Asking Questions

A few pointers

Multiple-Choice (Likert) Format

Strongly Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Match response to item

- Frequency (Never-All the time)
- Likert Scaling (Disagree-Agree)
- Quality (Poor-Excellent)
- Service (Not Well-Extremely Well)

Use Simple Sentences

- No double negatives
- Eliminate vagueness (poorly defined terms)
- Avoid objectionable\Irrelevant questions

Avoid Double Negatives

It is not the case that I have never cheated on my tax returns.

Never should one not help others.

*The likelihood of depression recurring after the discontinuation of psychotropic drug treatment is greater than if drug treatment is never used as part of therapy.

Avoid Vague or Ambiguous Terms

How many times in the past year have you talked with a doctor about your health?

Is health care easily accessible for your family?

*Studying accounts for a majority of the activities I do at college.

*Tests are stressful.

*I relax by using drugs.

Avoid Objectionable or Irrelevant Questions

How old are you?

Have you ever tested positive for HIV virus?

Have you answered each question truthfully?

How many years of education were you able to complete?

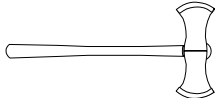***I believe crack is one of the four food groups.**

Avoid Double-barrel Questions

Is your doctor friendly and reasonably priced?

Were your caregivers courteous and friendly?

*I am often fidgeting and on edge.

*I find that I am more attentive and remember more if I have eaten before a study session.

Balance questions\responses

How was the service at this hospital?
_____ Excellent _____ Very Good _____ Great

Are you depressed frequently?
Sad is the best descriptor of me right now.
My depressed mood keeps me from doing fun things.

Reverse Score to Reduce Response Bias

I am often sad.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

I often feel happy.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

Exhaustive & mutually exclusive categories

What is your age?

under 10   10-20   20-30   30-40   40-50

How did you last travel to the supermarket?
 car, bus, foot, walking, public transportation

What is your marital status?
 single, married, divorced

Even vs. Odd categories

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree