

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER  
COLLEGE OF NURSING**

**GUIDELINES**

Use the following guidelines and list major headings in your written critique.

The Critique should focus on evaluation and not broad commentary, advice or direction. Include comments which convey your level of enthusiasm and reflect the descriptor level you are recommending. Avoid using the first person when referring to your opinions or recommendations, instead say “the reviewers” or “Committee.” If you suggest no changes, write “adequate and appropriate.”

Use the following five categories as major headings in your written critique. Under each heading, address each of the criteria listed below:

1. **Significance.** Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or the methods that drive this field?
2. **Approach.** Are the conceptual framework, design (including composition of the study population), methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
3. **Innovation.** Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing standards or develop new methodologies or technologies?
4. **Investigators.** Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers? *Please do not include* descriptive biographical information unless important to the evaluation of merit.
5. **Environment.** Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support? *Please do not include* description of available facilities or equipment unless important to the evaluation of merit.

**OVERALL EVALUATION:** In one paragraph, summarize the most important points of the Critique, addressing the strengths and weaknesses of the application in terms of the 5 criteria listed above. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to have possible scientific impact and thus deserve a high merit rating. For example, an investigator may propose to carry out important work that by its nature is not innovative but is essential to move a field forward. This should be a brief description to support the Committee’s recommendation.

**Adapted from the Guide for Assigned Reviewers’ Preliminary comments on Research Grant Applications, National Institutes of Health.**

<http://www.drug.nih.gov/guidelines/r01gui.htm>

**Revised January 2000**