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Message from the OURA President

**By: Heather Brown
President, OURA**

Welcome to the Winter edition of OURA In Tune. It has been a busy year and we are happy to share some of our exciting and on-going developments and activities.

OURA Conference

[The program](#) is up on the [OURA website](#) and [registration](#) is now open! The OURA Conference will be held in Huntsville at Deerhurst Resort and Conference Centre from March 6-8. Highlights include:

- A revised two day format with preconference workshops and standing committee AGMs being offered on Sunday March 6
- Continued offering of our highly successfully Leadership sessions
- Awards dinner celebration on Monday night
- OURA AGM on Tuesday morning

OURA Awards

OURA Awards recognize the achievements and contributions OURA members make to the collective. There are three ways to recognize the work of your colleagues. We encourage you to consider nominating a colleague or submitting an application for the OURA Innovation Award. Here is a quick overview of the various awards available to OURA members:

Award of Achievement

Honour long-standing members (minimum of 10 years) who have made significant contributions by participating through active membership on the Executive, standing committees and workshops, active enhancement and development of academic administration within the Ontario university system.

Nomination deadline is February 4, 2011. For more information, please contact [Robert Perrier](#), Vice-President, OURA.

Honourary Membership

Individuals who are no longer eligible to be active members of OURA, however, contributed significantly to the various activities of the Association. The individual shall enjoy

permanent invitation to attend OURA meetings and to maintain interest in OURA affairs.

Nomination deadline is February 4, 2011. For more information, please contact [Robert Perrier](#), Vice-President, OURA.

OURA Innovation Award

The OURA Innovation Award recognizes the achievements that improve the quality and reduce the cost of academic administration within an area under the OURA mandate (admissions, registration, examinations, scheduling, transcripts, systems, records, calendars, scholarships and awards, secondary school liaison, graduate studies). A \$5,000 donation will be made to the winning institution for student awards.

The application deadline is February 4, 2011. Please contact Robert Perrier, Vice-President, OURA at reperrie@lakeheadu.ca

UIP Review

The Ontario University Information Program - Steering Committee (OUIP-SC) and the Ontario Universities' Virtual Fair Working Group continue to move forward with the recommendations outlined in the UIP Review report.

ARUCC 2012

Mark your calendars! ARUCC will be held in Ontario in June 2012. OURA is looking forward to working with ARUCC and CRALO in co-hosting this event.

Join the OURA Executive

Nominations are now open for OURA Executive Members. Please forward your nominations to any member of the nominating committee:

[Robert Perrier](#) (Vice-President) Lakehead University, 955 Oliver Road, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P1B 5E1

[Lucy Bellissimo](#) (Member-at-Large) York University, Bennett Centre for Student Services, W225, 99 Ian Macdonald Boulevard, Toronto, Ontario, M3J 1P3

[Ray Darling](#) (Past President) Wilfrid Laurier University, 75 University Avenue West, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3C5

Respectfully yours,

Heather Brown, President

OURA 2011 Conference - March 6-8

Join us for OURA 2011 Conference at the beautiful Deerhurst

Resort & Conference Centre in Huntsville, Ontario.

Complete program, registration, accommodation, travel information, sponsorship opportunities and resort activities on the [conference webpage](#).

Scholarships and Awards Updates

By: Kam Holland
Chair, Standing Committee on Scholarships and Awards

The Standing Committee on Scholarships and Awards has been busy planning for the upcoming conference in March. Topics for the conference were carefully chosen based on comments from recent surveys, as well as issues that are relevant to all of us working with financial assistance.

We have an exciting line up for the conference this year, including such things as:

- Retention and recruitment - exploring the effects of student expectations about financial aid on post secondary choice.
- Communication and marketing - how to effectively reach students presented by Studentawards.com
- The AUCC: Policy, Partnerships, Development and the Future
- "Opportunity Knocks" a supplemental merit scholarship project presented by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario
- A systems discussion on launching in house systems to manage awards and work/study

The annual general meeting of the Standing Committee on Scholarships and Awards will be held on Sunday night of the conference. At this meeting, a vote will be held for committee membership for the upcoming year. If you, or someone you know, is interested in serving on this committee, please send your nominations to me (hollandk@yorku.ca).

Graduate Studies Updates

By: Rosemary Springett
Chair, Standing Committee on Graduate Studies

Recent meetings of the Standing Committee on Graduate Studies have involved planning for the upcoming conference. We have attempted to provide topics that are timely and relevant to all areas of graduate administration.

The preconference will be held on the Sunday afternoon (March 6), and graduate administrators may be interested in the English proficiency sessions which will address ESL requirements at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The conference breakout sessions we have planned include:

- Technological Advancements - Part I: External Scholarship Improvements and Electronic Thesis Improvements (Ron Wagler, Western)
- Technological Advancements - Part II: Virtual Advisor and CHAT EMT (Hasmik Sargsyan, Toronto), and Roundtable
- Neither Student, Staff or Faculty: the Mystery of Postdoctoral Fellows (Crystal French, Carleton)
- Case Studies in Non-Standard Graduate Admissions (Heather Kelly, Toronto)
- General Roundtable, a chance for us to share and discuss "hot topics"

The annual general meeting of the Standing Committee on Graduate Studies will be held on the Sunday night. At this meeting, a vote will be held for committee membership for the upcoming year. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in serving on this committee, please send your nominations to me (rspringett@wlu.ca) by January 14.

Updates to the OURA website have also been discussed during our meetings. A request to have a secure section of the OURA website for listserv questions and responses has been made. This initiative will be developed during the next year. And, on behalf of all of us who use the International Placement Guide, I would like to thank Elena Arena (Lakehead) for maintaining the database this year.

Secondary School Liaison Updates

By: Kristina Neilson
Chair, Standing Committee on Secondary School Liaison

As we wind down the Standing Committee on Secondary School Liaison (SCSSL) year we look forward to coming together at the OURA Conference. When deciding on conference topics the SCSSL looked at current trends and discussion points, past recommendations and feedback, had a few brainstorming sessions and put the call out to the entire GCSSL.

The pre-conference topics on Sunday offer the Liaison group sessions in **Effective Networking** and **Recruiting First Generation Students**. In the liaison world much of what we do comes down to networking, whether one is on a temporary contract looking to make future employment connections or a long term employee looking to further build a network, this

session will explore how we can do this effectively when presented with the opportunity. The objective of the Recruiting First Generation Students is to provide further insight into the needs of first generation students and their families during the recruitment and admissions process.

The Liaison breakout sessions are as follows (please see the program for full descriptions):

- **Having the Answers for College Transfers:** This panel session will explore new and emerging trends in student mobility, and how that affects University Recruitment strategies and practices.
- **Persuasion and Photography:** High school student readership of university printed publications remains high. An immense amount of effort goes into the creation of our publications. Where do our images come from? What do they say about our university, about our campus? Discussion will include differing ideas and balancing our own needs with various departments, the designer and the photographer.
- **Market Research 101: How to Create and Structure Surveys to Implement Effective Change:** This session will focus on how to create and structure surveys to collect the most important and relevant information as well as how to effectively implement change from the results.
- **Moccasin Trails:** Discussion will include the challenges that First Nation, Inuit and Métis students face when it comes to post secondary education. From this workshop you will be able to assist students in overcoming these challenges and be able to recognize cultural differences.
- **Social Media for Tomorrow:** QR Codes, Geolocation, Facebook, Twitter, Formspring, YouTube, Flickr and more! Social media is now an integral part of your recruitment marketing mix, but, are you using it efficiently? Learn to streamline your social media activities, allowing efficient use of your staff and technology resources in your campaign communications.

The SCSSL Annual General Meeting will be held from 7:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. the Sunday of the pre-conference workshops at the OURA Conference: March 6, 2011. With the AGM comes the time to vote for the next SCSSL membership. The current Vice-Chair will assume the role of Chair while the current Chair will assume the role as Past-Chair. The rest of the positions are open to a vote. In addition, the Ontario Universities' Fair - Steering Committee (OUF-SC) is also accepting nominations for a one-year Member at Large position as well as the three-year term of Vice-Chair, Chair and Past-Chair. If you are interested in serving as a member on the SCSSL or the OUF-SC, please send your nominations to k2neilse@ryerson.ca with a show of institutional support. A call for nominations was sent to the collective via email on January 10, 2011. See you at the conference!

Undergraduate Admissions Update

By: Rebecca Hamilton
Chair, Standing Committee on Admissions

The Admissions committee met on November 17, 2010 at York University for our Fall Admissions Forum and, as usual, discussed a broad range of topics including:

- 4T Dual Credits/Specialist High Skills Majors, and what universities are offering such courses.
- Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education, and who has set admission standards to date.
- GCE/A-Levels and problems surrounding discrepancies in final grades vs. predictions and the question of revoking the admission or not, due to late timing of final results.
- GCE/A-Levels - mixing AS and A-Level results for admission purposes
- ELP issues, surrounding reporting from OUAC
- China - issues surrounding Gao Kao/CNUE exam availability
- Offers of Admission, and who sends offers for all programs applied to, and who doesn't
- IB/GCE/AP advanced credits - specified, unspecified and when to assign
- OUAC application concerns and suggested changes entry to Canada dates

OURA Conference update

As mentioned in the April 2010 report, the Standing Committee was in the initial planning for staging regional roundtables in 2010 for all admission staff. We had originally hoped to hold four such events - in the northern, southern (GTA), eastern and western regions of the province. Regrettably, only the western region event came to fruition this year, but I am pleased to say that it was a great success. On October 6, McMaster University hosted the University of Western Ontario, University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University and Brock University for a full-day event. We were joined by Jennifer Paradise-McCurdy from OUAC as well as our guest speaker Tony Di Lena from the Ministry of Education, Private Schools branch. In all, 62 Admission specialists attended and spent the day discussing timely topics of concern for all of the universities - from application-processing concerns to system related issues; policy planning to "how does your office match transcripts to applications". All participants had the opportunity to network with other individuals in similar roles to them, and I believe most left the event with many new contacts from their neighboring schools. I think this comment received after the event sums up the day:

"Wow, I haven't seen my staff so excited since we hired them! I chatted with most today and they all said what a wonderful day it was yesterday. They were so grateful to

have the opportunity to share with colleagues facing the same issues and questions as they are. They thought the day was well worth it. The time of the year for these discussions is perfect for the Admissions crew and the topics were of great importance to our work. Our staff is already looking forward to when we can do it again."

I am hopeful that after the other regions hear about the success of the event in the west they will initiate planning for events in their regions as well. We appreciate that this may have to wait until 2011, but the schools that attended will attest to the benefit derived by all of their staff.

Records & Systems Update

By: Dave Marasco
Chair, Standing Committee on Records & Systems

The Records and Systems Committee of OURA has finalized its conference session for OURA 2011 to be held at Deerhurst, March 6 - 8, 2011.

Sunday's preconference session will have an international focus on EAP programming as a catalyst for academic success. As a committee, we reviewed membership feedback and will host conference workshops including:

Promoting and Supporting Internationalization on Campus:
Comparative Approaches Self-Service Approach to Transfer Credits Risk Based Approach to Managing Student Retention
Electronic Marks Submission Study Abroad

The topics have significant challenges to current functions in the Office of the Registrar and the management of our respective student information systems. We look forward to your attendance at OURA 2011!

SINCERELY,

W. Aaron House
Communications Officer
Ontario University Registrars' Association, 2008

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