

Research Thesis Scoring Tool

IRA Standards (2003) addressed: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 5.4 ISTE Standards addressed: TF-I.B1; TF-III.A2; TF -VIII .D1

Thesis Evaluation

Each section of the thesis, as well as the verbal defense presentation, will be scored as follows:

3.9-4.0 = Distinguished

3.0-3.89 = Proficient

2.0-2.99 = Developing

1.0-1.99 = Unsatisfactory

Each element will be scored with a whole number score between 1.00 and 4.00 or an incremental score as follows:

.00	Clearly demonstrates current level of performance
.25	Slightly above current level of performance
.50	Approaching the next level of performance
.75	Nearly reached the next level of performance

Thesis Section Weights (section weights will be calculated during the defense meeting and averaged across readers)

Abstract _____ x .05 = _____

Introduction _____ x .10 = _____

Literature Review _____ x .25 = _____

Methodology _____ x .15 = _____

Results _____ x .20 = _____

Conclusions _____ x .20 = _____

References/Style _____ x .05 = _____

TOTAL _____

The verbal defense score is separate, distinct and not weighted.

For your thesis to be approved, you must score at least 3 in each category of the rubric.

Component	4 Distinguished	3 Proficient	2 Developing	1 Unsatisfactory
Abstract (.05)	Clearly and succinctly states the purpose, describes sample, summarizes methodology and major findings in the appropriate academic discourse. Abstract is an appropriate length.	Is sufficient but incomplete in stating the purpose, describing sample, summarizing methodology and major findings. Abstract is an appropriate length.	Addresses some, but not all of the following: states purpose, describes sample, summarizes methodology and major findings. Abstract length is inappropriate.	Fails to clearly or convincingly state the purpose, describe sample, summarize methodology and major findings. Or Abstract is missing.
Introduction (.10)	Clearly and succinctly states, in the appropriate academic discourse, the problem/issue, rationale, research question and the significance of the study. Uses prior knowledge to identify a question to be studied and a clearly stated hypothesis to test. Identifies complexities and nuances in the question.	Is sufficient but incomplete in stating the problem/issue, rationale, research question and the significance of the study. Draws under-developed connections to prior knowledge to identify a question to be studied and a hypothesis to be tested. Has not identified all the complexities and nuances inherent in the question.	Addresses some, but not all of the following: states the problem/issue, rationale, research question and the significance of the study. Has identified an appropriate topic to be studied, but does not build on prior knowledge to identify a question to be studied and a clearly stated hypothesis to test. Organized as a catalogue of information about the topic rather than building toward a clear argument.	Fails to clearly or convincingly state the problem/issue, rationale, research question and the significance of the study. Topic is unclear or imprecise. Question identified is too broad or vague. Hypothesis is unclear or not testable. Connections to prior knowledge are unsubstantiated.
Literature Review (.25)	Clearly and succinctly synthesizes relevant research on the topic using appropriate sources, details the parameters of the search, and defines key terms in the appropriate academic discourse. Impressive depth of insight/analysis. All information is factually correct. The author consistently and accurately follows APA guidelines.	Is sufficient but incomplete in clearly and succinctly synthesizing relevant research on the topic using appropriate sources, detailing the parameters of the search, and defining key terms. Adequate depth of insight/analysis. Most information is factually correct. The author consistently and accurately follows APA guidelines.	Addresses some, but not all of the following: clearly and succinctly synthesizes relevant research on the topic, details the parameters of the search, and defines key terms. Uses some appropriate sources. Little insight/analysis; that which is provided is conventional or underdeveloped. Discussion omits important aspects of the problem and contains factual inaccuracies. The author inconsistently and/or inaccurately follows APA guidelines.	Fails to clearly or convincingly synthesize relevant research on the topic, detail the parameters of the search, and define key terms. Inadequate or improper use of sources. Significant elements of the discussion are lacking. Lack of insight/analysis. Many factual errors or inconsistencies. The author inconsistently and/or inaccurately follows APA guidelines.
Methodology (.15)	Clearly and succinctly describes types of methodology used, characteristics of the participants and context, sampling procedures, methods of inquiry, data collection processes, data analysis processes and limitations in the appropriate academic discourse. Research design uses appropriate and ethical methodology, identifies relevant constraints, and addresses possible criticisms. Flaws are not readily apparent.	Is sufficient but incomplete in clearly and succinctly describing types of methodology used, characteristics of the participants and context, sampling procedures, methods of inquiry, data collection processes, data analysis processes and limitations. Research design methodology is sufficient, but lacks sophistication. Consideration of constraints and criticisms is incomplete. Flaws are excusable due to practical constraints.	Addresses some, but not all of the following: types of methodology used, characteristics of the participants and context, sampling procedures, methods of inquiry, data collection processes, data analysis processes and limitations. Research design methodology is insufficient. Constraints and criticisms are not properly addressed. Flaws are obvious and remediable.	Fails to clearly or convincingly describe types of methodology used, characteristics of the participants and context, sampling procedures, methods of inquiry, data collection processes, data analysis processes and limitations. Research design will not answer the question, does not use other inappropriate methodology. Designed without sufficient care, so that the accuracy of the analysis is in doubt. Ethical issues are ignored. Does not recognize or address the limits or implications of the method to be employed.

Results (.20)	Clearly and succinctly states results, substantiated by collected evidence, in the appropriate academic discourse. Relevant tables and/or figures are used accurately.	Is sufficient but incomplete in clearly and succinctly stating results, substantiated by collected evidence. Relevant tables and/or figures are used accurately.	Addresses some, but not all of the following: Clearly and succinctly states results, substantiated by collected evidence. Tables and/or figures are used inaccurately.	Fails to clearly or convincingly state results, substantiated by collected evidence. Tables and/or figures are lacking or used inaccurately.
Conclusions (.20)	Draws insightful conclusions from the results and clearly and succinctly presents insightful implications. Includes statements that are substantiated by collected evidence. Makes relevant recommendations for research or practice, in the appropriate academic discourse.	Is sufficient but incomplete in drawing insightful conclusions from the results and presenting insightful implications. Statements not always substantiated by collected evidence. Recommendations for research or practice were incomplete.	Addresses some, but not all of the following: Draws insightful conclusions from the results and clearly and succinctly presents insightful implications. Statements are not well substantiated by collected evidence. Recommendations for research or practice were inappropriate or inaccurate.	Fails to draw insightful conclusions from the results or present insightful implications. Statements are not substantiated by collected evidence. Recommendations for research or practice were lacking, inappropriate or inaccurate.
References and Style (.05)	Complete and accurate, following APA guidelines. Overall, the thesis uses a professional writing style and completely follows the specifications of the assignment. The title page and all relevant citations accurately follow APA Guidelines.	Complete and accurate, following APA guidelines, with fewer excusable errors. Overall, the thesis uses an acceptable writing style and adheres to the specifications of the assignment. The title page and all relevant citations accurately follow APA Guidelines.	Is incomplete or inaccurate. Does not consistently follow APA guidelines. Overall, the thesis inconsistently uses an appropriate writing style and does not follow all specifications of the assignment. The title page and all relevant citations accurately follow APA Guidelines (with fewer excusable errors).	Is lacking, incomplete or inaccurate. Does not follow APA guidelines. Overall, the thesis uses an inappropriate writing style and does not follow the specifications of the assignment. The title page and relevant citations fail to adhere to APA Guidelines.
Verbal Defense	Verbal presentation is well organized, professional, and demonstrates excellent communication skills. Presentation reveals exceptional depth of subject knowledge, critical thinking skills, and an ability to interconnect and extend knowledge from multiple sources and perspectives. Responses to questions and critiques are eloquent; arguments are skillfully presented. Slides and visuals are very clear and enhance the verbal presentation.	Verbal presentation is organized, clear, and demonstrates good communication skills. Presentation reveals some depth of subject knowledge, some critical thinking skills, and an ability to draw knowledge from multiple sources and perspectives. Responses to questions and critiques are complete; arguments are well organized. Slides and visuals are clear and help guide the verbal presentation.	Verbal presentation meets some, but not all of the expectations for a graduate-level presentation: Organization, clarity, and communication skills are demonstrated, but could improve. Presentation educates on the subject matter, but does not reveal depth of insight, critical thinking, or extend the knowledge researched. Responses to questions and critiques are given, but are not thoughtful or lack clarity; arguments are lacking. Slides and visuals are clear, but do not add to the presentation.	Verbal presentation is poorly organized, unclear, and poorly communicated. Presentation reveals critical weaknesses in depth of subject knowledge, lacks critical thinking insight, and is narrow in scope. Responses to questions and critiques are incomplete or require prompting; arguments are poorly presented. Slides and visuals are unclear and difficult to read or understand.