

**TERM PROJECT AND HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS**

Throughout the academic term, you will develop a 2-page self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) designed for a specific target population of your choosing. The SAQ may focus on any topic, and you are encouraged to create a questionnaire that is relevant to your own research or interests.

The specific content and format of the SAQ is flexible and you may include as many items as you like within the 2-page limit. However, it *must* include the following:

- at least *two* items that measure one or more objective phenomena (e.g., autobiographical events, past behaviors, physical symptoms, factual knowledge)
- at least *two* items that measure one or more subjective phenomena (e.g., attitudes, values, emotions, mood states, likes and dislikes)
- at least *two* relevant demographic items (e.g., sex, educational level, race, ethnicity, political affiliation).

In addition, the SAQ must be a paper questionnaire (even if you ultimately plan to collect data in another mode, e.g., a face-to-face interview or Internet survey).

Your SAQ may include standardized scales or psychological inventories that are relevant to your research goals. However, such scales should account for no more than half of your SAQ's items. If you utilize existing items or scales, you will be held accountable for their quality. If a scale or inventory contains poorly worded items, consider using a different measure. If that is not possible, devise better versions of the items and develop a methodology for comparing them to the original questions (e.g., random assignment of alternate versions of the SAQ).

You will develop the SAQ in a series of steps, and we'll conduct group critiques of each class member's project at several of these steps as indicated on the following pages. In addition to presenting your own work, you will also be required to lead the group critique of another student's work at each step of the process. As explained in class, your course grade will be based not only on your own SAQ, but also on your performance in leading group critiques of other students' SAQs and your contributions to other group critiques.

*Note:* For all class critiques, you'll bring a copy of your completed assignment for the class to view, as well as a paper copy to submit to Prof. Herek. Please also e-mail your assignment (in PDF/Acrobat format) to Professor Herek ([gmherek@ucdavis.edu](mailto:gmherek@ucdavis.edu)). For some of the assignments, the copy you bring to class will be printed on one or more transparencies for use on an overhead projector. Details will be provided in class.

### **Schedule for Assignments**

*(Note: Deadline dates are subject to change throughout the quarter.  
Check the course web site every week for updates)*

#### ***Assignment #1: SAQ Objectives (due Monday, April 4)***

Prepare a set of detailed objectives for your self-administered questionnaire. The goal of this assignment is to create a road map that will guide you when you write and select SAQ items. This brief document (approximately 1 page) should:

- State the main goals or overall purpose of your SAQ.
- State the hypotheses you propose to test (if applicable)
- List the main variables that you will measure (each variable will correspond to one or more items in your questionnaire).
- For each variable (or for each item related to a variable), indicate whether you expect to measure it at the ratio, interval, ordinal (ranking), or nominal (categorical) level.
- Briefly describe the target population for your SAQ.
- Indicate which items/variables will be independent variables and which will be dependent variables when you analyze the data.
- Indicate whether any items will be combined into a scale.

Please submit a paper copy to Prof. Herek and e-mail him an electronic version (in PDF/Acrobat format). *Note.* Examples of questionnaire objectives are posted on the course website on the “Assignments” page.

#### ***Assignment #2: Using the Roper Center Database (due Wednesday, April 6)***

Use the iPoll database of the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research to find at least three questions relevant to your SAQ topic that have been administered in national or regional surveys. Please submit a paper copy to Prof. Herek and e-mail him an electronic version (in PDF/Acrobat format). More information about this exercise will be provided in a separate handout.

#### ***Assignment #3: Demographic Items and Questions about Objective Phenomena (to be completed by Friday, April 8, at 11:59 pm)***

Based on your SAQ objectives, create the questions you will use for measuring objective phenomena and select the demographic questions you will use. At this stage, don't format the items into a questionnaire. Simply list each item and its response options. (Hint: You might find some useful demographic questions in Chapter 9 of the Bradburn et al. book or through the iPoll database).

We'll critique these items in class beginning on April 11. In preparation for that critique, please e-mail a copy of your questions (preferably in PDF/Acrobat format) by midnight on Friday, April 8, to Prof. Herek and to the class member who is designated to lead the discussion of your items. On April 11, bring your items to class (on a transparency or as paper handouts for the class) and submit a paper copy to Prof. Herek.

***Assignment #4: Questions about Subjective Phenomena (to be completed by Friday, April 22, by 11:59 pm)***

Based on your SAQ objectives, create the questions you will use for measuring subjective phenomena. As with the previous assignment, don't format the items at this stage. Simply list them along with each item's response options.

We will critique these items in class beginning on April 25. In preparation for that critique, please e-mail a copy of your questions (preferably in PDF/Acrobat format) by midnight on Friday, April 22, to Prof. Herek and to the class member who is designated to lead the discussion of your items. On April 25, bring your items to class (on a transparency or as paper handouts for the class) and submit a paper copy to Prof. Herek.

***Assignment #5: Formatted SAQ, Version #1 (to be completed by Friday, May 6, at 11:59 pm)***

Combine your items into a formatted 2-page questionnaire, complete with title, instructions, and navigational directions as appropriate. Although we will focus mainly on the layout and visual design of your SAQ at this stage, you should use the feedback you received during earlier class critiques to revise the content and wording of the questionnaire items. Pay attention to the order of items as well.

We will critique these items in class beginning on May 9. In preparation for that critique, please e-mail a copy of your SAQ (in PDF/Acrobat format) by midnight on Friday, May 6, to Prof. Herek and to the class member who is designated to lead the discussion of your items. On May 9, bring your own SAQ to class on transparencies and submit a paper copy to Prof. Herek.

***Assignment #6: Formatted SAQ, Version #2 (to be completed by Friday, May 22, at 11:59 pm)***

Using the feedback you've received from class critiques, as well as the knowledge you've gained from the readings and new material we've covered, prepare a revised, fully-formatted version of your self-administered questionnaire. We'll critique this SAQ in class beginning on May 25. In preparation for that critique, provide a copy of your SAQ (in PDF/Acrobat format) by midnight on Friday, May 22, to Prof. Herek and to the class member designated to lead the discussion of your questionnaire. On May 25, bring your own SAQ to class on transparencies and submit a paper copy to Prof. Herek.

***Final Assignment: Formatted SAQ, Final Version (due by 12 noon on Monday, June 6)***

Based on class feedback, submit two paper copies of the final version of your self-administered questionnaire to Prof. Herek no later than noon on Monday, June 6. You may leave it in Prof. Herek's mailbox in Young Hall. Please also e-mail Prof. Herek an electronic version in PDF/Acrobat format.