

BIOINFORMATICS & SYSTEMS BIOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM
2nd YEAR QUALIFYING EXAM EVALUATION FORM (rev. 8/19/2024)

Form instructions:

- The exam committee fills this out collaboratively online in Google Docs during the committee discussion at the end of the exam.
- **Setup:** The committee chair or the BISB coordinator should:
 - Login to your Google account (typically @ucsd.edu or @gmail.com).
 - Open the form template and copy it to your Google account.
 - In your copy's filename, change "NAME" to the student's name.
 - "Share" the copy (with "Editor" access) to committee member Google accounts.
- When completed, please print the form to a PDF and send it to the BISB coordinator.
- **To send to the student (optional):** Either share it with "Viewer" access (NOT "Editor" access) or send the PDF.
- **Word instructions:** If you use Word instead of Google Docs:
 - In the filename, change "NAME" to the student's name.
 - Type X's to check the boxes.
 - When completed, send the Word file or a PDF to the BISB coordinator.

Qual exam instructions: The second-year qualifying examination is designed to examine the student's ability to think critically, analytically, and independently, and to apply the skills acquired in classes to a real research project. The subject of the exam is the student's current research project, but the focus is the student's critical analytical ability and command of relevant methods and subjects. In this vein, committee members may ask general questions that, while originally prompted by the student's proposal, are intended to test the student's depth of knowledge in significant areas of bioinformatics or systems biology.

The exam consists of two components: a ten page written proposal and an oral exam. Both written and oral formats should have the following sections, in line with NIH proposals (page counts are for the written proposal, and will differ for oral presentation slides):

- **Specific Aims:** A one page description of specific objectives of the project.
- **Significance and Preliminary Data:** The report must clearly articulate the significance of the proposed activity, and describe preliminary work that illustrates the promise of the approach. We expect this part to be the bulk of the proposal (5–7 pages).
- **Approach:** A 2–3 page description of what the student proposes to do to extend the preliminary results and to achieve the specific aims.
- **References:** In addition, the proposal should cite, and provide references to, related work in the area. The bibliography is not included in the ten page limit.

The second component is the oral exam, where the student defends their proposal. Again, we expect the student to spend the bulk of the time describing their preliminary data.

Student name:	
Proposal title:	
Exam date & time:	

Please check your decision and type in your name:

Approval	Disapproval	Committee member name (typed)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Chair)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If you need more space for your comments, the boxes will automatically grow as you type them in Google Docs or Word. But if necessary, you can share additional feedback in a separate document or in the body of the email when you send this form to the coordinator.

Please comment on the **strengths** of the student's overall performance:

Please comment on the **weaknesses** of the student's overall performance:

Does the committee have **any concerns** about the student or the suitability of the thesis advisor?