

The Atkinson Centre for Mature and Part-time Students NEWSLETTER

Spring Thoughts

As I write this, signs of spring are appearing all around me: the days are getting longer, the snow is melting, and everyone seems to have renewed energy. Spring is about renewal; spring also demonstrates the resilience of nature. This year, experiencing renewal and resilience is especially poignant and relevant for York students, staff and faculty. The long winter felt even longer, with classes suspended and students searching for ways through which to remain positive and productive. However, just as spring dims our memory of winter each year, I hope that the resumption of classes has helped everyone to move forward with a renewed sense of purpose.

Here at ACMAPS, we all strove throughout the strike to communicate regularly with students and we were actively involved in planning and presenting information sessions preceding the return to classes. More recently, we welcomed approximately 70 incoming mature and part-time students at our winter term entrance orientation and we have been busy planning several workshops and events for the winter term. The details are provided in this newsletter, along with other information that I hope you will find useful.

I wish you all a rewarding term and I look forward to seeing you either at one of our events or during a visit to the office.

Very best wishes,
Norma Sue

Office Hours:

Mon 8:30 am - 7:00 pm
Tue 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Weds 8:30 am - 7:00 pm
Thurs 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Fri 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Sat See ACMAPS website
Sun Closed

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ACMAPS Listserv

ACMAPS has a listserv that will be used for a monthly newsletter, event listings and announcements relevant to mature and part-time students. If you would like to be added to the ACMAPS listserv, please e-mail acmaps@yorku.ca. If you are a Facebook user, please look up our profile on the York University Canada network and feel free to add us to your friends to receive regular status and event updates (our profile name is Atkinson Centre).

ACMAPS on the Web

For all the latest about the Atkinson Centre for Mature and Part-time Students, check www.yorku.ca/acmaps. The website includes up-to-the-minute event listings for mature students, staff bios, FAQs for mature students, and links to important academic and student services at York.

ACCESS

SUPPORT

ADVOCACY

RESEARCH

A word from YUMSO ...

YUMSO is pleased to announce that Suzanne Edwards and Hilary Moore join Scott Cowan and Leigh Sanger on the YUMSO executive. A special thank you to Scott and Leigh who volunteered so many hours over the last several months.

YUMSO is U! York's mature students are wonderfully diverse, exceptionally resilient, creative and intelligent! You each have unique experiences, skills and great inner strength which you use every day and which hold you on your academic paths. We look forward to learning from you and invite you to be in touch at any time with your ideas, thoughts and concerns. For those of you whom we haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting, we'd like to introduce ourselves:

Suzanne Edwards, Interim President
suzed@yorku.ca

I'm a third year student pursuing a BA Spec. Hons. in Psychology and a certificate in Sexuality Studies. I am a single parent of two boys and lost both parents in recent years to cancer which necessitated my return to Canada from the UK. My former career in London, where my co-parent still resides, was as a Corporate Interior Designer most recently for the global business management firms Andersen Consulting and Deloitte. Along with solutions-based skills pertaining to organizations, I am certified in the respected YWCA Life Skills Coaches Training (both Levels 1 and 2) and in Facilitation Skills, both taught by Dr. Jan Hill. I also hold certification as a facilitator of Personality Dimensions, a temperament assessment tool, and completed a three-month course at Seneca on Adult Education. I am absolutely passionate about the mature student experience at York U and I am volunteering in order to help bridge

the gap of isolation felt by so many of us across this campus.

This is OUR time at university too.

Hilary Moore, Interim VP Keele
hs_moore@yahoo.ca

I am a third year Honours student with a double major in Religious Studies and Women's Studies. I began my degree at York in the early 1990's, left a couple of years later and then returned in 2005. During my years away from York I chaired and co-led a small congregation, moved to the east coast where I worked as a volunteer on a Helpline and Parent Support Program, moved back to Toronto where I managed a department of a catering business and then attended George Brown College where I obtained a counselling diploma. I believe it is important for mature students to have their own space on campus and an organization that represents their needs and offers them the opportunity to connect with others who have chosen to return to school later in life. I bring to the position of VP the ability to take initiative and strategize, strong organizational skills and a comfort with stepping into a leadership role. I look forward to meeting more of our members at social events and am open to responding to any questions or concerns you might have.

With a new term upon us, it's time to invigorate YUMSO and to have some fun! For a start, we are working on creating a variety of social events to provide YUMSO members with regular opportunities to meet each other. Recent events included a free movie night at the Nat Taylor Cinema, a meet and greet breakfast at Blueberry Hill, and a cross-campus supper and movie night at Glendon Campus.

For more information on YUMSO's event calendar, click on: www.yorku.ca/yumso

Adviser's Corner

Keeping the focus

When advising students, I often communicate the importance of maintaining an overall "balance" in trying to achieve one's projected long or short term goals. This process entails factoring in all the facets and demands of one's life (work, family, kids, friends, stress) and, importantly, all the other "unknowns" that have a tendency to pop up unexpectedly in one's life; they possess the annoying ability to cause negative impacts that without sufficient strategies in place will linger on like an annoying flu bug unwilling to go away.

This academic year, the strike was the big "unknown" for many at York, both students and staff. Some of the issues addressed with students over the past few weeks included concerns around loss of motivation, stress management, financial support and time management. It is no doubt necessary to acknowledge the negative effects of the strike, but as well, to look at how to effectively implement strategies of rebuilding the momentum and positive drive that will maintain the overall focus of the goal (s) at hand.

In the end, stress for students is minimized with the knowledge that there are indeed many options available to assist you in succeeding. The following links were useful in terms of assisting me to effectively assist students, providing a detailed breakdown of useful information for students to utilize whether from an academic or personal standpoint.

Back to Class web site:

<http://www.yorku.ca/roweb/backtoclass/>

Learning Skills Program

www.yorku.ca/cdc/lsp

Moving Forward

No sooner have we managed to get back into the swing of things with the resumption of classes and the start of the Winter session, than it is time to look forward into planning what courses to take for the Summer session and the Fall/Winter 09/10 academic year. The following are a few key strategic points:

- ✓ **EXHALE!** Give yourself a silent cheer! You have survived the academic session/year (even though there might have been the occasional moments when you wanted to throw in the towel!!). Take the summer months to find the time to relax, refresh and rejuvenate the body, mind and spirit. If you are taking a summer course, try to find some time between terms for yourself.
- ✓ Review your degree/program requirements: Check the program website and pick up any printed materials such as supplemental calendars from the department office.
- ✓ Book an academic advising appointment with your program, department or Faculty Advising Centre. Remember to express your concerns and clarify all questions. (It may help you to write these down before the appointment so you stay on track.)
- ✓ Check enrollment dates/times for Fall/Winter 2009/10 – Prepare in advance for your enrollment date. Set up a list of your first choice and alternate courses for enrollment in case your first choice is already filled. A copy of an enrollment worksheet is available online that you can print and use to input your course choice (s).

http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/enrol_worksheet.pdf

Resource Library Update

Want to find a wide array of information all in one place? ACMAPS can be your one stop shop to finding useful information.

Over the fall term, we reached out to a broad array of student support offices on campus to update our resource library with their latest printed materials. The departments were delighted to provide such information and we are glad that it can be housed in the resource library for our students to use without having to contact each department themselves. We have updated information on various departments, programs and services available to students at York University.

When visiting our resource library, students can find information on the following: the 09-10 admissions booklet, various faculty 09-10 booklets, writing centre brochures, career centre brochure, learning skills program workshop schedule, financial services brochures, computing network services (CNS) information, parking services/security information and bookstore FAQ's.

Check out the ACMAPS resource library at 111 Central Square. We look forward to seeing you!

Attention Mature Students: You're being profiled!

In an attempt to put a human face on the mature student experience, ACMAPS will soon be launching its Student Profiles project. Profiles will offer an authentic insight into the lives and experiences of mature and part-time students at York University, while enhancing community and celebrating our students.

ACMAPS is looking for students who are willing to share their experiences for the betterment of their fellow mature students. What was life like before York? What made you decide to go back to school and why did you choose York University? Where is life's road taking you? What's your favourite thing about York? In what ways are you involved on campus?

If you are interested in nominating yourself or someone else for profiling, please watch for an upcoming message from us or email us at acmaps@yorku.ca and let us know!



Winter 2009 Mature Student Academic Orientation

The old saying, “It takes a village to raise a child,” was demonstrated on March 3, as ACMAPS and YUMSO welcomed approximately 70 newly admitted Mature Students to York University at the Winter Orientation.

New students began the evening over a light meal at a series of small tables, each hosted by current mature student volunteers from YUMSO. Following introductions of ACMAPS and YUMSO, the group heard a series of “Top tips for transition”, including information on scheduling, networking, seeking help, study and writing skills, keeping informed and creating personal balance. These tips were augmented with the personal reflections of current students whose advice included everything from extending the hand of friendship to creating a study space to choosing courses you really enjoy to what to expect on the road that lies ahead.

Networking and Q&A were followed by mini-tours, including Vanier College (home of the YUMSO club), York Lanes, Student Centre, Vari Hall, Ross Building, and the ACMAPS office in Central Square.

Feedback on the session has been really positive and we (ACMAPS and YUMSO both) are looking forward to serving the academic and social needs of this new group of students.

Our special thanks to all the current mature students who came out in support of this event!

Mature Student Success Program Fall Round-up

Fall 2008 brought with it the return of the Mature Student Success Program. The series comprised a variety of titles focused around students’ skill development, including computing skills, note-taking and study skills, essay writing, time management, and library research skills.

Taken together, the sessions were intended to assist mature students, especially newly admitted mature students, to ease their transition to the academic side of university life. Because these sessions were run by staff from various university supports, students also gained access to ongoing support and had a chance to network a little with their fellow students.

Special thanks to all our presenters and partner offices for their support, including: Leslie Sanders (Atkinson Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies), Cathy Boyd-Withers and Ramona Frial-Brown (Learning Skills Program), Karen Wash and Debbie Fraser (Computing Network Services), John Spencer (Centre for Academic Writing), and Erin Fields (York University Libraries).

As we move into 2009, we’re continuing this popular series. Some new sessions will be offered and some of our most popular sessions will be repeated. See the back cover for details.

Mature Student Success Program Winter, 2009

As we move into the winter term, ACMAPS will continue its Mature Student Success Program. Some popular sessions from the fall will be repeated and new sessions have been added to round out the series.

Click on www.yorku.ca/acmaps/events.html for schedule and registration details.

Writing University Essays – Learn the basics of academic writing from choosing a topic through to the final product.
Monday, March 16th at 5:30 p.m.
VH 3017
Leslie Sanders

Getting Involved on Campus – Hear about the opportunities for life outside the classroom and the benefits of involvement on campus.
Wednesday March 25th at 5:30 p.m.
HNE B10
Jair Kallidumbil and Ross McMillan

Exam Preparation and Study Skills – Learn the skills that support strong exam results.
Thursday, March 26th at 5:30 p.m.
HNE B10
Cathy Boyd-Withers and Ramona Frial-Brown

Life as a Mature Student – Helping your friends, family, and employer understand the demands of life as a mature student.
Monday, March 30th at 5:30 p.m.
HNE B10
Joanne Kirzner and Brian Poser

So how did you do on your first essay? – Learn how to make sense of the feedback markers give to improve future writing.
Thursday, April 2nd at 5:30 p.m.
HNE B10
Leslie Sanders

Library Research Skills -- Learn expert strategies for finding and assessing information in the library.
Tuesday, April 14th at 5:30 p.m.,
Rm 531 Scott Library
Erin Fields

Who am I? -- Play a fun and interactive self-discovery board game where you will identify your unique skills, abilities, interests, and desires.
April 23rd at 5:30 p.m.,
Location TBA
Career Centre Staff

Getting ready for your next year -- Whether you're going into second year or getting ready for graduation, join us for a conversation on making the most of the transition ahead.
Wednesday, April 29th at 5:30 p.m.
HNE B10
Brian Poser and Norma Sue Fisher Stitt

Brown Bag Lunch Chats and Brown Bag Supper Socials – take a little time to get to know us, the university and your fellow students. Coming soon to a lunch hour/supper hour near you. In the meantime, why not take in YUMSO's Lunchtime Social – Fridays from 12-2 at 113B Vanier College?