



**AFRICA**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
A United Methodist-Related Institution

***“Investing in Africa’s Future”***

**COLLEGE OF HEALTH, AGRICULTURE & NATURAL SCIENCES**

**REM 500: RESEARCH METHODS**

**END OF SECOND SEMESTER FINAL EXAMINATIONS**

**APRIL 2022**

**LECTURER: PROF L. DUBE**

**DURATION: 3 HOURS**

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***INSTRUCTIONS***

Do not write your name on the answer sheet

Use Answer Sheets Provided

Begin your answer for Each Question on a New Page

Credit is Given for Neat Presentation

## INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Answer QUESTION 1 and any other three from the remaining questions.

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### Question 1

Read the following case and answer the questions following it.

#### **Agriculture Insurance: The Key to Resilience for Smallholder Farmers**

“Agriculture is a risky enterprise due to its cyclical nature, risk of loss from fires and natural disasters and yet the uptake of insurance services in the agricultural sector is generally low as compared to other sectors of the economy like manufacturing, mining and services sectors across the world, and Zimbabwe is no exception. Farmers view insurance as an unnecessary expense rather than an investment to curtail future risk, especially given the small size of their holdings. Whether such a view is based on economic rationale or on mere opinions, is still a subject of debate in academia”.

As an agribusiness research consultant, you have been commissioned by the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, Climate and Rural Development to conduct a comprehensive study in the wake of lower uptake of agriculture insurance products by smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe.

Required:

- a) State an appropriate research title for the research. [3]
- b) Formulate the statement of the problem for the study. [4]
- c) “A research problem exists only if some conditions are met”. With reference to the research problem and the statement of the problem you provided above, highlight three salient features of a good statement of the problem. [3]
- d) Formulate three possible research objectives for the proposed study. [6]
- e) Discuss whether a positivist or pragmatist paradigm would provide the best approach for the study and justify the choice of the paradigm. [5]
- f) Develop a conceptual framework for the above problem, clearly indicating the various types of variables. [10]
- g) Identify the target population for your study and briefly describe how you would select the sample for the study. [5]
- h) Give four ethical considerations that you would bear in mind while conducting your research. [4]

### **Question 2**

Research may be considered as an *organized, systematic, data based, critical, objective, scientific inquiry or investigation into a specific problem*, undertaken with the purpose of finding answers or solutions to it. What are the five characteristics of scientific research? [20]

### **Question 3**

“During the last two decades, there has been a dramatic change in the agribusiness environment. The trend towards complexity has increased the risk associated with business decisions making it more important to have a sound information base”. In view of the above statement, discuss with suitable illustrations, the role of research in today’s organization? [20]

### **Question 4**

The choice of an appropriate research methodology in any research is often guided by theoretical, practical and ethical considerations. Discuss any five factors that influence choice of methodology in a research study. [20]

### **Question 5**

Critically analyze the role of literature review in agribusiness research. [20]

**End of Examination Paper**