

Instructions for Questionnaire Construction

- I. Questionnaire exercise – how to do it
 - A. Choose a concept, something on which you believe people vary in an ordinal way, complex, not directly observable
 1. Write an open-ended question, e.g. What is your opinion concerning gun control? What is your attitude towards the availability of abortion? Give us your evaluation of the education you are receiving at UW-Madison.
 2. ANSWER the open-ended question. Each member of the group does this separately and privately. Then share.
 - B. After reading the answers
 1. List the DIMENSIONS of the concept – the ASPECTS of it, such as beliefs, feelings, intentions to act
 2. Write closed-ended questions to tap each of the dimensions
 - C. Come up with an OBVIOUS hypothesis. This relates your concept to an independent variable. This should be SO obvious that if it is not confirmed in your data you will suspect your measurements rather than stop believing the hypothesis (e.g., members of gun clubs will be more opposed to gun control than people who are not members). Write a question to identify respondents' attributes on the independent variable.
- II. What each GROUP should turn in on Friday, April 6
 - A. What is your concept? A paragraph giving:
 1. Conceptual definition
 2. Dimensions of the concept
 - B. One open-ended question (or several if you do not agree)
 - C. 15 or more closed-ended questions. Some should be worded positively, some negatively. More questions is better.
 - D. Your obvious hypothesis, and a question to measure the independent variable.
 - E. A few other independent variables you are just curious about, in terms of how they might relate to the dependent variable concept; honors and 4-credit students must have more of these and firmer hypotheses