HUSV 3001: Research Methods in the Social Sciences  
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Comprehensive Final Exam  
Study Guide

Unit 1

- Epistemology
- Goals of social research (description, prediction, explanation, and evaluation)
- Common-sense vs. research-based knowing
- Conceptualization and operationalization
- Components of social research (data, concepts, and theories)
- Induction and deduction
- Quantitative and qualitative forms of data
- Competing models of social research (positivist / postpositivist, interpretive / constructivist, critical / transformative, and pragmatist)
- Independent and dependent variables
- Hypotheses [null, alternative (directional or one-tailed), and alternative (nondirectional or two-tailed)]
- Statistical hypothesis testing (Type I and Type II errors)
- Anonymity and confidentiality
- Ethical absolutists vs. relativists
- Communication continuum in Internet-based research (public, semipublic, semiprivate, private)

Unit 2

- Research fallacies (ecological and exception)
- Writing qualitative research questions (narrative research, phenomenology, ethnography, and case study)
• Cross-sectional vs. longitudinal research designs
• Levels of measurement (nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio)
• Categories of measurement (norm- and criterion-referenced measurement)
• Validity (face, content, criterion, conclusion, internal, construct, and external)
• Reliability (inter-rater, test-retest, parallel form, and internal consistency)
• Measurement error (random error, systematic error, and standard error of measurement)
• Probability vs. nonprobability sampling
• Random sampling (simple, systematic, and stratified)
• Nonprobability sampling [availability (convenience or accidental), modal instance, purposive (judgmental), expert, proportional quota, snowball (interactive), heterogeneity, and dimensional]

Unit 3

• Survey research
• Indirect measures
• Content analysis
• Secondary analysis of data
• Field research
• Case studies and focus groups

Unit 4

• Threats to internal validity (“MRS SMITH” acronym)
• Threats to external validity
• Experimental designs (true experiments, quasi-experiments, and pre-experiments)
• Single-system research designs
• Evaluation research (summative vs. formative evaluation)