

Mexican American Studies – MAS Graduate Student Dissertation Defense Evaluation

**Revised 5/26/2021*

The attached evaluation tool (rubric) is designed to assist in the evaluation of students' ability to successfully prepare and defend their graduate research. The rubric includes seven evaluation criteria, and allows for the addition of criteria important to individual departments/programs. Evaluation of a thesis/dissertation and its defense can be an integral part of graduate student learning outcomes assessment conducted by graduate programs. It is applicable to all programs that have a thesis or dissertation requirement.

This evaluation tool will:

- Provide students, prior to their defense, with a clear understanding of the elements of their written thesis/dissertation and its defense deemed most important to the defense committee.
- Provide multiple perspectives on students' ability to successfully prepare and defend their research and engage in cogent discourse about their chosen field of study.
- Encourage conversations among departmental colleagues about improving graduate student learning outcomes and assessment.
- Serve as a potential source of program-level data on the accomplishment of the program's learning outcome objectives, for submission as part of an assessment report.

Suggested Instructions (may be modified to suit program needs):

Defense committee members and students should review and become familiar with the criteria in the evaluation tool prior to the defense. The rubric should be scored at the conclusion of the defense, or shortly thereafter, by every member of the defense committee. This cover page (page 1) can then be completed (providing a *summary of the scored ratings* below for each of the criteria in the rubric), returned to the appropriate department/program office, and maintained in a confidential departmental file following the defense (one cover page per evaluator) for use as a valuable tool in graduate student learning outcomes assessment. The remaining rubric pages (2 - 4) can be shared with the student or destroyed.

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Program: _____

Degree: ☒ Ph.D.

Date of Defense: _____

Evaluator Role:

☐ Advisor Chair

☐ External Core Committee Member

☐ External Defense Committee Member and
Defense Chair

☐ Internal Core Committee Member

☐ Other (explain): _____

Defense Score Summary by Criterion:

Assessment Criteria: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____
7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____
10. _____