

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING FOR THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

1. PURPOSE OF STUDY

- A. (One to two paragraphs explaining the focus for the study and the purpose for attempting it.) The purpose of this study is to _____.
- B. What study or literature review is your study most directly based on? Organize your research design with subheadings beginning with an general review on the topic. This may be in chronological order. Use citations to reference all material presented here. (Give citation.)
- C. How does your study build on previous research?
- D. How will the study contribute to knowledge about education?

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESES, AND OBJECTIVES

- A. In what form are you stating your research purposes? (Check one or more.) ____Questions ____Hypotheses ____Objectives
- B. List research questions/hypotheses/objectives. Questions you want to answer or hypotheses you want to test
- C. Does the study relate to a particular theoretical framework? If it does, describe the framework, and indicate how the research questions, hypotheses, or objectives relate to it. If the study is qualitative in nature, indicate whether you plan to use a grounded theory approach.

3. LITERATURE SEARCH

- A. List the descriptors that you will use initially in your literature search. Organize this chapter with subheadings beginning with a general review on your topic. This may be in chronological order. Use citations to reference all material presented here.
- B. List the preliminary sources that you will use in your literature search.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

- A. Describe the research design that you selected for your study: survey or descriptive, causal-comparative, correlational, experimental, case study, historical, evaluation, a particular qualitative research tradition, or educational research and development.
- B. If the study is quantitative in nature, what are the limitations to the generalizability (i.e., external validity) of the findings that will result from your research design? What will you do to maximize the generalizability of your findings?

5. POPULATION/ SAMPLING

- A. If the study is quantitative in nature, describe the characteristics of the population that you will study. If the study is qualitative in nature, describe the phenomenon you wish to study and the cases that comprise instances of the phenomenon.

- B. Identify the sampling procedure (e.g., simple random sampling, stratified sampling, or cluster sampling, etc.), and explain why you selected it.
- C. Indicate the sampling unit (e.g., individual students or a class of students).
- D. Indicate the size of the sample, and explain why that sample size is sufficient.
- E. Indicate whether the sample will be formed into subgroups, and if so, describe the characteristics of the subgroups.

6. VARIABLES

- A. If the study is quantitative in nature, list the variables that you will study. For each variable, indicate whether it is an independent variable, a dependent variable, or neither.

7. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION: INSTRUMENT and DATA SOURCES

- A. List the measures that you will select or develop for the study.
- B. Indicate the variables that each measure will assess. For each measure, indicate which types of validity and reliability are relevant and how you will check them.

8. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

- A. What statistics, if any, will you use to analyze your data? If the study is qualitative, indicate whether you will use an interpretational, structural, or reflective method of analysis. Indicate whether the research is descriptive, correlational, or inferential in nature. Further, identify appropriate test (e.g., Chi Square, T-Test, ANOVA...etc.) used to for each of these types of statistics.