APPENDIX A
CERTIFICATION EXAM: QUALIFYING PAPER

In a well-constructed essay of 15 - 20 double-spaced pages, discuss research and theory that help you understand an adult education topic/dilemma/issue that you are interested in researching. The purpose of this paper is to build an argument from relevant research and theory about the topic/dilemma/issue and implications for research and/or practice. Use APA style.

State of the Art
1. First describe the setting in which the topic/dilemma/issue is situated. What is the "state of the art" in this setting vis-à-vis this topic/dilemma/issue? What assumptions do you hold because of your own background and professional experience that influence your framing of the topic/dilemma/issue?

Research and Theory Base on Topic/Dilemma/Issue
2. How does a selected review of theory and research inform your 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 do we know from research and where are the gaps?
   * What critique has been raised?
   * What practices and pitfalls have been identified through research on the problem/issue?
   * How are solutions supported or blocked by the organization, institution, community or constituents?

Selected Research and Theory Base on Adult/Organizational Learning
3. Given what you have learned about adult and organizational learning theory describe
   * Which learning theory/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 this (these) theories when applied to the particular setting and/or topic/dilemma/issue you've identified?

Implications for Research and/or Practice - Critique & Assumptions
4. What conclusions do you draw in light of 1-3 above? What does your critique and suggestions reflect about the assumptions you hold with respect to practice and this particular dilemma? Depending on the topic/dilemma/issue, for example, you might discuss:
   * How does this review help you frame your research problem and questions?
   * What should be considered in implementation to address the issue, i.e., what would individuals as well as the setting have to do?
   * Would the culture of the setting have to change to support such an initiative? If so, how? If not why not?
   * How would you measure/assess successful implementation?