RGS6035.01   Theory & Application of Research Methods
Fall 2025
Location: Garland

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:
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COURSE INFORMATION:
RGS6035.01   Theory & Application of Research Methods
Level: Graduate
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, September 13, 2025
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 20, 2025
The first class meeting is September 15, 2025, in Room # 18 (Garland)

All Monday-Thursday lecture classes begin promptly at 6:30 p.m.
All Saturday lecture classes begin promptly at 8:30 a.m.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:
None

TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:
Title: Introduction to Research Methods: A Hands-On Approach
Author: Pajo, Bora
Publisher: SAGE Vantage
Year Published: 2023
Edition: 2nd
ISBN: 19781544391724 (electronic) 9781544391700 (paperback)
Price: Available at http://amberton.ecampus.com

Amberton University has an agreement with eCampus.com to provide a full-service online bookstore to students. The Amberton University Virtual Bookstore is accessible through the University's website, www.Amberton.edu. There is also a bookstore link in the Student Portal.

The AU Virtual Bookstore provides an easy to use interface, online buyback of books, and same day shipment of most titles with an average delivery time of 2-3 days depending on the student's location. Textbook options include new, used, rental, and electronic media as available.

Since no books are sold on campus, students should plan accordingly and purchase their books in advance of the first day of class, allowing time for shipping. Be certain you are enrolled in the course before purchasing your book(s). All textbook information (Title, Author, ISBN, etc.) is available in course syllabi so students can shop competitively. Most textbooks can be purchased from many different textbook vendors. Some textbooks may only be available on the University's Virtual Bookstore. Students should be careful to obtain the exact resource(s) required for the course.

APA Requirement

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences. This resource, revised according to the 7th edition, offers examples for the general format of APA research papers, in-text citations, endnote s/footnotes, and the reference page. For more information, please consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (7th ed.). All coursework at Amberton University will comply with the standards contained in the APA Publication M anual.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

This course presents the issues relevant to the understanding and application of research methods in the study of human behavior and organizational variables. It provides students with a comprehensive overview of both quantitative and qualitative data anal ysis methods, emphasizing the principles and practices of research methods across diverse fields. Special attention is given to conducting research online, equipping students with the skills to locate, analyze, and apply data from digital sources. Through this research methods course students will gain hands -on experience with the tools and techniques needed to succeed in today's data - driven environments.

UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE, THE STUDENT WILL BE COMPETENT IN:

1. Describing and discussing the research process and the scientific method.
2. Selecting procedures to locate unsolved research problems in given areas of interest.
3. Listing and describing the components of a sound research plan.
4. Writing hypotheses and research questions related to a given research problem.
5. Identifying ethical questions or principles in research situations.
6. Conducting literature reviews on a given topic.
7. Identifying sections of research reports indicating bias or contamination.
8. Describing and using appropriate sampling procedures.
9. Defining types of validity and reliability and their influence on research.
10. Identifying significant research methods.
11. Constructing and applying research questionnaires.
12. Evaluating threats to internal and external validity.
13. Creating experimental designs with specifications for random assignments.
14. Writing in APA format and achieving the intended purpose of research reports.
15. Understanding the available sources of data and their locations.
16. Demonstrating critical evaluation competencies in research.
17. Understanding how artificial intelligence (AI) can assist in data analysis and research methodology and evaluating the reliability of AI-generated research findings in professional environments.

ACQUIRED SKILLS:

1. Critical thinking in Research Methodologies
2. Data Analysis Using Quantitative and Qualitative Methods
3. Writing Structured Research Reports in APA format

COURSE POLICIES:

Read the entire syllabus carefully. All graded activities and tests will be administered through the Moodle learning management system, and access to course materials will be available on the first day of class. As a graduate student in an online course, the professor expects you to be able to meet submission deadlines listed in the course calendar, syllabus, and Moodle activities. All assignments must be submitted as specified in the Assignment Detailed Instructions (ADI) document, including file naming convention, file type, due date, or other noted detail. Points may be lost for failure to follow instructions.

Assignments may only be submitted during announced windows, and no late work or resubmissions are accepted without prior approval by the professor. All deadlines and class events are posted in Central Time Zone (US). All classwork must be completed and submitted fully no later than **Tuesday,**

November 18, 2025, at 6 pm (CST). If an emergency arises that prevents the student from submitting or meeting course requirements, the professor should be contacted promptly and may extend grace at their discretion.

Additional helpful forms and documents are available on the Moodle page for the course, most notably in the folder labeled Course Documents. Other helpful documents and resources will be posted in the weekly activity layout on the Moodle course page.

Student's Responsibilities

This syllabus contains information, policies, and procedures for a specific course. By enrolling, the student agrees to read, understand, and abide by the policies, rules, regulations, and ethical standards of Amberton University as contained in the current university catalog and schedule of classes.

Attendance Policy:

Regular and punctual class attendance and engagement is expected at Amberton University. In case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor as soon as possible. If a student intends on withdrawing from a course, it is the student's responsibility to follow the university's policy on formally withdrawing from a course. **Ceasing to attend classes does not constitute an official withdrawal.**

Attendance in a lecture course is defined as punctual arrival to, and engagement in, a full lecture session. A Student in a lecture course missing more than 20% (two class periods for weekday classes or one class period for Saturday classes) of the class meetings may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

Attendance in a distance learning course is defined as active participation in the weekly online class sessions. "Active participation" can be defined as: submitting an academic assignment, taking an exam, engaging in an interactive tutorial, participating in an online discussion forum (or chat session), or initiating (or responding to) a communication with a faculty member about an academic assignment or the subject matter of the course. A student not meeting these requirements may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as though it were your own. If you use another person's words, ideas, or information; or if you use material from an outside source – whether a book, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, or electronic media – you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism is a violation of the University's code of student ethical conduct and is one that is taken seriously. Amberton University operates on an honor system; therefore, honesty and integrity are essential characteristics of all who are associated with the institution. All Amberton students are expected to abide by the honor system and maintain academic integrity in all their work. Amberton University and its instructors monitor student work for plagiarism and reserve the right to submit such work to technology - based plagiarism detection services and applications at any time.

Self-plagiarism means reusing work that you have already published or submitted for a class. It can involve:
- Resubmitting an entire paper
- Copying or paraphrasing passages from your previous work

Self-plagiarism misleads your readers by presenting previous work as completely new and original. Students may not submit the same paper in substance in two or more classes without prior written permission of the instructors involved.

Amberton University students who use Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content must adhere to the following policies:

Originality: Students must avoid presenting AI generated content as their own original work. It is essential to acknowledge the involvement of AI in the content creation process in order to maintain academic and ethical standards.

Paraphrasing: When using AI generated content, students must rephrase and/or modify the generated text. Paraphrased AI generated content should also be properly cited.

Acknowledgement: When using AI generated content in any assignment, proper credit must be given to the AI system that generated the content. https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt

Students agree that by taking this course, all required assignments may be subject to submission for a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism and self-plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in future papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Turnitin is a writing improvement and plagiarism prevention tool which uses special algorithms, to compare text-based student submissions to the Turnitin database and other online sources. Turnitin produces a detailed **similarity report**   that can be customized and viewed by instructors and students.

Turnitin "Draft Coach" is a Google based add-on to Turnitin which supports students in developing high-quality academic writing; and serves as an integrity coach. Draft Coach helps address errors and improve the quality of student's writing by highlighting grammar mistakes, identifying incorrectly cited sources, and scanning for similarity across several databases. By providing formative feedback on how to address citation issues, incorrect grammar, and matches with the Turnitin database, Draft Coach provides explanations to help students become more confident writers, capable of producing higher quality work both in academics and in the workplace.

COURSE DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:
This course is offered as a Lecture/Classroom course. This course requires that students meet at a designated time in the classroom.

(Describe the kinds of activities that will be used in the classroom: lecture, group presentations, oral reports, written reports, research papers, etc.)

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:
Outline the course with topics and learning activities required to gain knowledge of course competencies. Include number of assignments required, etc. Describe the kind of activities that will be used in the classroom, lecture, group presentations, oral reports, written reports, research papers, etc.

The course outline is the critical component of the course. It is in the outline that topics and learning resources are brought together. Aside from a personal lecture, the course outline should sufficiently inform the student of all information (type, source, and important dates that will be learned in the course. Do not include the actual assignment and exercises within the syllabus, but do include important dates, activities, schedule, as well as examination dates.

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date

1 Sep 13 - 19, 2025	Class Introductions, Course Overview, Use of Social Research, APA format, & QEP email	Ch. 1 The Purpose of Research Ch. 1 Quiz	1, 2, 3, 6, 10	Sunday night for quizzes by 11:55 pm
2 Sep 20 - Sep 26, 2025	APA Style, Paper Sections, Citations, Formatting tutorial Topic Selection	Moodle readings on APA	3, 4, 5, 13	Discussion Post/Declaring Topic of Interest
3 Sep 27 - Oct 3, 2025	Library Orientation, searching, tools, Information Organization MBTI/QEP videos	**ASSIGNMENT 1**	4, 5, 6, 8	**ASSIGNMENT 1** (2 parts) Due by Saturday, Oct 4, 2025 at 11:55 p.m. Learning Style paper
4 Oct 4 - Oct 10, 2025	Statement of Purpose, Interviewing, Quantitative or Qualitative or Mixed processes	Ch. 2 Formulating a Research Question Ch. 3 Researching & Writing the Literature Review Chapter Quizzes	1, 2, 6, 11	Sunday night for quizzes by 11:55 pm
5 Oct 11 - Oct 17, 2025	Quant designs, measurement, errors, validity	Ch. 4 Quantitative Designs Ch. 5 Measurement Errors, Reliability, Validity Chapter Quizzes	1 – 15	Sunday night for quizzes by 11:55 pm

6 Oct 18 - Oct 24, 2025	Data Collection and Analysis, Sampling, Results, Plagiarism	Ch. 6 Sampling Ch. 13 Results and Discussion Chapter quizzes	9, 12	Sunday night for quizzes by 11:55 pm
7 Oct 25 - Oct 31, 2025	Big Data, ProQuest Psychology, Presenting Research	Ch. 14 Presenting Your Research Ch. 15 Big Data Chapter quizzes **ASSIGNMENT 2**	7, 9, 10	Sunday night for quizzes by 11:55 pm **ASSIGNMENT 2** Due by Saturday, Nov 1, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. Quantitative Journal Article
8 Nov 1 - Nov 7, 2025	Quantitative designs, measurement, errors, validity	Ch. 7 Data Collection for Quantitative Research Ch. 8 Secondary Data Chapter quizzes		Sunday night for quizzes by 11:55 pm
9 Nov 8 - Nov 14, 2025	Qualitative Designs and Data Collection	Ch. 11 Qualitative Designs and Data Collection Ch. 12 Entering, Coding, and Analyzing Qualitative Data Chapter quizzes	1 – 15	Sunday night for quizzes by 11:55 pm
10 Nov 15 - Nov 20, 2025	Complete course evaluation by due date in Moodle	**Final Exam**		**Final Exam** Due Tuesday, Nov 18, 2025 at 11:59 pm.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Grading for the course is summative, in that the score on each assignment is added to all previous scores. The final grade is an accumulation of all the points awarded for assignments up to a maximum of 700 points. The grading policy for the course is included below:

Assignment #1 *100 points (14.29% of final grade)* Due by 11:59 pm (CST) Saturday, October 4, 2025 (Learning Style Paper)

Assignment #2 *100 points Due (14.29% of final grade)* by 11:59 pm (CST) Saturday, November 1, 2025 (Quantitative Journal Article Review)

Final Exam 100 points *(14.29% of final grade)* by 11:59 pm (CST) Tuesday, November 18, 2025 (will open Saturday November 15, 2025 at 8:00 am)

13 Quizzes 130 points *(18.571% of final grade)* (10 points each)

Discussion Posts 270 points *(38.571% of final grade)* (30 points each)

Additionally, multiple online quizzes will be given over APA format rules, readings, and lectures to earn another possible 300 points toward the course point total.

<u>TOTAL POINTS FINAL GRADE</u>
644 - 700 A
643 - 574 B
573 - 504 C
503 - 434 D
433 and Below F

NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED Tuesday, November 18, 2025 AT 6 PM

Acceptance of late work or extra credit assignments is at the discretion of the professor. Students unable to meet the course requirements should contact the professor promptly and directly concerning late work or extra credit. **Late work or extra credit are only granted in emergency circumstances by the professor.**

QEP: MY LEARNING STYLE
The Amberton University Quality Enhancement Plan, "My Learning Style," is designed to give Amberton students the opportunity to explore their own adult learning style and its impact on the learning process. This course contains an assignment designed to achieve that goal. To complete the "Learning Style" assignment, student will take the MBTI and discover their adult learning style and then review related journal articles. Each student will complete a brief 3-page reflection paper about their experience with the "My Learning Style."

GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:
Each assignment/exam submitted will be reviewed, graded, and returned to the student in a timely manner, along with appropriate commentary.

Final grades are processed approximately one week after the last day of the session and may be located in the My Grades section of the online registration portal as well as being emailed to the student's Amberton University email. Amberton University staff will not release grades over the phone. University instructors will not leave a message with comments or grades in any type of media that is not secure.

For questions regarding grades after the semester has ended, students should use their email account and contact the instructor at the faculty email address as provided above in *Professor Information* area.

Incomplete Grades

An "I" (incomplete grade) is given at the discretion of the professor and may be given only when an emergency or illness prevents the student from completing course requirements. Should an "I" be granted, the student has 30 days from the end of the sessio n to complete the conditions of the incomplete. An "I" which is not properly removed within 30 days following the session enrolled will become an "F" grade.

How to Withdraw From a Course

To be official, the class withdrawal must be in writing and signed by the student requesting the withdrawal; no withdrawal is accepted verbally. Please review the "Schedule of Classes" for procedures for class changes or withdrawals and the refund policy and schedule.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:

This course is offered as a lecture course; however, several technological options are available to faculty and students that can enhance communication both during the session and after the session has ended. The **Student Portal** is the gateway to email, Remote Research and General Tools. The Student Portal may be accessed through a link on the University's website, http://www.Amberton.edu, or at http://apps.Amberton.edu.

After selecting the "Student Portal" link, you will be prompted for a Username and Password.   Use your assigned **username and password** (AUID) as described below:

Username = your capitalized firstname **initial** +lastname+last 3 digits of your SSN.

> * Use your name exactly as it is listed on the University's records, including any suffixes or hyphenations, such as Jr, Sr, or II, as a part of your username.

>> For example: James Jones, Jr.   SSN: 123-45-6789
>> Username: JJonesJr789

Password = your Amberton University ID# (AUID)**including the dashes**

>> For example: 04-999-999

Once your login has been validated, you may select from a variety of menu options, including online course materials, email access, Remote Research, General Tools, all Syllabi, and Research Tutorials.

Email Communication

Each student enrolled is assigned an Amberton email account, which gives the student access to the Amberton email system (my.Amberton.edu). This email account is provided by Google Apps for Education. Students are encouraged to check their email regularly for University news, notices, and to communicate with instructors.

The student's assigned email address would be Username@my.Amberton.edu

> Example: LJones-Smith789@my.Amberton.edu

The student Username is determined by:

> firstname initial+lastname+last 3 digits of student ssn.

> For example: Linda Jones-Smith   SSN: 123-45-6789

Email Address = LJones-Smith789@my.Amberton.edu

Students will be prompted for a Username and Password when accessing their email account. Use the Username portion of the email address as the username (Example: LJones-Smith789) and your Amberton ID# (including the dashes) as the password.

If you already have a Google Gmail account, you might be prompted to add this account to your current settings. Click 'Yes' and you will be logged into your my.Amberton.edu email account. It will be a separate email account from your personal Gmail account.

If you need assistance with your email account, please visit https://support.google.com/mail

The Amberton University Moodle Website
Students enrolled in this course will also be using the Moodle Learning Platform, with access available through the Student Portal or by going to: http://moodle.Amberton.edu

For those utilizing Moodle for the first time, the **username and password** for the Moodle Learning Platform will be emailed to the student's email account prior to the start of the course. For those returning to Moodle who do not remember their username and password, click on the link " *Forgotten your username or password*" available on the Moodle log in page (http://moodle.Amberton.edu). Otherwise use the same username and password as previous session.

Moodle Tutorial:
Upon successful log in and access to the Moodle learning platform, there is a *Student Moodle Tutorials* course available, to learn about the basics of Moodle. Simply click on the link for the *Student Moodle Tutorials* and read through the various learning topics: Navigating; Communicating; Assignments & Exams; Grades; and Student Resources.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:
Each session, all Amberton students are requested to evaluate their courses. The evaluation process is an important one and provides students with an anonymous and confidential way to give meaningful feedback to the University. Summary information and com ments are provided to faculty after the close of the session. Students' identities are not disclosed.

Students will be notified through the Amberton email system of the Course Evaluation procedures. Usually, the evaluations take place in class during week 9 of the session. Please take advantage of this opportunity and participate in the evaluation proces s.

RESEARCH RESOURCES:
The Library provides access to full-text, and peer reviewed articles, and digital research tools. Students can search Library holdings through the online catalog and databases search engines available on the Library website or browse the physical library space and holdings located at the Garland campus.

Research items not contained in the Amberton Library collection can be located through interlibrary Loan (ILL) or through the TexShare program with the help of the Library staff. Students with questions about available services, resources, or research, may contact the Library via email at Library@amberton.edu.

RESEARCH ACCESS:
Databases can only be accessed by authorized users, and students at Amberton must enter their Amberton ID credentials-same as Moodle login-to gain access when off-campus. Use an Amberton website, such as

the University site (Amberton.edu) or the library site (Library.amberton.edu) to find links to databased and digital books. Online resources are available all day, every day.

Library Live Chat Feature

Library staff are available to assist students with research problems or questions during Library hours through a live online chat feature, telephone, email, "How-to" videos, or in person. The library telephone is (972-279-6511 ext. 185. You can email questions to library@amberton.edu or visit the library in person on the Garland campus for assistance.

Microsoft Office 365 Education:

Amberton University students have access to a license for Office 365 Education, a comprehensive suite of productivity tools. This package includes:
• Microsoft Word for document creation
• Excel for spreadsheets and data analysis
• PowerPoint for presentations
• OneNote for digital note-taking
• Microsoft Teams for collaboration
• Additional classroom tools to enhance your learning experience
To set up your student account and access these resources, please follow the instructions provided in our step-by-step guide: https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Office365_Setup_Students.pdf

Google Workspace for Education:

All students are assigned a Gmail account in Google Workspace for Education.

To set up your student account and access these resources, please follow the instructions provided in our step-by-step guide: https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Google_Drive_Students.pdf

Once logged into your student account, you'll have access to a suite of tools designed to enhance your learning experience:
- Google Docs: Create and edit essays, reports, and other written assignments
- Google Slides: Develop engaging presentations for projects and class discussions
- Google Sheets: Perform data analysis, create charts, and manage calculations
- Google Drive: Store, organize, and easily access all your files in the cloud
- Google Calendar: Schedule study sessions, track assignment deadlines, and manage your academic timetable
- Google Keep: Take and organize quick notes during lectures or study sessions
- Google Meet: Attend virtual classes, participate in group study sessions, or meet with teachers
- Google Classroom: Access course materials, submit assignments, and receive feedback from instructors
- Google Forms: Create surveys for research projects or participate in class quizzes
- Google Sites: Build websites or digital portfolios to showcase your work