

Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Neuroscience

Annual Advisory Committee Meeting Evaluation Form

Student Name _____

Meeting Date _____

The following items were discussed at this meeting:

On a scale of 1 to 5 please rate how this student is progressing in each of the five categories, with 1 being Insufficient and 5 being Excellent. Refer to the attached rubric for assessment criteria. The committee members should discuss each criteria separately and the chair documents the committee's rating.

Insufficient

Good

Excellent

Mastery of Fundamental Concepts

1

2

3

4

5

Interpreting and Applying Scientific Literature

1

2

3

4

5

Developing Hypotheses

1

2

3

4

5

Experimental Design and Execution

1

2

3

4

5

Oral Presentation Skills

1

2

3

4

5

Specific comments and recommendations:

Committee Chair

Student

Committee Member

Acknowledged:

Committee Member

Committee Member

Graduate Advisor

Rubric for Assessing Categories

Mastery of Fundamental Concepts: By the time the student has their first committee meeting they should have already completed the core coursework in neuroscience, Principles of Neuroscience I & II, and have received additional training and experience through elective courses, journal clubs, lab meetings and seminar attendances. For beginning students, competency of fundamental concepts should be assessed from the students presentation of their research interests and goals and if necessary from additional questions presented by the committee members. For beginning students, a score of 3 or more indicates that the committee has confidence in the student's mastery of fundamental concepts taught in the core course. As students advance and their exposure to the literature increases these scores are expected to increase reflecting mastery of literature specific to their course of study.

Interpreting and Applying Scientific Literature: Beginning students should at minimum show evidence that they have surveyed the literature, are able to define the current state of their chosen field, and can identify recent publications that will guide and influence their research. This level of competence would be rated a 3. As students progress and develop more focused research proposals, a broader and deeper knowledge of the literature is expected to warrant higher ratings. During annual evaluation meetings committee members should challenge the students ability to accurately reference relevant literature during their presentations and in response to specific questions.

Developing Hypotheses: A central component of the training program is to teach students the inherent importance of hypothesis-driven research. Students will be expected to identify key questions in their field, develop a testable hypothesis to address the question(s), and present a cogent rationale based on their interpretation of the literature. Beginning students should demonstrate that they are at least thinking about their research in the context of hypothesis testing to receive a rating of 3. As students advance in their research, evidence of experience developing and defending testable hypotheses should be apparent in their presentation. Additional questioning by the committee may be appropriate to help clarify the students skill level before assigning the rating.

Experimental Design and Execution: Beginning students should be evaluated based on their ability to identify the tools and techniques that they will need to pursue their research interests. A rating of 3 or better would indicate that the student has demonstrated a basic knowledge of experimental design and research planning. As students progress, they should demonstrate greater levels of competency in this area and direct evidence of having completed experiments. Note: a student may display sufficient knowledge of experimental design and execution to complete their research and graduate without necessarily being rated "excellent" in this skill.

Communication: The committee is asked to evaluate the student's ability to communicate their research ideas and finding, verbally and written. A rating of 3 or better indicates that the student is making satisfactory progress towards becoming an effective writer/speaker. These scores are expected to improve with experience during the course of training: students do not need to be rated "excellent" to graduate, and critical feedback even in later stages of the degree program may help the students advance their careers.