University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
College of Health Affairs  
School of Rehabilitation Services and Counseling  
Fall Semester, 2017

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Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays: 3:00pm to 4:30pm and by appointment

Course Title: Practicum I  
Course Number: REHS 4330.05

Class Time: Thursday: 4:40pm - 7:10pm  
Classroom: Health Affairs Building West 2.110


Course Description
This course is designed to provide an orientation to practicum experiences in the Rehabilitation Services program and is an integral part of the curriculum for rehabilitative services students preparing for entry into REHS 4602 (clinical practicum). Student will secure a placement in a rehabilitation service agency or human service/community-based program to acquire an early, practical, field-based experience. Students will focus on priority clinical issues and will provide a concentrated study in specific areas in rehabilitative services.

Additional Information:
Students will review the process for setting up a practicum placement, understand professional requirements of an interview, and complete a series of critical thinking and reflective assignments. Through a series of structured assignments and activities, students will integrate their field experiences with classroom activities. Students will understand practicum expectations and responsibilities, methods of evaluation, and the importance of professionalism in the work place.
**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Students will secure a pre-practicum placement by successful completion of a resume, letters of reference, and skills in interviewing.

2. Demonstrate the ability to explore rehabilitation careers and develop affiliations with community agencies through collaborative efforts with agencies and related professionals. (C.3.2, C.3.7)

3. Demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking skills and decision making skills. (C.4.1)

4. Demonstrate high standards of professionalism by adhering to work site schedule, informing supervisor of tardiness or absences, and meeting the goals of the learning objectives with supervisor.

5. Demonstrate the ability to develop professionally by exploring a personal paradigm for helping consumers. (C.3.3)

6. Develop effective communication through written, oral, and presentation skills in the classroom and at the pre-practicum site. (C.4.5, C.4.6)

7. Demonstrate the ability to identify Federal, state and community resources for consumers.

8. Demonstrate the ability to obey the law and know, understand and practice professional/ethical behavior. (C.6.2)

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will have served the community through a minimum of 50 hours of field-based experiences:

1. Assist human service consumers with making decisions; identifying alternative supports, and explaining possible outcomes.

2. Be knowledgeable about confidentiality, informed choice, and ethical professional behavior.

3. Assess the benefits of various approaches to supporting vulnerable populations

4. Seek out current information on human, legal, and civil rights to make appropriate referrals on behalf of client.

5. Understand terminology related to the field of human services and to demonstrate fluency in use and application.

6. Demonstrate understanding of individual assessment and family dynamics.
7. Incorporate relevant information into short and long term goals for human service consumers.

8. Be knowledgeable of consumer rights and client advocacy.

9. Be aware of what educational requirements, licensing, and long term training needs are necessary to stay current in the field.

10. Provide others with information about self-advocacy, job training, and rehabilitation programs to support personal growth and development.

11. Identify causes of burn out and the need to integrate wellness strategies in delivering human services.

12. Be able to reflect and demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving strategies as it applies to servicing vulnerable populations.

UTRGV Policy Statements

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**
Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.

**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.

**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.

**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:** Fall 2017 Nov. 15 – Dec. 6.
ATTENDANCE:
*Attendance records will be maintained by the instructor.* Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

**Attendance-Related Special Polices**
- Students are expected to arrive to class on time and return from breaks on time. Late arrivals interrupt the learning processes of fellow students. Students who are repeatedly tardy to class will be asked to drop the course.
- Students are expected to stay for the entire class period. Leaving class early interrupts the learning processes of fellow students and should be reserved for unusual circumstances. Students who repeatedly leave class early will be asked to drop the course.
- You will be allowed one (1) unexcused absence.
- Five (5) points will be deducted from your final grade for each additional absence.

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 of November 15. 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.

**Late Assignments**
Late assignments will not be accepted without prior consent of the instructor. If prior approval is obtained from the instructor, a 10 point penalty per day will be assessed to the grade of that assignment. If the assignment is not submitted on the agreed upon date, the student will receive a grade of zero (0) points for that assignment. If you are having difficulties with an assignment, please see me.

**Course Requirements**

1. **Group Supervision**
   This course is conducted as a seminar where students come together weekly and are supervised in a group. The instructor and students will share responsibility for preparing for and facilitating discussions.

   1. Students will receive supervision on a regular schedule throughout the practicum with faculty supervisor during which time cases will be discussed. It is expected that you will come to supervision prepared to participate in discussions, case conference, practicum-site supervision, and related activities.

   2. Seeking to develop and maintain a respectful and engaging learning environment, students will be asked to express thoughts, opinions, and issues openly. Simultaneously, students are encouraged to be open and respectful of others’ views and opinions. Allowing others to finish their statements and complete their thoughts is necessary to sustain healthy and engaging discussions, which will invariably include different values, judgments, perceptions, daily-lived experiences, beliefs, and attitudes.
II. Field Work (Pass/satisfactory = 100pts. / Fail/unsatisfactory = 50pts.)

Practicum is an opportunity for students to learn from direct experience about a profession that they have interest in possibly pursuing, and an opportunity to learn from other people’s experience about other potential professions. In addition, the purpose is to experience the ways in which the delivery of rehabilitation services occur and afford the student with a real life experience in the helping profession. Lastly, field practice is essential to developing skills and knowledge in the human service profession.

1. Students will become familiar with REHS 4330 Practicum I Handbook.

2. Instructor approval of the placement site is required before the field service begins.

3. Students will participate a minimum of 50 hours over the full academic term. Failure to complete hours, show up for scheduled shifts and/or not informing supervisor in advance about tardiness or absences will result in receiving an “F.”

4. Students will complete a minimum of 10 - 12 hours per week throughout the practicum at a pre-approved practicum site.

5. Unless otherwise indicated by the supervising faculty, placement in the practicum site is initiated by the student. Students will be provided with UTRGV’s School of Rehabilitation Internship and Practicum Affiliation List of established rehabilitation service agency or community based program sites to consider for practicum experience. The student is responsible for communicating with the prospective site-supervisor, interviewing for placement consideration, and subsequently confirming the conditions under which the field experience will be conducted.

6. Students currently working in the human service field may negotiate with the professor to use their current work situation to accomplish this assignment rather than adding additional field service work.

7. Students will have their immunization records (e.g. hepatitis B vaccine, TB shot) updated and available (if needed). Students agrees to complete criminal background checks (if necessary). Students who select a hospital setting are required to take UTRGV’s College of Health Affairs online Hospital Orientation.

8. Students commit to securing a field service placement within the first three weeks of class. Students will not be allowed to remain in REHS 4330 after the 3rd week of class without a confirmed commitment with a field practice site. Hence, failure to secure a placement within the first three weeks of class will result in being required to drop this course.
9. Once a field practice is secured, the student needs to determine the learning objectives, duties and responsibilities, and work schedule of his/her placement with the supervisor.

10. After determining the learning objectives, duties and responsibilities, and work schedule with the supervisor, students will complete the Field Experience Contract. The Field Experience Contract is signed by both you and your field supervisor.

11. Students will complete ongoing and detailed Time Log of Practicum Hours and agency activities. Time Log of Practicum Hours must be submitted monthly to the faculty supervisor.

12. Supervisor’s written evaluation of field practice.

13. The faculty supervisor is responsible for determining the final practicum course grade for each student, relying heavily on the on-site supervisor’s assessments of the student’s level of accomplishment pertaining to objectives of the site experience.

14. A final grade of “C” or better needs to be achieved in REHS 4330 to obtain permission for enrollment into REHS 4602, Clinical Practicum.

**Additional expectations**

**Responsibilities of the Student**

1. To observe and become familiar with the procedures, policies, and regulations established by the agency. Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally (e.g., no cell phone usage, informing supervisor of tardiness or absences).

2. To ask for assistance and supervision when needed to assure the consumer receives appropriate services.

3. To seek the assistance of appropriate staff members to address problems and registered complaints.

4. To utilize the site-supervisor for maximum learning opportunities.

5. To attend conferences, staff meetings, counseling sessions, and other learning experiences assigned by the site-supervisor.

6. To inform the site-supervisor of work related difficulties.

7. To ensure that the site-supervisor has the Field Experience Evaluation forms they are to complete: one at mid-semester and one at the end of the semester.
Agency/Site Supervisor Responsibilities

The agency/site-supervisor is a key person in the education of the student. The site-supervisor's role is to facilitate the development of the competencies and skills needed by the profession. The following are the responsibilities to be undertaken by the site-supervisor.

1. To provide an opportunity for a field experience in a professional setting.

2. To provide orientation to the community agency, its components, policies and procedures; an introduction to the staff and their role and function; and an identification of the expectations for the student allocating the suggested proportion of time.

3. To provide the student with opportunities to observe all aspects of the delivery of rehabilitation services.

4. To provide opportunities to practice service delivery through one or more methods.

5. To provide opportunities to integrate knowledge and practice toward the development of the following skills through activities: e.g., intake interviewing, job placement, job development, case coordination, and termination.

6. To provide opportunities for case recording and reporting.

7. To provide assistance and supervision informally when needed to assure student interactions with clients are appropriate.

8. To provide models of professional competence and conduct.

9. To be accountable for knowing the number of hours of field experience the student has completed.

10. To inform the student of steps that should be taken to improve weaknesses and further develop strengths.

11. To communicate any concerns about the student to the faculty supervisor.

12. To complete and review *Field Experience Evaluation* with student prior to submitting them to the faculty supervisor: one at mid-semester and one at the end of the semester.
Faculty Supervisor Responsibilities
The practicum faculty supervisor is Dr. Rene Gonzalez. The faculty supervisor facilitates the learning of the individual student through direct contact with the student and site-supervisor, as needed. The purposes of these contacts are as follows:

1. To provide an opportunity for the student to discuss experiences with the faculty supervisor.

2. To assure the student that the program remains involved and interested in their progress and education.

3. To address any academic or clinical practice problems that may develop between the student and agency.

4. To assess the student's progress and professional potential and provide feedback to the student.

III. Agency Introductions: 10 points
This assignment involves an oral presentation to the class regarding the agency or program in which you are completing your field placement.

(See Blackboard “Assignment” for Agency Introductions Guidelines)

IV. Student Led Group Sessions: (40 points)

(See Blackboard for Group Session “Assignment” for Guidelines: Student Led Group Sessions on Work Ethics Traits)

Students will be required to work in a group of two to co-lead a Work Ethics Traits group session. Students will be randomly assigned a topic to present to the class. Learning objectives and suggested activities are located on blackboard.

V. Practicum Experience Reaction Paper: (30 points)
Each student will complete a five (5) page reaction paper about their practicum experience.

(See Blackboard “Assignment” for Practicum Experience Reaction Paper Guidelines

• Due: Wednesday, December 6, 2017 @ 4:00pm

VI. Class Participation (20 Points)
Students are required to attend all classes and take an active part in class. This course is dependent on student participation in class discussions and group sessions.

(See Blackboard “Assignment” for Guidelines for Group Members)

COURSE EVALUATION: 
Grading Scale
The total number of possible points for this course is 200.
A - 200 – 186 Points (93 - 100%)
B - 185 – 166 Points (83 – 92.5%)
C - 165 – 146 Points (73 – 82.5%)
D – 145 – 126 Points (63 - 72.5%)
F - 125 Points
Course Outline
The schedule is tentative. Students are responsible for keeping up with **ALL** changes made to schedule and syllabus.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WK</th>
<th>Starts</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Materials</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Aug. 31</td>
<td>Orientation to Class</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>Agency Introductions</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td>Agency Introductions</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>Group 1: Attendance</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td>Group 2: Character</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Oct. 05</td>
<td>Groups 3: Teamwork</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Oct. 12</td>
<td>Group 4: Appearance</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>Groups 5: Attitude</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td><strong>Due: Mid-semester Field Experience Evaluation</strong></td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Nov. 02</td>
<td>Groups 7: Organizational Skills</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Nov. 09</td>
<td>Group 8: Communication</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td>Group 9: Cooperation</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>-----Thanksgiving Holiday-----</td>
<td>No Classes</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Group 10: Respect</td>
<td>Student Led Group</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td><strong>Due by 4:00pm: Practicum Reaction Paper</strong></td>
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**Due: End of semester Field Experience Evaluation**