

AMBERTON UNIVERSITY
SYLLABUS FOR LECTURE/CLASSROOM COURSE

RGS6035.01 Theory & Application of Research Methods
Spring 2026

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

Name: Stacia' Alexander, PhD, LPC-S
Phone Number: 972-279-6511 ext. 246
Faculty Fax#: 972-686-5890
Office Location: Garland
Email Address: salexander@amberton.edu

COURSE INFORMATION:

RGS6035.01 Theory & Application of Research Methods
Level: Graduate
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, March 14, 2026
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, May 21, 2026

Room: Garland, Room 16

Student access available to the Student Portal: Saturday, March 14, 2026.

Students enrolled in distance learning courses are not assessed any additional fees for security or identity verification.

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 the 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, endnotes/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 Manual.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

The following represents the course competencies for this class. Competencies are equivalent for all lecture and distance learning courses. Following each competency is the assignment used to gain mastery of this area of study.

The course presents the issues relevant to the understanding and application of research methods in the study of human behavior and organizational variables. Aspects of conducting research, methodologies for analysis, and studying and preparing a research project are covered.

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, May 19, 2026, 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. 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 dropped 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. Please see below for instructions.

Please see below for instructions.

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.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

The calendar is the road map for the course, informing the student of the topics to be covered, learning activities for each week, due date of assignments, and overview of the subject. Reading assignments, online quizzes, online videos, and other web-based activities will be posted in the Moodle course by weeks. A course calendar of due dates and activities is located in the Course Documents folder in the Moodle course.

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
WEEK 1 March 13 - 20, 2026	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

WEEK 2 March 21 - 27, 2026	APA Style, Paper Sections, Citations, Formatting tutorial Topic Selection	Moodle readings on APA	3, 4, 5, 13	Discussion Post/Declaring Topic of Interest
WEEK 3 March 28 - April 3, 2026	Library Orientation, searching, tools, Information Organization MBTI/QEP videos	ASSIGNMENT 1	4, 5, 6, 8	ASSIGNMENT 1 (2 parts) Due by Saturday, April 4, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. Learning Style paper
WEEK 4 April 4 - April 10, 2026	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
WEEK 5 April 11 -April 17, 2026	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

WEEK 6 April 18 - April 24, 2026	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
WEEK 7 April 25 - May 1, 2026	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, May 2, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. Quantitative Journal Article

WEEK 8 May 2 - May 8, 2026	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
WEEK 9 May 9 - May 15, 2026	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

WEEK 10 May 16 - May 21, 2026	Complete course evaluation by due date in Moodle	Final Exam		Final Exam Due Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 11:59 pm.
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All work with the exception of the final exam must be submitted by Tuesday, May 19, by 6 pm. The final exam must be completed by Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 11:59 pm.

Graded assignments are marked in Moodle with an asterisk (*).

Students must access graded assignments via the links in Moodle only.

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, January 10, 2026 (Learning Style Paper)

Assignment #2 100 points Due (14.29% of final grade) by 11:59 pm (CST) Saturday, February 14, 2026 (Quantitative Journal Article Review)

Final Exam 100 points (14.29% of final grade) by 11:59 pm (CST) Tuesday, February 24, 2026 (will open Saturday February 21, 2026 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.

TOTAL POINTS FINAL GRADE

644 - 700 A

643 - 574 B

573 - 504 C

503 - 434 D

433 and Below F

NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED May 19, 2026 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."

Graduate
92 – 100 A
82 – 91 B
72 – 81 C
62 – 71 D
Below 62 F

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 university 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 session 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" (online or in-print) 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.

This lecture course utilizes several technological tools to enhance communication among faculty and students, both during and after the session.

- Email Access via Single Sign-On (SSO):

You must use your SSO credentials to access your email.

- **Access the SSO Gateway:** The Student Portal can be accessed through a link on the University's website at <http://www.Amberton.edu> or directly at <http://sso.amberton.edu>.

- Moodle Messaging:

For quick, course-specific communication, please utilize the messaging feature available within Moodle. This is often the fastest way to reach your instructor or classmates regarding course topics.

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.

SINGLE SIGN-ON (SSO) INSTRUCTIONS FOR AMBERTON UNIVERSITY

Amberton University uses a Single Sign-On (SSO) portal to provide secure, one-time access to various systems like Moodle, Amberton Email (Gmail), and Campus Web.

Here are the step-by-step instructions for logging into the SSO portal:

1. Access the SSO Portal

You have two main ways to reach the login page:

- Direct URL: Open your web browser and go directly to the SSO login page:

<https://sso.amberton.edu>

- Via University Website (Alternative):

1. Go to the Amberton University website: <http://amberton.edu>.
2. Click the menu icon (often represented by 3 horizontal bars typically found on the right side of the screen).
3. Click the SSO Login link.

2. Enter Your Credentials

When prompted, enter your Amberton University credentials:

- Username: This is the same as your University email account name (the part before @my.Amberton.edu).
 - Format: Your capitalized first name initial + your entire last name + the last three digits of your SSN.
 - Example: If your email is JSmith789@my.Amberton.edu, your Username is JSmith789.
- Password: This is your Amberton University ID # (AUID), and it must include the dashes.
- Example: 07-999-876

3. Set Up Multi-Factor Authentication (Initial Login Only)

- First-Time Users: During your initial log-in, the system will prompt you to set up Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) for added security.
- Follow the on-screen steps to establish your preferred authentication method (e.g., text message, or an authenticator application like Google Authenticator).

4. Access Your Applications

- Once successfully logged into the SSO portal, you will see a dashboard with icons or links for the various applications you can access.
- Click on the application you wish to use (e.g., Moodle, Gmail, or CampusWeb), and you will be taken directly to it without needing to log in again

If you have lost or do not know your University email address or have access issues, please contact the IT Help Desk at:

(972-279-6511 ext. 128

e-sysop@amberton.edu

The Amberton University Moodle Website

Students enrolled in this course will also be using the Moodle Learning Platform, with access available through the Single Sign On (SSO) Login page 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 comments 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 process.

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

Turnitin Draft Coach

Instructions for Accessing Turnitin Draft Coach in Google Docs

Turnitin Draft Coach is typically available as an add-on or extension within Google Docs, allowing you to check for similarity, citations, and grammar *before* final submission.

Important Pre-requisites:

- Institutional Access: Draft Coach must be licensed and enabled by your school or institution's Turnitin and Google Workspace administrators. If you cannot find the extension, contact your instructor or IT support.
- Account: You must be signed into Google Docs using your institutional/school email account, not a personal Gmail account, for the extension to appear and work correctly.
- Document Type: The document must be a native Google Doc (not an uploaded .doc, .docx, or .pdf file opened in Docs). If you have another file type, copy and paste the text into a new, blank Google Doc.

Step-by-Step Guide

1. Open Google Docs: Sign in to your institutional Google account and navigate to Google Docs.
2. Open Your Document: Open an existing assignment draft or start a new document and paste your writing into it.
3. Access the Extension: In the top menu bar of your Google Doc, click on Extensions.

4. Select Draft Coach: Hover over or click Turnitin Draft Coach, and then select Turnitin Draft Coach again from the submenu.
 - o *Note: If the option does not appear immediately, refresh your page and try again.*
5. Draft Coach Panel: The Draft Coach panel should now appear on the right-hand side of your screen.
6. Get Started: The first time you open it, you may need to click a "Get Feedback" or similar button, and you will likely need to read and accept the Terms and Conditions to continue.
7. Run Reports: Once loaded, you can select the tabs or cards in the panel to run different checks:
 - o Similarity Check: Checks against Turnitin's database. (*Note: You typically have a limited number of checks for similarity, often three.*)
 - o Citations Check: Analyzes your document for correct citation and referencing practices.
 - o Grammar Guide: Provides feedback on grammar and mechanics (usually US-English rules).

You are now ready to use Turnitin Draft Coach to review and improve your writing!