



Qualifying Paper: Critical Review of the Research Literature

This paper must be submitted by the date specified by the program. Extensions will be made with prior written approval from the advisor in the case of extenuating circumstances only.

In a well-constructed essay of 20 to 25 double-spaced pages (excluding the required reference pages), discuss research that contributes to our understanding of an adult education topic/dilemma/issue that interests you. The purpose of this paper is to build an argument from relevant research about the topic/dilemma/issue that has implications for research and/or practice. *This paper must be written in APA format (Papers not written in APA format will not be reviewed).*

1. **State of the Art.** What is the "state of the art" in this setting vis-à-vis this topic/dilemma/issue? Describe the setting in which the topic/dilemma/issue is situated. What assumptions are being made (both literature driven and experientially) that influence the framing of the topic/dilemma/issue?
2. **Research and Theory Based on Topic/Dilemma/Issue.** How does a selected review of theory and research inform our understanding of the topic/dilemma/issue? Depending on the topic/dilemma/issue, for example, you *might* discuss:
 - How have key ideas vis-à-vis the issue been defined over time?
 - What perspectives on the issue/problem dominate?
 - What is known from research and where are the gaps?
 - What critique has been raised?
 - What patterns are identified across studies?
 - Prepare a matrix, added to the appendix, which describes 6-10 relevant studies that specifies the study's designs, samples, methods, key findings, and implications for this topic.
3. **Selected Research and Theory Based on Adult/Organizational Learning.** Drawing from the field of adult and organizational learning theory, describe:
 - Which learning or development theory or theories can be drawn upon to understand how best to analyze and address the problem?
 - How does current research relevant to this theory broaden or inform our conceptualization of how to approach, study, and/or act on the topic/dilemma/issue?
 - What are the limitations of these theories when applied to the particular setting and/or topic/dilemma/issue you have identified?
 - What patterns are identified across studies?
 - Prepare a matrix, added to the appendix, which describes 3-5 relevant studies that specifies the study's designs, samples, methods, key findings, and implications for this topic.

4. ***Implications for Research and/or Practice - Critique and Assumptions.*** Develop implications:
- What conclusions can be drawn in light of questions 1-3 above?
 - What does the critique you have prepared and suggestions made reflect about the assumptions you hold with respect to potential practice and/or research of this particular dilemma?
 - What are the implications for research and practice?
 - *Note:* This is not the place to discuss or formulate your dissertation research questions.

This paper must be submitted within six months of your certification exam date.

If you have already completed an approved draft for your proposal defense, you may alternatively submit chapter two.



Department of Organization and Leadership

Adult Learning and Leadership

Qualifying Paper Rubric

Student's Name: _____

Submitted QP Date: _____

| Criterion | Exemplary 4 | Satisfactory 3 | Needs Developing 2 | Unacceptable 1 | Overall Ratings and Comments |
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| State of the Art Topic: | Topic framed in terms of what is, or is not, known in some way from literature and professional experience. Assumptions identified and critiqued. | Topic is situated in literature and, when relevant, on professional experience / observations. Assumptions identified and understood. | Topic posed generally as "gap" or primarily from own experience / not specific / based on assumptions not clearly stated or critiqued. Framing of dissertation vs. lit review. | Topic is not clearly identified or stated. Assumptions made about the topic that are not recognized as such. | Highest Lowest 4 3 2 1 |
| Research & theory on topic / issue | Well-developed argument. Robust analysis of key theory and research, detail to support insight into topic posed and research questions or directions to pursue. Critique of issues and challenges. Clear definitions. Identifies promising research framing, tools, and approaches. | Develops argument. Key representative research covered in terms of what is/is not known; includes synthesis across studies and details on research design, sample, key findings, limitations; as relevant, includes definitions, key perspectives, views. | Does not develop argument. Research discussed serially rather than in integrated way, details not included re design, samples, limitations; limited synthesis, critical analysis, or insight. | No clearly developed argument. Rambling discussion of articles, possibly with little or no research. Includes personal reflections and views as part of literature review. No synthesis or critical analysis. | Highest Lowest 4 3 2 1 |

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| Selected research & theory on adult (org) learning/development | Well-developed argument. Robust analysis of key theory and research, detail to support insight into topic posed and research questions or directions to pursue. Critique of issues and challenges. Clear definitions. Identifies promising research framing, tools, and approaches. | Develops argument. Selective discussion of key theories and research relevant to topic. Includes synthesis across studies and details on research design, sample, key findings, limitations; as relevant, includes definitions, key perspectives, views. | Does not develop argument. Broad area identified but not focused. Little or no research. Literature discussed serially rather than in integrated way, details not included re design, samples, limitations; limited synthesis, critical analysis, or insight. | No clearly developed argument. Rambling discussion of articles, possibly with little or no research. Includes personal reflections and views as part of literature review. No synthesis or critical analysis. | Highest Lowest 4 3 2 1 |
| Implications for research and/or practice | Provides persuasive conclusions and recommendations tied to analysis of literature, as well as interests. Revisits and critiques assumptions. | Recommendations and reasoning is clear and relevant. Tied to interests and linked in minimal way to analysis of literature. Does not thoroughly revisit / critique assumptions. | Offers conclusions and recommendations tied to interests but not based firmly in literature review; and/or does not revisit/critique assumptions. | Does not offer conclusions and recommendations tied to analysis of literature. Does not revisit or critique assumptions. | Highest Lowest 4 3 2 1 |
| Quality of writing, thinking | Well-developed argument. Robust inclusion of research. Clear, concise writing. Appropriate academic tone. Uses APA, headings, and tables as appropriate. Work is free of spelling, grammar and usage errors. Bibliography is offered and well documented. | Makes an adequate argument, with sufficient inclusion of research. Clear writing and academic tone. May not use headings or tables well. Work is largely free of APA, spelling, grammar and usage errors. Bibliography is offered and well documented. | Argument is not well developed and at times hard to follow. Writing is not clear, is not concise, or is not good academic tone. Limited citation of research. Writing has multiple APA, spelling, grammar or usage errors. Bibliography may not be complete or well documented. | Does not use APA format. Does not present an argument but rather a series of statements and descriptions of articles without linking literature to what is or is not known and how that pertains to interests that are the focus of the review. Research not included in the review. | Highest Lowest 4 3 2 1 |

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| Comprehensiveness & originality | Thorough search of relevant segments of literature for scope of paper. Citations and description of research/theory full and clear. Writer has clearly defined point of view that provides interesting or unique insights into question(s) of interest. Effectively answers the "so what" question. | Adequate search of relevant segments of literature for scope of paper; and adequate set of citations and description of research/theory. Writer has clearly defined point of view that provides interesting or unique insights into question(s) of interest. Adequately answers the "so what" question. | Limited search of relevant segments of one of the two areas of review vis-à-vis topic of interest. Limited inclusion or discussion of relevant research and theory; limited clarity with respect to point of view and insights into question(s) of interest. Does not answer the "so what" question. | Inadequate coverage of literature in one or both areas of review vis-à-vis topic of interest. Inadequate inclusion or discussion of relevant research and theory. Not at all clear what person's point of view is or how the review answers the "so what" question. | Highest Lowest 4 3 2 1 |
| Overall Rating | Pass (4) | Pass with reservations (3) | Redo (2), specify section(s) | Unacceptable (1) | Highest Lowest 4 3 2 1 |
| Overall Comments | | | | | |
| <i>Date</i> | <i>Signature</i> | | <i>Print Name</i> | | |