

AMBERTON UNIVERSITY
e-COURSE SYLLABUS

RGS6035.E1 Theory & Application of Research Methods
Fall 2026

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

Professor: Dr. John Sinclair
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COURSE INFORMATION:

RGS6035.E1 Theory & Application of Research Methods

Level: Graduate

Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, September 12, 2026

Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 19, 2026

Student access available to the Student Portal: Saturday, September 12, 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: Research Methods: The Essential Knowledge Base
Author: William Trochim, James P. Donnelly, Kanika Arora
Publisher: N/A
Year Published: 2016
Edition: 2nd
ISBN: 13: 9780357692684
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:

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 analysis 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:

Late Assignment Policy: All assignments must be turned in by the due date by 11:59 CT. Any assignment submitted after the due date will automatically lose a letter grade unless arrangements are made with the instructor. All assignments submitted after the second week they are due will automatically receive a failing grade unless arrangements are made with the instructor. No assignments will be accepted after the last day of class unless an extension is granted by the instructor.

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.

Please see below for instructions.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
1	Introduction, Ethics	Read Chapters 1-2; Class Introductions (graded); Discussion Board 1 (APA 7) Quiz 1,2	1,3,4,6	Sunday, September 20
2	Qualitative Approaches to Research	Read Chapter 3 Discussion Board 2 Quiz 3	1,3,4,6	Sunday, September 27
3	Sampling	Read Chapter 4 Discussion Board 3 Quiz 4 Writing Assignment 1	2,5,8	Sunday, October 4
4	Introduction to Measurement, Scales, Tests, and Indexes, Survey Research	Read Chapters 5-7 Discussion Board 4 Quiz 5, 6, 7	2,8-9,12	Sunday, October 11
5	Introduction to Design, Experimental Design, QuasiExperimental Design	Read Chapter 8-10 Discussion Board 5 Quiz 8, 9, 10	10-13	Sunday, October 18
6	Introduction to Data Analysis: Foundations of Data Analysis	Read Chapter 11 Discussion Board 6 Quiz 11 Writing Assignment 2	10-13	Sunday, October 25
7	Inferential Analysis	Read Chapter 12 Discussion Board 7 Quiz 12	10-11,13,15	Sunday, November 1
8	Communicating Research	Read Chapter 13 Discussion Board 8 Quiz 13 Start Working on Literature Review	7,10-11,13	Sunday, November 8
9	Writing an APA Style Research Report	Discussion Board 9 Complete Literature Review	6-7,1,4	Sunday, November 15
10	Conclusions on Research Methods	Discussion Board 10 – Reflection	6	Wednesday, November 18

GRADING CRITERIA:

Grades are based on a point total with the maximum points totaling 1000. Each discussion board (including the Introduction) is worth 25 points and full points will be awarded for a substantive initial post of at least 300 words plus citations/references by Thursday 11:59 PM CT, and a reply to at least two classmates of at least 150 words each with commentary to drive the conversation forward by Sunday 11:59 PM CT. Discussion Board 10

– Reflection is the only one that has all posts due by Wednesday at 11:59 PM CT since it is the last week of class. There will be 13 quizzes (one for each chapter to test your knowledge), worth approximately 20 points each (260 points total). There will be 2 writing assignments worth 100 points each. The final project (literature review) will be worth 210 points. Your grade will be computed by taking the total points earned out of 1000, and the percentage will align with the scale below.

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

GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:

Students should review instructor feedback provided through Moodle or Amberton CampusWeb Portal. Final grades are processed after the session and may be viewed through the student portal. Grades will not be released by phone or through unsecured channels.

Incomplete Grades

An "I" (Incomplete) grade is granted only at the professor's discretion for emergencies or illness.

Students have 30 days from the end of the session to complete the course requirements. If the conditions are not met within this 30-day window, the "I" automatically converts to an "F".

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 DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:

This course is delivered through Moodle. Students are expected to have reliable internet access, basic computer skills, the ability to upload/download files, use Amberton email, and submit assignments in the required format. Students needing assistance should use the Amberton SSO support/ticket process.

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR COURSE:

SINGLE SIGN-ON (SSO) INSTRUCTIONS FOR AMBERTON UNIVERSITY

Students should access Amberton systems through the Single Sign-On portal at <https://sso.amberton.edu>. After logging in, students can access Moodle, Amberton email, CampusWeb, and other assigned applications. Students who need help accessing SSO should submit a support request through the SSO support option or contact support@amberton.edu.

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.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:

Students will communicate with faculty through the Moodle Learning Platform or the Amberton University email system.

Email Communication

Students are expected to use their Amberton email account and Moodle for course communication. Students should check Amberton emails regularly for course and university notices.

Upon completion of a session, all communication and course specific information is removed from the Moodle system. If a student needs to maintain a record of communications or assignments, the student is strongly encouraged to print out or download these items to a disk for their own records.

FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments must be submitted through the appropriate Moodle assignment link unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are responsible for submitting files in the format required by the instructor.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:

Students will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous course and instructor evaluation near the end of the session. Instructions and dates will be provided through Moodle and/or Amberton email.

RESEARCH RESOURCES:

The **Amberton Library** provides access to full-text articles, peer-reviewed databases, and research tools, with options like Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and TexShare for items outside its collection. For research assistance, students can connect with library staff during operating hours via email (Library@amberton.edu), phone (972-279-6511 ext. 185), "How-to" videos, live online chat, or in person at the Garland campus.

MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 EDUCATION:

Amberton University students may access Microsoft 365 Education resources as provided by the university.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE FOR EDUCATION:

Amberton students are assigned a Google Workspace for Education account, including Amberton Gmail, Google Drive, Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides. Students should use their Amberton Google account for course-related work when required.