



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

Outstanding Scholars Newsletter

March 2021

IN THIS ISSUE

Monthly Program Updates

by Joshua Galasso

Welcome! This is the fifth issue of the OS newsletter created to assist Outstanding Scholars (OS) Students in keeping up-to-date with everything related to the OS program. This will be the final issue for the 2020-2021 academic year.

What is Outstanding Scholars?

Outstanding Scholars are paid to do research outside of the classroom, working alongside faculty members on research projects! This unique opportunity lasts for three years, particularly in your second, third, and fourth years of undergraduate study.

Outstanding Scholars Student Council Election

During March, the election for OSSC 2021-2022 positions was held. Your participation makes a difference and we thank everyone for voting. Here are the winners of this year's election:

- President - Marta Haireek
- Vice President - Anita Hu and Madeleine Chang
- Treasurer - Nathan Gibb

- Communications External - Emma Chenier
- Communications Internal - Allison Baker
- Community Outreach - Dora Strelkova
- Fourth Year Rep - Olivia Morassutti
- Third Year Rep - Sukhleen Nagra
- Second Year Rep - Timothy Igobokwe

Congratulations students! We look forward to seeing what the future holds for OSSC.

As a recap, this year, the OSSC Newsletter reviewed events and topics such as:

- OSSC Masks Fundraiser
- OS Information Seminars
- OS Peer Mentors
- OS Student Achievements
- OS Research-Based Collaboration
- OS Students on Exchange
- UWill Discover
- Lancer Leadership Conference
- OSSC Election
- "Meet the Prof" Night
- Career of a Genetic Counselor

Thanks for supporting the newsletter!



OS Student Achievements

The OS Student Achievement section highlights achievements of students in the OS program! This includes publications, scholarships/awards, and more. Email Marta Haireek, upcoming OSSC President, at haireek@uwindsor.ca to be featured in future issues!

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Monthly Success Tips

The Monthly Success Tips section discusses new tips each month to help students to excel in their classes. Have any tips you would like to share? Let us know!

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Monthly Program Updates Continued

Outstanding Scholars Swag

Outstanding Scholars currently offers merchandise to be purchased to rep the OS program. Items available at the moment include OS hoodies, sweatshirts, t-shirts, and masks!

These items can be purchased online through the Outstanding Scholars Website. (<https://www.uwindsor.ca/outstandingscholars/339/outstanding-scholars-swag>).

Dr. du Toit's Office Hours

Dr. Simon du Toit offers weekly virtual office hours to give students a chance to ask any questions they may have about the OS program.

These office hours are held on Mondays and Thursdays at 4pm; the meetings can be joined by following the meeting link emailed to OS students weekly prior to 4pm. If you are not an OS student but would like to join office hours, you can reach out to Dr. du Toit at scholars@uwindson.ca for the link!

DocuSign Forms

"OS students really stepped up this week in completing the DocuSign forms for the Student Work Placement Program (SWPP). Over 85% of the forms were signed, which means the OS program will receive over \$370,000. This gives us an exciting opportunity to consider developing the OS program in new directions. I am really grateful for the support this program received from OS students! It rolled out in less than a week, because the government gave us a really short turnaround time. An 85% response in that time frame is – outstanding!" – Simon du Toit

OS Graduation

Congratulations to the 64 OS students that are graduating this year! These students will receive their medallions in the mail, along with a few small items. Simon du Toit has arranged for these student's transcripts to include they are graduating from the Outstanding Scholars program.

There will be an online celebration for OS grads in June, close to the Spring Convocation.



Simon is excited to ask this year's grads to share their stories with him including:

- ➊ Firstly, details of any publications or presentations you have achieved as an OS
- ➋ Secondly, your most memorable experiences as an OS

Please submit these two answers to Simon du Toit at sdutoit@uwindson.ca.



Second-Year OS Applications

All first-year OS candidates who are preparing to apply for OS in their second year should begin to arrange for a professor or advisor to complete the reference survey on their behalf. Furthermore, first year candidates should start working on their application responses.

The OS program is aware of the pandemic pressures on the process, including distance learning and potential grade inflation. Strong personal statements are the best defense against those challenges.

OS Student Achievements

The OS Student Achievement section is used to highlight OS students who have made a notable accomplishment in either an academic or personal capacity.

The March 2021 OS Newsletter would like to recognize Michael Qaqish, a University of Windsor graduate and current medical student at Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry. Here is what he had to say:

"I graduated a year ago from the University of Windsor and I am currently a medical student at Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry. During my time at U of W being a part of the Outstanding Scholars program stands out as being one of the most important opportunities for me. Being a part of the program allowed me to grow both in a professional and a personal sense.

Although the program helped guide me in the direction of being a research assistant, the part of OS that was really important to me was it allowed me to get to know people

in the other departments much better. Through being a part of the OS student council, I was able to meet someone from every faculty on campus. I really enjoyed this and became friends with many people that were dealing with similar struggles as myself which is always nice to have. Furthermore, making those connections made finding other opportunities around campus much easier since I would get to know most of the club leaders.

On top of the peers I have met, the relationship I had with Dr. Du Toit (the OS program director) also meant a lot to me. He was always eager to find ways to help connect OS students and inspired me to keep getting involved around campus and continue to branch out to other faculties in order to gain connections.

Another opportunity that being a part of OS allowed me to do was being a mentor for a first year OS student. I cherished this aspect of OS as it was fulfilling to help someone who

is on a similar path as myself. I would also use this role to push students outside of their comfort zones so they can make connections and have those benefits like I was able to. I am always happy to lend a helping hand for those out there reading this and are thinking about messaging me for anything! Please feel free to!" – Michael Qaqish



Michael Qaqish

RESEARCH



Research Opportunities

There are currently over 200 opportunities stored on the Outstanding Scholars Blackboard page, to which all OS students have access.



UWill Discover

OS students regularly present their research work at UWill Discover, the university's annual undergraduate research conference

EXPERIENCES

97%

of OS students remain on track to graduate, or graduate in a timely way



87%

of OS students say they are either "Well Satisfied" or "Extremely Well Satisfied" with the OS program

FAST FACTS

100 First Year OS Candidates

248 OS Students in Years 2, 3 and 4

\$10,450 Earnings Over 4 Years



Monthly Success Tips

I want to wish everyone good luck as we wrap up the Winter 2021 semester and head into exams. Here are a few tips to help you excel in your courses for the rest of the semester:

- Stay focused on studying
- Double check your exam times
- Create a study plan

Stay Focused on Studying

As the end of the semester is approaching, you may be enticed to begin relaxing early. Stay focused for a few weeks as you finish all your exams so you can achieve the marks you want! After finishing the semester, there will be plenty of time to relax and enjoy the nice weather.

Double Check Your Exam Times

Before the exam period begins, you should double check your exam times and keep track of them on a calendar or whiteboard. You can check your exam times by navigating to UWinsite → "Manage Classes" → "Exams" → "View My Exam Schedule". You can also use reminders or alarms to make sure you remember all the respective starting times.

Create a Study Plan

As you check your exam times and keep track of them, you can create a study plan outlining what days and times you will study for each class and what curriculum you would like to study at that time. This will help keep you on track and optimize your time when you are very busy.

During March, Outstanding Scholars student council held the first annual "Meet the Prof" night on Thursday, March 18th, from 6:00 to 7:30pm! At this event, students joined breakout rooms in Zoom and had an opportunity to meet professors in different faculties, discuss their research projects and the courses they teach. We want to thank the students and professors who attended! Monitor your emails and our social media for future opportunities to RSVP for these types of events.

Upcoming Opportunities

Throughout the school year, Outstanding Scholars Students organize various events to support charitable causes and opportunities to network with other students. Here are a few examples of leadership development opportunities:

Outstanding Scholars Student Council

The OSSC offers students the opportunity to help steer the OS program and organize activities for students in the program. Elections for all positions, with the exception of First-Year Representative, are held in March of each year to elect members for the following school year.

Outstanding Scholars Peer Mentors

The OS program offers incoming first-year Candidates an opportunity to be paired with an upper year OS! The Peer Mentor program is coordinated by OS students, and it offers Scholars the opportunity to help new students transition into the scholarly life of the university. This mentorship lasts throughout the Fall and Winter semesters.

McCall MacBain Scholarship

The McCall MacBain Scholarships are Canada's first comprehensive, leadership scholarships for master's and second-entry professional undergraduate studies. Starting in June 2021, Canadian students and alumni can apply to join the second-ever class of McCall MacBain Scholars at McGill for their studies starting in Summer/Fall 2022.



Thanks for reading!

Thank you for reading the fifth issue of the Outstanding Scholars Newsletter. If you would like to see any additional topics covered in the future, please email Marta Haireek, upcoming OSSC President, at haireek@uwindsor.ca.

www.uwindsor.ca/outstandingscholars/

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