Examples of Theory Questions

1. Discuss the theoretical literature related to human behavior and designed interior environments. You do not need to include all theories, rather, select two or three concepts, such as defensible space, meaning of place, territoriality, privacy, personal space, etc., and discuss the theory or theories that contribute to the study of each. Please address these concepts as they relate to the following questions:
   a. How is the concept a basis for understanding human behavior/human response to designed environments?
   b. How can we design for and predict human behavior based on these concepts?
   c. How can we evaluate a designed environment based on these concepts?
   d. What are the interactive effects of two or more of these concepts?

2. Discuss the theoretical literature related to human behavior and designed interior environments. You do not need to include all theories, rather select two or three concepts, such as defensible space, meaning of place, conflict, territoriality, privacy, personal space, etc., and discuss the theory or theories that contribute to the study of each. Please address these concepts as they relate to the following questions:
   • What are the major assumptions of the theory/theories?
   • How is it a basis for understanding human behavior/human response to designed environments?
   • How can we design for and predict human behavior based on these concepts?
   • Are the constructs of the theory/theories interactive? Explain and give examples.

3. Select one of the major theories used in interior design research or practice. Describe it, explain the basic assumptions that underlie it, discuss its usefulness, what types of problems it is used to solve, and what are its benefits and limitations. If would be best to give examples where possible.

Examples of Content Question

From the territoriality literature you have studied, select a research issue and develop a research proposal from it. If you have identified a specific research question for your dissertation, you may use it for this proposal. If you have not, please select one and develop it. Be sure to include the following:

• Clear, concise statement of the purpose
• Research question
• Rationale or importance for the study of this issue
• Theoretical orientation you will use
• Brief background review of the relevant literature
• Main hypothesis of the research project or any subhypotheses
• Research methods
  o Research design
  o Independent, dependent, and extraneous or intervening variables
  o Sampling, data collection
• Statistical analysis method and rationale
• Implications for use of the findings.

Identify a design trend that is occurring in residential design today, such as home offices, home theater, “cocooning,” computerized “smart houses,” or other trend. Outline the major components of a lecture that you would present to interior design and architecture students in a university course on Societal Trends that Affect Designed Environments. You must link the societal trend with the design outcome.

Example of Analysis Question

Systematically critique the attached article. Your critique should respond to the following questions:
1. Does the article state implicitly/explicitly the conceptual framework upon which the study rests?
2. Is the purpose of the article – the goal or rationale – clearly stated?
3. Identify the hypotheses of the study. Are the explicitly or implicitly stated?
4. Are the hypotheses conceptually clear?
5. What methods were used in the investigation? Were the procedures clearly defined? Was the method appropriate for testing the stated hypotheses? What were some of the shortcomings of the methods?
6. How were the results described/explained? Do the results support the hypotheses?
7. Does the summary/conclusion follow logically from the objectives and findings as described by the authors?
8. How can the findings be used in interior design practice, education, or as a basis for further research?

Example of Research Methods Question

Describe how you would carry out an evaluation of the effectiveness of the home office space. What variables would you consider? Who would be involved in the evaluation? What type of questions would be asked? How would you analyze the data collected? How would information gained from this evaluation be operationalized and put to good use? How frequently would you re-evaluate? Compare and contrast the necessity of day-to-day modifications made to improve the working space and a systemic, more formal, and more far-reaching evaluation.

Example of Statistical Analysis Questions

1. List the assumptions of analysis of variance. Describe a research question for which this is an appropriate statistical analysis. How does this approach differ from regression analysis?

2. Imagine that you have been given research contract by a very rich Middle Eastern government to do a post-occupancy evaluation of a recently built office building that houses the Ministry of Natural Resources. With the money, you have (among other things) conducted a survey of the occupants of the building. You have data on the age, sex, educational level, salary, size of office, amount of window area, the main colors in
the decorating scheme of the office, which side of the building the office is on, and the
level of satisfaction with the office on a scale from 0 (totally dissatisfied) to 10 (extremely
satisfied). Please write in as much detail as you can about how you would conduct an
analysis of the satisfaction scores using ordinary least square multiple regression. The
goal is to discover which of the social-demographic and the office characteristics
contribute the most to satisfaction.

There are no limits placed on how you would answer the questions. We would like to know what
it is that you know about data analysis. This is your opportunity to indicate whatever it is that
you know about data analysis using a specific statistical technique. You may answer in
statistical terms, methodological terms, and/or practical terms.