

Genes & Development

Written Critique of a G&D Candidacy Exam Proposal

Please provide the candidate with a brief overall evaluation of his/her written proposal. Some points that you may want to include in your summary are listed below. Not every point need be addressed with each student, and you may want to discuss other areas not listed here pertinent to the individual exam. Try to focus on those areas where the student showed real strengths or weaknesses.

1. PROJECT AIMS

- a. Was the hypothesis and/or model to be tested made clear?
- b. Were the basic approaches to be used logical choices?

2. BACKGROUND

- a. Was sufficient background given to assure you that the student has a firm grasp of the literature and reasoning behind the proposed project?
- b. If Preliminary Results were presented (not required), were they of sufficient quality to be convincing? Did they directly address the Specific Aims?

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

- a. Is the rationale for undertaking each Specific Aim or set of experiments clearly stated? Does each Specific Aim or set of experiments seem logical?
- b. Are the proposed experiments described sufficiently? Were appropriate controls included? Do you feel that the student understands the methods well enough?
- c. Are expected results stated? Were sufficient reasons given to expect these results?
- d. Are potential pitfalls and alternative approaches stated in a logical way?

4. INNOVATION

- a. Do you believe that this proposal was written by the student without plagiarism?
- b. Is this an innovative proposal? Do you think there are new ideas presented or tested, new methods or ways to use existing ones, beyond the “usual” for the student’s laboratory?