



**Standing Committee on Provincial and Federal Affairs**

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**Provincial External Representation Review 2014**

# Context for Review by PFA

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- Review must be conducted every two years
- In the past, conducted by External Portfolio through an Ad-hoc Committee on Provincial Representation
- Recent amendment to by-law #3 gives responsibility to PFA Chair
- Provincial Representation = OUSA

# The Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA)



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## Mission and Principles

- Advocates to the Provincial Government on behalf of students at its seven member schools
- Research, develop policy, lobby government, communicate, and build partnerships
- Values member autonomy
- Focusses on issues directly related to students

## Structure

- General Assembly
- Steering Committee
- Executive
- Home Office

**The USC has held full membership status with OUSA since 1995**

# Review Process

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## Guiding Principles

- a. Whether the actions of the external organization conform with their mission statement, mandate, and stated objectives.*
  
- b. Whether the actions of the external organization conform to the internal policies of the USC with regard to external representation*
  
- c. Whether the actions and policies of the external organization reflect the best interest of undergraduate students at Western.*
  
- d. Whether membership in the external organization is financially prudent.*

# Review Process

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## Combination of Surveys and Interviews

- March 4th, 2014: Interview with Associate Vice-President External
- March 5th, 2014: Acquired results from survey that was sent to student-at-large via Mustang Monthly in February 2014. Interview with Vice-President External and OUSA President
- March 6th, 2014: Questionnaire on provincial representation sent to committee.
- March 11th, 2014: Interview with Provincial Affairs Coordinator and OUSA Campus Coordinator. Acquired survey results from committee.
- March 13th, 2014: Draft of Review sent to committee for final read-through

## Results

- Some concerns and recommendations
- Overall, USC should retain its full-membership status within OUSA

# Principles

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Principle One: The USC should be a member of an external organization that provides representation for students to the Provincial Government through professional, researched, and effective lobbying on issues directly related to students.

Principle Two: The relationship between the USC and any external organization it is a member of must comply to USC by-law#3.

Principle Three: Membership fees for an external organization should be reasonable, considering services received

Principle Four: Any external advocacy organization that the USC is a part of should make themselves, their policies, and initiatives accessible and visible to Western students-at-large.

# Concerns

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Concern One: OUSA does not currently have a strong presence on campus.

Concern Two: OUSA does not include its General Assembly in the issue identification and policy-formation process the best it can.

*Concern Three: OUSA's tenuous and strained relationship with Canadian Federation of Students diminishes its lobbying effectiveness.*

*Concern Four: While OUSA's online presence has improved, its website continues to be unorganized and difficult to navigate.*

# Recommendations

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Recommendation One: Working alongside USC campus coordinators, OUSA should develop and execute at least one physical on-campus promotional campaign per year.

*Recommendation Two: OUSA's steering committee should take steps to consult with campus delegates with regard to policy and issue identification, and share upcoming policy papers to delegates at least two weeks prior to the General Assembly.*

Recommendation Three: Enhance the relationship with the Canadian Federation of Students by identifying common priorities and presenting a united front for student voices in the sector.

Recommendation Four: Dedicate resources to the improvement of the OUSA website, ensuring that all public documents are available while making it more accessible and easier to navigate.