



ONT-Advise

A Newsletter About Post-secondary Academic Advising in Ontario¹

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When preparing this newsletter, I was reminded that November seems to me to be the season of needing to stay warm. Winter jackets are removed from closets, sweaters are worn during the day and flannelette pyjamas at night, hot chocolate becomes a favourite once again, we get our furnaces tuned up for the coming winter, and we often seek out family and friends to help us stay warm during indoor pursuits. Here's hoping that you will find some wonderful things to do to stay warm over the coming months!

New Members of OAAP Steering Committee

Thanks to everyone who offered to serve on the OAAP Steering Committee. The committee aims to have representatives from colleges and universities, as well as from northern and francophone institutions. Ryan Green from Lakehead University and Sohelia Pashang from Seneca College were chosen as the newest members of the committee. Each will serve a three year term. There will be ongoing opportunities for Ontario academic advisors to serve on the Committee because there are typically six members with staggered three-year terms. If you may be interested in serving on the Steering Committee in the future, please watch for announcements in the spring of each year when a call for participation is sent out by the current committee.

Ryan Green Bio

Greeting from the True North!

My name is Ryan Green and I am one of the newest member on the OAAP steering committee. I am the most Northern member, hailing from Lakehead

¹ Academic Advising is to be understood in its broadest sense and may include those involved in providing academic advice, career advice, counseling, liaison services, and/or learning skills opportunities in order to promote student success and retention.

University in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

I have been an Academic Advisor at Lakehead University since 2008. My academic background includes a college diploma in Human Resources Management and a Bachelors of Arts degree, majoring in History.

Recently, our Advising office took on the Student Success model where I am now the senior Student Success Advisor. I advise students from a wide breath of programs including; humanities, social science, pure science, and professional programs like Kinesiology and Business.

I have a passion for working with Ontario's undergraduate students and in 2010 completed nearly 1200 individual appointments!

Soheila Pashang Bio

I am currently working as a Coordinator at Seneca College, Social Service Worker - Immigrant and Refugee program. I enjoy my work very much since I have the privilege of working with great team, developing curriculum, teaching, and assisting students with their course selections and other related academic matters. I am also a member of Seneca College Academic Council. Prior to Seneca, I worked as Social Worker/Therapist with health, settlement, and not-for-profit organizations with various groups of immigrants and refugees. However passion for learning took me to OISE/UT where I completed my PhD exploring the discourse of un-authorized migration with specific attention to the lived conditions of non-status women in Canada.

From a very young age, I enjoyed writing short stories and poetry but political upheaval in my country resulted in my migration and settlement and integration challenges including learning new language. This condition distracted me from pursuing my dream and it is just recently that I have begun to write poetry again but this time in the English language! I have also co-edited *Unsettled Settlers: Barriers to Integration*, a text book and am working towards co-editing *Migration and Trauma*, another book.

CHERD Reminder

The Centre for Higher Education Research and Development (CHERD) currently offers many professional development opportunities for college and university administrators in Canada (see <http://umanitoba.ca/centres/cherd/> for information). They have recently added courses for academic advisors. All courses will be taught by Canadian academic advisors with a focus on student success and advising issues in this country. The courses are listed in the CUCA Level II curriculum. Note that you do not have to complete CUCA Level I before you begin taking the courses in academic advising.

Technology Working Group

There seems to be a generation gap these days. The gap exists between many academic advisors who came of age during a time when information was accessed in a far different way than students access information today. At the risk of sounding like an old battle-axe, when I went to school, students had to attend lecture to hear what the instructors said, and had to go to the library to find information in texts and journals for our assignments (and I had to walk five miles to school, uphill both ways too, honest!). The students who are with us now gather information in a very different way than most of us ever did, with most of their information gathering done using technology in an online world. The question that results is, when we provide information in the way that we learned to access it, are advisors providing it in a way that is accessible to students? Or, are we providing a ton of information that students simply can't access because of the different approach that they now take?

This question has spurred many of my thoughts and conversations over the last while. Despite being a child of another generation, I want to ensure that the information that I provide to students is given in a way that they can easily find and use. I am a relative "newbie" to technology, but have been trying to find ways of operating in this brave new world. I mentioned this to the OAAP Steering Committee and they have asked that I head up a working group to investigate ways to use technology in advising. The goal will be to find tools and tricks that can be easily used by the children of the older generation, the relative "newbies" to technology, when sharing information with our new generation of students. Shari Dorr, current member of the OAAP Steering Committee has offered to represent the committee on the working group. We are looking for 3 or 4 other volunteers from our membership who are interested in finding out more about using technology in academic advising (or about helping a few of the self-described old battle-axes to learn some new tricks). The goal will be to provide an information brief by spring 2012. It will be distributed to OAAP members and can be used as a professional development/discussion paper for academic advisors around the province. If you would like to help with this working group, please contact Jo Stewart at jo.stewart@brocku.ca by November 30th.

Conference Information

Special thanks go out to the conference organizers at Huntington University who worked very hard to put together the planned conference in 2011. However, when the organizers reviewed the conference registrations a few weeks before the 2011 OAAP conference was scheduled, they realized that there were too few participants to merit holding a conference. It is very unfortunate, but the conference had to be cancelled due to a lack of registrants. Since then a number of people have indicated that they were going to register, but just had not had the time yet. In the future when

conferences are announced, please remember to register as soon as you can so that we can be sure that there will be plenty of participation in order to merit mounting a conference.

Looking Down The Road - The 2012 Conference

There is currently no news to share about a potential 2012 conference. One will be planned in the future, with information announced in this newsletter and via email contacts.

Website

OAAP has a website where past issues of this newsletter are archived, links to websites that are pertinent to academic advising are housed, and information about current conferences will be linked. There are many things that can happen with a website - blogs, forums, pages for advisors with particular interest (e.g., student success advisors, faculty advisors, advisors from particular academic programs, etc.). Given the geographical size of Ontario, the website has the potential to become a real connection tool, but your help is needed. What would you like to see online? How can the website be used to help you to connect with fellow advisors from across the province to share best practices? Check it out at www.ontarioadvising.webs.com. If you have ideas about how the website can be juiced up to provide better professional development for OAAP members, please contact jo.stewart@brocku.ca with your ideas.

