Extended Congratulations!

The HSM Department congratulates Kayla Thompson and Jennifer Janas for being recognized as the outstanding Human Services students. Academic honors are recognized based on excellence in academic achievement, scholarship and/or service to the program or university.
Tell us about yourself.
When I was 23 years old in 1977, I was introduced to the gerontology profession when I was hired as the executive director of a federally funded public housing agency located near the banks of the Illinois River. I was charged with the management of the agency’s senior citizen housing projects, including advocating for the wellbeing of the elderly tenants. Since I am the of twelve children, I watched my own parents grow old and pass away three decades ago, and I have remained close to my siblings, six of whom have also died. So, my identity is embedded in my compassion for older adults, and their children who love them. I have spent the past 44 years trying to touch people whose lives have been broken by poverty, illness, loneliness and depression. This is my passion. It is my life’s work. I have lived in Springfield, Illinois since 1991 serving as an elder advocate in a nonprofit organization for which I am a charter board member. I enjoy the company of good friends, listening to 1970s and 1980s popular music, watching old movies, reading other people’s biographies, and remaining committed to graduate level academic learning.

What attracted you to the Human Services Department at UIS, and more specifically about your concentration?
Three words: Dr. Carolyn Peck. I was drawn to the UIS Human Services Department upon learning that Dr. Peck was on faculty here. Dr. Peck’s professional reputation as a premier expert in gerontology has been a blessing for me beyond description. Although I was saddened upon her retirement prior to my graduation, I will always remember her many contributions to my education as emblematic of her bountiful heart and deeply held conviction that the growing American aging demographic remains in need of advocates to accompany their journey along the fairways of later life. Making the decision to study gerontology at the UIS Human Services Department was a bond between my own desire to help aging adults and the wondrous HMS faculty of professors and instructors, the always helpful library liaisons, and of course, my distinguished Human Services fellow students.

What are your career interests and goals?
At age 67, I don’t think it’s time for me to find myself sunbathing on a shoreline somewhere because I still have the energy and motivation to make a difference in the lives of my elder peers. My goals include being a better advocate for those who cannot take care of themselves, and to join efforts with local and statewide elder advocacy groups in lobbying public officials and legislative bodies to pass laws defending older adults against neglect and abuse, and for the inclusion of diverse members of the older adult community who suffer discrimination based on their identities and personal life choices.

Of the courses that you completed within your concentration, which course did you enjoy the most? Why?
Given my life’s focus on the pursuit of equality and social justice, my favorite course in the Human Services curriculum was HMS 511 Social Policy and Human Services, taught by instructor Frank Shepke. For me, identifying the components and relevance of social justice issues, understanding the historical and institutional contexts in which many social inequalities have been resolved, and learning about the modern day empowerment mechanisms for the freedom of socially oppressed demographics has given me hope that all the efforts put forth by Human Services experts are making a positive difference in countless older people’s lives.

What motivates you personally and professionally?
While remembering to preserve my own wellbeing, I will not be satisfied until I have poured out my soul lifting up the dignity of humanity to the degree it was meant to become. When I was 16 years old, my mother and father took me to a groundbreaking ceremony in a cornfield south of Springfield where the State of Illinois was about to build a new college. I watched the dignitaries that day each digging a shovel full of dirt to begin construction of that institution, which was Sangamon State University. In 1995, the SSU campus became the University of Illinois Springfield. I began my graduate studies here in June 1982, and I have been a student here ever since, and about to earn my fourth master’s degree. So, what motivates me most is the pursuit of human excellence that elevates the poor, disadvantaged and brokenhearted, and remaining engaged in the systems that make this elevation possible.
Tell us about yourself.
My name is Carlis Thomas. I am a Parent Educator who works with District 186 Springfield Public Schools. I must carry out the McKinney-Vento Act’s requirements. The parent educator is the primary contact for homeless people, school and employees, shelter personnel, and other service providers. I am responsible for ensuring that homeless children and youth receive the services they need. I support and help students in homeless situations. I am in charge of providing what students need who are experiencing homelessness so that they can enroll and succeed in school.

I graduated from Hayti High School in Hayti, Missouri, and attended Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. I studied Social Work. At Southeast, I became an Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority member, Inc. (AKA), the first intercollegiate historically African American Greek-lettered sorority. The organization was founded on five basic tenets: To cultivate and encourage high scholastic and ethical standards, promote unity and friendship among college women, study and help alleviate problems concerning girls and women to improve their social stature, maintain a progressive interest in college life, and be of "Service to All Mankind." I graduated from Greenville University, a private university in Greenville, Illinois, with a bachelor’s degree in Organizational Leadership. I have three sons, two of which have moved away from Springfield and started their wonderful lives of adulthood. The youngest is an 18-year-old son attending Lincoln Land Community College and transferring to the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign to run track. Other than my youngest son, I have no family in Springfield, IL, so I cherish the time I have group texting and video chatting with my family. For fun, I enjoy traveling with friends. I enjoy alone time doing self-care activities. I love reading books about psychology, communication, and self-improvement. I enjoy listening to all genres of music.

What attracted me to the Human Service department at UIS and, more specifically, about your concentration?
Being a human service major comes from the heart. I am someone who has many personal encounters that have brought me to where I am now. When I was deciding on a major, I choose HMS with a concentration in Children and Family Service because I am passionate about it, and I know I want to work in this field for the rest of my life.

What are your career interests and goals?
Human service inspires me to learn new insights daily from experiences with a range of clients and community organizations. After graduation, my career goal in human service work will be to work in an organization where I would be most needed and efficient. As a human service worker, I want to do more than just support kids; I want to make a difference in their lives, families, and the system.

Of the courses you completed within your concentration, which course did you enjoy the most? Why?
The Class is: Advanced Interviewing and Intervention, as Dr. Kang is my professor. I enjoyed the course Advanced Interviewing and Intervention because Dr. Kang helped me see the value of interview planning. Interviews may seem to be the easiest part of any intake process, but this is far from the case. This course teaches me how to start and end therapeutic relationships to help clients strengthen their functioning and heal emotional distress. Any errors made at this point could harm the relationship-building process. As a result, interview training is good to have for any student preparing to interview clients.

What motivates you personally and professionally?
Helping others is a central part of humanity; it brings people together and allows them to support one another—the stories of those who support others in crisis times inspire me. However, helping others is not limited to grand gestures or challenging times. Assisting others is something that can be done regularly. Furthermore, helping others does not always have to be a selfless act. It's important to know helping others will potentially help me. Whatever your inspiration, it's important to get out and support others.
In two words, life around the Human Services Department has been “very busy.” In addition to the usual activity of teaching students, serving the department, college, and university, we welcomed a new faculty member (Lisa Vinson) to teach and coordinate the Alcohol and Substance Abuse concentration and certificate. I know you met her in the last newsletter, but I would like to acknowledge her hard work this year. Lisa hit the ground running and the program form of increased applications, is reaping the benefits of her hard work in the form of increased applications. Thank you, Ms. Vinson. Dr. Youngjin Kang successfully wrote for her four-year reappointment, which in and of itself is a big job. I also want to thank adjunct faculty members, Dr. Peggy Mayfield and Mr. Frank Shepke, for their stellar teaching.

Ms. Vinson, Dr. Kang, and I continued our research and writing, resulting in several publications. Ms. Vinson had three entries for the SAGE Encyclopedia of Multicultural Counseling, Social Justice, and Advocacy. Most of Ms. Vinson’s research centers around diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Dr. Kang had three publications in peer-reviewed journals and four entries in the Encyclopedia of Marriage and Divorce in America: Issues, Trends, and Controversies. Most of Dr. Kang’s research centers around child and family issues such as divorce, family relationships, and family processes. I had three articles in peer-reviewed journals and a book chapter. Most of my research is centered on Carl Rogers’s three conditions of empathy, genuineness, and unconditional positive regard as applied to the classroom, critical social justice, and work environment. Dr. Mayfield has given two presentations: one for the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy: Counselling, Supervision, and Training in Ireland and the U.S and another for the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development.

In other news from the department, we are pursuing accreditation with the Council on Standards for Human Service Education (CSHSE). We are currently in the process of mapping our core classes to those standards. I will be completing the rest of the application for the self-study which we hope to accomplish during the 2021-2022 academic year. Finally, I want to acknowledge the work and support of faculty members Dr. Kang and Ms. Vinson. I would also like to give a shout out to Dr. Nancy Barrett (Program Coordinator) for her sizeable support and work on this endeavor.

In addition to seeking accreditation our department has made major revisions to the Gerontology concentration and has added a fifth concentration in Nursing Home Administration. Courses were developed to align with the Gerontology Competencies for Undergraduate and Graduate Education which were developed in 2014 by the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education. These Gerontology competencies are the guidelines on which the accrediting standards of Accreditation for Gerontology Education Council (AGEC) are based. For the Nursing Home Administration concentration, courses were developed to help students become licensed Nursing Home Administrators and are based on the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules Administrative Code, which is administered by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR). Courses are also consistent with the National Association of Long-Term Care Administrators Board (NAB), which is a national licensing board that will allow graduates to become Licensed Nursing Home Administrators in other states. The median salary for master-degreed gerontologists is $67,150 annually; for master-degreed nursing home administrators, the median salary is $100,980 annually.
When teaching online, creating a dynamic and engaging learning environment is paramount. Opportunities must be created to enable students to engage with each other, the material, and me. To this end I began investigating the use of Carl Rogers’ three conditions: empathy, genuineness, and unconditional positive regard. Dr. Jennifer Martin and I have used the three conditions to develop a model that creates a safe learning environment allowing the professor and students to authentically converse about topics such as racism, homophobia, ableism, and ageism so our students begin to understand the social injustice of such “isms” and their impact on human service and education.

Dr. Youngjin Kang

Dr. Kang with her colleague, Dr. Ko (Assistant Professor of the Department of Counseling and Human Services at East Tennessee State University) have recently published, “Divorced Parents’ New Dating Disclosures to Children: An Important Task for a Successful Family Transition” in *Certified Family Life Education (CFLE)* Network Magazine. In this article, the authors discuss that divorced parents often share their new dating relationships with their children and this type of parent-child communication is important for children’s post-divorce adjustment and their relationships with new stepfamily members.

Divorced parents may be excited to introduce a new partner to their children, intending to formalize their relationship which may possibly become a new stepparent, so parents would like to facilitate their children and new partner develop their relationship in a positive way. However, children may not be ready to accept a new relationship while still dealing with their feelings and losses resulting from their parental divorce. If the current dating partner is a potential stepparent, of course, children must know the information about their parents’ new dating partner; however, premature introduction or sharing too much information may hurt children’s feelings and future step-relationships.

With the importance of divorced parents’ new dating disclosures to children, the authors argue that dating disclosures should be appropriately done, and provide what practitioners can do as working with divorced families, including (1) Help divorced parents emphasize children’s feelings and their loss, (2) Help divorced parents set clear communication boundaries with both children and the ex-spouse, (3) Help divorced parents be strategic in disclosing, and (4) Help divorced parents with the after-disclosure stage. The entire article can be found at [https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-network/winter-2021-family-formation/divorced-parents-new-dating-disclosures-children-important-task-successful-family-transition](https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-network/winter-2021-family-formation/divorced-parents-new-dating-disclosures-children-important-task-successful-family-transition).

Lisa D. Vinson

Lisa Vinson was invited by Judy Wagenblast to participate in the NEA Big Read, Sangamon County project. Citizens are invited to read the same book and hold discussions about the issues and themes presented. The goal of the NEA Big Read is to broaden our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. Since 2006, NEA has funded more than 1,600 NEA Big Read programs.

Ethnicity and Character Traits: Norwegian-Americans and More hosted by the Academy of Lifelong Learning at Lincoln Land Community College

What causes certain behaviors to be understood as common to those of a certain country or population group? Are the sometimes-humorous associations we make with those of a particular culture based in reality? Springing from “LAB GIRL” author Hope Jahren’s sharing of her Norwegian heritage, a discussion of the complexities of identity will be moderated by LLCC sociology professor Dr. Colin Suchland. He will be joined by Lisa Vinson of the Human Services Department at the University of Illinois Springfield and Dr. Marv Slind, a second-generation Norwegian-American historian.
Internship Information

- Where can I do my internship?
- Do I have to do an internship?
- Can I do an internship at my place of work?
- How long is the internship?
- If I have an internship, do I have to go to the internship class?
- What forms do I need to have filled out before I start my internship?
- Do I have to complete my internship in one semester?
- Can I do an internship at more than one place?

You can find the answers to these questions and more by going to the HMS website, http://www.uis.edu/humanservices/. 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. For example, students in the ASA concentration are required to complete a 500 hour internship. All other students are required to complete 400 hours.

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 advisor. The forms require your advisor’s signature, your field site supervisor’s signature, and your signature. The 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.

For more information about internships, please contact Professor Lisa Vinson at lvins2@uis.edu.
Academic Calendar

SUMMER 2021
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

FALL 2021 (Census: September 2, 2021, Thursday)
August 20, 2021, Friday – Full-Term and First-Half Classes Begin
September 6, 2021, Monday – Labor Day, Campus Closed
October 16, 2021, Saturday – Mid-Point
October 18, 2021, Monday – Last-Half Classes Begin
November 24-26, 2021, Wednesday-Friday – Mid-Term Grading Deadline
December 4, 2021, Saturday – Last Day of Classes
December 6-11, 2021, Monday-Saturday – Finals Week
December 11, 2021, Saturday – Semester Ends
December 15, 2021, Wednesday (Noon) – Final Grading Deadline

SPRING 2022 (Census: January 31, 2022, Monday)
January 17, 2022, Monday – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Campus Closed
January 18, 2022, Tuesday – Full-Term and First-Half Classes Begin
March 12, 2022, Saturday – Mid-Point
March 14-18, 2022, Monday-Friday – Spring Recess
March 16, 2022, Wednesday (Noon) – Mid-Term Grading Deadline
March 21, 2022, Monday – Last-Half Classes Begin
May 7, 2022, Saturday – Last Day of Classes
May 9-14, 2022, Monday-Saturday – Finals Week
May 14, 2022, Saturday – Semester Ends/Commencement
May 18, 2022, Wednesday (Noon) – Final Grading Deadline

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/

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 & Suggested Conferences

**Publications**

**Dr. Denise Bockmier-Sommers**


**Dr. Youngjin Kang**


**Suggested Conference**

Dr. Bockmier-Sommers has suggested the National Organization for Human Services as a conference that would be insightful for those in the human services program. The title for this conference will be “Call for Unity: Sustaining Wellness, Hope and Community.” This conference will be held virtually Wednesday October 20th through Friday October 22nd. Visit the following link to find out more information, https://www.nationalhumanservices.org/national-conference.

Dr. Kang has suggested that the 27th Annual Prevent Abuse Illinois Conference (Virtual) would be useful for students interested in abuse prevention. The title for this conference will be “Balance after Chaos: From Surviving to Thriving.” This conference will be held from October 14th and 15th in Springfield, Illinois. Visit the following link to find more information, http://www.preventchildabuseillinois.org/pca-conference.

Dr. Kang also has suggested the Annual Conference of National Council on Family Relations (Virtual). This conference would be very beneficial for those interested in family relations. The title of this conference will be “The Science of Families: Nurturing, Hope, Happiness & Health.” This conference will be held November 2nd through the 5th in Baltimore, Maryland. Visit the following website for more information, http://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2021
The Department of Human Services is indebted to our Advisory Board Members who play a very important role in the development of learning through courses and teaching. Members come from a variety of backgrounds, as follows:

**Cathy Annerio** – Mercy Communities

**Denise McCaffrey** – Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

**John Kelker** – United Way of Central Illinois

**Mary Jane Forney** – Illinois Department of Human Services

**Valerie Gebhardt** – UIS Counseling Center

**Mercedes Kent** – Gateway Foundation

### Class Information

**The following class is being offered during the Summer of 2021:**

HMS 589 – Financial Management in the Non-Profit Sector (Instructor TBA)

**The following classes are being offered during the Fall of 2021:**

**Core Requirements**

- HMS 501 - Critical Perspectives in Human Services (Instructor TBA)
- HMS 502 - Interviewing and Assessment Skills in Human Services (Dr. Youngjin Kang)
- HMS 511 - Social Policy and Human Services (Instructor TBA)
- HMS 550 – Internship (Lisa D. Vinson)
- HMS 585 - HMS Capstone (Dr. Denise K. Bockmier-Sommers)

**Child and Family Concentration**

- HMS 516 – Ethics and Professional Development (Dr. Youngjin Kang)
- HMS 537 – Treating Children from Diverse Populations (Instructor TBA)
- HMS 567 – Family Dynamics and Intervention (Instructor TBA)

**Social Services Administration Concentration**

- HMS 514 – Staff Development and Supervision (Instructor TBA)
- HMS 588 – Grant Writing in Human Services (Dr. Denise K. Bockmier-Sommers)

**Gerontology Concentration**

- HMS 512 – Neurobiological Health and Wellness in Aging (Instructor TBA)
- HMS 563 – Sociology of Death, Dying, and Bereavement (Instructor TBA)

**Alcohol and Substance Abuse Concentration**

- HMS 525 – Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (Lisa D. Vinson)
- HMS 528 – Dual Diagnosis and Relapse Prevention (Lisa D. Vinson)
Department of Human Services

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Suggestions?

If there is anything that you would like to see added to the Human Services newsletter?
Do you have a story or experience you would like to be featured?
Let us know!
Email Jacob Reid: jdreid2@uis.edu

Editor

The Spring 2021 Human Services Department Newsletter is brought to you by Jacob Reid. Jacob is a Human Services Graduate Assistant. He has worked with Dr. Kang to bring this edition to you.

We hope you enjoyed this semester’s edition!