

# HONR 3380 (online)

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## Catalog Description

This course is a practicum course in honors to allow students to do experiential learning within their respective disciplines. Prerequisites: 6 credits of undergraduate honors.

## Required textbook

None.

## Instructor Description

A practicum course affords students the opportunity to do the kinds of things they have learned in principle. It is, in short, learning by doing, or experiential learning. You have a choice of four practicum options (see below). All four options lead students to a more practical sense of what they have studied in their coursework, and importantly, each asks students not only to engage in practice for a semester but also to adequately reflect on and analyze that practice through journal entries and a final reflection/analysis assignment.

## Practicum Options

Each of the four options below should engage students in about 8-9 hours each week. This figure is not an arbitrary number; it corresponds to the amount of time a student would be expected to spend on any upper-level course at UTRGV.

1. **Research Practicum:** This option asks students to assist a faculty member in his or her research project(s). Students should choose to work with faculty they already know and who agree to mentor them during the semester. Note: the faculty member should be tenured or on the tenure track, those some exceptions can be made in unique circumstances.
2. **Internship:** This option allows students to receive academic credit for work they complete during an official internship, which can take place on campus, locally, state-wide, or nation-wide. An internship appropriate for HONR 3380 is one that lends itself to academic analysis and reflection, ideally but not necessarily related to the student's course of study and career plans. Students should have a faculty mentor from UTRGV who helps guide their analysis and reflection. NOTE: Students awarded an Archer Fellowship may substitute three hours of HONR 4680 for HONR 3380.
3. **Service Practicum:** This option asks students to involve themselves in a service-learning project for the entire semester. This may include work with existing organizations such as Habitat for Humanity or an animal shelter, though it might also include the development of a service project from the ground up (ideally one that serves the greater RGV community). Students should spend approximately 8-9 hours per week involved in this service work, and they should have a faculty mentor who helps facilitate their work.

4. Teaching Practicum: This option awards students credit for assisting a UTRGV instructor with his or her teaching in an undergraduate course. Ideally students would work with an instructor teaching a lower-level course that the student has already taken and excelled in. Students negotiate teaching duties with the instructor, though the duties should be those that lead to academic analysis and reflection about teaching experiences (as opposed to, say, doing nothing more than helping the instructor grade student work).

### Required Coursework

During the semester in which the practicum is taken, students should keep a weekly journal in which they document and reflect upon their practicum experiences. At the end of the semester, students will be asked to compose a larger assignment in which they reflect more deeply on these experiences and their connection to other courses and professional development. The weekly journals should assist in the preparation of this larger reflection assignment, which is described below.

### Reflection Assignment

The culmination of HONR 3380 involves a reflective writing assignment that allows students to think deeply and critically about their practicum experiences. The paper should be in a narrative format and should adhere to MLA or APA style guidelines if outside sources are cited. Always use specific examples to support your reflective narrative. Since you were asked early in the semester to keep a reflective journal, the reflection assignment should easily be able to pull examples directly from the journal.

This reflection assignment has three main goals. It should (1) document what you learned and gained from the practicum, (2) discuss how the practicum allowed you to put into practice knowledge and/or theories you learned in the classroom and how the practicum influenced your views on classroom book learning, and (3) explain how the practicum helped you shape or re-shape your understanding of your future profession and career goals. An introduction section should provide a brief summary of your practicum experience (where it took place, what title you held, your supervisor's name and position, when you worked, etc.). You do not necessarily have to complete these tasks in strict order. You may weave your responses throughout the assignment in whatever way you wish, as long as you ultimately are working toward all three assignment goals.

Please bear in mind that this assignment factors into your grade for HONR 3380. Importantly, please recognize that it is by no means a pro forma assignment that automatically lead to an "A" for the course. This is a formal writing assignment that should be written clearly, thoroughly, and correctly. You may divide it into sections if you wish. It will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. How thoroughly and deeply does the reflection assignment address the three goals listed above?
2. How well does the reflection assignment rely on specific examples from the practicum experience to support its points?
3. Is the reflection assignment written clearly and correctly (free of grammatical, spelling, and mechanical errors)?

Please note the following guidelines that you should follow when submitting this reflection assignment at the semester's end:

1. The reflection assignment should fall between 1000-1250 words.

2. The reflection assignment should be submitted as a pdf to me at [mark.andersen@utrgv.edu](mailto:mark.andersen@utrgv.edu) by 5:00 PM on Thursday of exam week. Your practicum supervisor will need to fill out and submit an evaluation form by the same deadline.

## UTRGV Policy Statements

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. **Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at [ability@utrgv.edu](mailto:ability@utrgv.edu). **Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at [ability@utrgv.edu](mailto:ability@utrgv.edu).

### MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD:

Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (<http://my.utrgv.edu>); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available late in the semester.

### SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY:

As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE:

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at [www.utrgv.edu/equity](http://www.utrgv.edu/equity), including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

## COURSE DROPS:

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.