RMACSM Research Grant Review Categories and Scoring Instructions

To provide students with experience in review of grant proposals, we will use the review criteria and scoring established by the NIH. Below is a slightly modified excerpt describing review criteria and scoring. Please note that both students and their faculty mentors are required to be members of RMACSM this year in order to receive an award. A score sheet for each grant application follows.

Review of the proposal

Overall Impact. Reviewers will provide an overall impact/priority score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert an influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of the following review criteria.

Scored Review Criteria. Reviewers will consider each of the review criteria below in the determination of scientific and technical merit, and give a separate score for each. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential to advance a field.

Significance. Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Investigator(s). Is the student well suited to the project and do they have appropriate experience and training? If the project is collaborative, do the students have complementary and integrated expertise; and are their faculty mentors appropriate for the project?

Innovation. Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed? (Note: most students are not likely to score high in this category)

Approach. Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems and alternative strategies presented? If the project involves clinical research, are the plans for protection of human subjects from research risks justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed?

Budget. Is the proposed budget reasonable and appropriate? Are other sources of funding described as appropriate? Is it clear how the grant monies will be used?

Timeline. Is the timeline clear and reasonable? Is it likely that the student can successfully complete the study according to the timeline?

Environment. Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the mentor and institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the student adequate for the project proposed?

Scoring the Proposal

The scoring system utilizes a 9-point rating scale (1 = exceptional; 9 = poor). The final overall impact/priority score is determined by calculating the mean score from all the reviewer's impact/priority scores, and multiplying the average by 10; the final overall impact/priority score will be reported to the student. Thus, the final overall impact/priority scores range from 10 (high impact) through 90 (low impact).

Scoring Guidance

HIGH IMPACT		
Score	**Descriptor**	**Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses**
1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses

MEDIUM IMPACT		
Score	**Descriptor**	**Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses**
4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses

LOW IMPACT		
Score	**Descriptor**	**Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses**
7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

RMACSM Research Grant Review Form

Please complete the information below and rank each proposal according to the 9-point impact scale for all categories.

Grant proposal title:

Grant Category (grad/undergrad):

Name of Student Author: **Are both mentor and student members of RMACSM? ____**

Name of Faculty Mentor:

Category	**Score (1-9)**	**Brief Summary of rational for score (1-2 sentences)**
Overall Impact		
Significance		
Investigator(s)		
Innovation		
Approach		
Budget		
Timeline		
Environment		
Total Score		