BCMB Honors Evaluation Rubrics
Approved April 8, 2022; Modified April 25, 2023

Step 4: Thesis Review

To be completed by the three members of the honors committee using the thesis rubric below.

- By 5 pm on Friday the 12th week of spring semester classes, a polished version of the honors paper must be submitted to the committee. At this time, the final paper must either partially or fully meet all criteria outlined in the thesis rubric. **The total score must be ≥ 75.**

- The thesis should be no longer than 25 pages of single-spaced text in length, excluding references and figures.

- The expectation is that the faculty mentor has reviewed the thesis before sending to the honors committee.

- Final edits to the honors paper are due to the committee by 5 pm Wednesday of exam week.

1. The author includes a descriptive title – a descriptive title reflects the "take-home" message of the paper (**2 pts**).

2. The author concisely summarizes the project by incorporating elements from all sections of the thesis in the **Abstract** section of the thesis (300-words) (**8 pts**).

Poor (0 1 2)	Average (3 4 5)	Good/Excellent (6 7 8)
Abstract is missing completely or missing elements of one or more of the following sections: introduction, methods, results, or discussion.	Abstract is present and incorporates elements from each of the following sections: introduction, methods, results, and discussion. The chosen information from each section listed above is presented in an imbalanced manner or does not emphasize a key point.	Abstract is present and incorporates elements from each of the following sections: introduction, methods, results, and discussion. An appropriate balance of each section listed above is present and the information included from each section emphasizes a key point.

3. The author identifies a hypothesis/question, contextualizes the hypothesis/question, supports it with evidence, and proposes an approach to address the hypothesis/question in the **Introduction** section of the assignment (750-1000 words) (**20 pts**).

Poor (0 1 2 3 4 5 6)	Average (7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14)	Good/Excellent (15 16 17 18 19 20)
The background information may not be appropriate and/or sufficient. The work relies heavily or exclusively on general, non-scholarly or irrelevant sources that do not support the hypothesis/question.	The background information supports the hypothesis/question at times, but sources are not always appropriate and/or sufficient.	The author uses appropriate and sufficient background information from relevant sources to support the hypothesis/question.
The work lacks a clear hypothesis/question.	The author attempts to identify a hypothesis/question, but the hypothesis/question is not a clear explanation for the phenomenon in question.	The author identifies a clear and concise hypothesis that is **explanation for the phenomenon in question**.
The author does not summarize an experimental approach to directly address the hypothesis/question.	The author presents elements of an approach to address the hypothesis/question, but the approach is incomplete and/or does not directly address the hypothesis/question.	The author summarizes an experimental approach to directly address the hypothesis/question.

4. The author provides enough information to reproduce the findings in the **Materials and Methods** section of the assignment (500 words) (**15 pts**).

Poor (0 1 2 3 4 5)	Average (6 7 8 9 10)	Good/Excellent (11 12 13 14 15)
Key information is missing or incomplete. Another scientist would not be capable of reproducing the findings.	All aspects of the experimental procedure are addressed, but at times not in enough detail for another scientist to reproduce the findings. At times, too much information is provided that is available from other citable sources.	The author provides enough information so that another scientist could successfully reproduce the findings. The author cites other sources of methods when available.

5. The author clearly states the results with reference to the figures and tables without explanation in the **Results** section of the assignment (**10 pts**).

Poor (0 1 2 3)	Average (4 5 6 7)	Good/Excellent (8 9 10)
The author does not describe the results in writing.	The author attempts to describe the results in writing, but does not do so in a thorough and/or accurate manner.	The author thoroughly and accurately describes the results in writing, references the figures/tables where appropriate, and includes statistical analysis (if appropriate).
All results are preliminary.	Data has the potential to pass peer review, but analysis/presentation requires minor adjustments.	Data would pass peer review if submitted.
	The author begins to explain the findings instead of waiting for the Discussion section.	The author refrains from explaining the findings (until the Discussion section).

6. The author presents the data in **Tables and/or Figures with Legends** at the end of the document (**10 pts**).

Poor (0 1 2 3)	Average (4 5 6 7)	Good/Excellent (8 9 10)
Figures/tables are missing altogether or contain very little data and/or inaccurate data.	The author provides figures/tables, but may be missing some data and/or include some inaccurate data.	The author provides figures/tables with complete and accurate data.
Figures/table legends are missing.	The author provides figure/table legends that are incomplete.	The author provides figure/table legends that provide a) a title, b) concise information about what was done and c) the key finding.

7. The author sustains analytical inquiry in the **Discussion** section of the assignment (2000 words) (**20 pts**).

Poor (0 1 2 3 4 5 6)	Average (7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14)	Good/Excellent (15 16 17 18 19 20)
The topic is summarized or described rather than analyzed. The author attempts analysis, but it is incomplete or inaccurate. Conclusions may not be based on or flow from evidence.	The author mostly analyzes and integrates the findings from the results section, but at times does so in an incomplete or inaccurate manner.	The author explains and integrates the findings from the results section with current knowledge in the field in a manner that advances and supports a sustained and insightful analysis.
The author does not place the findings in a broader context or does so in a manner that does not address why the work is important.	The author attempts to place the findings in a broader context, but falls short of addressing why the work is important.	The author places the findings in a broader context and addresses why this work is important.

8. The author conforms to appropriate standards for language usage throughout the assignment (**10 pts**).

Poor (0 1 2 3)	Average (4 5 6 7)	Good/Excellent (8 9 10)
Frequent problems with grammar and mechanics detract from meaning.	Overall, language use is mainly correct and effective.	Language use is uniformly correct and effective.
Vocabulary or phrasing is frequently unclear or misleading. The reader may have doubts about the author's control of vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics, etc.	At times, the author crafts sentences that are wordy, but that do not interfere with a reader's understanding of the text.	The author crafts clear and concise sentences that communicate the author's ideas precisely.
	Word choices are mainly effective. In places, the author's command of language use or language choices may falter.	Vocabulary is sophisticated and specialized, and the author demonstrates command over that vocabulary.

9. The author conforms to appropriate formats for citation of source material throughout the assignment (**5 pts**).

Poor (0 1)	Average (2 3)	Good/Excellent (4 5)
Citations may be absent, incomplete or inaccurate.	The author uses the appropriate citation style, and, for the most part, the citations conform to that citation style. Source citations may be inconsistent or incomplete, but they are enough to locate the source and avoid an accusation of plagiarism.	The author uses the appropriate citation style, and the citation style is thorough and correct, both within the text and in the citation list or bibliography.