**BGS Dissertation Committee Meeting Report**

Student Name: ­­­­­­­­­

Student Graduate Group: GGEB

Specify program:  **Biostatistics**  **Epidemiology**

Date of Meeting:

Semester/year started dissertation work:

Advisor:  Present

Committee Members (list each, specify chair)

(Chair)  Present

Present

Present

Present

Present

Was the mentor interviewed in the absence of the student?  Yes  No

Was the student interviewed in the absence of the mentor?  Yes  No

Rate the student’s performance in the following areas:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Excellent** | **Satisfactory** | **Some Concerns** | **Unsatisfactory** |
| **Progress since last meeting** |  |  |  |  |
| **Quality of written progress report** |  |  |  |  |
| **Oral presentation** |  |  |  |  |
| **Project design** |  |  |  |  |
| **Productivity (for stage of training)** |  |  |  |  |
| **Analytic skills** |  |  |  |  |
| **Computational skills** |  |  |  |  |
| **Data quality and accuracy** |  |  |  |  |
| **Perseverance and motivation** |  |  |  |  |
| **Independence** |  |  |  |  |
| **Ability to interpret data** |  |  |  |  |
| **Grasp of literature** |  |  |  |  |
| **Clarity of future plans** |  |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL ASSESSMENT** |  |  |  |  |

**Please explain any “some concerns” or “unsatisfactory” marks:**

**Briefly summarize the student’s project: what are the major questions and approaches?**

**Describe the progress since the last meeting.**

Is the committee satisfied with the student’s progress?  Yes  No

If not, why not? If progress has been insufficient, what steps need to be taken to rectify the problem?

**List the committee’s recommendations regarding the tasks/goals to be completed before the next meeting:**

Were the student’s lab notebooks reviewed?  Yes  No

If yes, were they satisfactory?  Yes  No

If not, please comment:

Describe the status of publications. Is it expected that a first-author paper will be submitted within the next 12 months?

Were postgraduate career plans discussed (for 4th year and later students)?  Yes  No

If not, then why not? If so, please comment:

Please summarize any other concerns below. If no concerns, write “none.”

When should the next committee meeting take place?

3-6 months

Was the student given permission to defend?  Yes  No

(Please see the instruction below about permission to defend.)

Any other comments:

RCR, SRR and IDP requirements

During the past year did the student participate in at least one RCR-focused lab meeting?    Yes    No

During the past year did the student participate in at least one SRR-focused lab meeting?    Yes     No 

Did the student complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP) inclusive of a meeting with the mentor to discuss, in the past year? Yes No 

Instructions/definitions

**Student’s presentation:** If this is not the first presentation of the current project to the Dissertation Committee, then the presentation should commence with a ***brief*** summary of what was presented previously so that most of the Committee Meeting can focus on events since the previous meeting.

**Committee chairperson:** The Chairperson’s roles are to (a) direct the flow of each dissertation committee meeting to ensure optimal value for the student, and (b) monitor the student’s progress toward graduation, ensuring that meetings are held at an appropriate frequency (at least bi-annually) and that continued advancement is made towards the completion of the research and the writing of the dissertation. If the Chairperson feels that there is an issue or problem that cannot be resolved among the mentor and the student’s committee, he or she should bring it to the attention of the Graduate Group Chair (Program Chair in the case of GGEB) immediately.

**Permission to write and defend the dissertation within the next six months:** The Graduate Group requires a dissertation that represents a definitive contribution to scientific knowledge and that demonstrates the student’s ability to perform independent research. The dissertation should contain experimental information that answers a stated question and should display a logical progression of scientific thought. Graduates should have as their goal accomplishing work resulting in two or more lead-author research publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals. At a minimum, the dissertation will include two lead-author research manuscripts which have been submitted for peer review to appropriate journals in order to grant permission to write and defend. A third lead-author manuscript is also to be included in the dissertation, but its submission to a journal is not required in order to grant permission to write nd defend. The dissertation committee has the final authority to grant permission to write and defend the dissertation. However, in cases where these standards are not met, the dissertation committee must consult with the Graduate Group Chair (or Program Chair, in CAMB or GGEB) prior to granting permission to write the dissertation. *Note that the dissertation must be defended with six months from the date of this meeting.*

## Guidelines for maintaining a laboratory notebook: Graduate groups must ensure that the laboratory notebooks of their students are maintained properly. Students are requested to bring their most recent laboratory notebook to each dissertation committee meeting. The chair of the dissertation committee will appoint a member to review the notebook. The objective is to ensure that students record their primary data in a way that will allow it to be analyzed appropriately and recovered when necessary. The objective is NOT to monitor the precise content of the notebooks, but to ensure that they are maintained in an acceptable format. There will be a great deal of variation between notebooks, but most notebooks will meet the following requirements:

Notebooks should have bound pages.

Entries should be made in ink and dated.

Inserts should be stapled onto pages when practical.

Sufficient information should be recorded so that the reader can determine the objective, design, procedure, and results of an experiment.

The origins or properties of any special reagents used should be noted.

There should be an organizational scheme (e.g. a table of contents or explicitly chronological entries) that allows others to locate key experiments.

Primary data that cannot be entered into a notebook, including digital images or data files, gels, photographs, microscope slides, animal records, etc. should be indexed in the lab notebook with the identifying file name/label and storage location clearly documented.

For the Biostatistics and Epidemiology programs (GGEB), where the majority of the research will be in electronic form, the following guidelines apply:

* Key results for each chapter, as well as the dissertation itself should be organized and presented to the dissertation committee at each meeting
* There should be an organizational scheme (e.g. table of contents describing the location of each key experiment and program)
* Any result involving mathematical notation (derivations, proofs, models) should be presented in LaTeX or other suitable equation editor, in sufficient detail that committee members can easily confirm the conclusion. Note that the lab notebook will typically include considerably more detail than a paper submitted for publication
* Reproducible research methodology should be used for all simulations and data analyses.

If parts of these requirements are not applicable to a specific project (e.g., studies generating mostly large data sets or image stacks), the dissertation committee will advise the PI and the student of the best manner to maintain experimental records. At a minimum, hard copy records must be kept that identify the unique file names and storage locations for all digital data sets.

If weaknesses are detected in notebook organization, then the student and PI should receive guidance from the dissertation committee on what improvements need to be made. It is the responsibility of the PI and the student to immediately address issues as they arise.