



University
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Welcome Back Lancers!

Dear students,

Let me start off indicating that I hope you had a restful break and that I wish all of you have a productive and healthy 2019. It's the last year of the decade! We have never lived in more interesting times. All of us have so much to look forward to and young adults more so than most. For those of you a bit older like me, these are still heady times.

You will recall that starting in fall 2017, I committed to writing two newsletters per year to give students a high-level update on things we're prioritizing for the student experience. My fall newsletter was both a report card of sorts for 2017-2018 and an overview of what you could expect for this academic year. This mid-term newsletter will be a brief update on where we're at on many of our 2018-2019 commitments.

Here goes:



UWindsor Blue and Gold Spirit Program

Here's what we've done:

- We've renewed **Windsor Wednesdays**. Twice per month we've been running contests and doing giveaways to encourage you to wear Blue and Gold. I can't make a definitive

statement, but it's my sense that I'm seeing more UWindsor and Lancer gear on Wednesdays, so I'm chalking this up as a tentative win.

- We've run several spirit contests including a campus **photo contest**. We received over 300 entries for this particular contest, which blew away our expectations. Many of the pics were fantastic. For this term, we're going to have a Blue and Gold door/office decorating contest, a Blue and Gold pet contest (yes, you get to dress up your dog, cat, etc), and more. Keep your eyes on our social media about these contests. Follow @UWinStudentExp on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).
- **UWin Day**. I was particularly pleased with this activity. It was an effort to designate a day for us to take pride in our University. Setting aside that everyone loves free cupcakes, students seemed supportive of what we were trying to do. Look for a bigger and better UWin Day Fall 2019.
- We will be targeting one Lancer varsity game in an all out effort to see if we can create an environment that is great for our athletes but not so great for the visiting team. It will depend on how they do in January and part of February, but I'm really hoping we can target a volleyball playoff game. The Men's team is firing on all cylinders and is currently ranked number 7 nationally. We shall see. Go Lancers!!



Residence Upgrades

We did several upgrades in residence including new lighting in Alumni Hall in each individual room, the ramp at Mac Hall, two fully accessible rooms in Cartier and the new University Club dining hall opened with positive reviews. In the winter term, we'll be concentrating on getting a generator installed at Alumni that will enable this building to continue to operate in a power outage and we'll be putting out several tenders to line up work for the spring and summer including completing upgrades of the remaining Mac Hall bathrooms.



Student Mental Health Strategy & Wellness Initiatives

We launched the **Student Mental Health Strategy** on October 3rd and work is already underway to implement many of the 39 recommendations. To ensure that the University remains committed to

implementing this program, we've created an Implementation Committee that is made up of committed students (6-7 reps), faculty (4 reps) and staff (6 reps). Among other tasks, the Implementation Committee will help the University invest the \$31,000 Student Mental Health Fund. A call for proposals for this new resource will hopefully be ready for the end of the winter term and will result in several new mental health initiatives happening in 2019-2020.



Lancer Leadership Conference

I'm very pleased to let you know that the Student Success and Leadership Centre will be running UWindsor's first student **leadership conference** on Saturday, February 2nd. If you are already a leader or if you want to learn more about how to develop your leadership skills, please give this event consideration. More than ever, leadership skills are needed and valued in today's workplace. There will be many sessions and speakers including student leaders who you can learn from. I would add that this will be our first opportunity to deliver this kind of conference. Should you attend, we would love to get your feedback so we can develop this program into an exceptional opportunity for future UWindsor students.



CAW Student Centre Refurbishment

Work (slowly) continues on this. We now have drawings of what a Wellness Centre would look like. This space would bring together Student Counselling and Health Services. By the spring, we also hope to have drawings and a cost estimate to refurbish the eating area in the main floor of the building. The resources to make these changes are still to be determined, but for my part I'm willing to move forward with getting some exciting renderings and we'll look to cross the funding bridge when we get to it. We'll of course be working closely with the UWSA and OPUS on all of these projects. The CAW Student Centre remains a great building, but the 1992 motif and furniture needs a significant once over. Stay tuned.



Relay for Life



In the fall, I wrote about how we're going to make a **Relay For Life** program happen on our campus for the first time in 2019. I'm very pleased to report that we have a group of dedicated students who are working hard to make this happen. Relay For Life is a 12-hour walkathon that brings together teams of students for a night of fun, bonding and great memories all for the purpose of raising money for cancer research and survivor support programs. I've seen how powerful this program can be for the students who implement it and who participate in it. Many other universities participate in Relay.

Here are some of the fundraising goals from universities across Ontario:

- Brock - \$50K
- Laurentian - \$55K
- Queens - \$115K
- Trent - \$48K
- Wilfred Laurier - \$25K

UWindsor has set a goal of \$50K! Let's work together to make that happen.

Several years ago UWindsor tried to join this family of universities to make a difference toward a disease that affects all of us in some way. Despite these efforts, the program did not make it off the ground. Folks, the UWindsor student community does wonderful things, but very often it is at a faculty or even departmental level. I have a challenge for you. If 18 teams register for this year's Relay for Life (tentatively, there are 12 already), I will donate \$350 to that team who raises the

most funds as of the day of the event.

So to make it official, that's a challenge to the student community to come together to support this important initiative of leadership and giving. Cancer is a scourge. Let's fight it by coming together on March 22nd in the CAW Student Centre.



Supports for a Successful Semester

A new year, means a new start! There are many free resources available to you on campus to help ensure that you have a successful semester. Listed here are some of the supports we think might be most useful to you but you can [find a full list of the resources on our website](#).

- **Academic Advising:** meet with advisors to discuss the general questions you have about your academic success.
- **Writing Support Desk:** learn how to improve your writing, integrate resources, and more.
- **Student Counselling Centre:** meet with trained counsellors to help improve your mental health.
- **Health Services:** is the family physician office on campus.
- **Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS):** develop practical methods to improve your learning and studying skills. January will offer the following FREE, 30 min sessions:

1. Strategic Note Taking - Jan 21 @ 11:00am, Dillon Hall, room 351
2. Test Anxiety - Jan 22 @ 2:00pm, Dillon Hall, room 351
3. Study Smarter, Not Harder - Jan 23 @ 11:00am, location TBD
4. Multiple Choice Tests and Exams - Jan 24 @ 2:00pm, Dillon Hall, room 351
5. Planning & Organization - Jan 28 @ 11:00am, Dillon Hall, room 351
6. Exam Strategies (FAHSS) - Jan 29th @ 3:00pm, Dillon Hall, room 351
7. Exam Strategies (Math & Science) - Jan 30th @ 11:00am, location TBD

Follow @UWinStudentExp on social media for reminders about these sessions and more to help make your experience at U Windsor a successful one.



A Final Word: UWinSite

UWinsite. You may recall that I gave you a heads up this would be happening in the September newsletter. I want to thank all of you for working through this new way of doing business. I spoke to many of you and a range of frustrations were expressed. I also saw the many waiting students in Academic Advising. To quote a colleague, it looked like a well-attended sit-in. Your exceptional patience and willingness to trust the process is something my colleagues and I are most thankful for.

While every effort was made to make this happen as seamlessly as possible, the sheer size of what was done was going to mean some headaches. On this point, I have a few thoughts:

- We needed to move to a new system. Back in the late 90's when the old student information system was built it won awards. But times have changed. There has been an industry consolidation around 2 to 3 off-the-shelf student information systems and our own system, while beloved by many due to its long service and familiarity, for many reasons, the University felt compelled to invest in an industry-leading system. It's kinda, sorta analogous to driving a car for 20 years. When you got your car it was, of course, great. But after many years, it becomes more difficult to find the parts you need and as you drive down the highway, you're being passed way more than you're passing, you start to think maybe it's time for a change. Indeed, the time had come for a change and over the next year, we'll get to see what this new shiny vehicle can do. Work continues to tune up UWinsite to make it hum, if not zoom.
- Over the past 10 years, many aspects of the University went through revitalization. Several buildings, a downtown campus, the addition of 4,000 international graduate students, new academic programs, 50 new academic scholars and the greening of large swaths of campus. The UWindsor Proud campaign is a reflection of these developments. A part of renewing the student experience and revitalizing UWindsor was and is UWinsite. Data and Big Data are the lifeblood of any tier one organization, whether that's a business, a non-profit agency or a university. We were served well by the old student info system, but to be competitive in a very competitive post-secondary market and to do right by you and our future students, we needed to move on to a new system and so we have. Again thanks for your patience, support and kindness to those on the front lines who've been working really hard to make this thing work.

There's my update. 2018 is a wrap and based on the first week, 2019 is looking good. Per the norm, feel free to write to me directly at rflannag@uwindsor.ca should you have any questions or concerns about this update or other matters. I've highlighted those things that I think the student population as a whole may have some interest in, but there are many other wonderful and important things happening. If I've missed anything, you only need to write or stop by my office in the CAW Student Centre. Look for the Yoda poster.



Good Luck and Go Lancers!

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