Instructor: Jen Wallin-Ruschman  
Office Hours in Bowen 216: Mon. & Wed. 5-6:30; Tues. & Thur. 9:30-11 and 12:15-2, and by appointment  
Email: jwruschman@abac.edu I prefer to be emailed directly at this address (please do NOT email me through D2L)  
Office Phone: (229) 391-5092

How to address me? I’m fine with Jen, but if you want a more formal title then Dr. Jen is good. I really don’t care for Ms. or Mrs. and no need to say Wallin-Ruschman.

Overview:  
Welcome! This outline provides you a resource to consult for frequently asked questions. Read it completely before our second class meeting and consult it throughout the quarter. This course will provide students with an overview of social science research methods emphasizing critical thinking and practice. This course will explore the foundations of research methods and elaborate on topics such as: quantitative & qualitative research methods, measurement, ethics, sampling, survey research, and quantitative & qualitative data analysis. Class time will include discussions, presentations, activities, group work, lecture, videos, and/or other interactive material.

Course Objectives:  
By the end of this course, students should be able to:  
1. Understand social science research methods and be able to collect, analyze, and interpret data.  
2. Apply stated research questions, develop/propose and defend appropriate research methods and procedures for data collection and analysis  
3. Adapt social science research methods to practical settings  
4. Understand the ethical considerations of the research process  
5. Produce practical and usable solutions to issues facing communities  
6. Produce a research proposal  
7. Document sources using APA style

Pre-requisites/Co-requisites:  
It is recommended that students complete MATH 2000 (statistics).

Course Requirements:  

Desire 2 Learn:  
This course will rely on the D2L system (https://abac.view.usg.edu/) as an additional resource for learning. I will be using D2L to post additional readings, slides, links, grades, and
announcements. D2L is also a place to continue in-class discussions. I sometime send important announcements out through D2L so please check it daily.

Turnitin.com:
For this class all written assignments (except the introduction and closing assignments) are to be submitted electronically to turnitin.com. When you register for turnitin.com use the class code 8150912 and password dumbledore.

Classroom norms:
This course will rely heavily on active participation from students. To have a productive learning environment, I believe it is essential to promote a respectful class climate. Some guidelines to keep in mind in accomplishing this goal are: speak from your own experience, engage thoughtfully with the content of the class, do not expect yourself or other class members to speak as a representative of a social and/or cultural group. Differences of opinion are welcome, as they help us to re-examine our own thinking. You should always maintain respect for opinions differing from your own and practice confidentiality if other students choose to share personal information. In addition, please avoid side conversations, texting/cell phone use, off topic computer work, and other behavior that is distracting to me and other students. These guidelines are just a starting point, on the first day of class we will work together to develop a set of classroom guidelines. It is also expected that you come to class having read the assigned text and be prepared to discuss the text each and every class period.

Instructor norms:
I am committed to facilitating your learning of course material. Please fill free to contact me by email or speak to me after class or during office hours about any questions or concerns you have. You can generally expect me to respond to emails within 48 hours during the week. Also, I will make every effort to return assignments in a timely manner. Expect assignments to be handed back one to two weeks after they are taken/submitted.

Office Hours:
My office hours are listed on the first page of the syllabus. If my designated office hours do not work with your schedule feel free to email me so we can find an alternate time to meet. If you have a question about the material, want to review your exam, or have a concern about any of the assignments – please come by office hours.

Ethical Behavior:
Students are expected to maintain a high standard of personal ethics. Any evidence of cheating, helping others to cheat, or plagiarism will lead to serious academic consequences, such as zero credit for associated work, and/or failing the course. To avoid plagiarism on written assignments students must use citations and references when they quote or paraphrase the work of other authors, including our text.

College Policy on Academic Dishonesty:

Academic Dishonesty: Academic irregularities include, but are not limited to, giving or receiving of unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any academic assignment; taking or
attempting to take, stealing, or otherwise obtaining in an unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the education process; selling, giving, lending, or otherwise furnishing to any person any question and/or answers to any examination known to be scheduled at any subsequent date; fabricating, forging, or falsifying lab or clinical results; plagiarism in any form related to themes, essays, term papers, tests, and other assignments; breaching any confidentiality regarding patient information.

Disciplinary Procedures & Appeals Process: Incidents which violate this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the current procedures outlined in the College Catalog and Student Handbook. Students will have the right to appeal any disciplinary decision.

Attendance
Attendance is essential to this course as much of the course time will be spent on in-class activities and discussions that require your presence.

Missing Class
When you miss a class meeting you should utilize your peers to get notes and handouts from the class. You do not need to let me know when you are missing class and please do not email me to ask what you missed in class or “if we did anything important.” Everything we do in class is important.

Late Assignments
Late assignments will be marked down one letter grade for every day they are late. So, if you wrote a “B” paper, and turn in it one day late, you would receive a “C”.

Student Resources:
Disability Accommodations
If there is a student in this class who has specific needs because of learning disabilities or any other disability, please feel free to contact the instructor.

Weather Hotline: In case of inclement weather during class we will move to the safety of the designated shelter. If you have experienced inclement weather and want to check on the ABAC status for class meetings, check the ABAC website or call the Inclement Weather Hotline: 229-391-5225

Other:
If you feel there is something about you that might impact your experience in this class that I should be aware of, please let me know. If anything arises during the term, please speak to me as soon as possible. These policies are firm but not rock-hard (i.e., things happen). I encourage you to contact me sooner rather than later if you are having any sort of issue that affects your completion of the course.

Grading Scheme:
Class Participation & Attendance: 100 points
Exams (2 x 100 points): 200 points
Community Research Proposal: 150 points
Small Assignments: (5 x 10 points) 50 points  
Methodology Presentation 50 points  
Total: 550 points

Letter grades are based upon total points earned.  

Assignments:

Class Participation and Attendance (100 points)  
Attendance and participation are essential components of this class and all college courses. We will strive to create a classroom atmosphere in which open dialog and communication is comfortable and encouraged. Please ask questions, offer observations, and suggest alternative perspectives during class. Participation will also make up a portion of your grade and will be divide among the following three categories.

I. Introduction Assignment (10 points)  
On the first day of class you will write a statement (about a page or two) about why you are taking this course (your objectives), what you want to learn, and some information about yourself (e.g., major, your future goals).

II. Participating in class discussions & activities, filling out exit cards, and bringing discussion questions (80 points)  
This course will include discussions and activities designed to increase your understanding of the material. ALL portions of in-class time (including lecture) require active engagement for you to learn. Additionally, it is important that you read the assigned readings BEFORE you come to class. This will not only allow you to participate, but also help you comprehend the material, which will set you up to do well on class assignments.

To be awarded the full 80 points for participation in this course you must come to class AND be an active participant by participating in the following THREE ways:

1. Being active in class discussion and activities by contributing your voice and being a vocal participant in both large and small group discussions and activities. Asking questions is also a great way to be an engaged class member. Further, you cannot be engaged if you are on your phone or doing off topic work on your computer- so please avoid these activities that are distracting to yourself, myself (yes, I can see you), and other class participants.

2. In addition to active participation, daily reflection cards or Exit Cards will be collected. These will be written on index cards during the last few minutes of class. Each exit card should include a brief reflection on the day, which might include some combination of answers to the following questions:
   i. What did you learn?  
   ii. What are you confused about?  
   iii. What went poorly?  
   iv. What went well?
You will need to put your name on your exit cards so I know you are turning in thoughtful responses. These cards not only let me know you are attending class and are an engaged class participant, but also help me be a better teacher and make the class the best it can be.

3. **You should bring 2 discussion questions to every class period that has assigned readings.** These discussion questions should address issues in the chapter and/or readings assigned for that day. Some days I will collect discussion questions and on other days I will ask individuals to ask their discussion question to help stimulate class discussion on the readings. Your questions should address some aspect of the reading you found interesting, confusing, or problematic.

Your 80 potential points in this category will be assigned utilizing the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>72-80</td>
<td>Actively participates every week. Asks questions and brings up discussion points without having to be prompted. Discussion questions are exceptionally thoughtful and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the readings. Completes high quality class activities and thoughtful exit cards. Attends at least approximately 90% of classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>64-71</td>
<td>Actively participates each week. Demonstrates an understanding of the readings on a weekly basis. Discussion questions are relevant, and demonstrate an understanding of the readings. Completes the class activities and exit cards. Attends at least approximately 80% of classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>56-63</td>
<td>Participates each week. Engages with the week’s topic and readings although some gaps in understanding may be evident. Listens but rarely comments. Occasionally does not have discussion questions prepared. Only completes some of the class activities. Attends at least approximately 70% of classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>48-55</td>
<td>Does not participate actively. Responds to direct questions but does not volunteer opinions. Comments reveal only surface level understanding of the readings/topic. Rarely has prepared discussion questions. Does not volunteer information and lack of preparation may be evident. Does not complete class activities. Attends at least approximately 60% of class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 47</td>
<td>Does not participate in class. Is distracted in class (e.g., on phone, side conversations, off topic computer work). Does not read before class and does not have discussion questions. Attends approximately 50% or less of classes.</td>
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**III. Closing Assignment (10 points)**

On the final day of class you will bring in a short response (approximately 1-2 pages) detailing your experiences in the course. Specifically, some examples of what you took away from the course, what you would do differently if you took the course again, and what I could do differently if I taught the course again. There is no right or wrong answer, the assignment is simply intended to facilitate reflection on what you have taken away from this course and help me improve the course in the future.

**Take Home Exams (100 points x 2= 200 points)**
The first exam will cover the material from the first part of the course (see schedule for exact chapters and topics). The second exam will cover the material in the second half of the course (i.e., no exams will be cumulative). The exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and written response questions. Exams will be given out in class and students will have 4 to 6 days to finish the exam (see the attached schedule for days the exams are handout and days the exams are due).

The multiple choice and true/false aspects of the exam will be submitted in scantron format in person on the due date. The written response portion of the exam will be submitted on turnitin.com on the same due date.

Community Research Proposal (50 points + 100 points= 150 points)

For this assignment you will design a research project with a local community or community organization that you have connections with. If you have connections with a community organization through a practicum or internship you may work with them for this project. Alternatively, if you need help connecting with a community organization I will offer some resources early in the semester. It is possible for a group of individuals to work with the same community (if the community agrees). However, you should carry out an individual aspect to the project. If you plan to work in a team or group I recommend you meet with me so we can discuss the division of labor. Also, each individual will need do a different project and turn in a separate research proposal paper.

For this semester you will just be conceptualizing and designing your research project and connecting it to a community identified need. Ideally, you will carry out this project after the term is over, potentially as your capstone project.

This assignment has three parts.

i) Before submitting your preliminary proposal you must receive approval from me on your project. This can be done by scheduling a meeting with me. There is no deadline for this but you MUST have approval before I will accept your preliminary proposal. The earlier you meet with me the more time you will have to make necessary edits to submit a good proposal.

ii) In the middle of semester (see attached schedule for exact date) you will turn in the first half of your research proposal (i.e., your preliminary proposal) on turnitin.com. This will include:

Introduction, Literature Review, and Research Questions or Hypothesis (7-10 pages)

This preliminary proposal is worth 50 points.

This section will include: working title, introduction, aims, objectives, justification, review of the literature, and research questions and/or hypothesis. Pages 52-58 of your Gray text provide more information on each of these sections and chapter 5 provides additional information on conducting and writing your literature review. Your proposal should be specific to the community you are working with and meet some of their identified needs.
For the literature review you need 4-5 peer-reviewed journal articles related to your topic. A literature review doesn't simply summarize each article. Instead, it shows how all of the articles tie together, how they relate, and how these relations lead to your hypothesis.

iii) At the end of the semester (see attached schedule for exact date) you will turn in your full research proposal on turnitin.com. This will include your revised preliminary proposal (7-10 pages) as well as a second section that will include:

Methodology, Analysis, & Discussion (7-10 page preliminary proposal + 3-5 new pages)

You final proposal is worth 100 points.

This new section will include: description of research methodology, time frame/time table, sampling strategy & participants, data collection instruments/measures, data analysis plan, ethical considerations, discussion, limitations, and related material (e.g., interview schedule or survey). Pages 58-62 of your Gray text provide more information on each of these sections. Additionally, you should utilize the chapters that provide more detailed information on the methods that you choose to employ. Any measures or instruments you plan to use should be included as appendices in your document and do not count towards your page total. Keep in mind that the point of this section is to communicate how measures/instruments, the design and, the participants help to answer your question and/or test your hypothesis.

For the analysis plan, discuss how you intend to analyze your data. What are your independent and dependent variables? What statistical test(s) might you use to analyze them? If you’re doing a qualitative study, how will you code and analyze your data? Chapters 22 or 23 should be very useful depending on the type of data you are using.

The discussion is where you talk about what you expect to find, as well as the implications of your study. This means explaining what you think you will find or learn from your study and interpreting what your anticipated outcomes mean. This is also the place to elaborate on how your idea contributes to the field of study and the community. Also, discuss the limitations in your research design- no study is perfect!

Your final paper will be 12-15 double spaced pages and be in APA format (title page, reference pages, and appendices are necessary but do no count towards your page total).

Methodology Presentation (50 points)

After students have had a chance to meet with their community partners and begin to develop their research proposal, we will divide into 4 groups corresponding to 4 textbook chapters:

1. Designing Descriptive and Analytic Surveys
2. Designing Case Studies
3. Designing Evaluations
4. Action Research and Change

Ideally, you will work on the chapter that most closely aligns with the methodology you will be using for your research proposal. However, we need at least 3 individuals to work on each chapter.
Each group will facilitate one class period (75 minutes) on their assigned chapter. The 50 points will be awarded from: 20 points from peer evaluation, 20 points from my evaluation, and 10 points from other group member evaluation. The grading rubric for each of these aspects will be posted in D2L. You should NOT try to cover the entire chapter in one day. Rather, you should pick the concepts from the chapter that you find most interesting, important, or confusing and concentrate on those. **Groups should not lecture** for the entire class but should utilize other creative ways of facilitating learning (e.g., activities).

**Small Assignments** (10 points x 5 = 50 points)
Throughout the semester, I will assign small tasks to complete outside of class. These assignments are given to increase your understanding of course material by applying course concepts outside of the classroom. Small assignments may involve completing an activity and then writing a short paper (~1 page), taking a short quiz, or something else. I will assign 7 of these throughout the semester, and you must complete 5. Because I will be assigning more of these than are required, **I will not allow makeup or late assignments.** To receive credit you must turn in a copy by the specified deadline. **All assignments are to be submitted electronically via turnitin.com.**

**Extra Credit:** (up to 10 pts)
This term we will cover a wide range of topics, each of which people dedicate their entire lives to understand. As such, I do not know everything. If someone asks a question in class that the instructor or another classmate is unable to provide a satisfactory answer to, then you will be given an opportunity to independently research the question. To receive any credit you must submit your findings in writing (at least 2 double spaced pages) by the date indicated in the schedule. You should be using at least one scholarly source for your response. Students may be encouraged, but not required, to spend a few minutes presenting their results in class. There may be opportunities for this throughout the term but there is designated time during the last week of class.

**Grade Disputes:** All grade disputes must be submitted in writing. The written grading dispute should clearly articulate your justification, or principled argument, for the grade adjustment.
NOTE: This schedule is subject to change. It is your responsibility to stay aware of any changes.

**Thursday, August 14th**: No class 
*(convocation)*

**Tuesday, August 19th**: Review syllabus and Classroom Guidelines 
Readings on D2L: Syllabus

**Thursday, August 21st**: Introduction 
Gray: Intro.- Pgs. 2-11 & start Theoretical Perspectives 
Gray: Ch. 2- Pgs. 16-29

**Introduction Assignment Due**

**Tuesday, August 26th**: Continue Theoretical Perspectives & Research Methodologies 
Gray: Ch. 2- Pgs. 29-38

**Thursday August 28th**: Planning Research 
Gray: Ch. 3- Pgs. 40-62

**Tuesday, September 2nd**: 
*Discuss Research Proposal Assignment* 
*Learn to Search for Literature*

**Thursday, September 4th**: Using Literature 
Gray: Ch. 5- Pgs. 98-118

**Tuesday, September 9th**: Research Ethics 
Gray: Ch. 4- Pgs. 68-95

**Thursday, September 11th**: Research Ethics 
Readings on D2L: A perspective on ethical issues in community psychology. (Snow, Grady, Goyette-Ewing, 2002).

**Group Presentation Sign-Ups**

**Tuesday, September 16th**: Quantitative Methods 
Gray: Ch. 6- Pgs. 128-145

**Thursday, September 18th**: Quantitative Methods 
Gray: Ch. 6- Pgs. 145-158

**Tuesday, September 23rd**: Qualitative Methods 
Gray: Ch. 7- Pgs. 160-167

**Thursday, September 25th**: Qualitative Methods 
Gray: Ch. 7- Pgs. 168-188

**Tuesday, September 30th**: Mixed Methods 
Gray: Ch. 8- Pgs. 190-198

**Thursday, October 2nd**: Mixed Methods 
Gray: Ch. 8- 198-205 
& Sampling Strategies 
Gray: Ch. 9- Pgs. 208-215

**Tuesday, October 6th**: Sampling Strategies 
Gray: Ch. 9- Pgs. 215-234

**Give Out Exam 1** (Introduction, Chs. 2, 4, 6-9)

**Thursday, October 9th**: Group Presentation-Designing Surveys 
Gray: Ch. 10- Pgs. 236-264

**Friday, October 10th at 5pm**

**Exam 1 Due**

**Thursday, October 16th**: Group Presentation-Designing Case Studies 
Gray: Ch.11- Pgs. 266-294

**Tuesday, October 21st**: Group Presentations-Designing Evaluations 
Gray: Ch. 12- Pgs. 296-326

**Thursday, October 23rd**: Group Presentations- Action Research and Change 
Gray: Ch. 13- Pgs. 328-348

**Preliminary Proposals Due**

**Tuesday, October 28th**: Questionnaires
Thursday, October 30th: Questionnaires
Gray: Ch. 14- Pgs. 370-380

Tuesday, November 4th: Interviewing
Gray: Ch. 15- Pgs. 382-409

Thursday, November 6th: Observations
Gray: Chs. 16 & 17- Pgs. 412-419, 422-423,
Table 16.6 (pg. 428), 430-432, 438-439, 441-446, 448-456

Tuesday, November 11th: Focus Groups
Gray: Ch. 18- Pgs. 468-496

Thursday, November 13th: Unobtrusive Measures & Secondary Analysis
Gray: Ch. 19 & Ch. 20- Pgs. 498-505, 514-534.

Tuesday, November 18th: Analyzing Quantitative Data

Thursday, November 20th: Analyzing Quantitative Data
Gray: Ch. 22- Pgs. 554- 572

Tuesday, November 25th: Analyzing Qualitative Data
Gray: Ch. 23- Pgs. 572-599

Tuesday, December 2nd: Analyzing Qualitative Data
Gray: Ch. 23- Pgs. 602-624
Closing Assignment Due
Give Out Exam 2
(Chs. 14-20, 22, & 23).

Wednesday, December 3rd at noon
Final Research Proposal Due

Monday, December 8th at noon
Exam 2 Due