ECE-Department Rubrics for Oral Examinations – Version 1.1

These Rubrics are to serve as a guide for PhD Student Oral Examinations, including the PhD Oral Qualifying Exam, Annual Review, and Final Defense. Scoring should be between 1 – 4, with 4 being Exceptional, and 1 being Unsatisfactory. Each committee member should provide an independent score. The average score of all committee members is to be entered on the PhD student checklist.

	Excellent 4	Good 3	Satisfactory 2	Unsatisfactory 1
Quality of Writing	Publication quality writing that is written in clear idiomatic English. Clearly states objectives, motivation & background (properly referenced). Concisely presents ideas and concepts. Excellent validation of work. Draws clear conclusions. Engages the reader.	Written in good idiomatic English. States objectives. Provides motivation & background (with references). Clearly presents ideas and concepts. Validates work. Draws clear conclusions.	Written in understandable English. States objectives. Provides motivation & background (with references). Presents ideas and concepts. Validates work. Draws conclusions.	Written in poor English. Objectives are not clear. Inadequate background or Motivation. Inadequate presentation of ideas and concepts.
Quality of Oral Pre-sentation	Clear, coherent, and motivational oral presentation. Good eye contact. Understands the audience. Well prepared and organized slides. Clearly states objectives. Clearly demonstrates objectives & draws conclusions. Excellent use of visual aids.	Good and coherent oral presentation. Good eye contact. Understands the audience. Well prepared presentation. Clearly states objectives. Demonstrates objectives and draws conclusions. Good use of visual aids.	Mostly coherent oral presentation. Fairly well prepared and organized slides. Sates objectives. Demonstrates objectives and draws conclusions. Good use of visual aids.	Poor oral presentation. Disorganized presentation. Objectives are unclear. Conclusions are weak.
Quality of Research	Well defined thesis. Excellent understanding of the context of the thesis topic and existing methods. Excellent development of evidence with data and analysis to prove or validate thesis. Discussion of critical assumptions, contrary findings and alternative interpretations. Draws conclusions that supports thesis and discusses implications	Well defined thesis. Very Good understanding of the thesis topic and existing methods. Good development of evidence with data and analysis to prove or validate thesis. Discussion of critical assumptions. Draws conclusions that supports thesis and discusses implications	Well defined thesis. Shows understanding of the thesis topic and existing methods. Adequate development of evidence with data and analysis to prove or validate thesis. Draws conclusions that adequately supports thesis.	Weakly defined thesis. Poor understanding of the context of the thesis topic and existing methods. Inadequate arguments. Little data or analysis to prove or validate thesis. Weak conclusions. Sloppy.
Ability to Field Technical Questions	Clear understanding of questions and their context. Coherently and succinctly provides answers to the	Understands questions and has a satisfactory understanding of their context. Coherently provides	Mostly understands questions. Has the ability to communicate answers to a majority of questions.	Often misunderstands questions. Poor ability to communicate a clear

	understanding of audience with strong technical evidence backing response.	answers with sufficient technical evidence backing response.		answer or solution to questions.
	Excellent 4	Good 3	Satisfactory 2	UnSatisfactory 1
Level of Scholar-ship	Excellent comprehension of the technical field or area of research. Excellent understanding of state of the art methods and techniques used. Exhibits innovativeness in ideas. Exhibits an elegance of design, synthesis and execution of ideas or methods. Exhibits clear and concise structure of arguments. Provides clear theoretical and methodological perspectives.	Strong comprehension of the technical field or area of research. Good understanding of state of the art methods and techniques used. Exhibits ability to contrive new ideas. Ability to design, synthesis and execute ideas or methods. Good ability to present arguments. Provides good theoretical and methodological perspectives.	Good comprehension of the technical field or area of research. Mostly understands state of the art methods and techniques. Some ability to contrive new ideas. Some ability to design, synthesis and execute ideas or methods. Some ability to present arguments.	Shallow comprehension of the technical field or research area. Lacks innovation of ideas. Inability to design or synthesize ideas or methods.
Ability to Perform Independent Research	Has the aptitude and ability to think independently and pose creative and novel approaches to find solutions to challenging problems. Exhibits creativity in thought and intellectual depth. Excellent ability to pose strong arguments in support of their solution methodologies. Excellent ability to design new experiments and develop novel ways to build evidence supporting arguments. Excellent ability to be critical of their own arguments.	Has the ability to think indepen-dently and pose novel approaches to find solutions to existing problems. Exhibits creativity in thought. Ability to pose strong arguments in support of their solution methodologies. Good ability to design new experiments and develop ways to build evidence supporting arguments. Ability to be critical of their own arguments.	Some ability to think independently and pose approaches to find solutions to existing problems. Has some creativity in thought. Poses adequate arguments in support of their solution methodologies. Some ability to design new experiments and develop ways to build evidence supporting arguments.	Inability to independently contrive new solutions or approaches. Lacks coherence, confidence, and understanding of the theory. Presents work that is not original. Lacks ability to pose strong arguments.
Written Qualifying Exam	Answered all questions correctly. Overall the student's written exam demonstrated an excellent breadth of knowledge and depth of knowledge of the subjects covered. The student also	Answered all questions correctly (allowing for some very minor errors). Overall the student's written exam demonstrated a good breadth of knowledge and	Answered most questions correctly. Overall the student's written exam demonstrated some breadth of knowledge and	Many questions were answered incorrectly. The student lacks breadth and depth of knowledge in

	demonstrated knowledge beyond what was expected.	depth of knowledge of the subjects covered.	depth of knowledge of the subjects covered.	Electrical or Computer Engineering.