Division of Biological Sciences  
Master’s Thesis Research Plan

This research plan will guide the student’s thesis work. Defending a thesis successfully requires at a minimum that the student has obtained sufficient data to make a significant contribution to a research paper that will be published in a peer-reviewed journal. Please refer to the BS/MS Program website for more information on Program’s expectations and requirements (biology.ucsd.edu/education/contiguous-bsms).

To be completed by the student:
*Your responses should be typed. Wherever necessary, please feel free to exceed the space provided under each section. However, the total number of pages of the student’s part of this form should not exceed four pages. Note that copying directly from grant proposals does not fulfill the requirement to create a research plan.

1. Provide a brief background (1-2 paragraphs) of your research project and state your project’s global goals.

2. What hypothesis will you test or what experimental questions will you aim to answer? Outline the general plan of your work, including the broad design of experiments to be performed. Indicate if there will be substantial collaboration with other individuals (e.g., graduate students, faculty, and other BS/MS students).

3. Provide a timetable for your Research plan.

   Briefly identify experimental milestones (key experiments) and their estimated time of completion. Include as many specific dates (i.e. June/Spring 2020) as you can:

   Estimated date of thesis defense: ____________________________
4. Who will serve as your immediate mentor? Please indicate their title (e.g., Ph.D. student, postdoc, etc.)

5. Successful graduate students have a clearly defined mentorship plan which includes frequent formal and informal interactions with their immediate mentor and their thesis advisor, in which they discuss their data, review the progress of their project and discuss future experiments.

Describe your mentorship plan (this plan should be discussed with and have an approval of, your immediate supervisor and your thesis advisor)

6. Provide a list of all scientific papers you used in writing this research plan (in APA format).

7. As a graduate student, you are expected to participate in the scientific activities of your lab and your department or section. Examples of such activities are: participation in lab meetings, journal clubs, presentation of your work in scientific meetings, attendance of departmental and division seminars. All Master’s students are invited to present a poster in the Biology Research Showcase (usually held in the 10th week of the Spring quarter). Describe which academic activities you will take part in.

Student’s Printed Name: ________________________________ Date: ____________________

Student’s Signature: ______________________________________
Successfully defending a thesis requires that the student has obtained sufficient data to make a significant contribution to a research paper that will be published in a peer-reviewed journal. Such contribution could consist of one or more of the following:

- The student produces at least one figure or a table that could be included in a peer-reviewed research paper.
- The student's work lays a significant foundation for further research (for example, the student conducted a genetic screen).
- The student develops a new technique or improves an existing method, producing a significant, applicable technical advance.

*Note: In addition to their research work (for which they earn BGGN 271 credit units), MS students are expected to complete 12 units of elective course work.

1. Based on student’s research proposal, please evaluate student’s potential to produce enough data to successfully defend a Master’s thesis.

2. Please evaluate the feasibility of the proposed timeline.

3. Please confirm that sufficient resources will be available for the student to perform the thesis work, including mentorship and the necessary materials to conduct the experiments proposed in this research plan.

4. Please confirm that you will advise the student on potential committee members. MS students must have 3 faculty on their thesis committee, 2 of which must be Biology faculty.

5. Please confirm that you have reviewed and approved the mentorship plan proposed by the student.
In addition to their Thesis Advisor, the student must find at least one other thesis committee member (who is a tenure-track faculty member with the Division of Biological Sciences) prior to admission to the MS program. The Thesis Advisor will serve as Chair of the thesis committee. If the Thesis Advisor is not a tenure-track faculty member with the Division of Biological Sciences, the second committee member must serve as Co-Chair of the committee.

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