

CAPCSD PhD Scholarship Reviewer Rubric

Strength of the cover letter

5 = The cover letter is clearly written and contains all four required elements: an introduction to the research project, a description of academic career goal and steps taken to qualify for such a position, the date of progression to candidacy and expected date of graduation, and an explanation of how the scholarship would facilitate the timely completion of the dissertation research project.

4 = The cover letter contains all four required elements, but the writing lacks clarity in one or more areas

3 = The cover letter contains only three of the four required elements

2 = The cover letter contains only two of the four required elements and the writing lacks clarity in one or more areas

1 = The cover letter contains only one or none of the three required elements

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge

Strength of the research project description's background

5 = The background and statement of the problem are exceptionally clear, concise, and provide an in-depth understanding of the research context.

4 = The background is clear, concise, and provides a thorough understanding of the research context, laying a solid foundation for the problem statement.

3 = The background and statement of the problem are generally clear and provides some depth in understanding the research context, though there may be areas for improvement.

2 = The background is somewhat unclear or lacks depth, hindering a comprehensive understanding of the research context before the problem statement.

1 = The background and statement of the problem are unclear, vague, or lacking any depth, making it challenging to grasp the research context.

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge

Strength of the research summary's specific aims/objectives, research design, and analysis plan

5 = The specific aims/objectives, research design, and analysis plan are exceptionally clear, concise, and precisely defined. It is easy to understand the intended focus of the research and the methodology without ambiguity. The outcome measures are well-defined, and the methodology is appropriate for addressing the research question. The analysis plan is exceptionally clear and appropriate for the project.

4 = The specific aims/objectives, research design, and analysis plan are clear and well-defined, though there may be minor points that could be clarified for better precision.

3 = The specific aims/objectives are generally clear but may require some additional clarification to enhance precision. There are concerns about the appropriateness of the methodology or planned analyses.

2 = The specific aims/objectives, research design, or analysis plan are somewhat unclear or lack the necessary precision, making it challenging to fully understand the research focus, methodology, or planned analyses.

1 = The specific aims/objectives, research design, or analysis plan are unclear, vague, or overly broad, hindering a clear understanding of the proposal.

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge

Strength of research project description – timeline

5 = The proposed timeline is highly realistic considering the complexity of the research problem and the available resources. The timeline is clearly aligned with scholarship eligibility requirements.

4 = The proposed timeline is realistic and considers the complexity of the research problem. The timeline is clearly aligned with scholarship eligibility requirements.

3 = The proposed timeline is generally realistic but may require some adjustments. The timeline is clearly aligned with scholarship eligibility requirements.

2 = The proposed timeline is somewhat unrealistic, with overly ambitious deadlines or inadequate consideration of the research problem's complexity. The timeline appears aligned with scholarship eligibility requirements.

1 = The proposed timeline is highly unrealistic, with little consideration for the complexity of the research problem or the time required for each activity. The timeline appears aligned with scholarship eligibility requirements.

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge, or the timeline does not align with scholarship eligibility requirements.

Strength of the mentor/research advisor's nomination letter

5 = Nomination letter provides extremely strong support of the applicant's performance to date, their research plan, and their potential for an academic career; contains multiple examples to support claims of excellence

4 = Nomination letter provides strong support of the applicant and contains examples to support claims of strength

3 = Nomination letter provides support of the applicant, but does not contain examples to support claims

2 = Nomination is neutral, but does not raise any concerns

1 = Nomination letter raises one or more concerns or expressly states the student does not have the recommender's full support or that support comes with some reservation

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge