

AMBERTON UNIVERSITY
e-COURSE SYLLABUS

RGS7005.E1 Qualitative Research & Statistics in Counseling
Fall 2026

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

Professor: Dr. Jackie Johnston
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Amberton Email : **JJohnston@Amberton.edu**

COURSE INFORMATION:

RGS7005.E1 Qualitative Research & Statistics in Counseling
Level: Doctoral
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, September 12, 2026
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 19, 2026

Student access is 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.

PREREQUISITES:

None

TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Title: Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods
Author: Allison Hurst
Publisher: ecampus.oregonstate.edu
Year Published: 2023
Edition: 1.0
ISBN: 10: None or 13: None
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Students should verify enrollment in course before purchasing textbooks. Textbook information and ordering options are available through the Amberton Virtual Bookstore. 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.

LINK TO DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (Ed.D.) IN COUNSELING STUDENT HANDBOOK
[Student Handbook](#)

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 doctoral-level course provides counseling scholars and practitioner-researchers with an advanced understanding of qualitative research methodology and its integration with statistical reasoning in counseling inquiry. Students will explore the philosophical, ethical, and methodological foundations of qualitative research, learning to design, analyze, and evaluate studies that contribute to evidence-based counseling practice.

Emphasis is placed on rigorous design, ethical research practice, reflexivity, and integration of

emerging AI-assisted data analysis tools to enhance qualitative research workflows. Through structured weekly assignments culminating in a simulated IRB-approved research proposal, students will develop competencies necessary for independent qualitative research at the doctoral level.

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

1. Formulating research questions and designing qualitative studies that align with the questions and objectives of the research.
2. Performing various qualitative data collection methods, such as interviews, focus groups, ethnography, and observations.
3. Employing qualitative data analysis techniques, including coding, thematic analysis, and narrative analysis, to interpret qualitative data.
4. Understanding ethical issues in qualitative research, including informed consent, confidentiality, and the impact of research on participants.
5. Conducting comprehensive literature reviews to situate research within existing scholarship and identify gaps.
6. Critically evaluating qualitative studies, including assessing rigor, credibility, and transferability to findings.
7. Understanding of the researcher's positionality, biases, and influence on the research process and outcomes.
8. Writing qualitative research reports and communicating findings effectively to both academic and non-academic audiences.
9. Understanding qualitative research data analysis software (CAQDAS) for data management and analysis, including the intentional integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., AI-assisted transcription, coding, sentiment analysis, and pattern recognition) to enhance efficiency, accuracy, and insight in qualitative research workflows.
10. Applying relevant theoretical frameworks to the design and analysis of qualitative research, enriching the study's conceptual foundations.

ACQUIRED SKILLS

1. Designing Qualitative Research
 - Formulate research questions and align study design with counseling objectives.
2. Data Collection & Analysis
 - Conduct interviews, focus groups, and observations; analyze data using thematic and narrative techniques.
3. Ethical Research Practice
 - Apply ethical principles, including informed consent and confidentiality.
4. Technology Integration
 - Use qualitative research software and **AI tools** for transcription, coding, and data visualization.
5. Scholarly Communication
 - Write and present qualitative findings effectively to diverse audiences.

COURSE POLICIES:

All assignments are due according to Moodle due dates. Late work may be accepted at the discretion of the instructor, so view the due dates in Moodle as the last possible moment for submission. Late Work: Assignments up to 3 days late incur a 10% deduction unless prior arrangements are made. No extra credit or makeup work will be given. Participation is through emails, Moodle messaging, and discussion forums. Chats are NOT mandatory but may be very helpful.

STUDENTS' 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 OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

This 10-week doctoral course guides students through the full arc of qualitative research in counseling contexts — from philosophical foundations and research design through data collection, analysis, and final proposal submission. Each week builds on the last, with scaffolded assignments that progressively develop the skills needed for independent qualitative inquiry. A detailed week-by-week schedule with due dates and discussion forums is also provided in the Moodle LMS.

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
Week 1 Sept 12	Introduction to Qualitative Inquiry in Counseling Ch. 1	Discussion: Counseling issue suited for qualitative inquiry Short Paper (2-3 pp.): My Epistemological Stance	1, 4, 10	Sept 17, 2026
Week 2 Sept 19	Research Design & Theoretical Frameworks Ch. 2-3	Draft research questions aligned with counseling topics Identify & justify a theoretical/conceptual framework	1, 10	Sept 24, 2026
Week 3 Sept 26	Research Questions & Literature Reviews Ch. 4, 9	Annotated bibliography (5 peer-reviewed qualitative studies) Draft Statement of Problem & Purpose of Study	1, 5, 10	Oct 1, 2026
Week 4 Oct 3	Sampling, Reflexivity & Researcher Positionality Ch. 5-6	Reflexivity Journal #1: Who am I in relation to my research question? Draft Sampling section for proposal	5, 6, 7	Oct 8, 2026
Week 5 Oct 10	Ethics & IRB Simulation Ch. 7-8	IRB Simulation Packet (study purpose, consent	4, 7	Oct 15, 2026

		form, risk/benefit statement)		
Week 6 Oct 17	Data Collection Techniques in Counseling Research Ch. 10-13	Semi-Structured Interview Guide for your study Practice Interview (simulated) with peer reflection	2, 4, 7	Oct 22, 2026
Week 7 Oct 24	Data Management & Intro to Qualitative Analysis Ch. 17-18	Upload short, fictionalized transcript into CAQDAS or AI-coding tool Codebook draft (5-7 preliminary codes)	3, 9	Oct 29, 2026
Week 8 Oct 31	Advanced Coding & Thematic Analysis Ch. 19	Mock Data Analysis Report (3-4 pp.) using coded data Peer critique of another student's analysis	3, 6, 9	Nov 5, 2026
Week 9 Nov 7	Writing & Presenting Qualitative Findings Ch. 20	Draft Results & Discussion sections of proposal Research Poster or Slide Deck summarizing key findings	3, 6, 8	Nov 12, 2026
Week 10 Nov 14	Value of Qualitative Research & Final Submission Ch. 21	Final Qualitative Research Proposal (12-15 pp.) with all sections Final Reflection Journal: How has your view evolved?	1 - 10	Nov 19, 2026

GRADING CRITERIA:

Component	Description	Weight
Weekly Assignments & Discussions	Reflective journals, discussions, and short application papers tied to weekly readings.	40%
IRB Simulation & CAQDAS Exercises	Completion of ethics simulation and qualitative data analysis exercises using NVivo, ATLAS.ti, or similar software.	20%
Peer Review & Participation	Constructive engagement in discussion forums, peer	10%

Final Qualitative Research Proposal	feedback, and virtual sessions. Comprehensive proposal integrating design, methods, ethics, and analysis sections (12–15 pages).	30%
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Doctoral	
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 approximately one week after the session and may be viewed through the student portal. Grades will not be released by phone or through unsecured channels. 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 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 Tutorial course available, to learn about the basics of Moodle. Simply click on the link for the Student Moodle Tutorial 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 communications. Students must use their official university email account for all university related communication and should check their 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. The online library is available through Single Sign On (SSO).

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.