Fall 2020 HMS Graduates

Jennifer Bursott
Triana Harris
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Sarah Neill
Kayla Thompson
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Congratulations Class of 2020!

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Lisa Vinson has accepted the position of Assistant Professor/Program Coordinator of the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Concentration at University of Illinois – Springfield in the College of Education and Human Services. She is expected to earn a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from Northern Illinois University this year. She is a National Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor, a National Certified Counselor, a Licensed Professional Counselor, a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, a Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor, a Cooccurring Disorder Professional Counselor I, and an Approved Clinical Supervisor. Vinson has more than 20 years of experience in the human service field, focusing on educational and clinical services that impact diverse racial/ethnic individuals and their families. She has worked in various capacities at Chicago Public Schools, several higher education institutions and mental health/substance use social service agencies, with a previous focus that served Chicago’s South and far South Side communities.

Throughout her career, she has been actively involved in working with the community. Early in her counseling career, she oversaw youth-related programming spanning education, job readiness and development, and anti-violence initiatives. Vinson was previously a counseling intern with Metropolitan Family Services Calumet’s Upward Bound Schools program (which includes before and after school programs at multiple Chicago Public Schools) and later became a professional counselor and concluded as the Program Supervisor for Metropolitan’s “STEP UP in Health Careers” program, conducted in partnership with Chicago State University and South Suburban College. STEP UP is a federally funded career-laddering program that provides educational training for Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF) recipients and low-income eligible individuals in high-demand healthcare fields. She also led critical incident initiatives, across all Metropolitan Family Services’ Calumet programing for the Roseland and Altgeld communities.

As a Counselor Educator who specializes in substance use disorders, Vinson places strong emphasis on the learning and development of counseling students to promote a strong professional identity within the field of counseling. Creating innovative teaching approaches online, is her attempt to assist students with creating life-long memories that will add value throughout their professional careers. Student choices and their professional identity are key components for training competent counselors and as a licensed clinical professional counselor, she believes every individual has the right to be served by a professional counselor and should have access to a comprehensive multi-tiered system of support to effectively meet the needs of those focused on recovery, during relapse, or those struggling with life stressors and psychological problems. These core beliefs led her to seek out extensive clinical supervisor training which enhanced her professional supervision and leadership work by obtaining the Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS) credential. The ACS markets national qualifications and standards among ”mental health experts to promote a clinical supervisor’s identity, visibility, and accountability that inspires professional growth (CCE, 2020).”

Vinson launched her human service career as an in-home daycare teacher assistant in Chicago, IL. She earned a bachelor’s and master’s Degree from Chicago State University, in addition to completing Chicago State University’s Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program for the Advanced Alcohol and Other Drug Counseling program. Her research and professional interests include how America’s cultures and its changing aspects and after-effects of discrimination intersect with communities of color, higher education goals and minority mental health. Her personal interests include reading and watching historical documentaries concerning race, discrimination, and civil unrest.
Tell us about yourself
I am proud to say that I was born and raised in the land of Lincoln – right here in Springfield, Illinois. Professionally, over the past twenty years, I have been fortunate to work in a variety of roles within accounting, human resources, fundraising, coaching, and in the human services field. Currently, I am honored to be a part of the GPSI program and serve in the Human Resources Department at the Illinois Department on Aging. Personally, my prized treasures are my family and friends. It’s a big finish this spring for our household, given our daughter Caragan is earning her Master’s from FGCU, while coincidently our son Kelby will finish his Bachelor’s from SIUe. Interestingly, this year marks another goal off my bucket list by running 26.2 miles to complete the 2020 Springfield Marathon. In my spare time, I enjoy researching, history, DIY projects including interior design, re-purposing homes, and furniture. Meanwhile, volunteerism continues to be close to my heart by serving those at the St. John’s Breadline, volunteering for Sangamon County Animal Control, and serving as a member at Springfield Road Runners, Springfield Ballet Company, Springfield Area Soccer Association, and recently joining the Sangamon County Historical Society on account of my love for history.

What attracted you to the HMS department at UIS and more specifically about your concentration?
When searching for a graduate program UIS became a clear choice over other universities because of the proximity, online instruction, and courses offered. The most compelling benefit of attending UIS came to light during my graduate interview with Dr. Denise Bockmier-Sommers. Immediately, she provided a personalized approach exemplified by her genuine aspiration to ensure the success and professional growth of students entering the SSA program.

What are your career interests and goals?
My professional career plans, once I have completed the GPSI and Masters of Human Services degree, is to support our community here in Springfield, Illinois by earning a full-time career in a leadership role at a local state agency where I can fulfill my desire and ambition to directly advocate and aid the lives of people we serve. I also plan to share my new skill set to help promote fundraising and grant writing within local organizations that I actively serve through volunteerism.

Of the courses that you completed within your concentration, which course did you enjoy the most? Why?
All the courses offered throughout my concentration have been rewarding and valuable, but two specific classes stood out to me that have been equally beneficial to my overall growth and educational enrichment. This past summer I completed Fundraising in the Nonprofit Sector instructed by Dr. Denise Bockmier-Sommers that embarked on innovative ideas that promoted and enhanced my fundraising capabilities. This information has shaped my knowledge personally and professionally by acquiring new techniques that have skillfully heightened my understanding and applications. Currently, I am enrolled in Dr. Kang’s Ethics and Professional Development course. Dr. Kang’s thorough and insightful assessments have enriched my educational development that has ensured a better aptitude for self-awareness and overall professional and ethical practices. I am thankful for these courses as I know they will be influential and essential in my future endeavors.

What motivates you personally and professionally?
It's the simple things in life that motivate me, both personally and professionally. Namely, perseverance and knowing life are full of unwavering challenges that everyone experiences with their share of many ups and downs. When I see people decide to keep moving forward and keep fighting through their obstacles towards their hopes and dreams, this truly inspires me. Finding joy in the smallest amounts, whether it is holding a door open for a stranger and a completely random act of kindness. Being genuine and empowering others is an aspiration that continues to motivate me; sharing compassion, staying nonjudgmental, and keeping open mind allows me to treat others the way I would want to be treated. Ultimately, the most gratifying motivator is being someone my children can be proud to call Mom.
Tell us about yourself
My name is Blanca Gonzalez and I was born and raised in Chicago, IL. I received my bachelor’s degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice and my master’s degree in Human Services with a concentration in Alcoholism and Substance Abuse from UIS. My aspiration to help others began at a young age, which led me to care for animals in shelters and complete my undergraduate internship at the Illinois Innocence Project. I’m currently living in Springfield, IL. Some of my hobbies include exercising, photography, and hiking.

What does your experience in the field look like?
My experience in the field began when I started my internship at Gateway Foundation. Gateway Foundation is an alcohol and drug treatment center where individuals can recover in an environment with professional support. My internship at Gateway allowed me to apply what I had learned in life and in the classroom to real life experiences.

Every helping professional has their own style of work. That being said, I was able to shadow and learn their different techniques within the field. After observing and figuring out what style mine might be, I was able to put myself to work. I was able to provide direct services to clients, such as counseling, case management services, crisis intervention, and client and family education. Building rapport with clients was a very important factor when providing therapeutic group sessions. Case management allowed us to know where the client was at in their recovery. Client education allowed the client to comprehend addiction in itself.

Along with providing direct services, I learned more of the administrative side of Gateway Foundation. I was able to administer intake assessments to clients who were in need of care, along with discussing with other professionals the level of care that clients were in need of. My internship at Gateway Foundation was an opportunity for me to put my skills to use and explore other skills that I may not have been aware of beforehand.

What are your career goals?
My ambition to help others has evolved into my overall career goal. The job that I aim to have is a job where I am able to reach my greatest potential. The skills that I have been able to evolve while being in the Human Services program have allowed me to see more of who I am and who I would like to become. As someone who has provided direct services to clients experiencing addiction, I would like to say that change is achievable with professional support. I envision myself working as a human services professional in the federal government someday. At the moment, I am reviewing all my job opportunities and am in the process of deciding the best fit for me to achieve these goals.

Any information you would like share with current students?
To any current students in the Human Services department, I would like to say that every class you take is essential in your development as a professional. Therefore, it is important to be attentive in class and build professional relationships with other students and professors. Together you will be able to provide each other with questions and answers that will help you in the field.

Through my relationships with other students, I was able to see things from different perspectives. For example, how they would approach a client might have been different from the way I would have approached a client. Either way could have been considered correct, especially when it is done through professionalism, empathy, and integrity. This type of learning experience is an opportunity for growth for all of us. My professional relationships with professors allowed me to get most of my experience while working in the field. They were available to answer any questions that I may have and were open to discussing any of my concerns, which played a great role in succeeding throughout the program and also the professional work field.
You can find the answers to these questions and more by going to the HMS website. A description of the internship is listed under “Curriculum” and then “Degree Requirements.” You can also find FAQ internship information listed under “Students.”

If you are a semester away from during your internship we want to congratulate you on reaching this step in your degree. You have prepared a long time and have put in many hours to do your internship. We know you are excited and anxious about starting your internship. We are excited for you to get started. Typically, the best time to begin preparing for your internship is at the beginning of the semester prior to your internship. There are varying requirements depending on your concentration. Requirements are based on the focus of your concentration are required to complete 400 hrs. For example, students in the ASA concentration are required to complete a 500 hr. internship. All other students are required to complete 400 hrs.

How do you begin the process? After reading the information on the website, explore with your advisor what is required for your concentration and where you might like to do your internship. Your adviser can provide information about contacting the agency where you would like to complete your internship. Different placements may have preferences about how to contact them. Many require a professional resume and often a placement interview. Prospective field placements want to know of your interest and competencies. Once the field site has accepted you, you need to complete several forms that establish a working agreement between you, the field site, and the university. In order to begin accruing your internship hours, you need to have completed and submitted the forms to your adviser. The forms require your adviser’s signature, your field site supervisor’s signature, and your signature. Following are the forms that need to be submitted: Request for Insurance, Preliminary Placement, Internship Contract, and Internship Application. In addition to these forms you need to submit a copy of your resume and provide a copy of your field site supervisor’s resume to the Human Services Department.

So, educate yourself about the requirements of your internship and contact your adviser at the beginning of the semester before your internship. Help us help you achieve this important step in your degree!
Academic Calendar and Graduation Information

**SPRING 2021 (Census: February 1, 2021, Monday)**
(All classes will be offered remotely beginning January 29, 2021)
January 18, 2021, Monday – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Campus Closed
January 19, 2021, Tuesday – Full-Term and First-Half Classes Begin
March 13, 2021, Saturday – Mid-Point
March 17, 2021, Wednesday (Noon) – Mid-Term Grading Deadline
March 15, 2021, Monday – Last-Half Classes Begin
May 8, 2021, Saturday – Last Day of Classes
May 10-15, 2021, Monday-Saturday – Finals Week
May 15, 2021, Saturday – Semester Ends/Commencement
May 19, 2021, Wednesday (Noon) – Final Grading Deadline

Spring recess will be replaced by five non-instructional days, when no classes will be held in person or remotely and no examinations or assignments of any kind will be due on the following dates:
March 2, 2021, Tuesday
March 3, 2021, Wednesday
April 26, 2021, Monday
May 6, 2021, Thursday (Reading Day)
May 7, 2021, Friday (Reading Day)

**SUMMER 2021 (Census: June 11, 2021, Friday)**
June 7, 2021, Monday – Full-Term and First-Half Classes Begin
July 3, 2021, Saturday – Mid-Point
July 5, 2021, Monday – Independence Day Observance, Campus Closed
July 6, 2021, Tuesday – Last-Half Classes Begin
July 31, 2021, Saturday – Semester Ends
August 4, 2021, Wednesday (Noon) – Final Grading Deadline

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**Graduation Information**

Commencement is held each spring for graduates who received their degrees in the previous summer and fall semesters, and for degree candidates for the current spring semester.

Students planning to earn a degree must indicate their intent to graduate to the Office of Records and Registration.

Students must submit an online graduation application whether they plan to participate in commencement or not. It is important to complete this process by the posted deadline. A mandatory graduation application fee will be charged to each student upon submission of the graduation application.

Forms and instructions can be found on the Records and Registration Forms website: [https://www.uis.edu/registration/forms/](https://www.uis.edu/registration/forms/)

Students with questions concerning any of the information above or regarding graduation eligibility should contact Graduation at (217) 206-7730 or registrar@uis.edu.
Faculty Publications

Dr. Youngjin Kang

- Kang, Y., Ko, K. M., & Ganong, L. (November, 2020). Divorced parents’ coparenting quality and perceptions of the timing of dating disclosures to the other parent and their children. Poster accepted at the National Conference of NCFR, St. Louis, MO.
- Ko, K. M., W. Hwang., & Kang, Y. (November, 2020). Work to family conflict and family to work conflict: The bidirectional association between job demands and paternal involvement between single-income and dual-income families. Paper accepted at the National Conference of NCFR, St. Louis, MO.

Dr. Peggy Mayfield


Dr. Denise Bockmier-Sommers


Suggested Conferences

This fall, Dr. Bockmier-Sommers has recommended that Human Services students check out the Midwest Organization for Human Services. This conference is available to residents of Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Indiana. These conferences are an opportunity for students to connect with other students throughout the 12 states, and to meet educators and other professionals from various agencies. The website for the Midwest Organization of Human Services can be found at this link, https://nohs.memberclicks.net/mwohs."
The Department of Human Services is indebted to our wonderful Advisory Board members. These members come from many different backgrounds as noted below.

Cathy Annerino  
Mercy Communities

Denise McCaffrey  
Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

John Kelker  
United Way of Central Illinois

Mary Jane Forney  
IL Department of Human Services

Valerie Gebhardt  
UIS Counseling Center

Lisa Zuurbier  
Illinois Department on Aging

Mercedes Kent  
Gateway Foundation

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**Spring 2021 Classes**

**Core Requirements**
- HMS 501- Critical Prospectives in Human Services (Lisa D. Vinson)
- HMS 502- Interviewing and Assessment Skills in Human Services (Dr. Youngjin Kang)
- HMS 511- Social Policy in Human Services (Frank Shepke)
- HMS 516- Ethics and Professional Development (Dr. Youngjin Kang)
- HMS 550- Internship (Lisa D. Vinson)
- HMS 585- HMS Capstone (Denise K Bockmier-Sommers)

**Child and Family Concentration**
- HMS 521- Advanced Interviewing and Intervention (Dr. Youngjin Kang)
- HMS 533- Child Abuse and Neglect (Dr. Peggy L. Mayfield)

**Social Services Administration Concentration**
- HMS 538- Social Services Administration (Dr. Denise K Bockmier-Sommers)
- HMS 584- Introduction to Nonprofit Management (Frank Shepke)

**Gerontology Concentration**
- HMS 508- Psychology of Aging (Dr. Peggy Mayfield)
- HMS 582- Aging and the Human Services (Dr. Peggy Mayfield)

**Alcohol and Substance Abuse Concentration**
- HMS 521- Advanced Interviewing and Intervention (Dr. Youngjin Kang)
- HMS 527- Assessment and Treatment of Substance Abuse (Lisa D. Vinson)

**Summer 2021 Classes**

**Social Services Administration Concentration**
- HMS 589- Financial Management (TBA)
• Is there anything you would like to see in the Human Services newsletters?
• Have a story you would like to be featured in?
• Want some more information? Visit our website at https://www.uis.edu/humanservices/

The Fall 2020 Newsletter was created and edited by Jacob Reid, Human Services Graduate Assistant. Jacob is pursuing his Masters in Human Development and Counseling. He has worked with Dr. Youngjin Kang to bring you this edition.