Proposal: Online Graduate Program in Human Services Administration

Master of Arts in Human Services Administration (MA/HSA) Program (30 credits): This program consists of 10 current MHS courses, with a focus on helping mid-level human service supervisors and managers use a systems approach to bring about positive change at the personal, agency, and community level.

Summary: Program Structure and Philosophy

- Unlike our traditional 2-year f2f MHS Program, this new online program will be open only to students who have completed an undergraduate degree.
- This program maintains the holistic philosophy of the MHS Program but eliminates from the current MHS curriculum the courses that students are likely to have had in their undergraduate programs and the courses that are geared primarily to counseling/micro track concerns.
- The current MHS ethics, skills, psychology and social systems dimensions are all represented in the 10 required courses, but the emphasis is on systems and skills.
- We already have the courses, the syllabi, and qualified instructors, so this program will be relatively easy to get up and running.
- Students may, if they wish, add three additional courses (making a total overall of 39 credits) in a focus area and graduate with an MA in Human Services Administration in […] fill in specialty area, e.g., Master of Arts in Human Services Administration in Gerontology.] We plan to build three popular concentrations first -- Gerontology, Criminal Justice, and Substance Abuse. Many of those needed courses are already approved and in Lincoln’s catalog as part of the MHS curriculum; new areas of concentration, such as Consulting/Coaching, can later be added as demand arises.
- Students who have already earned an undergraduate or graduate degree and are seeking to specialize, or are just interested in developing expertise in a specific focus area, can take the 3-course concentration alone.
- Courses (all of which are 3 credits) can be taken in any order, but students working towards a degree must take HUS 745: Theory and Practice Integration (Capstone) as their final course.

See following for description of courses and fuller explanation of program.
Master of Arts in Human Services Administration (MA/HSA) Program

I. **Name of Degree**: Master of Arts in Human Services Administration (MA/HSA). If students choose to take three additional courses in a specialty area, then the degree would be Master of Arts in Human Services Administration in … [fill in specialty, e.g., "Master of Arts in Human Service Administration in Gerontology."]

II. **Number of Credits Required for Graduation**:
- 30 credits (all courses earn three credits)
- 39 credits to graduate with specialty

III. **Length of Semester/Modules and Time to Complete if Attending Full Time**:
Courses taught in 10-week modules. Students may take no more than two courses per 10-week term; a degree could be potentially be completed in one year, depending on how many times per year the 10-week modules are offered. Specialty modules can also be taken on their own, allowing several different points of entry.

IV. **Target Population**:
People working in the human service field who are comfortable with technology and who have undergraduate degrees. People in current MHS catchment area who know Lincoln’s f2f MHS Program. People outside catchment area who know Lincoln by reputation.

V. **Admissions Requirement (academic background required and admissions testing)**:
Undergraduate degree from an accredited institution, with GPA of 3.0 or above in a social science or related field. Students with GPA of 2.75 may be granted conditional acceptance, with this conditional designation removed after satisfactory (3.0 or higher) completion of two courses. Students also must have one year paid work experience in human service field. It is expected that students will be employed in human service supervisory or administrative positions (or, in special circumstances, an approved intern position) during their period of graduate study.

VI. **Transfer Policy**:
A maximum of two courses (with grades of B or higher) from other accredited master’s level programs may be transferred in for credit towards the degree, assuming that the Program Director and Registrar confirm course equivalence.

VII. **GPA Needed for Progression**:
Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher to demonstrate satisfactory progression toward the MA/HSA degree. Students earning grades of B- or below in individual courses will receive an administrative warning letter reminding them of the need to maintain a 3.0. No more than two C courses may be counted towards graduation credit.

VIII. **Rationale (marketing pitch—why would someone decide to enroll in this program rather than a similar one offered by another institution?)**:
Lincoln's reputation and history (minority friendly education); MHS reputation in field (adult-friendly education); emphasis on group dynamics in all courses (come out...
knowing self, knowing others, knowing organizational dynamics, knowing how individuals and groups function in society); focus on administration and planning from a systems perspective; relatively inexpensive in-state tuition rates; relatively short timeframe; built around multiple points of entry, program can function as

- a 3-course certificate program alone, attracting MHS alums and others with general master’s degrees who want to specialize;
- a shorter version of the current MHS program, attracting people who want an MHS but already have their bachelor’s degree and don’t want to spend two more years on their master’s degree as required by our f2f program; or
- a general master’s degree with the chance to specialize in some of the most important (and thus most marketable) human service specialties.

IX. List of the 10 Required Courses (3 credits each) with Brief Description of Each:

1. **HUS 614: Communication Skills for Human Service Practitioners**: This course helps students improve their academic and professional writing skills. By creating and refining a variety of professional documents (proposals, reports, web-based prose, PowerPoint presentations, and academic research), students will learn to write with clarity, conciseness, correctness and conviction.

2. **HUS 711: Professional Ethics**: The course focuses on the theoretical and historical background of ethics for human services with the primary attention given to philosophical traditions. Approaches to values are distinguished, e.g., philosophical, psychological and interdisciplinary.

3. **HUS 722: Theories of Counseling**: The course focuses on theoretical perspectives of helping in a wide variety of human interaction situations. Theories of counseling will be examined and their application to other professional helping relationships will be discussed. Variables related to establishing and maintaining a helping relationship will be examined, e.g., assessment / intervention, rapport building, cultural competence and skill building. The stages of a helping relationship will be explored in class by role-plays, student simulation (case consultation), and problem solving formats. Emphasis is on understanding helping from the perspective of interpersonal dynamics and the components of behavior change.

4. **HUS 731: Group Dynamics, Ethical Issues & Systems Analysis of Group Interaction**: The course focuses on theories of group dynamics with respect to styles of leadership and/or facilitation of group context and process, and conflict resolution. Behavior in face-to-face groups is examined along the dimensions of task accomplishment, relationships among group members, and issues of cultural diversity. Ethical questions for groups and the formation of group norms as a values clarification process are considered. The difference between beliefs, attitudes and values will be delineated. Issues of institutional racism, sexism, classism, ageism, ethnocentrism, and homophobia will be examined for their impact upon norm formation. Group dynamics will be explored in a cultural context with the emphasis on valuing diversity and managing conflict. Conceptual tools from systems theory, communications sciences, cultural anthropology, and sociology will be employed to identify and explicit various behavioral patterns within different group settings. Emphasis will be placed upon intra-group and intergroup dynamics, intra-cultural and intercultural communications, as well as linkages between groups and larger social systems.

5. **HUS 743: Social Systems Intervention, Marketing, Managerial Planning and Outcome Assessment**: This course will examine various aspects of organizational management and the extension of managerial intelligence to the organization’s surrounding community and other salient social systems in the larger macro environment. Concepts and tools will be drawn from
systems theory, cybernetics, game theory, communication theory, marketing, management, political science, public administration, and organizational outcome assessment.

6. **HUS 649: Tools and Models for Human Service Managers:** It is only through effective and efficient management practices that human service agencies can achieve a broad humanistic vision. This course will provide students with a variety of management tools models and perspectives essential for creating and maintaining efficient practices and effective strategies within human services organizations.

7. **HUS 659: Planning and Effecting Community Change:** This course examines participatory planning as a systematic process for creating community change. It critically analyzes the sociopolitical context and core concepts of “planning for change,” major models and methods of practice, and practical tools for engaging community members, assessing community strengths and needs, setting goals and making action plans, building support and collaborative partnerships for implementation, and evaluation as a participatory community-based approach. Emphasis is placed on working with oppressed groups in racially segregated and economically disinvested areas.

8. **HUS 744: Research I: Action Research:** This course focuses upon the descriptive analysis of data and presentation of findings. Research findings will be analyzed, findings presented, and collusions will be drawn. Additionally, recommendations for future study will be explored. Limitations to methodology will be documented along with implication of these limitations. Students will be introduced to research based social program planning and grantsmanship strategies. Students will also further explore applied research through the introduction of evaluation research theory.

9. **HUS 753: Social Systems Innovation and Change at the Organizational, Community and Societal Levels:** This course will focus on the various aspects and implications of planned change, innovation, capacity building, and the analysis of future trends. Change and innovation will be fully explored both within human service organizations and larger social systems. Material from political science, systems theory, organizational development, public administration, social marketing, and public policy will be presented.

10. **HUS 745: Theory and Practice Integration: Capstone** (only if degree candidate): This Field Seminar provides the forum for the planning, development and presentation of a change project as well as the refinement of a professional literature review. [This course cannot be taken until the other nine have been successfully completed.]

X. **List of Possible Electives (Concentration Areas) to be Developed/Offered in Future once Core Program Is Up and Running**

- **3 courses for Gerontology Concentration**
  - HUS 617: Theories & Process of Aging
  - HUS 627: Methods of Working with the Elderly
  - HUS 647: Cross Cultural Perspectives & Aging

- **3 courses for Substance Abuse Concentration**
  - HUS 648: Intervention & Treatment of Addiction
  - ??
  - ??

- **3 courses for Criminal Justice Concentration**
  - HUS 651: The Criminal Justice System
Master of Arts in Human Service Administration online program proposal, page 5 of 8

- HUS 723: Social Deviance, Relevant Social Policy, Social Pathology, & Sociological Intervention
- ??

- **3 courses for Consulting/Coaching Concentration**
  - Introduction to Models of Consultation*
  - Building a Learning Organization*
  - Impact of organizational Culture*
  - Introduction to Outcome-based Planning and Evaluation*
  (* = courses not yet designed and approved)

- **Other specialty areas?**

**XI. MA/HSA Program Structure:** Fully online, no campus presence required of student. Courses can be taken in any order* (no required sequence or cohort), by students who simply want to take a course or two or by those who want to work toward a degree. We lose the cohort advantage but we gain flexibility and the chance to recruit from a farther distance. Primarily asynchronous instruction, to provide flexibility for working adults. *Capstone course required as final course if degree candidate.

**XII. Projected Date for First Course Offerings:** January 2013 if we can get university and Middle States pre-approval and can build at least half of the online courses by that time. All 10 core courses have been approved and are in Lincoln’s catalog, so once the overall online program itself is approved by faculty, the program can be marketed with assurance that we will be ready with courses, expertise, and a cadre of experienced instructors.

**XIII. Needs (staff, technology, other):** Assumes assistance of Learning House to help Lincoln with web presence, marketing, admissions, faculty training, course design, etc. In addition, once program is established and begins to grow, we will need at least one additional full-time tenure track faculty position, to coordinate and anchor program or to replace the current MHS faculty member playing that role. Video chat software (Elluminate, Go-to-Meeting, Adobe Connect, etc.) will be helpful though not immediately essential. New adjunct positions will be needed to cover some of the courses, depending on enrollment expected; this may result in some adjuncts needing temporary full-time status to help us get started in the first year. 24/7 technical help needed for faculty and students (some of which will come from Learning House.)

**XIV. Course Developers, Master of Arts in Human Services Administration Program**

1. HUS 614: Communication Skills for Human Service Practitioners: Linda Stine
2. HUS 711: Professional Ethics:  Malcolm Bonner
3. HUS 722: Theories of Counseling: Fern Spellman-Davis*
5. HUS 743: Social Systems Intervention, Marketing, Managerial Planning and Outcome Assessment: Brad LeVan*
6. HUS 649: Tools and Models for Human Service Managers: Brad LeVan*
7. HUS 659: Planning and Effecting Community Change: Frank Worts and Szabi Ishtai-Zee
8. HUS 744: Research I: Action Research: Bryon Noon*
9. HUS 753: Social Systems Innovation and Change at the Organizational, Community and Societal Levels: Phil Terry-Smith*
10. HUS 745: Theory and Practice Integration: Capstone (only if degree candidate): Linda Stine and Frank Worts

*long-term MHS adjuncts

XV. Pedagogical Model: Courses will be developed in 10 weekly modules, following Learning House best practices for online pedagogy. Each module will contain at a minimum the following activities:

- A “lecture for the week” (may include video and/or audio but will most often contain a written summary of main points along with linked articles / videos / PowerPoints as appropriate),
- Required readings
- Suggested readings
- Discussion forum assignment(s)
- Written assignment (as applicable) with associated rubric
- Quiz (may be pre/post)

Once all courses are developed, a committee will review the total program to make sure that courses follow accepted guidelines for good online pedagogy and the specific MA/HSA guidelines for authentic assignments, community building and adult learning theory.

XVI. Program and Course Assessment

A. Mission Statement for the Master of Human Services Program*

Dedicated to the idea of positive social change, the Lincoln University Master of Human Services Program enables students to integrate theory with practice and positions them to be leaders within their respective agencies and communities. Professional and personal development is enhanced through a combination of academic and performance-based experiences stressing action research and problem-solving skills among the dimensions of values/ethics, psychology, systems, and professional communication. The Lincoln University Master of Human Services Program is committed to providing innovative graduate programs for adult learners.

*The MA/HSA Program falls under this general mission statement.

B. MHS Program Goals*

The Master of Human Services Program is designed to produce graduates who will
1. Demonstrate professional values/ethics in the workplace.
2. Apply psychological theory effectively to produce individual, group, organizational and/or community change.
3. Use the principles of systems theory and a variety of social science models to bring about meaningful system change.

4. Demonstrate graduate-level skills in professional communication and research.
   *The MA/HSA Program falls under these general program goals.*

C. MA/HAS Program Student Learning Outcomes

Students exiting the MA/HSA Program will be able to

1. Develop appropriate ethical interventions and apply them to real life/work projects.
2. Differentiate between individual, group and organizational dynamics to facilitate positive behavioral change in work-based projects.
3. Evaluate principles of organizational and social change in systems, illustrating how they impact work-based projects.
4. Complete a capstone project that uses action research to identify an agency need, document and analyze options for change to address that need, and implement an action plan for positive agency change.

D. Matrix of Program Major Courses and Student Learner Outcomes for the Master of Arts in Human Services Administration Candidate (MA/HSA degree)

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E. Direct Sources of Evidence that MA/HSA SLOs Have Been Met

*Master of Arts in Human Services Administration online program proposal, page 7 of 8*
1. **Capstone Constructive Action Paper:** MA/HSA students are required to carry out and document a capstone project demonstrating their ability to bring about constructive agency-based social change in their final course. This capstone project will be assessed by the same rubric developed for the MHS capstone paper.

2. **Portfolio:** The Capstone paper will be submitted as part of a portfolio, which also contains one written assignment chosen from four other MA/HSA courses that the student has completed.

F. **Indirect Sources of Evidence at the Program Level**
   1. Feedback from MHS Agency Advisory Committee
   2. Feedback from alumni
   3. Course-embedded assessment (same evaluation form given for f2f Lincoln University course evaluation)
   4. All courses designed to fit Learning House quality assurance standards and reviewed by MHS faculty committee
   5. All instructors completed Learning House Moodle 2.x and Best Practices training