

# CAPCSD PhD Scholarship Reviewer Rubric for 2025

## **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**

5 = The specific aims/objectives are exceptionally clear, concise, and precisely defined. It is easy to understand the intended focus of the research without ambiguity.

4 = The specific aims/objectives 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.

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

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

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge

## **Strength of the research summary's methods and outcome measures**

5 = The research design and outcome measures are well-defined, and the methodology is appropriate for addressing the research question. It demonstrates a thorough understanding of research methods.

4 = The research design and outcome measures are mostly clear, and the methodology is generally appropriate. Some minor improvements or clarifications may be needed.

3 = The research design and outcome measures are present but may lack some clarity or coherence.

2 = The research design and outcome measures are unclear or poorly defined, and the methodology is not well-suited for addressing the research question.

1 = The research design and outcome measures are so poorly described that it is impossible to evaluate their appropriateness.

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.

4 = The proposed timeline is realistic and considers the complexity of the research problem.

3 = The proposed timeline is generally realistic but may require some adjustments.

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

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

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge

#### **Strength of the Analysis Plan**

5 = The analysis plan is exceptionally clear and appropriate for the project. It is easy to understand the plan without ambiguity.

4 = The analysis plan is clear and well-defined, though there may be minor points that could be clarified for better precision.

3 = The analysis plan is generally clear but may require some additional clarification to enhance precision or there are concerns about the appropriateness of the planned analyses.

2 = The analysis plan is somewhat unclear or lacks the necessary precision, making it challenging to fully understand it.

1 = The analysis plan is unclear, vague, or overly broad, hindering a clear understanding.

0 = Item missing from application/unable to judge

#### **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