

## A Message from the Dean, Dr. Nawal Ammar

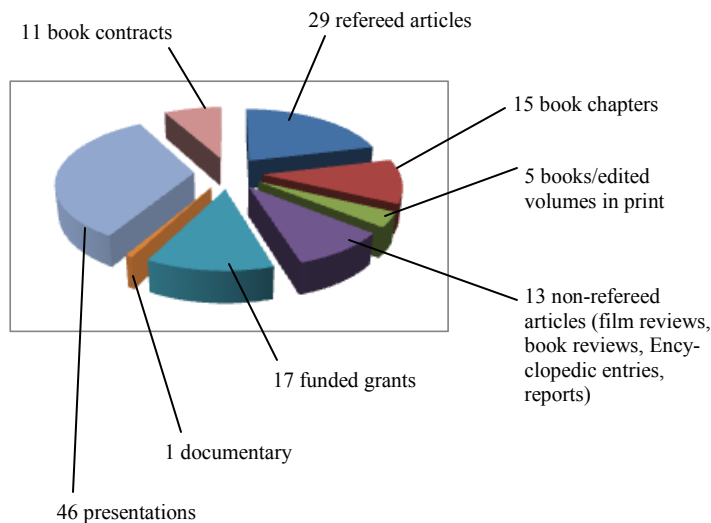
Winter 2012



One more semester has come and gone for the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities (FSSH) at UOIT. The Fall Semester, 2011 saw yet another increase in student enrolment from 1283 to 1650 undergraduate students (a 27% increase). This increase is attributed to more student enrolment in Criminology but also because of the two new programs in Forensic Psychology and Community Development. There are plans this year to also grow the Faculty's graduate programs. The Communication graduate program has been put on hold for a variety of reasons. However, we are in the process of developing two more graduate degrees in Forensic Psychology (in collaboration with the Faculty of Science and other universities nearby) as well as a Ph.D. in Criminology.

Our faculty are still hard at work and engaged in their teaching, research and service. Last year our faculty's accomplishments included the following:

### 2010-2011 At a Glance



- Faculty taught 7000 students over the course of the 2010/2011 academic year.
- Faculty served on/aided with 60 university committees/events (56, 2010-2011).
- Faculty who taught both semesters in 2010/2011 had a mean evaluation score of 1.19; a mean score above the university score.
- Faculty served on 83 SS&H Committees
- The Faculty received a university Administrative/Technical Staff Award of Excellence for Mr. David Kim.
- The only two graduate students Winning Papers for the 2010 Student Paper Competition by *The Journal of Criminal Justice Research* were from UOIT. They were: "Immigrant and Non-immigrant Dating Relationships: Recognizing Multiple Identities and Power in Abuse Perpetration," authored by Amanda Couture; and, "Representations and Misconceptions of Child Sexual Abuse in the Media," authored by Marie Polgar.

Our graduate students have also achieved beyond completing their MAs. Jaclyn San Antonio travelled to Ecuador to help build schools for indigenous people and is currently teaching Victimology for FSSH at UOIT for the 2012 winter semester. Ryan Scrivens is working as a teaching assistant for FSSH at UOIT, as well as volunteering as a researcher for Durham Region Police Services (DRPS) and at the Markham Food Bank. Amanda Couture is a teaching assistant for FSSH at UOIT while also producing publications and conference presentations for various research projects. Kathryn Carter (formerly Bruynson) and Marie Polgar-Matthews are teaching assistants as well at FSSH at UOIT. Steven Roberts works as a teaching assistant at FSSH at UOIT and has applied to Ph.D. programs. Alison Fyfe is now at McGill University in the Ph.D. Communication Studies program. Andrew Smith is in the doctoral program in social psychology at Queen's University where he continues his research on eyewitness identification. Cayla Da Silva is continuing with academics as well as she undertakes another master degree, this time in social work at the University of Toronto. She also does contract work for DRPS. Taylor Churchill has his own home renovation business. Laura MacDiarmid is program manager at The Salvation Army Wycliffe Booth House in Middlesex County, Ontario. Ashley Verhaaff is volunteer and peer support coordinator at WOTCH Community Mental Health Services in London, Ontario, and Amanda Breen is a parole officer with Correctional Service of Canada.

We look forward to another productive semester and year.

Nawal Ammar, Ph.D., Professor & Dean

### Inside this issue:

- 2 Orientation Fall 2011
- 2 UOIT and Resolution Research® Sign MOU
- 3 Biography: Dr. Thomas McMorrow
- 3 Why an Aboriginal Resource Centre? A Student's Perspective
- 4 Putting Theory into Practice
- 4 UOIT's Contribution to Revitalizing Downtown Oshawa: A Study
- 5 Faculty News

# Orientation Fall 2011

The theme for September 2011 UOIT Orientation Week was, "The Circle of Life." The week of festivities included University 101 activities designed to orientate first year students to their respective locations (north or downtown). The FSSH first year students, with the guidance of the academic advising staff, participated in a scavenger hunt.

The FSSH Circle of Life story was read to the first year students which incorporated information on the different programs, departments and personnel within the Faculty. Students were then divided into groups to begin the hunt at the Regent Theatre.

Each team with their Team Orange Crush (Team OC) captains scavenged the downtown location to find answers to common questions asked by first year students, such as:

What is plagiarism?  
Who is the best person to discuss problems affecting my academic performance?  
Which of the following is an example of having a clear academic standing?  
Where do I find forms such as add/drop, medical statement etc?  
How will I receive the majority of communication from UOIT?  
If I am struggling in a class, what should I do?  
Who is my current Dean of Social Science and Humanities?  
Which of the following is a legitimate excuse for deferring a final exam?

Upon completion of the hunt, each group returned to the Regent Theatre to unscramble the word clues and form the final question. The first team to finish and have the correct final answer won a prize.

After the scavenger hunt students were treated to a pizza lunch, compliments of

the Faculty, and introduced to faculty members and staff.

Other events during orientation week (September 6-10) included the annual "Wild Goose Chase," dodge ball, a "Tips for Success" workshop and pub nights, running between UOIT's downtown and north locations.

A good time was had by all!  
*Alexandra Herman, academic advisor (acting) ■*

## UOIT and Resolution Research® sign MOU

Below is the press release issued by UOIT Communications and Marketing regarding the partnership between Digital Life Research Group and Resolution Research®. Digital Life Research Group is comprised of Communication faculty from FSSH.

The [University of Ontario Institute of Technology \(UOIT\)](#) and [Resolution Research & Marketing, Inc. ®](#) signed a memorandum of understanding today, giving researchers access to a smarter, competitive tool for data collection and analysis through connection-driven intelligence.

"This partnership supports our innovative research agenda allowing for even more collaboration with industry and community organizations - strengthening our ties locally and beyond Durham Region," said Dr. Nawal Ammar, dean, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, UOIT.

Through this partnership, Resolution Research will provide [UOIT's Digital Life Research Group](#) with access to the innovative Relevance Media (RM) software platform. This platform enables quick, integrative analysis of multiple, disparate data sets, and connects data that was previously impossible to combine for discovery, especially as related to the social media arena. As a result, the RM platform will benefit researchers by allowing for more affordable re-

search analysis and data collection, provide students with access to the software and more opportunities to engage in new and relevant research projects that broaden their real-life work experience through work placements.

"In today's mega-abundant data world, a paradigm shift has occurred in the research industry - the shift demands anticipatory insight through agile analysis of large data streams. The focus has shifted from data collection, to observational research (like listening posts, neurological, and behavioral), to the anticipation of future behaviors. Resolution Research's adaption of the RM platform facilitates this process providing strategic foresight and predictive trends and analyses," said Nina Nichols, president, Resolution Research. "We're delighted to collaborate with UOIT, clearly a preeminent 21<sup>st</sup> century thought leader, as together we capitalize on the convergence of market research methodologies."

UOIT will develop a Digital Life Research Centre that uses the RM platform in all types of research projects focused on data hidden in, for example, social media (such as Facebook, and Twitter), marketing analysis, research and development notes, voice of customer data (call-centre records, service requests, blogs, field reports, customer satisfaction surveys, etc.), Internet content (customer product reviews, competitor information, social networking,

eCommerce footprints, etc.), legal documents, and government and corporate filings. Dr. Teresa Pierce, assistant professor, FSSH, will be the lead researcher.

The memorandum of understanding was signed by UOIT President Tim McTiernan and Nina Nichols, president, Resolution Research, during a signing ceremony held at UOIT's Bordessa Hall. ■



UOIT President Tim McTiernan (right) with Nina Nichols, president, Resolution Research.

# Biography: Dr. Thomas McMorrow



I was drawn to the faculty by its expanding legal studies programme, its array of talented academics and the prospect of participating in a learning community with such potential for making a constructive impact in the Durham region, Canada and the world. Following a full semester here teaching Family Law to a group of dynamic and engaging students, I am thrilled by the great opportunity this is proving to be.

A few weeks before Christmas 2011, I successfully defended my thesis for my Doctor of Civil Law at the McGill University Faculty of Law entitled “*Critical to what? Legal for whom?*” *Examining the Implications of a Critical Legal Pluralism for Re-imagining the Role of High School*

*Students in Education Law*. My dissertation critically examines the legal theoretical assumptions which underpin the burgeoning field of education law; that is, the area of law, legal practice and scholarship which focuses on the intersection of the education system and the legal system. Drawing on artistic depictions of everyday life in secondary school, sociological and anthropological studies, doctrinal legal materials and debates in legal theory, I problematise the orthodox way of imagining law and its relationship to human interaction within secondary schools.

My passion for examining legal problems, both theoretical and doctrinal, on a local level is informed by an international and bilingual perspective. I earned my LL.B. from Trinity College Dublin, studied public law at the Université de Poitiers in France, and, in 2010, conducted research as a SHRCC-sponsored graduate student at the University of Wollongong, Australia.

Recognizing the diversity of beliefs, perspectives and goals not only across but within a given culture commends a context-sensitive approach to legal research. Hence the qualitative component of my current research agenda. The first study I wish to undertake examines factors influencing recourse to the family court system; the second explores efforts within aboriginal collectivities to enhance economic well-being while furthering the cultural traditions of these communities. No doubt my interactions with students and colleagues alike will continue to inspire my research, writing and service activities.

*Dr. Thomas McMorrow, assistant professor* ■

## Why An Aboriginal Resource Centre? A Student’s Perspective

My name is Jill Treen and I’m a fourth year legal studies student. I currently hold the position of the Vice President of the Aboriginal Student Circle, and am completing my workplace practicum with the Aboriginal Resource Center. (ARC)

I grew up always knowing that I was part aboriginal, but until recently I never truly identified. I attribute my proud aboriginal status in part to the Aboriginal Resource Center, and in turn the student group that was formed on campus. Through the support of fellow aboriginal students and the great councillors on campus I have learned about my people’s history, and was able to develop my native identity. I’m a proud Metis woman.

At 23, I assumed I knew who I was and what I believed in. When I was asked by a fellow student to join the Aboriginal Student Circle I was apprehensive because I didn’t want to offend others by the way that I looked, or where I grew up. (I naively assumed the majority of the other students would come from reserves). She assured me the group would consist of a variety of different people who identify with different cultural backgrounds. Our

meetings take place in the Aboriginal Resource Center.

The Aboriginal Resource Center is a place to develop my native identity, while receiving cultural support related to my education, career and personal development. The centre offers me a welcoming gathering place to socialize, complete homework, and gather information about the current activities offered not only by the university, but the surrounding community. It truly supports community involvement and the unity between cultures. This center would not be what it is without the wonderful work of the two aboriginal councillors Kris and Laura. With their continual support, they make the center a very inviting place that promotes self-growth, a better understanding of the aboriginal culture, and provides educational resources. They go above and beyond to make you feel unique and special when you are in the center.

I’m fortunate to be able to complete my workplace practicum with the Aboriginal Resource Center and work alongside Kris and Laura. Recently, I was able to take part in the grand opening ceremonies. I

was overwhelmed to see the support that streamed in from various aboriginal communities.

As a wise practicum advisor once told me “I’m part of something truly special.”  
*Jill Treen, Legal Studies student; VP Aboriginal Student Circle* ■



*Drum Circle, ARC Opening Ceremony*

*Photograph credited to Calvin Taylor, UOIT Communications and Marketing*

# Putting Theory into Practice

During the Fall 2011 semester, the Practicum Office orchestrated over 100 successful placements for Criminology students in the areas of policing, corrections, law and the non-profit sector. Students completed 100 hours of fieldwork with internationally recognized agencies including AIDWYC (The Association in Defence of the Wrongly Convicted) and Centre for Children Committing Offences, as well as numerous local organizations including the Oshawa Community Health Centre, John Howard Society, Eastview Boys and Girls Club and Big Brothers and Big Sisters In-school Mentorship program. This year more than ever, UOIT students have excelled in the field and have been commended for their unparalleled levels of professionalism. Our students have demonstrated a commitment to building a genuine rapport with stigmatized and marginalized populations, while drawing prac-

tical connections between their work in the classroom and community. In the words of 4<sup>th</sup> year Criminology student Alyx Ivany, “Practicum was hands down the best course I have taken in my undergraduate degree. Why? It put theory into practice. It was the only course that offered the opportunity to view case files, crime scene photos, and trial transcripts on an everyday basis.” The Winter term marks the first group of Communication and Legal Studies students embarking on the Practicum experience. These students will gain professional experience with a variety of prestigious organizations, including The Ministry of Labour, Toronto Workers Health and Safety Legal Clinic, The Region of Durham and The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

*Juanita Boone, practicum assistant* ■



*Dan Walters, practicum coordinator (centre) with fourth year Criminology students, Bryan Welsh-Morgan and Nadia Khan.*

## UOIT's Contribution to Revitalizing Downtown Oshawa: A Study

Over the months of March to June 2011, Dr. Nawal Ammar, Dean of the FSSH, Dr. Barbara Perry, Associate Dean of FSSH, Dr. Arshia Zaidi, Assistant Professor FSSH, and Research Assistants Michael Vrantsidis, Sarah Houssam-Eddine, Cody Lamb, Derek Silva, and Robert Sudak, conducted a study examining the social impact of the FSSH move to downtown Oshawa. This study represents a rapid first step towards measuring the extra-financial value relative to resources invested, i.e., the social impact, of UOIT's expansion into the downtown core of Oshawa. Three forms of data collection were used in this Rapid Social Impact Assessment (RSIA). The first was a focus group approach. We identified the need to explore the move qualitatively with four groups of internal and external stakeholders (n=29). In addition, a survey questionnaire was developed and administered electronically to the internal stakeholders (faculty, students, and staff from the FSSH) and by mail to external stakeholders (patrons occupying commercial space in the Oshawa's downtown core). All participants (n=131) were asked various survey questions that assessed the impact of UOIT's FSSH move to downtown Oshawa on revitalization and on them personally and/or professionally.

A systematic analysis of the themes

emerging from the Focus Groups and survey questionnaire shows that in general both external and internal stakeholders find UOIT's extension of its main-campus to downtown Oshawa as having a positive impact on the City, on student and classroom space, faculty research, and for the image of UOIT (especially for the FSSH). In addition, UOIT's downtown location has had a positive effect on the aesthetics of the streetscape through its renovation of the Regent Theatre, and what was previously known as the Alger Press building, as well as the construction of Bordessa Hall. Moreover, there is also a strong sense that UOIT's effort to enhance their space has initiated a similar sense of pride and renewal among others in the downtown. Most dramatic, from participants' perspective, however, is the increased diversity of the downtown community. As these participants suggest, the shift in the demographics of the downtown is welcome. Many shared their excitement about the increasing options that are available in terms of social and cultural events in the downtown. Finally, a significant fall-out of the changing streetscape is a shift in perspective on the safety of downtown. Some participants went so far as to characterize the presence of the university as a crime prevention strategy, or a key deterrent to criminal behaviour.

While this study shows the positive impact of UOIT's FSSH move to downtown Oshawa, it is nevertheless essential to underscore the cautionary and negative concerns that both external and internal stakeholders expressed. In nearly all Focus Groups and survey questionnaires, most participants agreed that one of the most significant issues that need to be addressed is student housing. On a related note, there were some participants who spoke to the parallel issues of transit and parking. Perhaps one of the most significant concerns of the external stakeholders are related to unfulfilled promises. To many, the fear that UOIT will not fulfill its promise and continue its expansion of its main-campus in downtown Oshawa is very real. Regardless, the expansion of UOIT's move to downtown Oshawa is supported by the majority of both internal and external stakeholders queried in this study. There is remarkable enthusiasm about the “buzz” that has been created by the entrenchment of UOIT Faculties in downtown Oshawa, across all representative categories of stakeholders.

*Derek Silva, research assistant* ■

# Faculty News

The Centre for Evaluation and Survey Research (CESR) recently conducted a quality of life study in the Region of Durham; the Durham Area Survey (DAS). The purpose of this online survey was to identify Durham resident interests including work, transportation, safety and stress among other indicators. The data collected will help form the basis of a larger study planned in the Summer of 2012. The first of a series of reports from the DAS will be published on the CESR website in January and the series will continue to appear through the Spring. In addition to several client projects, CESR is also collaborating on a study of community resilience planned for 2012. For further information, please contact us at 905.721.8668 ext.6552 or [cesr@uoit.ca](mailto:cesr@uoit.ca).

*Christy Whiteman, admin. assistant-CESR* ■

**Michelle Armstrong** joined our administrative staff full-time on September 1, 2011 as an administrative assistant-departmental. She was previously on contract with the Faculty as special projects coordinator. Welcome aboard Michelle! ■

CLU and LiNDR enjoy a growing partnership which began in February 2011. CLU is currently working on multiple projects with LiNDR and its community partners which range in areas from English as a second language to digital literacy.

The Literacy Network of Durham Region (LiNDR) held an event at Bordessa Hall on September 30 2011, to announce the details of the Trillium grant it recently received. The project will look at strategies to improve access to services and supports across Durham Region by developing a sustainable model for psycho-educational assessments needed by people with cognitive impairments and/or learning disabilities. The Trillium grant will look at ways to assist individuals with the cost of this testing. Approximately 30 guests attended the event, including special guests Jerry Ouellette and Christine Elliott, Dr. Tim McTiernan, president UOIT; Dr. Michael Owen, associate provost research; Dr. Nawal Ammar, dean FSSH. Dr. Shanti Fernando, assistant professor and CLU director was the emcee of the event.

*Deborah Banavage, admin. assistant-CLU* ■

October 26, 2011 marked the third annual Athlete's Breakfast for FSSH. Fifteen FSSH students from UOIT's various var-

sity teams came to enjoy a hot meal and mingle with staff and faculty. Dean Ammar wished them success in both their athletic and academic endeavors for the year. There were thirty-five attendees, including faculty members, staff from both the Faculty and UOIT Athletics Department, and students. ■

On November 16, 2011, UOIT embarked on its annual "Turkey Toll" for the Campus Holiday Food Drive. Over the years this initiative has helped support UOIT and Durham College students in need during the holiday season. Staff and faculty at 55 Bond St. E. and 61 Charles St. raised \$209.47. Your support was greatly appreciated! ■

The FSSH Academic Awards Dinner was held on December 1, 2011 to honour FSSH President's List and Dean's Honour List students of the 2010-2011 academic year. Two hundred and twenty-four attendees, including faculty, students, family and friends were treated to dinner and awards presentations.

The Academic Achievement Award was presented to those students with the highest GPA in each major for each year:

## Communication

- 1st year—Travis Persaud
- 2nd year—Sierra McKenzie
- 3rd year—Kristen Sibley

## Criminology and Justice

- 1st year—Brett Crowley
- 2nd year—Lauren Casey
- 3rd year—Holly Dykstra

## Legal Studies

- 1st year—Erin Passmore
- 2nd year—Melissa Heaslip
- 3rd year—Rachel Calvelli

## Public Policy

- 1st year—Christopher Walker
- 2nd year—Kathryn Black

The athletic awards were presented to the male and female students with the highest cumulative GPA while participating as a varsity athlete:

- Male—Michael Montgomery
- Female—Stephanie Macaskill

The Faculty Award was voted upon by FSSH students and presented to the core faculty member who has inspired students and enriched the quality of learning at UOIT. The recipient of the 2010-2011 Faculty Award was **Dr. Arshia Zaidi**.

The Teaching Assistant Award was voted upon by FSSH students and presented to the teaching assistant(s) who had significantly enhanced the quality of learning through support and facilitation. The recipients of the 2010-2011 Teaching Assistant Award were **Amanda Couture** and **June Melnychuk**.

Congratulations to all!

Thank you to Patricia MacMillan, academic advisor, for spearheading this memorable event. ■

December 15, 2011 was the Faculty's annual potluck lunch. As usual, thanks to the generosity and culinary skills of participating faculty and staff, there was oodles of food and everything was scrumptious! ■

## Contact Us:

UOIT  
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities  
Bordessa Hall  
55 Bond St. E.  
Oshawa, ON  
Telephone: 905.721.3234  
Fax: 905.721.3372  
[www.socialscienceandhumanities.uoit.ca](http://www.socialscienceandhumanities.uoit.ca)