Questions for the preliminary exam are written by the Design Graduate Program committee members. The questions are designed to relate to the student’s degree program, professional goals, and area of research interest.

**Examples of Evaluation and Analysis Questions**

1. List the assumptions of one of the following statistical analysis methods. For the method you choose, identify a research question and explain why this is an appropriate statistical analysis method.
   A. analysis of variance
   B. multiple regression
   C. cross tab
   D. correlation

2. Define and discuss the importance of validity and reliability in completing a research project.

3. Describe a positivistic research plan in which a particular theory is to be tested. Identify the theory, research question, hypotheses, research method, variables, how the variables would be operationalized, and the analytical technique to be used.

4. Contrast the application of experimental versus survey research methods. Give an example of a research question that could be studied using either approach and explain how one approach would be superior to the other based on the research question. Include discussion of assumptions, limitations, and interpretation.

**Examples of Theory Questions**

1. Describe as completely as you can the housing adjustment/adaptation theory of Morris and Winter. Be sure to include as many of the concepts as you can and indicate how each one relates to the others. You need not deal with the dynamic version of the theory. Include a diagram of the model implied in the theory and discuss how the theoretical model might differ from an empirical model. If you have additional time, discuss any problems you see in the theory or in its application as it appears in the literature.

2. There has been concern among housing professionals about the lack of theoretical grounding for research, education, and practice. Discuss the state of theoretical development in the housing field. Is there a critical mass of theory-based research that is uniquely related to housing? Are we just a grouping of designers, sociologists, political scientists, engineers, etc., who happen to be applying our fields to housing? What are the main theoretical frameworks used in housing?
3. Describe how a social scientific housing researcher could use different theoretical frameworks to analyze the common constraints or barriers to housing for some special population (low-income, elderly, minorities, single-parents, or some other). Select at least two theoretical frameworks and discuss how they can contribute to the study of housing constraints that affect the population you have chosen.

4. Discuss, in as much detail as you can, Lawton’s ecological model of aging. Explain the main concepts of the theory. What contribution does the theory make to planning and providing housing for a frail older population? How does congruence theory relate to housing adjustment/adaptation theory?

5. Discuss the economic theory of the housing market. Explain the concepts of filtering and vacancy chains. Does housing conform to the assumptions of economists related to the nature of commodities and markets? How does Lawton’s theory relate to economic theory?

Examples of Focus on Subject Matter Questions

1. There is a widespread agreement that designers of multi-unit housing need a sound understanding of the behavioral aspects of housing design. Select and discuss five concepts critical to the designing of socially appropriate home environments. Give some examples of specific design solutions based on an understanding of each of these concepts. Identify and discuss the important research studies that have contributed to understanding the relationship between human behavior and the built environment.

2. Housing, as an area of study, seems to attract the non-traditional student. How would you design a housing curriculum at the University level to meet the needs of this type of student? List and discuss the criteria you would use to evaluate undergraduate and graduate curricula in housing for the non-traditional student. Is there any support in the literature for these criteria?

3. You have been given the job of reviewing the entire array of land-use regulations and their impact on the housing market in a large metropolitan area. Discuss how land-use regulations affect the availability, cost, and characteristics of the housing stock.

4. You have been asked to design a program that will educate designers and builders about the merits of adaptable design for aiding older persons to remain in their current housing. Discuss the concept of adaptable design, as you would present it in your program. Describe the specific design features that would need to be included to make the dwelling unit satisfactory.