Review of MS Scholarly Papers
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1 Introduction

The committee was tasked to review a collection of scholarly papers for the purpose of evaluating the writing skills of the MS students. The scholarly papers were not associated with the members of this committee. It was expected that at least 75% of the papers would be evaluated as very good or excellent by this external review committee.

2 Material reviewed

The committee selected 6 MS scholarly papers from 2011-2012 to review. Each review resulted in a numerical score from 1-5 (poor, fair, good, very good, excellent) and a brief comment. Each committee member reviewed 3 scholarly papers; 3 papers received one review each and 3 papers received two reviews each (for normalizing across reviewers).

1. Area: Systems
   Score: 3
   Comments: This has 2 authors: The student and his advisor. The writing is mediocre. Grammatical and typos are all over the paper. There are also some technical inaccuracies. References are not consistent. Depth is ok.

2. Area: Programming Languages
   Score: 5
   Comments: This has 4 authors, including the student and two faculty advisors. Looks a conference paper/submission. The writing is correspondingly very good.

3. Area: Computational Biology
   Score: 3
   Comments: Nice, complete, paper, interesting problem.

4. Area: Artificial Intelligence
   Score: 3
   Comments: This has only 1 author (as should be the case). It is well-written. It is also technically weaker than the others reviewed; all of those were multi-author and looked like conference submissions. This has preliminary results, and reads like a decent class project.

5. Area: Databases
   Score: 2
Comments: Lots of grammatical mistakes, even in the abstract. The writing is not formal at all. This is mainly a survey of previous results and not new stuff.

5 Area: Human-Computer Interaction
Score: 4.5
Comments: Writing is very good and the depth is reasonable Good, complete paper.

3 Summary

2 out of 6 proposals (33%) were deemed to very good or excellent. There is much room for improvement. Also, the Department should explicitly address whether a scholarly paper can have multiple authors (e.g., a conference submission).