provides a strong justification for undertaking the research and effectively articulates the potential impact of proposed research.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Literature</u> : Demonstrates critical thinking and the ability to synthesize relevant literature and define the knowledge gaps in the field of study. Clearly articulates how the students' research will address this knowledge gap and advances the field.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Hypothesis</u> : Clearly states the hypotheses that are based on scientific literature and/or preliminary findings.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Research Methods/Strategy</u> : Applies robust research methods/tools to test the hypotheses and find solution(s) to the defined research problem. Provides clear explanation of methodological choices and discusses the potential pitfalls of the chosen methods.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Data Analysis and Interpretation</u> : Data analysis is rigorous, objective, and thorough and applies appropriate statistical tools. Makes valid and nuanced interpretation of data within the constraints of experimental caveats.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Conclusions</u> : Provides insightful discussion of conclusions in the context of literature to draw connections or point to disagreements with published work. Provides a compelling argument pertaining to the importance of the findings in closing the knowledge gap in literature (originally identified).	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Oral Communication</u> : Communicates research plan with clarity and professionalism orally.	1	2	3	4	5	6

<u>Written Communication</u> : Communicates research plan with clarity and professionalism in writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Overall Evaluation (circle one)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

**Overall Strengths** (if needed, please add additional sheet for comments)

**Areas for Growth** (if needed, please add additional sheet for comments)

**Outcome of Dissertation Defense** (circle one) Passed / Failed / Deferred

**Faculty Advisor Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_