

Doctoral Degree in Higher Education - Research Method Qualifying Exam

PLEASE READ THE INSTRUCTIONS AND QUESTIONS CAREFULLY!

Instructions:

There are two parts in the research method section of qualifying exam. **Ed.D** students must answer question 1 and 2 in part I and choose one of the two articles to critique in part II. **Ph.D** students must answer all questions in part I and choose one of the two articles to critique in part II. Citations and references must be conformed in accordance with the latest APA Publication Manual.

Part I:

1. From your point of view, what are the two greatest compelling issues concerning **today's** higher education research? Please support your view and argument with current literature.
2. You are the president's cabinet member at a four-year university. One day your president asked you to write an executive summary report of your institution's 2009 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Benchmark Comparison results (see attachment) for the university's board of regents. In this executive summary report, you must select what you deem to be the most important statistical results and present them in a way that can be easily understood by a person with none or minimum statistical training. Please utilize tables and charts appropriately. The executive summary report cannot go beyond two pages single-spaced (preferable one page or less). **Ed.D** students must include, but are not limited to, interpretations of mean, statistical significance, and standard error of means (SEM). **Ph.D.** students must include, but are not limited to, interpretations of mean, statistical significance, standard error of means, and effect size. (More information about NSSE and its reports can be found at http://nsse.iub.edu/2009_Institutional_Report/?loadtab=1)
3. (*This question is for Ph.D. students only*) Briefly discuss the differences between quantitative and qualitative research paradigms and provide a rationale for selecting a qualitative methodology within the higher education research arena.

Part II:

You are provided in this exam two research articles. Please choose ONE article and provide critiques in terms of its literature review, research design and method, results, and conclusion. Your critique should address both strengths and weaknesses or limitations of the study as well as strengths and weaknesses of the article itself. Your critique should be between 8-10 pages in length, double-spaced, excluding citations.