RGS6035.E1 Theory & Application of Research Methods
Fall 2019

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:
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COURSE INFORMATION:
RGS6035.E1 Theory & Application of Research Methods
Level: Graduate
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, September 14, 2019
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 21, 2019
Student access available to the Student Portal: Saturday, September 14, 2019.

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: An Invitation to Social Research How It’s Done
Author: Emily Stier Adler & Roger Clark
Publisher: Cengage Learning
Year Published: 2014
Edition: 5th
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 6th edition, second printing of the APA manual, 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, (6th ed., 2nd printing). 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 research, 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 that relate to a given research problem.
5. Identifying aspects of a research situation that involve ethical questions or principles.
6. Conducting a review of the research literature on a given topic.
7. Identifying sections of research reports and aspects of research design that indicate possible bias or contamination.
8. Describing, discussing, and using appropriate sampling procedures.
9. Defining and illustrating the types of validity and reliability and their influence on the research process.
10. Identifying and discussing the major methods of research.
11. Applying procedures and guidelines for constructing questionnaires.
12. Critically evaluating possible threats to the internal and external validity of a research project.
13. Creating commonly used experimental designs, including specifications for random assignment, formulation of experimental and control groups, and use of pretests and posttests.
14. Writing a document that employs correct grammar, mechanics, and diction; follows APA format for research reports; and achieves the intended purpose of the document.
15. Understanding the available sources of data and where they can be located.

COURSE POLICIES:
Read the entire Syllabus carefully. This is an on-line class administered through the Moodle Course Management System. Access to this e-course website will be available on the first day of class. All assignments must be submitted by 11:30 pm (CST) on the dates listed to ensure no penalty points will be applied. The student is responsible if a file is submitted that cannot be read and therefore cannot be graded. No work will be accepted after NOON on November 15, 2019. Any assignment received after the deadline will be penalized 10 points; after 3 days an additional 10 points will be deducted for a total 20-point deduction. No work will be accepted after one week past the due dates unless approved by the professor.

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 is expected at Amberton University. In case of 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 does not constitute official withdrawal.

Attendance in a Distance Learning course is defined as any submission to Moodle within the enrollment dates of the course, any required submissions outside of Moodle within the enrollment dates of the course, or initiating any communication with your professor regarding an academic assignment. A student in a Distance
Learning course is required to actively participate in the course and submit course assignments timely as described in the course syllabus. A student not meeting these requirements may be dropped at the discretion of the professor and Amberton administration.

**Plagiarism Policy**
Plagiarism is using another person’s work as your own. Plagiarism is a violation of the University’s code of student ethical conduct and is one that is taken seriously. Amberton University operated on an honor system, and honesty and integrity are essential characteristics of all who are associated with the institution. All Amberton University students are expected to abide by the honor system and maintain academic integrity in all of their work. Amberton University and its instructors monitor student work for plagiarism and reserve the right to submit such work to technology-based anti-plagiarism services and applications at any time.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Competencies Covered</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Class Introductions Use of Social Research</td>
<td>Read Chapters 1 &amp; 2 and Focal Research pgs. 192-194 and 206-212.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Scientific Method</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Research Topics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>APA Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Research Project Proposal Overview Experimental and Survey Design APA</td>
<td>Review Research Tutorials and Chapters 8&amp;9.</td>
<td>3, 4, 5, 13</td>
<td>Assignment #1 Due September 24, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ethics and Social Research Sampling</td>
<td>Review Chapters 3&amp;5.</td>
<td>4, 5, 6, 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Questionnaires and Interviewing Statement of Purpose</td>
<td>Review Chapter 8 and information regarding Review of Literature.</td>
<td>1, 2, 6, 11</td>
<td>Assignment #2 Due October 8, 2019</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Review of Literature</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Study Design Questionnaires Interviewing</td>
<td>Review Research Project Proposal Design and develop Statement of Purpose.</td>
<td>2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Investigating</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Data Collection and Analysis</td>
<td>Develop Review of Literature.</td>
<td>9, 12</td>
<td>Assignment #3 Due October 22, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Research Results and Measurements</td>
<td>Review Data analysis from Literature Review.</td>
<td>8, 9, 11, 13, 14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Learning Styles ProQuest Psychology</td>
<td>Complete the My Learning Style Reflection Paper. Develop Methods and Budget for Research Project Proposal.</td>
<td>7, 9, 10</td>
<td>Assignment #4 (Reflection Paper) Due November 5, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Complete Research Project Proposal</td>
<td>Complete Research Project Proposal.</td>
<td>1-15</td>
<td>Assignment #5 Due November 12, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Review Feedback</td>
<td>Review Feedback</td>
<td>1-15</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
GRADING CRITERIA:

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, students 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” project.

GRADING CRITERIA:
Assignment #1 20% Due by 11:30 pm (CST) Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2019 (Written Questions)
Assignment #2 20% Due by 11:30 pm (CST) Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2019 (Written Questions)
Assignment #3 20% Due by 11:30 pm (CST) Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2019 (Research Proposal Intro)
Assignment #4 20% Due by 11:30 pm (CST) Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2019 (Reflection Paper)
Assignment #5 20% Due by 11:30 pm (CST) Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2019 (Complete Research Proposal)

NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER NOON ON NOVEMBER 15, 2019

Equivalent Scores on Letter Grading
A+ = 100
A = 96
A- = 92
B+ = 91
B = 86
B- = 82
C+ = 81
C = 76
C- = 72
D = 67

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

GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:
A successful distance learning experience requires a flow of communication between instructor and student throughout the session. Instructor comments are considered essential to the learning process. Therefore, each assignment/exam submitted will be reviewed, graded and returned to the student in a timely manner along with the appropriate commentary. Students should carefully review all comments.

Final grades are mailed approximately one week after the last day of the session to the student’s address of record. Amberton University staff will not post or 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 DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:
This course is offered as a distance-learning course through the Moodle Learning Platform. Amberton’s distance learning courses, called e-Courses, are identical to classroom courses in terms of learning outcomes, competencies, and instructor expectations. A student choosing to take an e-Course must have the following skills and technical capabilities:

1. Access to the Internet
2. General knowledge in:
   - Internet browser settings and configuration
   - e-mail and file attachments
   - Uploading and downloading files
   - Using a word processing package
3. Ability to conduct on-line research

Students who have not mastered these skills should not enroll for this course, but should consider enrolling in MIS2110 Computer Concepts and Internet Technologies for instruction in these areas.

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR COURSE:

Through the Amberton University Student Portal
Students enrolled in distance learning courses using the Moodle Learning Platform may access the course through the Amberton University Student Portal. The site may be accessed through the University’s main page (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 to enter the AU Student Portal:

*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 your individual E-Course, email account, Remote Research, General Tools, all Syllabi, Research Tutorials and Electronic Instructor Folders (FTP).

If you are accessing the Student Portal from a public or shared computer, close the browser completely when finished, or click on the Logout button. For security purposes, no other person should have access to your Username or Password. If you feel your information has been compromised or if you experience technical difficulties, contact the e-course system administrator at: e-sysop@amberton.edu
If you have lost or do not know your Amberton ID#, please contact the Student Services Office 972/279-6511 or advisor@Amberton.edu for a replacement AUID card. You must know your Amberton ID# to gain access to the course and to send email to your professor.

**Through the Amberton University Moodle Website**

Students enrolled in distance learning courses using the Moodle Learning Platform may also access the course 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 University 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.

**COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:**

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

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 account. 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

**Students are responsible for reviewing the “Communication Guidelines” provided on the individual E-Course for specific instructor requirements.**

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 are to be submitted to the appropriate assignment Drop Box in the Moodle system. Specific
directions and guidelines for submission of assignments are located on-line in the “Communication Guidelines”
of the e-course. Due to compatibility issues, Office 2007 files cannot be read by earlier versions of Microsoft
Office. Before submitting an exercise file, confirm the file is in the proper format for grading by the instructor.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:
Each session, all Amberton students are provided with the opportunity to evaluate their courses and
instructors. 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. All information provided is anonymous.

The Instructor/Course Evaluation will be open for completion during week 9 of the session. An evaluation
assignment will be placed in week 9 of the Moodle course, along with the instructions on how to complete the
evaluation. Prior to week 9, the University will send out an email containing instructions and dates for the
evaluation period.

ACADEMIC HONESTY/PLAGIARISM:
Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s information as though it were your own. If you use another
person’s words, ideas or information, or if you use material from a source – whether a book, magazine,
newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, or electronic media – you must acknowledge the source.
Failure to do so violates Amberton University’s ethics policy.

RESEARCH RESOURCES:
The student is encouraged to use the Amberton Electronic Library as a research resource for this course. The
Electronic Library provides access to full-text and abstract articles as well as links to a variety of remote
research tools. Students can search Amberton Library Resource Center holdings through the on-line public
access circulation system. The physical library contains a specialized collection of research materials
specifically chosen to support the degrees and courses offered at Amberton. Interlibrary loan and document
delivery services are available. The TexShare Card offers borrowing privileges in libraries all across the state
of Texas. Students with research questions or questions about Library services are encouraged to visit the
Library or email their questions to library@Amberton.edu.

RESEARCH TUTORIALS:
Online research resources are available through “Research Tools Database”, accessible through the Student
Portal. (For additional assistance, students may access the “Research Tutorials” link located in the General
Tools area on the Student Portal.) Access the Portal by clicking “Student Portal” from the University’s website.
You must know your Amberton ID to access the Portal.

Library Live Chat Feature
The website allows for a live chat feature with librarians on the library pages. This service allows students to
connect with librarians on questions regarding resource assistance, searching data bases and access to library
services.  www.amberton.edu/current-students/library/index.html