



DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING



A Message from the Chair

Greetings-

On behalf of the entire Counseling faculty, we hope everyone had a safe and relaxing Thanksgiving holiday. I am sure you will agree it's been a busy semester-and this version of the

Communicator will certainly attest to that fact. More specifically, I can highlight that the **"state of the program"** is strong. Specifically, enrollment numbers are strong, national exit exam scores (Praxis II, CPCE, NCE) are at or above national comparison scores, and partnerships with outside **stakeholders** (i.e., UNMC & BCEHN) are providing a wealth of new educational and clinical opportunities and internships.

Additionally, this Fall semesters marks the beginning of the new **"alternative certification"** for school counselors and our **revised curriculum** (see your advisor if you have plan of study questions!). Just as importantly (but perhaps not as exciting), the Counseling Department's interim **CACREP** report was finally completed-an experience involving several years, teaching & assessment platforms (cue frustrated sighs about Livetext/VIA &/or Blackboard/Canvas) and substantial

faculty & COE administrative staff time and efforts. We also say goodbye and good luck to **Nate Hayward**, who has been an outstanding graduate assistant for the department for nearly two years. Thank-you Nate!

If that wasn't exciting enough, this volume of the *Communicator* also highlights our **Spring 2017 & upcoming Fall graduates** (congrats!!) and offers insights into numerous other faculty and student accomplishments and activities. These highlights document our growing and active CSI chapter, **Upsilon Nu Omicron**, and include the second installment of **"In the Know"** where we discuss the results of the survey we sent via the department listserv asking UNO Counseling students to share their perspective on balancing work/life/school demands and challenges (pp 4-5). Also, be sure to check out the important information regarding advocacy and leadership opportunities and highlights from the **UNO Community Clinic**. Finally, be sure to attend to your own wellness as we enter the final weeks of the semester.



Sincerely,
Dan Kissinger
Department Chair

Faculty411

Urban Dictionary:

411: 1. slang for 'the info', 2. asking for the low-down on something or someone

Dr. Bjornsen

- Co-authored a study titled: Factors associated with perceptions of rape events and reporting of rape among college and non-college women in the Journal of Aggression, Conflict, and Peace Research.
- Co-authored a study titled: A phenomenological examination of exercise motivation in college students in the Recreational Sports Journal.
- Co-author/presenter of outreach workshop to Healthful Living (HED 2310) with CMHC student Lindsay Vik. Topic: work wellness.

Dr. Blount

- Presented “Systematic review of empirical studies evaluating Wellness-Informed Approaches to Supervision” at the 2017 Assessment & Research in Counseling Conference in Phoenix, AZ.
- Presented “Counselor Educator’s preferred qualities of Candidates for Faculty Positions in Counselor Education” at the 2017 ACES conference in Chicago, IL.
- Presented “Wellness Discrepancies in Helping Professionals: Wellness as a Superpower” at the 2017 ACES conference in Chicago, IL.
- Presented “Facilitation Growth & Wellness in Refugee Populations” at the 2017 ACES conference in Chicago, IL.
- Published Investigating the relationship between counselors’ and counselors’-in-training wellness and personality priorities in *Journal of Individual Psychology*.
- Published School Counselors’ Stress, Burnout, and Job Satisfaction in *Professional School Counseling*.
- Published Establishing content-oriented evidence of psychological assessments in *Evaluation in Counseling and Development*.
- Published The helping professional wellness discrepancy scale: Development and validation in *Evaluation in Counseling and Development*.
- Published Examination of student outcomes in play therapy: A qualitative case study design in the *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*.
- Published The Counseling Competencies Scale: Validation and Refinement in *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*.

Dr. Carter

- Co-authoring a study with CMHC students Gerrit Van Steenberger & Andrew Koepp titled, “Neurofeedback: An Adjunct to Psychotherapy”.
- Co-authoring a study with a CMHC student Michaela Devitt titled, “What’s in it for me? State counseling association recruitment and retention efforts.”
- Co-authored a book chapter with CMHC students Michele Jack-Love, Chelsea Taggart, and Michelle Wilhelm that was accepted for publication in the text, *Old Age and End of Life – Physiological/Biological Development*.
- Authored another chapter titled *Old Age and End of Life – Geriatric Love and Intimacy* that was accepted in the same text.
- Working on book reviews of *Geriatric Notes: Pocket Guide Designed for Advanced Practice Nurses and Physician Assistants* for Jones and Bartlette Learning & another for *Sociology of the Family* by Sage Publication.
- Provided research for the University of Indiana study on the “Consequences of the decline in marital relationships, espe-

cially among the younger generation.”

- Presented a poster, “Counseling the Elderly: Overcoming Stigma” with CMHC students Michele Jack-Love and Chelsea Taggart at the 2017 Nebraska Counseling Association Conference in Lincoln.

Dr. Kissinger

- Submitted the conceptual article for publication titled, "Are we training reflective practitioners and scholars: Insights and ideas from a reflection-focused curriculum review" for publication. Co-authors: Drs. Luther, Bjornsen, Carter, & Mr. Richards.
- Co –presented a roundtable discussion with Drs. Bjornsen & Luther titled , “Training reflective practitioners: Insights and Guidance from a reflection-centered program review” at the 2017 ACES conference in Chicago.
- Presented a poster of his research on “Applying a wellness counseling approach to pediatric stroke survivor caregivers”.
- Submitted a study for publication with former University of Arkansas colleagues entitled; “Conceptualizing and addressing the wellbeing of parental caregivers of children who experienced a pediatric or childhood stroke: A holistic wellness approach”.

Dr. Luther

- Attended a Round Table as ACES conference in Chicago on Social Justice and School Counseling that led to participating in a dissertation from a Counselor Education doctoral candidate the University of South Carolina.
- Will pilot five social justice lessons developed by the doctoral candidate with a pre/post assessment component in The Foundations and Issues in Secondary School Counseling course.
- Working with Lincoln Public School counselors in a collaborative utilizing the Intentional Small Group (ISG) model. The action research question guiding the development standing small groups in support of students' success in school is "Does the implementation of Intentional Small Group (ISG) standing small groups to build skills needed for problem solving, pro-social skills, and academic strategies improve identified PBIS Tier 2 students’ success in school as measured by LPS results data?”

Mr. Richards

- Attended the 2017 American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Conference in Denver .
- Presenting sessions on developing a RAMP application and another on helping school administrators understand the ASCA National Model.
- Mentoring school counseling internship students, who are among a group students from 10 universities helping pilot an ASCA program aimed at helping students complete RAMP applications.



IN THE KNOW...

Professional counselors strive to learn more about ourselves and others in order to optimize our success in our professional and personal lives. While we know UNO Counseling Students hail from Nebraska and across the globe, how aware are we, really, of the experiences of those sitting with us in class? “In the Know” ” is designed to help spotlight this very issue by addressing topics and issues that highlight the diversity of experiences of students in our department.

Go, Go, Go! Balancing Work, Life and School Demands

It's no surprise that balancing work and school while trying to retain some semblance of a social/family/personal life is exhausting. In the midst of these various demands, some comfort may be found in knowing others (even your professors!) empathize with the stress and fatigue associated with graduate study. As one student stated, “it's definitely difficult to strike the right balance between school, work, and my overall wellbeing.” While it's not unusual, and sometimes essential, to just “put your head down” and attend to your responsibilities, it's also imperative to “look up”! To help in that arena, the department created and circulated a short survey asking UNO Counseling students about what experiences they might be getting outside of school and how these experiences are impacting their education. Results of that survey follow in this installment of “[In The Know...](#)”

****Students identified in this piece consented to being identified.***

By the Numbers...:

⇒ **190 students in the UNO Counseling program.**

The counseling program is divided up into 3 programs of study. Students are able to choose between Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMH), School Counseling, and Student Affairs. Currently 127 of those students are studying Clinical Mental Health, 48 are studying School Counseling and 15 are studying Student Affairs.

Survey Respondents:

⇒ **55 Counseling students completed the voluntary survey.**

⇒ **35 Clinical Mental Health; 16 school counseling, 4 student affairs.**

⇒ **34/55 (61.8%) were full time students (9 credits per semester)**

The vast majority of courses in the counseling department are evening courses requiring detailed attention to work/class/life schedules and timelines. Not to mention dinner (or at least a snack at break). **Lexie Voss***, a CMHC student, stated that, “adding part time work to my full time school schedule has been rather stressful. I try to balance the overall stressors that come along with my full schedule by working out regularly and eating well to help promote overall wellness.” Wellness-based habits and good time-management are certainly encouraged, but of course it's also ok to tumble off the wagon a bit if you need a good sugar rush from the candy machine or movie night with your significant other-or just yourself! Hey, we know you're working hard-you deserve it.

⇒ **27/55 (49%) of respondents students were employed full-time (over 32 hours week).**

Counseling students reported a variety of full time employment, from service profession jobs such as bartending/waiting tables/catering to mental health paraprofessional jobs. Others continued working in current previous fields (i.e., business, teaching) as they build toward a career as a professional counselor. **For example, one student stated,**

“[their] work experience has enhanced [their] work in the UNO counseling program for school counseling.

Working inside education gives [them] more perspective than those that don't work in the field and it also helps view [their] teaching differently... from a counselor's point of view."

This valuing of current/previous work experiences was a common thread. As an example, another student noted, "I understood the terminology and basic concepts of counseling from my prior work experiences, as well as an advanced understanding of the billing / management aspect of providing therapy." While these students are gaining valuable counseling experiences, many others are experiencing valuable life lessons at their places of employment. Another student informed us that the lessons they've learned "about communication, time management, and prioritizing" have not only benefited their educational experience, but personal life as well. Finally, Brenda Frazell, a second year CMH student and mother of 4, provides additional insights on parental/family roles have impacted her life:

"Being a mother of four and working is a juggling act in itself, and grad school was the extra "ball" that I thought would throw me off balance. Of course grad school is stressful at times, and getting assignments done alongside life is tricky, but I like to put it all in a positive re-frame. I have found that the CMHC program has actually become a grounding force and a place of wellness for me. I truly enjoy working with my peers, learning from the professors, using skills in class and in the whole process learning more about myself. This juggling act definitely is not easy, but very worth it."

⇒ **5/55 (9%) of students hold graduate assistantats at UNO.**

There are currently 356 graduate assistant positions at UNO this semester. There are 102 departments at UNO that have graduate assistant positions available. These positions vary from the counseling department to the physics department to cybersecurity. The duties of a graduate assistant vary with each position but the benefits are always great. If you are interested in receiving a tuition reduction and monthly stipend, unique experiences working in a campus setting, or interested in furthering your education, reach out to graduate studies and apply! GA's don't have to work in the same department they are studying, and free school is free school! Being a GA is a great opportunity that pushes you to learn and grow in your abilities.

⇒ **38/55 (69%) of students plan to continue with their current work schedule while completing their practicum and internships.**

There is a reason UNO Counseling students are encouraged to begin planning for the practicum and internship semesters at new student orientation and frequently thereafter. The 700 hours of practicum and internship site/coursework takes place over 3 semesters and averages 10-15 hours a week-most often during regular work/school hours. Thus, pre-planning, including a close look at budgets, family, and work responsibilities, is critical to ensure students are at their best given that many first jobs post-graduation are at internship sites.

Of our 35 respondents, 6 plan to continue working full time w/internship, a choice that often involves 50-60 hours weeks between work/school. An additional 22 plan to continue part time, while 9 plan on quitting their job or reducing their hours prior to the start of practicum/internship. However, no matter the enrollment status, successfully balancing practicum/internship semesters (which often include other courses & comprehensive exams), reflection and pre-planning is needed to ensure success equates across personal and academic dimensions.

We hope this installment of **"In the Know"** has provided some new insights and maybe even provoked some early thoughts on how to manage those challenging practicum/internship semesters. While no two stories are alike, one thing is for certain. UNO counseling students are committed students, spouses, significant others, military members/veterans/family members, employees, and the list goes on..... It is this commitment that makes our students and graduates respected members of the counseling profession across specialization areas. Nevertheless, remember, long and fruitful careers in counseling require commitment to the wellbeing of ourselves and our loved ones along with those we serve. To that end, make "wellness" & "balance" your baseline.

2017 Fall Conferences

Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)

Annual Conference 2017



CHICAGO Illinois



Dr. Bjornsen, Dr. Blount, and colleague presenting their poster on Helping Professionals and Wellness.

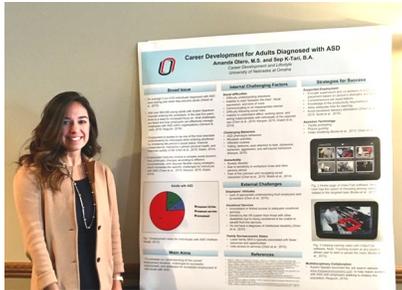


Dr. Bjornsen, Dr. Kissinger, and Dr. Luther relax after their ACES roundtable presentation on training reflective practitioners.



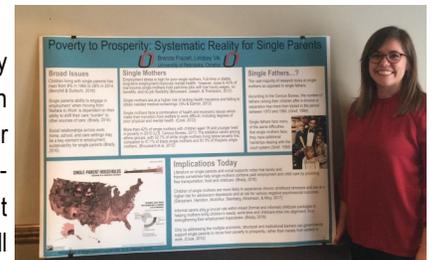
UNO CMH alumni Vincent Marasco, a current Counselor Educator doctoral student at the University of Idaho, with Dr. Bjornsen.

Nebraska Counseling Association Annual Conference 2017



CMHC graduate Amanda Otero presents a poster on Career Development for Adults Diagnosed with ASD. Not pictured: CMHC student Sep K-Tari

CMHC student Lindsay Vik presents a poster on the Systematic Reality for Single Parents. Not pictured: CMHC student Brenda Frazell



SAHE students Alex Zatzabal and Jasmyn McAlister present their poster on First Generation College Students and Career Development.



Dr. Carter, Chelsea Taggart, Michele Jack-Love present their poster on Counseling the Elderly: Overcoming Stigma.

Grief's Journey Annual Grief Awareness Conference 2017



CMHC student Alan Fredericksen (R) & colleagues presented at the annual Grief Awareness Conference on November 18th. Alan and his team presented on "The Role and Impact of Grief in the Addiction Journey".



Chi Sig Corner



Chapter Upsilon Nu Omicron

Semester Events:

CSI Movie Night: September 30th

CSI Meeting: November 16th 4:45 PM, Rm 304

CSI Annual BBQ: October 15th

New Student Orientation CSI Promotion Event

- If interested in participating, email Carli Palladino at: carli.palladino@gmail.com

Finals Week Mental Health Awareness Fundraiser

- December 11-15th
- Stressed during finals week? Come “Pet a Pup, Donate a Buck” in Roskins Hall
- Donations will be used to sponsor a family in need living in a developing country.

Fall CSI Webinars:

- Neurofeedback Series
 - October 12, December 12; 2-3 PM EST
- Growing Leaders: How CSI Chapters Support Member Leadership Development
 - November 8, 2-3 PM EST
- Affirming Practices with Transgender & Gender Nonconforming Clients
 - November 15, 2-3 PM EST



CSI members hosting a campus yoga wellness event outside of Roskins Hall in May 2017.

CSI Members attending the Omaha Out of Darkness Suicide Awareness Walk in September 2017.



CSI President Jared Langemeier monitors Dr. Kissinger (not pictured) to ensure he doesn't burn the hamburgers at the annual CSI cookout.

Interested in Joining? Here is how!

With 9 semester hours and a minimum GPA of 3.5, you can join by following steps:

- Complete the online application process at csi-net.org.
- Click on Membership under Chapters and Members (in the left hand column).
- Enter our local chapter name: Upsilon Nu Omicron.
- Submit the form online and pay initial dues online via credit card.
- Lastly, write a check to chapter Upsilon Nu Omicron for \$10.00 (chapter fee) and turn the check into Dr. Blount in Roskens Hall Room 101.

Advocacy Corner

- **What is advocacy?** - Counselors need to get out of their offices and connect directly with people in their own environments! There are many opportunities to get involved in Omaha and beyond.
- **What can you do?** - (1) find a problem and/or population that you are passionate about, (2) become informed on the issues, (3) share what you know & raise awareness! (4) by presenting at conferences, filling a need that isn't being met, doing workshops with involved populations, and (5) get out of your comfort zone!
- **In the words of ACA President Thelma Duffey**, "I think counseling outreach provides ... an opportunity for counselors to contribute to their communities by offering their areas of knowledge and expertise—at times to people who feel, and sometimes are, unsupported."

Need a Social Justice Break?

Join others from the Omaha community every Saturday from 1-2:00p.m. for our weekly **Peace and Justice Vigil** on the northwest corner of 72 & Dodge St. in Omaha, NE.

Bring and hold your favorite sign, a hula-hoop and do some Hooping for Peace or just come take a stand for something good.

Contact Steve Horn for more info: 402-426-9068

Stigma free

Join NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, in it's journey to break down the stigma around mental illnesses. Take the pledge to end the stigma and promote hope for those with mental illness. Help change "Stigma Free ME" to "Stigma Free WE" at: <https://www.nami.org/>



Advocacy Opportunities to Know About

KIKI Showing and Discussion Panel

- A film that follow 7 characters from the Kiki community designed to shed light on issues such as homelessness, illness, and prejudice, as well as gains in political influence and affirming gender-expressions
- Free pizza and a discussion panel with community members and activists to follow

2017 VA Stand Down Event

- Help end Veteran Homelessness in the Omaha metro area at this event through various volunteer opportunities at this event
- More info at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-va-stand-down-volunteer-registration-registration-38853797755?aff=es2>

Survivor Day

- Survivor day is the one day a year when people affected by suicide loss gather around the world at events in their loyal communities to find comfort and gain understanding as they share stories of healing and hope
- All Saints Episcopal Church, 9302 Blondo Street
- More info at: https://afsp.org/survivor_day/omaha-nebraska/

60 Minutes of Service

- Come learn all about a local nonprofit from organization's staff members and complete a fun and meaningful service project.
- First Wednesday of the month, 12-1pm, UNO Weitz CEC building

Want to learn about...

- leadership, teamwork, effective communication, and critical thinking skills
 - social, emotional, and intercultural competencies
 - civic identity: a sense of purpose and leadership within the community
- ... then check out **The Office for Civil and Social Responsibility** for upcoming volunteer opportunities in the Omaha community.

Funding for Research & Travel

Potential funding for students interested in attending a professional conference can seek support and can make travel requests in two locations. Students who will be presenting their research/projects are more likely to receive funding, than those who are only attending a conference. These requests should be made well in advance of the conference.

1. A proposal with a detailed budget (summary of presentation, conference name, registration fees, airfare, etc..) should be submitted directly to the Dean of the COE.
2. Information on other sources such as the University Committee on Research & Creative Activity (GRACA) and funding agencies exterior to the University can be obtained from the Office of Research and Creative Activity (ORCA).

*Please note all proposals should be submitted electronically as a document in PDF

Congrats to our Graduates!

Spring 2017 Graduates

Alkhalifah Faitmah, Kendall Allen, Brad Bolton, Elizabeth Brown, Elizabeth Chalenburg, Grace Chu, Alicia Falcone, Stephanie Gana, Jill Gross, Desiree Hayden-Parra, Ashley Hergott, Brandi Hill, Carrie Hoeser, Samantha Koehler-Overton, Kari Mettenbrink, Madeleine Moore, Felicia Nofuente, Trevor O'reilly, Nicolette Rogers, Megan Salcedo, Kristen Schweitz, Bethany Seehusen, Ellen Stoll, Randi Trausch, Lindsey Zentic.

December 2017 Graduates

Nathan Hayward, Renee (Ulrich) Pigsley, Veronica Wolf, Alexandria Bates, Mike Tosh, Sep Tari, Alexandria Ashley, Alexa Badura, Amber Determan, Jasmyn McAlister, Susie McWhirter.

Community Counseling Clinic seeing large increase in client numbers.

Clinic hours: Monday-Thursday, 2-7 pm

The last two semesters have seen consistent growth in client traffic at the UNO Community Counseling Clinic, in large part due to the new marketing efforts of our clinic coordinator (Laurelin Sterns) and assistance from current and former GA's Maddie Moore, Nate Hayward, and Lindsey Vik— and the excellent work of Dr. Bjornsen and the COUN 8220 spring practicum students. Great work all! **In fact, we have provided over 725 client sessions during the Summer and Fall semesters (to date)! |**

In addition to the great training opportunities for CMHC students, we are proud to continue providing quality, low cost mental health services to members of the UNO and Omaha communities. We appreciate your referrals to this service and have cards and brochures available for local community distribution if you would like to help.

Our clinic is staffed by advanced CMHC practicum students and Individual and couples are available for a small fee (\$10 per session, \$15 for couples and families).

Clinic Staff: Dr. Kissinger, Clinic Director

Laurelin Sterns, PLMHP Clinic Coordinator

Dr. Bjornsen, Practicum Instructor

Department of Counseling | 402-554-2727 |

www.unomaha.edu/college-of-education/counseling/

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