



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

# DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING

The Communicator | December 2018

[coe.unomaha.edu/coun](http://coe.unomaha.edu/coun)

2018 Chi Sigma Iota Outstanding Chapter Newsletter of the Year



## A Message from the Chair

The fall 2018 semester has been its usual eventful self. In addition to the normal business of courses, exams, papers, and clinical fieldwork (and jobs, family, social activities, etc...), this semester saw two key additions to the department. First, we welcomed Dr. Tolliver to the department as our new assistant professor. Also, Dr. Bjornsen-Ramig and her husband welcomed their first child, a daughter. We are excited for both additions! We also saw 15 students from the CMHC/SAHE programs graduate and begin their careers in clinical mental health counselors and student affairs professionals-**congrats to all graduates!!**

As you will see, faculty and students were busy this semester. Take some time to read over all the professional activities of the faculty (and students)-and don't hesitate to contact a faculty member if you have an interest in research or presenting at a future conference. Also, if you saw our recent survey, you may have guessed the cute lab picture is an enticement for you to read our **"In the Know"** section where we surveyed COUN students on pet ownership/benefits, and interest in using **Animal Assisted Therapy** in future practice. Don't miss one of the best pages we've ever created-**a page full of student and faculty pets!!** While you may be tempted to stop there, don't! This volume also highlights the great work of our Chi Sigma Iota chapter's (Upsilon Nu Omicron) advocacy and leadership work in the community and profiles rising career of a recent SAHE graduate and now Dr. Marquisha Spencer-Frost. Happy reading!

Best,

Dr. Kissinger



# Faculty411

## Urban Dictionary:

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

### Dr. Bjornsen

- Published article: “Student attitudes toward an online graduate career counseling course” in *The International Journal of Online Graduate Education*.
- Co-authored book chapter: “Activism and college mental health” with Dr. Kissinger, which was accepted for publication in *Exploring the Technological, Societal, and Institutional Dimensions of College Student Activism*.

### Dr. Blount

- Co-published the following articles:
  - *A needs assessment for physical activity programming on a college campus based on the Trans-theoretical model in Recreational Sports Journal*.
  - *Student attitudes toward an online graduate career counseling course in International Journal of Online Graduate Education*.
  - A wellness approach to investigating student veterans’ career goals in *Journal of Military and Government Counseling*.
  - A multi-method synthesis of studies evaluating wellness-informed approaches to counselor supervision in *Counselor Education and Supervision*.
  - Promoting wellness in refugee populations in *Journal of Counseling & Development*
  - *Work values, occupational engagement, and professional quality of life in counselors-in-training: Assessments in a constructivist-based career counseling course in The Professional Counselor*
- Co-presented *Wellness in Refugee Populations and Wellness-Based Supervision, Professional Quality of Life, and Helper Well-being* at the Association for Assessment & Research in Counseling Conference in Richmond, VA.

### Dr. Carter

- Published an article titled, A Transactional Analysis Model with a Single Mother and her Adult Child with Bipolar Disorder. *Journal of Clinical Case Studies*.17(5) 293-310.
- Reviewed Geriatric Notes: Pocket Guide Designed for Advanced Practice Nurses and Physician Assistants. Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC.
- Presented at the International Medical & Mental Health Conference in Dublin, Ireland: *Case Study, A Transactional Analysis Model with a Single Mother/Adult Child with Bipolar Disorder*.
- Presented the follow workshops:
  - *Learning to Relax*. Workshop at TD AmeriTrade.
  - *Gratitude: A Skill for Happier Living*. Workshop at Children Hospital and Medical Center.
  - *Happiness: Key to Life Satisfaction*. Workshop at Children Hospital and Medical Center.
  - *Health and Wellness in the Work Place*. Workshop at CompSource Technology Corporation.
  - *How Behavioral Health Should React Ethically in a Disaster*. Great Plains Behavior Health Conference.

### Dr. Kissinger

- Presented two research posters at the 2018 SACES conference in Myrtle Beach, SC.: A) Attitudes of athletic trainers toward mental illness and B) The implications of addiction in families (w/ CMCH student Lindsey Vik).

- Presented a seminar on the Wellness Paradigm at the First International Multidisciplinary Conference on Behavioral Health at Qatar University in Doha, Qatar;
- Presented a seminar on clinical diagnosis and treatment planning in the undergraduate psychology program at Qatar University.
- Presented a seminar on recognizing and addressing depression and anxiety as part of the Nebraska Methodist College's Nursing program lecture series.

#### Dr. Luther

- Presented to South Sioux City School District counselors, administrators, school psychologists, and clinical mental health counselors on a school based mental health collaboration focused on role clarity and communication.
- Member of the Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium special task force looking into chronic absenteeism issues and ideas.

#### Dr. Tolliver

- Assumed Faculty Advisor role for department's Chi Sigma Iota chapter, Upsilon Nu Omicron.
- Completed her dissertation "The Relationship Between Emotional Competence and the Supervisory Working Alliance: A Study of Doctoral Counselor Education Supervisors and Master's-Level Counselors-in-Training" .

## Alumni Spotlight

The Counseling Department is proud of the successes of our alumni! Here you will find brief bios and professional updates with UNO Counseling alumni, sharing their current experience and showcasing their diverse



### **Dr. Marquisha Spencer-Frost**

Dr. Marquisha Spencer-Frost is an Omaha Native and two-time University of Nebraska at Omaha alumna. She graduated in 2014 with her Master's Degree in Student Affairs in Higher Education in the UNO Counseling Department. After graduation, Dr. Spencer-Frost began her doctoral program in Education, with an emphasis in Higher Education Administration and Women and Gender Studies at Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. As doctoral student, she served as Claremont's Graduate Student Council President, School of Educational Studies Bowen Associate, and Student Consultant for several Executive Administration Committees. Dr. Spencer-Frost graduated with honors in May of 2018, receiving her Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration and Women and Gender Studies. She currently serves as an Adjunct Professor at the University of La Verne, and recently accepted a position as Assistant Dean of Academic Resources and Services at Scripps College in Claremont, California. In her spare time, Dr. Spencer-Frost continues to connect with others through her blog: [queensdothings.com](http://queensdothings.com), and enjoys spending time with her newlywed husband, Dell and their son Kye.



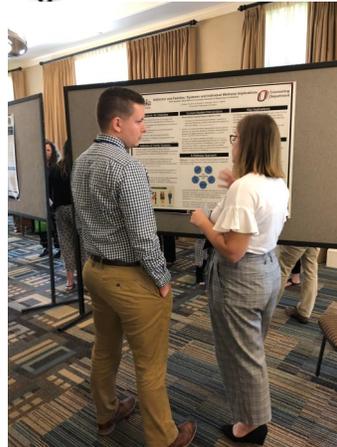
# 2018 Fall Conferences

Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES)—Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

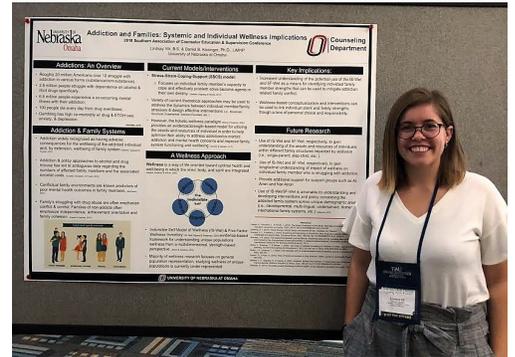
**SACES 2018** Myrtle Beach South Carolina  
 Conference Hilton Resort October 11-13  
*Creating and Cultivating Equity: Activism in Practice*



Dr. Kissinger presenting a poster on Athletic Trainer Attitudes Toward Mental Illness and Wellness. Not Pictured: Co-authors Dr. Blount and Dr. Rosen (H&K dept.)



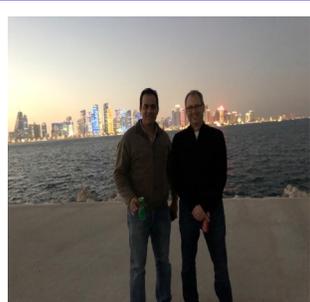
Discussing research with a doctoral student attendee



CMH student Lindsay Vik presenting a poster on Addiction and Family Wellness. Not pictured: Co-presenters Dr. Kissinger and Julia Downey



Dr. Kissinger traveled to Doha, Qatar to participate in the [First International Multi-disciplinary Conference on Behavioral Health at Qatar University](#). The conference brought together behavioral and mental health professionals from the U.S., Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Dr. Kissinger provided a keynote talk on the Indivisible Self Model of Wellness and also guest lectured in an undergraduate psychology course. The trip also allowed Dr. Kissinger to reunite with Dr. Eid Abo Hamza, his former student at the University of Arkansas and now faculty in the Psychology Department at Qatar University (w/full appointment at Tanta University in Egypt). Through the generous hospitality of Dr. Abo Hamza and his family [(Dr. Yasmeen, son Muhammed, & daughter Karma (“Cookie”)], non-conference time was spent exploring the beautiful city of Doha. Another highlight (post camel races!) was being invited to spend an evening with Dr. Abo Hamza’s friend Muhammed and his amazing (and large!) family at their family retreat in the desert outside Doha (r). Dr. Kissinger noted, “It was a privilege to be invited to speak at the conference and to learn from and socialize with so many talented international scholars. In addition, being able to spend quality time with Dr. Abo Hamza, his family, and his friends was truly special and an unforgettable life experience”.



# Chi Sig Corner

Chapter: Upsilon Nu Omicron



## Semester Events

### On the Calendar

- CSI/UNO Semester Activities
- Semester Chili & Chill event
- Ugly Sweater Party @ Dr. Tolliver's.
- Wellness Packs Donation Drive
- Elections: Spring 2019



Upsilon Nu Omicron members with the wellness packs they gathered and donated to Open Doors



Scenes from an Ugly Christmas Sweater party on Dec, 7th.



## Fall CSI Webinars

Available at any time with active membership.

To renew or sign up follow this link: [https://www.csi-net.org/general/register\\_member\\_type.asp](https://www.csi-net.org/general/register_member_type.asp)

### General Topics

**Mattering in Times of Moral Distress: An Ethical Mandate** Dr. Barbara Herlihy

**Grieving in the Age of Social Media** Dr. June M. Williams

**Counselors in Court: Building Competency, Credibility, and Confidence** Dr. Ann M. Ordway

**How To Develop a Data-Driven School Counseling Program and See Results!** Kirsten Perry

### Legal & Ethical Issues

**Mattering in Times of Moral Distress: An Ethical Mandate** Dr. Barbara Herlihy

**Counselors in Court: Building Competency, Credibility, and Confidence** Dr. Ann M. Ordway

**Child Sexual Abuse: Legal and Ethical Implications** Dr. Richard Joseph Behun, Dr. Eric W. Owens, & Dr. Julie A. Cerrito

**Conceptualizing Counseling Sessions: Ethical Considerations** Dr. Rhonda Sutton

**Legal and Ethical Issues in the Treatment of Self-Injurious Behavior: Risk Management Considerations for Professional Counselors** Dr. Rachel M. O'Neill



## *“We do not deserve pets, but I’m sure glad they think so...”*

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 this iteration of our ongoing **“In the Know” series** highlights the personal joys and clinical applications of pet ownership—with a special nod to the array of pets who bring joy and meaning to UNO Counseling students and their families. Don’t miss the great pics of student’s pets following the article!

In the U.S., 68% of U.S. households, or about 85 million families, own a pet according to the 2017-2018 National Pet Owners Survey conducted by the American Pet Products Association (APPA). Discussions about pets are often overheard in the department, as is the sharing of pet photos. This led us to wonder about the role pet ownership plays among our students—and their interest in pet assisted therapy in their future careers. To that end, we created and circulated a short survey asking UNO Counseling students to better understand the life experiences of our UNO animal loving and owning counseling students —and how these experiences are integral/integrated into their current graduate experience. The results of our department survey are explored below:

### **By the Numbers...:**

⇒ **212 students in the UNO Counseling program were offered the opportunity to complete the survey via the department’s listserv.**

### **Demographics**

⇒ **51 Counseling students completed the voluntary survey**

⇒ **38 Clinical Mental Health; 11 School Counseling; 2 Student Affairs**

⇒ **38/51 (74.51%) of respondents are female, 12/51 (25.5%) were male, 1/51 (1.96%) identified as other**

⇒ **41/51 (80.39%) of respondents self-identified as European American/White; 6/51 (11.76%) as Latino or Hispanic; 0/51 as African American or black; 1/51 (1.96%) of respondents self-identified as Asian American or Asian; 1/51 (1.96%) of respondents self-identified as Middle Eastern or Arab American and 2/51 (3.92%) as Multiple Races or Ethnicities.**

### **Pet Ownership & Benefits Among UNO Counseling Students**

⇒ **45/51 (88.24%) of respondents reported currently having a pet, 2/48 (3.92%) do not have a pet, and 4/51 (7.84%) wish they had a pet.**

⇒ **32/48 (60.38%) of respondents have a dog, 14/48 (26.42%) of respondents have a cat, 2/48 (3.77%) have a reptile or snake, 3/48 (5.66%) have fish or some kind of aquatic life, 1 (1.89%) respondent has a bird and 1(1.38%) respondent has a horse.**

When asked about how having a pet would impact their life, one student’s statement that being “...able to hold and cuddle an animal when I got home from work...” would help relieve distress was a common expression of how pets contribute to their wellbeing. This sentiment aligns with the Friedmann, Son, and Saleem’s (2015) finding that, “[animals’ act] as means of alleviating the distress caused by loneliness, depression, and anxiety as well as decreasing physiologic stress responses.” Perhaps unsurprisingly, our students reported numerous other wellness benefits of having their pets for themselves and their family members.

- ⇒ “I noticed an interesting impact on my 4 year-old’s mental health. We’ve had Zuko for only about a month or so and I have noticed a significant decrease in my son’s aggressive behavior. Zuko also seems to have a calming effect on him.”
- ⇒ “My girls have kept me sane when life gets stressful and overwhelming. They keep me grounded and present.”
- ⇒ “Our two dogs provide us with so much joy and laughter! There is nothing like snuggling with them, and scratching their heads to melt away the stress of my day. Our dogs love us and accept us, no matter what kind of day we’ve had.”
- ⇒ “We take 3 miles worth of walks a day. It gives me time to reflect. He greets me each day with unconditional love and I noticed I’m in an overall better mood when he’s around.”

These quotes from our students are also consistent with studies on human/domesticated animal relationships can positively affect mental and physical wellbeing. For example, friendly dogs have been shown to reduce children’s aggression in classroom settings( Hergovich, Monshi, Semmler, & Zieglmayer, 2002; Kotrschal & Ortbauer, 2003). Other studies show how pet ownership can increase physical activity (Friedmann, Son, & Saleem, 2015).

Our survey also examined student’s interest in utilizing *animal-assisted interventions in counseling* (AAI-C) and doing an event aimed at teaching them more about AAI-C and AAI-C competencies. According to the Delta Society (2005), AAI-C provides opportunities for motivational, educational, recreational, and/or therapeutic benefits to enhance quality of life. Animal-assisted therapy can be a useful intervention for individuals or groups. A meta-analysis of 49 studies reporting on animal-assisted therapy found positive outcomes and overall improved emotional well-being in those with autism, medical conditions, or behavioral issues (Nimer & Lundahl, 2007). Another review of randomized, controlled studies found that animal-assisted therapy can be helpful for those battling illnesses like depression, schizophrenia, or addiction (Kamioka, Okada, Tsutani, et al., 2014). Given our other results, it is unsurprising to see a high level of interest in AAI-C in our department. **Specifically, 80% of our respondents reported an interest in AAI-C, while just under 18% were undecided.**

For those interested in integrating AAI-C training into their clinical practice, it is important to gain the proper content knowledge (i.e., courses), AAI-C training, and certification. Some courses are available online, but it is suggested counselors do formal coursework. If you are interested, please contact **ACA’s Animal-Assisted Therapy in Mental Health Interest Network** ([counseling.org/aca-community/aca-groups/interest-networks](https://www.counseling.org/aca-community/aca-groups/interest-networks)). To learn more about the competencies, knowledge, and skills needed to become certified, visit <https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/competencies>.

### References & Suggested Readings:

Delta Society. (2005). *Introduction to animal assisted activities and therapies*. Retrieved from <http://www.deltasociety.org/AnimalsAAAAbout.htm>.

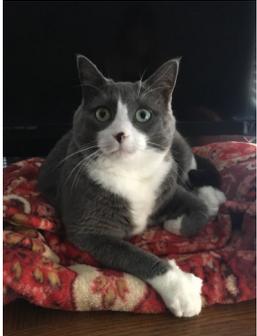
Andreas Hergovich, Bardia Monshi, Gabriele Semmler & Verena Zieglmayer (2002). The effects of the presence of a dog in the classroom, *Anthrozoös*, 15(1), 37-50.

Kamioka, H., Okada, S., Tsutani, K., Park, K., Okuizumi, H., Handa, S., Oshio, T., Park, S., Kitayuguchi, J., Abe, T., Honda, T., Mutoh, Y. (2014). Effectiveness of animal-assisted therapy: A systematic review of randomized controlled trials. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, 22(2), 371-39.

Kotrschal K., Ortbauer B. (2003). Behavioral effects of the presence of a dog in a classroom. *Anthrozoos*, 16, 147–159.

Nimer, J., & Lundahl, B. (2007). Animal-assisted therapy: A meta-analysis. *Anthrozoös*, 20(3), 225-238.

**UNO students and  
Faculty pets!**



# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

**Mental  
Health  
Opportunities  
to Know  
About**

## International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

November 17

### Working with Immigrants and Refugees: Panel and Resource Fair

A Training for Mental Health Providers and Helping Professionals

Friday, December 14, 2018 | 9:00 A.M. - Noon | 132 CPACS

### Aging with Intention

Curious about aging? Hear from Gerontology expert Julie Masters, Ph.D.

Monday, January 28, 2019 | 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. | 230/231 CEC

### TEDxUNO 2019: Resilience

TEDTalks video and live speakers will combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group.

Saturday, February 16, 2019 | 2:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M. | UNO Campus, TBD

## 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!
  - **CSI Advocacy Page:** <https://www.csi-net.org/page/Advocacy>
  - **ACA Advocacy Page:** <https://www.counseling.org/government-affairs/advocacy-tips-tools>
  - **NBCC Advocacy Page:** <https://www.nbcc.org/advocacy>

## 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 to: [unosponpro@unomaha.edu](mailto:unosponpro@unomaha.edu).



## Congrats to our Graduates!

### December 2018 Graduates

Sydney Barrett, Tyler Beekley, Alexandra Boryca, Megan Burke, Patrice Crall, Julia Downey, Kelsey Ferry, Brenda Frazell, Molly Hefner, Abbey Jones, Nicole Jordan, Gina Kadima, Ashley Petti, Kevin Reynolds, Michelle Wilhelm



Counseling Dept. graduates gather for a group photo following Graduation ceremonies at UNO's Baxter Arena.

## UNO Community Counseling Clinic

**Clinic hours: Monday-Thursday, 2-7 pm**

The UNO Community Counseling Clinic continues to provide effective, low-cost counseling services to individuals and couples in the Omaha metro community. In fact, *our clinic provided over 800\*\*\* hours of direct counseling services to clients in the last academic year alone.* Our success is due to the hard work of faculty, staff, and especially the practicum students who are providing the services-well done all!!

As we continue to build on our success and work to provide low cost mental health services to citizens in Omaha, we continue to appreciate referrals to this service and have cards and brochures available for local community distribution if you would like to help. As a reminder, current rates are \$10 for individual counseling and \$20 for couples.

For more information, please visit our website at: <https://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-education/counseling/community-counseling-clinic/index.php>

Sincerely,

Daniel B. Kissinger, PhD, LIMHP, CPC, Clinic Director

Renée Pigsley, M.S., PLMHP Co-Clinic Coordinator

Tom Seguin, M.A., PLMHP Co-Clinic Coordinator

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