

In This Issue

[Featured Article - The Off Campus Work Permit Program](#)

[Featured Article - Highlights from OUAC Advisory Meeting](#)

[Standing Committee Update - Scholarships and Awards](#)

[Standing Committee Update - Graduate Studies](#)

[Standing Committee Update - Secondary School Liaison](#)

[Standing Committee Update - Systems and Records](#)

[Standing Committee Update - Admissions](#)

Quick Links

[Ontario University Registrars' Association](#)

[Meet your 2008 OURA Executive](#)

[OURA Conference 2008](#)

[OURA Survey Articles](#)

[Job Postings](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Council of Ontario Universities](#)

[Ontario Universities' Application Centre](#)

[e-INFO](#)

[Graduate Studies International Admission Placement Guide](#)

[Common Scholarship Application Proposal](#)

[ARUCC](#)

Message from the OURA President

By: Ray Darling President, OURA

Welcome to another edition of OURA In Tune - the newsletter designed to keep you updated on your Association and industry activities. It is my pleasure and honour to serve as President of the Association. I have some big shoes to fill left behind by Joanne Duklas, who is thankfully still around as Past President. I am excited about working with your enthusiastic executive team that contains a mixture of experienced and newer members. [2008 OURA Executive](#)

The feature articles in this edition are a good example of that mixture. Joanne Duklas, our Past President from York, has written an excellent summary on OUAC activities from her recent attendance at an Advisory Board Meeting. Thomas Good, a newer member from Brock, has written an informative article on the impact of the Off Campus Work Permit program, a registrarial response to recent government changes. The Standing Committees have also provided an update on their activities. You will see that we are already busy planning for next year's conference, which we are excited to announce is being planned to be held in Ottawa. We will be relying heavily upon the survey results completed after the last conference and your continued input. This is your conference and we are counting on you to help us make it one of the best ones yet.

As many of you will know, the OURA Executive has commissioned a review of the University Information Program (UIP) in Ontario. The UIP is a joint recruitment program that has been around for over 30 years. A Review Committee, chaired by Ken Lavigne from Waterloo, have been asked to address several key questions such as, should the UIP continue and if so in what format? The Committee will be providing regular updates to the OURA Executive and we will share these with you.

If you have any suggestions for the OURA Executive in terms of our communications, professional development activities or advocacy initiatives, please do not hesitate to email me at rdarling@wlu.ca. Our Association is only as strong as its individual members - I encourage you to get involved as much as you can. Finally, let me take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy summer.

Ray Darling, President

Announcements

Departures and Arrivals

- Congratulations to **Denis Lawrence**, Registrar at Nipissing University, on his upcoming retirement. Denis may hold the record as longest standing registrar in Ontario (if not the world!). Denis served as Registrar for 35 years. We wish him all the best. Congratulations also to **Andrea Robinson**, currently the Associate Registrar of Admissions/Liaison, will be assuming the role of Registrar.
- **Lou Ariano**, formerly the Registrar at McMaster University, has accepted a position of Registrar at Aga Khan University in Pakistan. **Pat Harris**, Associate Registrar of Student Recruitment, is Acting Registrar.
- **Francois Chapeau**, formerly Associate Vice-President and Registrar at the University of Ottawa will be ending his term on June 30. **Eric Bercier**, current Director of Financial Aid and Awards, will be assuming the role of Registrar as of July 1.

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The Off Campus Work Permit Program

By: Thomas Good Chair, Standing Committee on Records & Systems

Harmonizing Off-Campus Work Permits Amongst the Different Areas of Your Institution

The Off-Campus Work Permit Program allows qualifying foreign students to work off campus while completing their studies. To qualify, you must be a full-time student enrolled at a participating publicly funded post-secondary educational institution or in an approved program at an eligible privately funded institution.

Citizenship and Immigration of Canada (CIC) has been working towards their first system for online submission of applications. The purpose of the online system is to improve the efficiency of client services. The CIC's plan is to roll out these systems in May, initially as a pilot through an online portal for applicants as well as an E-Application. The first line of business that was chosen for implementation was the Off-Campus Work permit, as there were roughly 18,000 permits issued last year. If the pilot is successful, the current paper process for Off-Campus Work permits may be eliminated amongst the schools.

What are the requirements for a student to apply for an Off-Campus Work Permit

To be eligible to apply for a work permit, you must:

- Be studying at a participating institution
- Have a valid study permit
- Have been registered as a full time student for at least six of the twelve months prior to the date of your work permit application
- Be in satisfactory academic standing
- Must have a form authorizing the institution, province, and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to share your personal information.

Maintaining the Off-Campus Work Permit To keep ones work permit, the student must remain a full-time student at a participating institution and continue to obtain satisfactory academic results. If you they are no longer a registered full-time student, or they move to a non-participating institution, do not maintain satisfactory academic results, one must return the work permit immediately to a local CIC office. The work permit will be invalid if they do not meet the eligibility requirements of the Off-Campus Work Permit Program.

Making the Off-Campus Work Permit Work Within our Institutions

The emergence of the Off-Campus Work Permit within our

Institutions has created a multi step verification process, whereas the student must get the Office of the Registrar and or Graduate Studies to verify their academics and then have the assigned individual (DIR) sign off on their off campus application. Along with the work being done with the CIC's pilot system, Brock University is currently working towards and testing their own online verification and tracking system. Whereas the student (Undergrade and Graduate) will print off the required documents from the CIC's website and then take it directly to the designated (DIR) located within the Office of International Services.

The online system was created so that the DIR would just have to input the students ID number into the verification system, and it would check and verify if the student would be eligible for the Off Campus work permit. The system would also track students who have applied in previous years, and output whether or not they are still eligible to receive the work permit. The system looks at whether or not the student is coded on our SIS system as a student on a study permit. If not, it will automatically output that the student is not eligible. The system will then look for the requirements mentioned above (full time studies and good academic standing). If the system comes back with either part time or poor standing, they will automatically flagged as not eligible.

Highlights from OUAC Advisory Meeting

By: Joanne Duklas Past-President, OURA

Highlights from the recent OUAC Advisory Meeting from June 3, 2008

As the OURA representative, I recently attended the bi-yearly OUAC Advisory Board meeting. Per usual, the Centre is running at full throttle doing an excellent job serving the Ontario university sector.

Registrarial colleagues will be interested to learn OUAC will soon be launching a new and MUCH improved E-Info. Applause is due the new E-Zine slated to launch at the end of August. It will offer customized program search improvements, the capacity to enlarge the print on the screen, an integrated scholarship search page, functional access for university administrators to make changes and PDF printable options for counsellors (yes, counsellors are still asking for paper!). And talk about reducing the ecological footprint: If INFO today were produced in hard copy, each copy would number more than 240 pages, printed back to back. Thank goodness print versions are a thing of the past. 24/7 customized service delivery is definitely the way go. Congratulations go out to the OUAC team and the INFO editorial board for a job well done. As an aside, university marketing teams are encouraged to ensure tight use of the program locator chart as it is important for students using the

search function to find what they want, not what we might want them to see.

Dr. Paul Genest (President of the Council of Ontario Universities) spoke of new COU-endorsed initiatives that could have far-reaching implications for our sector. These emerged from a college university task force co-chaired by Ms Anne Sado, President, George Brown College, and Dr. Alastair Summerlee, President, University of Guelph. Three initiatives requiring further review and which we'll want to watch closely include the following:

- a. Creating an entity to oversee a detailed and thoughtful review of credit transfer between colleges and universities;
- b. developing a nuanced framework for collaborative programming between colleges and universities with the McMaster/Mohawk and Guelph/Humber relationships highlighted as best in class models;
- c. analyzing the feasibility and realities of greater collaboration between colleges, universities and the application centres (e.g. perhaps consider a common student information portal).

New terms of reference for OUAC were approved to acknowledge the role of COU Holdings Association Inc. along with COU and recognition of OUAC's expanding role as a "custom software developer" was noted. OUAC is truly emerging as a pan-institutional, province wide solutions provider.

Dealing with legacy systems plagues pretty much everyone in our industry. OUAC is embarking on a significant and important strategic review and improvement of its legacy systems with a focused intent on supporting built rather than bought options. This will allow OUAC to increase processing:

- a. capacity to allow growth of future application services;
- b. integration across organization to more efficiently utilize resources;
- c. flexibility to customize applications and outputs.

Graduate contract work is increasing which introduces some interesting opportunities for OUAC and the universities.

As a reminder, OUAC is now sending universities the OEN (Ontario Education Number) for each student. In fall '08, the team will be focusing on capturing and sending historical OEN data to the universities (OUAC collected the OEN for two/three years before it was authorized to send the OEN to the universities; this information could be important for reporting or for engaging file management).

Couple of additional items of interest from OUAC front:

- The [2008/09 Schedule of Dates](#) has been approved. OUAC is encouraging OCAS to line up its application deadline to the university sector (ie. January 14, 2009).

- Agloma has recently been granted full university status and is working with OUAC to realize that in specific operational terms.
- OUAC has implemented a GPA calculator for the Education application.
- The GAP year project is on hold pending a similar initiative being undertaken by OCAS.
- The OUAC Admission Referral service went live June 3, 2008 and is very active.

Here are some interesting links to help you stay abreast of industry happenings and acronyms:

COU - [Council of Ontario Universities](#)

PSIS - [Postsecondary Student Information System](#)

OEN - [Ontario Education Number](#)

Scholarships and Awards Updates

By: Monica Bertolo Chair, Standing Committee on Scholarships and Awards

The Standing Committee Committee is in the preliminary stages of identifying topics of interest for the 2009 OURA conference. Members are asked to contact me, mbertolo@registrar.uoguelph.ca with their suggestions.

We continue to discuss and strive toward the implementation of a Common Scholarship Application. Input from members on this initiative would be greatly appreciated. Please direct your comments to Rico Natale rico.natale@Brocku.ca or to me. Thank you, Rico, for your continued leadership with this initiative.

Monica Bertolo, Chair

Graduate Studies Updates

By: Charlotte Sheridan Chair, Standing Committee on Graduate Studies

The Standing Committee on Graduate Studies continues to promote interaction and communication of ideas between graduate administrators.

Initiatives the Committee will be working on during the 2008 year are:

Updating the International Admission Placement Guide

This valuable resource tool for Graduate Studies Offices is found at: <http://www.oura.ca/resources.html>. Please contact your School of Graduate Studies or equivalent to obtain a username and password.

Ontario Visiting Graduate Student (OVGS) Program

A committee has been struck to review this program, with the goal of streamlining and standardizing the existing practices and procedures among graduate schools in Ontario.

Scholarship Best Practices

A working group has been struck to investigate the possibility of sharing scholarship best practices and relevant scholarship information and materials.

2009 OURA Conference

Reviewing possible Graduate Studies sessions as suggested at the OURA 2007 Conference Graduate Studies Round Table Session. To name a few:

Applied Degrees
Administrative Best Practices
Post Doctoral Issues

We would like to hear from you if you have suggestions for the Graduate Studies Sessions at the 2009 OURA Conference or sessions/workshops that may be offered during the year. Please send your suggestions and/or ideas to me at: Charlotte.Sheridan@brocku.ca

Charlotte Sheridan, Chair

Secondary School Liaison Updates

By: Robert Perrier Chair, Standing Committee on Secondary School Liaison

The Standing Committee on Secondary School Liaison met in March at the OUAC to start planning for the 2008/09 recruitment cycle. During this year of review, only minor changes were made to the fall UIP schedule to improve efficiency, safety, and geographic boundaries. The UIP Review is fully underway, with an assembled team reflecting the diverse roles within the registrarial community. Tasked to thoroughly review this collective recruitment activity, the Review team, in partnership with a consultant, will be seeking input from numerous community and internal partners.

York University opened its doors as host for Provincial Dialogue 2008 which saw over 370 guidance counsellor professionals from across Ontario, Canada, and Europe 'dialogue' with representatives from all of Ontario's universities. Surveys have been sent out to all delegates, with

a thorough review of the event forthcoming, including recommendations for future planning.

Other exciting programs and resources the liaison community continues to work on include the creation of critical paths for SCSSL roles, Liaison Workshop, the Liaison Community Website, eINFO, Regional Dialogues 2009, and the Ontario Universities' Fair (OUF).

Robert Perrier, Chair

Systems and Records Updates

By: Thomas Good Chair, Standing Committee on Records & Systems

The Records and Systems Standing Committee over the next year will meet and hold a number of electronic discussions. During the meetings and discussions, the committee will try and establish potential workshops on business related to student information systems to be hosted at the Ontario University Registrars' Association annual conference. The committee will focus the attention towards current issues and challenges related to systems used in the Office of the Registrar and other related student service areas.

Some keys ideas and challenge that rose during the AGM, that will be the topic of discussion amongst the members of the committee. Future discussion of the committee will include topics such as: the possibility of a University transfer system that would provide students and administrators with a universal transfer guide, a universal student tracking system [OEN], FIPPA, any Student Information System [SIS] changes to report, scheduling and timetabling issues and finally tracking international students off campus work permits both through the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) new system for online submission and Universities throughout Ontario.

Thomas Good, Chair

Systems and Records Updates

By: Thomas Good Chair, Standing Committee on Records & Systems

The Standing Committee on Admissions will be hosting two forums over the coming year in conjunction with the OURA meetings in the Fall and Spring. Senior Admissions personnel are invited to the day long forums for sharing of information and discussion around common issues and challenges in

admissions. Requests for agenda items will be sent to the membership in early fall.

The Committee also serves as a resource for Admissions offices facing unusual or difficult admissions-related issues. If you have an issue that you would like to bring forward to the membership, please contact a member of the Committee. Lastly, the Committee is beginning the process of identifying topics of interest for the 2009 OURA Conference. I encourage all of you to put on your thinking caps and submit your ideas. This is your conference and we want to ensure that the topics are relevant and interesting. Feel free to contact me at: janice_ofarrell@carleton.ca

Janice O'Farrell, Chair

SINCERELY,

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

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