**Flow Chart for Constructing Research Designs**

**Your Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Theoretical Framework for the Study**. Briefly (one paragraph) explain the theoretical framework for your study.

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| **BOX A: Objectives** |
| 1. **State the research question(s) *clearly and unambiguously*. Be specific, not broad. Number them.** |
| 1. **Topic: What do you want to add to what we know about the *topic of the research*?** |
| 1. **Explanation: What do you want to add to our *ability to explain the phenomenon of interest*?** |
| 1. **Theory: What, if anything, do you want to contribute to the *development of theory*?** |
| 1. **What research design will you use?** Indicate which of the design groups you will use, which may be more than one if you have a multi-stage study. For each design group you will use, indicate by name or a short descriptive phrase or sentence the exact design used. For example: Quasi-experiment with unequal comparison group size and non-random assignment of groups to treatments, true control. |

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| **BOX B: Theoretical Constructs & Linkages Explored in the Research** |
| 1. **State the constructs (concepts) in the theory are the focus of your research. Refer as necessary to your description of the theoretical framework in answering this question.** |
| 1. **What is/are your general or working hypotheses?** These are ***NOT*** ***statistical hypotheses.*** These are statements of ***relationships between theoretical constructs that you expect to observe.*** |
| 1. **Interventions or Treatments.** There may be none, but there is always a treatment in a true or quasi-experiment. |

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| **BOX 3: Variables & Level of Measurement** |
| **NOTE Give the level of measurement for EACH variable listed in B and C below.** |
| 1. **List the comparison groups and explain how each group is defined. If you assigned units (people, organizations, neighborhoods) to groups, explain the assignment procedure. For example, was it random? If not, what criteria were used to place the units into a specific group?** |
| 1. **List and define the dependent or outcome variables.** |
| 1. **List and define the independent or predictor variables (NOT the same as the comparison groups). For each independent or predictor variable, indicate whether it is based on theory or is descriptive.** |

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| **BOX 4: Sampling**  **Do NOT attempt to complete this box without the document “Basics of Sampling” at hand. It will be harder and will take much longer than needed without the guide. Don’t waste your time. Use the guide.** |
| 1. **Define the theoretical population(s).** Remember that each comparison group represents a different theoretical population (e.g., youth who have been arrested at least once and youth who have never been arrested). |
| 1. **What is the accessible population?** This may be different for the various theoretical populations. |
| 1. **Is there a sampling frame? If so describe it.** Some studies do not have a sampling frame. All studies have an accessible population. Very rarely are the accessible population and the sampling frame the same. |
| 1. **How *will you determine* sample size?** Do **NOT** try to determine it – you cannot do that because you do **not** have the information necessary to determine sample size for ANY legitimate (valid, reliable) sampling procedure. Explain what you will consider and how you will get the information you need to determine sample size. |
| 1. **Will you employ additional are the selection or screening criteria beyond the traits inherent in the definition of the theoretical and accessible populations?** Many (perhaps most) studies use some screening criteria. This does ***NOT*** make the sample a “purposive” or “judgmental” sample. It is simply a way to reduce non-experimental variance or establish comparison groups. |
| 1. **Name the specific sampling approach used (e.g., systematic random sample, volunteer sample, etc.).** If you will use a true purposive sample was taken, name the specific type of purposive sample – e.g., maximum variation purposive sample. Be careful NOT to confuse a purposive sample with any of the various types of non-random samples. This is a common mistake. |
| 1. **What do you anticipate will affect the response rate – decrease it? What steps will you take to reduce this threat – to get a response rate that is as “high as possible” under the circumstances for your study?** |
| 1. **Will you use replacement procedures and if so what procedures?** |

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| **BOX 5: Data Collection Procedures** |
| **Explain how you will collect the data briefly.** |

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| **BOX 6: Statistical Data Analysis**  **Complete ONLY if the article uses statistical tests.**  **Descriptive statistics of the sample are NOT statistical data analysis.** | | |
| 1. **Make a NUMBERED LIST of the statistical hypotheses you will test *for each objective you identified in Box 1.*** | **Specific test(s) you will use for each hypothesis.** | **Proposed significance level.** |
| **Topical Objectives** |  |  |
| **Explanatory Objectives** |  |  |
| **Theoretical Objectives** |  |  |
| 1. **Describe any additional (unplanned, post-hoc) statistical analyses that you may perform.** These are potential tests you could run, based on what you find in the primary analyses**.** Explain why you think the test may be needed. State the conditions that would lead you to employ the test. | | |

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| **BOX 7: Qualitative Data Analysis**  **Provide answers for all procedures used** |
| 1. **Explain how you will analyze the data. I strongly encourage you to use the materials on course reserve by Beaseley and Saldana to answer this question. You need detail. Do not write something like “I will use thematic analysis to analyze the data.” State the specific steps you will employ in data analysis.** |
| 1. **What is the nature of the results that you hope to reach? For example, you might want to develop a typology of different groups that you identify in your sample during the analysis or you might want to develop a model of the relationships between theoretical and non-theoretical constructs that emerge during analysis.** Bb |
| 1. **How will the results address each of the research objectives you identified in Box 1?**   **Topical**  **Explanatory**  **Theoretical** |
| 1. **Which of these results are most important from the perspective of being able to answer your research question?** |
| 1. **How do you plan to present the results?** |
| 1. **What procedures will you use to ensure rigor in data analysis?** |

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| **BOX 8: Planned Generalization** |
| 1. **Explain how you plan to generalize the conclusions that you reach in this study *for each objective that you stated in Box 1, by type*. Specifically discuss how you will use statistical and theoretical generalization or, if you will not use one of these two types of generalization, why you have decided not to use it. Provide your responses in the three boxes below.** |
| **Topical Objective(s).** |
| **Explanatory Objective(s).** |
| **Theoretical Objective(s).** |
| 1. **Which of the results are most important from the perspective of being able to answer your research question?** |