<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Very Deficient</th>
<th>Somewhat Deficient</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Thesis completed in timely manner</td>
<td>• Completed after 5 years</td>
<td>• Completed after 3rd or 4th year</td>
<td>• Completed within 3 years</td>
<td>• Completed within 2.5 years of beginning of program</td>
<td>• Completed within 24 months of beginning of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Contribution to field of study</td>
<td>• Difficult to find originality • Thesis is more aligned with a BS project rather than MS project</td>
<td>• Little originality • Mostly pedantic</td>
<td>• Demonstrates some originality • Some limited contributions.</td>
<td>• Original and creative • At least one important contribution for an MS thesis</td>
<td>• Original and creative • Several important contributions for an MS thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Knowledge of Field of study</td>
<td>• Insufficient knowledge of literature relevant to area of research.</td>
<td>• Familiar with and/or has cited some key literature, but clearly needs to read more</td>
<td>• Familiar with and/or has cited most key literature relevant to area of research</td>
<td>• Thesis demonstrates a thorough review of the key literature relevant to area of research</td>
<td>• thesis demonstrates a thorough review of key literature relevant to area of research • demonstration or awareness of literature beyond immediate area of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Methodology</td>
<td>• methods were inadequate in meeting objective of study • Unaware of suitable methods or technologies</td>
<td>• methods may be adequate but not as executed • Vaguely aware of suitable methods or technologies</td>
<td>• methods were adequate for meeting objective of study • Demonstrates awareness or skill in suitable methods or technologies</td>
<td>• methods are current and accepted technologies for meeting objective of study • Demonstrates awareness of current methods and technologies • Evidence of specialized skill in methods and technologies for collection or analysis of data</td>
<td>• Demonstrates creative development or execution of methods or technologies in meeting objective of study • Demonstrates knowledge of modern and emerging technologies in the field • Highly skilled in applying modern methods and technologies for collection or analysis of data</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **5. Quality of Writing**       | • Requires major revisions.  
• Sentence structure, language, and style are deficient.  
• Student should seek writing assistance | • Writing needs some improvement  
• Numerous typos and grammatical errors  
• Somewhat difficult to follow in areas | • Acceptable writing (25th to 75th percentile)  
• Some minor editorial changes required (grammatical and spelling) | • Very well written  
• Easy to understand  
• Minimal editorial changes required | • Writing quality is consistent with that found in high profile scientific publications |
| **6. Presentation**             | • Unorganized  
• Lack of flow in logic  
• Unable to answer many questions  
• Bluffed answers to questions rather than admitting not knowing the answer  
• Slides/handouts poor quality | • Presentation requires some reorganization  
• Some rambling, too much time spent on less important aspects  
• Some slides/handouts not clear  
• Distracting typos and errors  
• Difficulty answering with some questions | • Slides/handouts clear  
• Presentation skills good  
• Most questions answered competently | • Professional presentation  
• Nearly all questions answered knowledgably and respectively | • Well organized and professional  
• Slides/handouts outstanding  
• All questions answered knowledgably and respectively |
| **7. Quality of Thesis**        | • Not acceptable  
• Work is not publishable in a peer-reviewed publication | • Deficient in many areas  
• Proposed research may be difficult to publish  
• Mostly likely published in a refereed conference proceeding | • Within 25th to 75th percentile of theses  
• Should be able to publish a paper in a recognized journal | • Among 10th to 25th percentile of theses  
• At least one significant publication in a high quality peer reviewed journal will result | • Among top 10% of theses  
• At least one significant publication in one of the top journals in the field or multiple significant publications in high quality journals will result |
| **8. Post-graduation prospects**| • Student should consider a career outside of biology | • Student should seek employment in a non-research oriented career in field | • Likely to have successful career in field with MS | • Likely to be in the top 25% of applicants for jobs/positions in research and applied biological sciences | • Likely to be in the top 10% of applicants for jobs/positions in research and applied biological sciences |