

BIOINFORMATICS & SYSTEMS BIOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM
2nd YEAR QUALIFYING EXAM EVALUATION FORM — PAGE 1 of 2

Please fill this out as a PDF (in Acrobat, Preview, Firefox, Chrome, ...) and circulate among committee members. Avoid software such as Goodnotes that changes the format and removes the ability for others to fill it out as a PDF. Please email the completed form to bioinfo@ucsd.edu.

Student name:

Proposal title:

Oral exam date & time:

Please check your decision and sign next to your name

Approval	Disapproval	Committee Member (printed)	Member's Signature
		(Chair)	<div></div>
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Instructions: The second-year qualifying examination is designed to examine the student's ability to think critically, analytically, and independently, and to apply the skills acquired in classes to a real research project. The subject of the exam is the student's current research project, but the focus is the student's critical analytical ability and command of relevant methods and subjects. In this vein, committee members may ask general questions that, while originally prompted by the student's proposal, are intended to test the student's depth of knowledge in significant areas of bioinformatics or systems biology.

The exam consists of two components: a ten page written proposal and an oral exam. Both written and oral formats should have the following sections, in line with NIH proposals (page counts are for the written proposal, and will differ for oral presentation slides):

- **Specific Aims:** A one page description of specific objectives of the project.
- **Significance and Preliminary Data:** The report must clearly articulate the significance of the proposed activity, and describe preliminary work that illustrates the promise of the approach. We expect this part to be the bulk of the proposal (5–7 pages).
- **Approach:** A 2–3 page description of what the student proposes to do to extend the preliminary results and to achieve the specific aims.
- **References:** In addition, the proposal should cite, and provide references to, related work in the area. The bibliography is not included in the ten page limit.

The second component is the oral exam, where the student defends their proposal. Again, we expect the student to spend the bulk of the time describing their preliminary data.

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Student:

Date:

Score the student's performance in each aspect, using this scale:

Excellent, Above Average, Average, Below Average, Poor, Unable to Judge

Evaluate the Student's Proposal:

Originality (or close to advisor's record)

Familiarity with scientific literature

Ability to phrase question

Ability to design experiments / analysis

Consideration of alternatives

Organization, clarity of written proposal

Organization of oral presentation

Evaluate the Student's Skills:

Critical thinking / scientific judgment

Competence in statistics

Algorithmic skills

Understanding of data / databases

Understanding experimental approaches

If your comments exceed the space below, please share additional feedback in a separate document, or in the body of your email when you send this form to the coordinator.

Please comment on the **strengths** of the student's overall performance:

Please comment on the **weaknesses** of the student's overall performance:

Does the Committee have **any concerns** about the student or the suitability of the thesis advisor?