

GS 752 Seminar in Thesis Writing

Final Examination

Answer the following comprehensively.

1、 Why do you choose the topic that you are doing right now or what is your inspiration behind this study? How will it contribute or add up to the existing body of knowledge assuming that you are done with your topic?

2. Education policy researchers are facing a bit of a puzzle. Statistical and anecdotal evidence indicates that teachers are the single most important determinant of student outcomes under the influence of school systems. Yet, few, if any, value-added analyses find any teacher attributes or interventions lead to improved student achievement. Using your understanding of the process of educating children, the methodological issues in identifying causation, the structure of value-added empirical models and the content of most data bases employed in value-added analysis, explore why these efforts have yielded so little evidence of ways that policy could improve teachers or teaching. Illustrate your points with specific examples and reference to the literature.

3、 A researcher has conducted a study examining the effects of witnessing violence on externalizing behavior in 5th and 6th grade children. She administers the conflict tactics scale to the parent or parent substitute to assess the level of violence in the home. This measure produces two scales, one assessing whether or not the child has heard “long, loud arguments” and a second assessing whether or not the child has witnessed “acts of hitting, slapping or punching.” She administers the teacher version of the child behavior checklist to the children’s teachers to assess externalizing behavior. Since other variables may also impact a child’s behavior in school, she also administers the neighborhood report form to assess the level of violence in the neighborhood. Suppose the researcher is not very well versed in statistics and comes to you for advice. If all variables can be considered normally distributed, what statistics would you recommend that the researcher use to examine the research question above? Your recommendations must be clear and justify your choice of statistical technique. Be sure to discuss how you would examine both the statistical significance and effect size of any relationships suggested by the above research protocol.

4. You may have heard the phrase, “teaching as a researching profession.” Describe the importance of research within the educational profession. What knowledge base about research will impact your professional practice? What effect does research (both action research and the study of research) have upon current and future issues within the field of education?

5. You are a new faculty member at a local college. You have a heavy teaching load but must also conduct research so you decide to combine the two by implementing several interactive techniques in the classroom and evaluating how your students learn. You want to go beyond test scores and assess what students are taking away from each of the interactive techniques, and the ways students respond to higher order thinking based on the competencies you have developed for the class. Frame a qualitative research design that includes an hypothesis, a theoretical framework, research purpose, research questions, variables (and how they will be measured), methodology, data collection, analysis, representation, ethical issues, limits, and possibilities.