

WELCOME PACKAGE 2023



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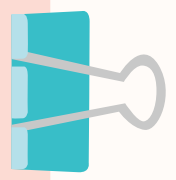
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WHAT IS ASUA?

The **Actuarial and Statistical Undergraduate Association (ASUA)** is Western University's *only* department club for students in Actuarial Science, Financial Modelling, Data Science and Statistics!



- ASUA strives to provide:**
- Academic workshops
 - Professional development opportunities
 - Supportive mentors
 - Social community
- for students in the **Department of Actuarial and Statistical Sciences (DSAS)**.



ASUA's mission is to create a positive and inclusive community for all undergraduate students in the DSAS, alongside an outstanding academic experience and effective professional development.





OUR COMMUNITY

We aspire to build an exceptional, inclusive and supportive community as well as an undergraduate experience that is unforgettable for all DSAS students. We also provide a large range of opportunities, panel events and seminars to enhance students' knowledge in relevant career paths, technical skills and networking.



Careers



Social



Academic



COMMUNITY TESTIMONIAL

Zhaoli Pan, International Student in Actuarial Sciences

What has been the most challenging aspect of your undergraduate experience so far as an International Student?

The most challenging thing for me was the unfamiliar environment. Everything was different, from academics to every aspect of my life. I had to adapt to the style of the university there, and I needed to learn more things.

What has being a part of the ASUA community brought for you as an International student in the DSAS?

Last year, as the International Representative of ASUA, I had really learned a lot. From an academic perspective, I had the chance to know more information and knowledge about related courses and skills. Moreover, I had the opportunity to be involved in lots of related events and got to network with elites in the industry. Then, I shared what I learned with other international students, which was meaningful. Also, I loved the people in ASUA, and I met friends there. Every time I had a question about anything, other people in ASUA were always willing to share what they knew with me. This supportive environment in ASUA really impressed me.

If you could tell your first-year self something as a new international student, what would it be?

I would tell myself to be brave in front of challenges. Although it took a while to adapt to the environment, I got over the difficulties. I definitely would have tried more new things and gained more new fun experiences because that's the meaning of life.

OUR INITIATIVES



The ASUA Times

Bi-weekly articles on current news surrounding the Actuarial Sciences, Statistical Sciences, Data Science, and Financial Modeling industries. These articles provide information on current economics and the world we live in under the DSAS.



The ASUA Newsletter

Monthly newsletter distributed to all ASUA members that outlines crucial dates and upcoming events and opportunities regarding application/scholarship deadlines, info session dates, employer networking dates, ASUA events, important DSAS opportunities, and more.



Reel Wellness Advice

Bi-weekly Instagram Reels showcasing significant opportunities and ASUA events alongside beneficial resources for academic workshops, career education, mental health support, and more!



ASUA Vlogs

Videos posted across our social platforms highlighting the many academic and social events that ASUA holds and encapsulating the fun moments and memories for students to look back on.



Monthly Q&A's

Monthly Instagram/Facebook stories where students can ask any questions they have regarding the upcoming month's events and/or opportunities as well as any other areas of the DSAS and will receive immediate responses.

MEET OUR TEAM



Alexandra Kolios, President

ASUA has been my favourite community I've discovered since joining university. From the many academic and social events throughout the year, I've been able to make friendships and connections that I'm extremely grateful for. I was able to form stronger bonds with friends in my classes and meet people that I never would have met otherwise, as well as make connections in the industry and in companies that I would end up working in. I'm looking forward to expanding ASUA this year to an even bigger and better support system for everyone in DSAS!



Aidan Roberts, VP Finance

At ASUA, I found a group of people that I can relate to, academically, where I could not find elsewhere. ASUA provides an abundance of opportunities that spark long term connections amongst DSAS students, professors, and industry professionals. Prior to joining ASUA, I experienced excessive stress associated with DSAS courses. Help was not easy to find via: Professors' office hours, tutorials, etc. That was until I met great people at ASUA who understood my struggles. They went above and beyond to assist me, and I aim to reciprocate the same level of support.



Vincent Berendsen, VP Events

Over the past few years, ASUA has never failed to provide me with some of the best opportunities to learn all sorts of things and meet some of the best people on campus. With a great mix of both academic and social events, this club offers the best of both worlds and truly makes for a community of students that can't be matched. For my last dance at Western University, I want to make sure that DSAS students are given the chance to grow and have fun throughout the various events offered during the school year!



Aevery Tam, VP Communications

ASUA has been a huge part of my time at Western University as I had an amazing opportunity to be a part of such a welcoming and supportive community. Thanks to ASUA, I gained valuable knowledge and skills to guide me through my academic and professional journey. ASUA has been a life changing experience for me and I hope to provide the same for DSAS students this year by implementing initiatives focusing on support and mental wellness!



Viveca Anaab-Bisi, SSC Department Rep.

Navigating the change from Medical Science to Actuarial Science in first year was a confusing task, but it was one that I couldn't have done without ASUA. Through ASUA, I gained insight on modules offered by the DSAS, and met many influential professionals, professors and students who have inspired me in many ways! As the SSC Representative, I aim to contribute to the academic and professional success of students within our department. I will work tirelessly to support you all and make sure your school year is a breeze!

WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN ASUA?



Be a part of building and enhancing our unforgettable community!

1

Access to endless resources for relevant career information, professional development and networking opportunities.

2

Receive immediate updates and information on upcoming events and significant opportunities through our official mailing list for ASUA members only.

3

Attend enjoyable social events hosted by ASUA for free or at a reduced cost.

4

Receive a financial reimbursement for the registration fee for the upcoming ANEA-ASNA 2024 conference.

5

Receive academic and social support through our Mentorship Program and a close tight-knit community.

and more!

EVENTS FOR THE YEAR

Here are some recurring and new events that you can look forward to for the upcoming school year!

01



Dodgeball Tournament

A fan favourite from last year that needed to return! Look forward to another exciting tournament as the different classes compete to win ASUA's second ever dodgeball tournament. Tons of fun and a great way to destress!

02



new!

DSAS Professor Mingling Night

Ever wanted to just chat with your professors informally? We're planning on offering just that with our DSAS Professor Mingling Night. Join us for a pleasant evening as we get to meet the people who run our faculty and hear about their past experiences!

03



ASUA Bar Nights

We all need breaks here and there, so this long-standing ASUA tradition once again comes back this year! Bar Nights are a great way to socialize and have a fun time with friends at one of the many bars in London.

04



Professional Panel

The professional panel event offers a fantastic opportunity to meet some industry professionals and learn more about the different opportunities that exist after completing your DSAS degree!

05



new!

Rec Room / Arcade Bar

The Rec Room offers a large variety of arcade games, some good food and has a bar! This event offers the best of both worlds: you can relax and chat with some friends over a drink or spend some time playing the different games!

06



Networking and Resume Workshop

Need help preparing for ASNA or other student conferences? You won't want to miss this amazing opportunity to learn more about networking techniques, resume writing and other tips and tricks to really impress recruiters.

07



End of Year Formal

The formal, which was first introduced last year, is a fantastic way to wrap up the year with ASUA. This year, we're bringing it back, allowing you and your friends to get dressed up and have an enjoyable night with some fun music, tasty food, and hopefully an open bar ☺

SCHOLARSHIPS

Barbara Newbegin Award in Mathematics

- Annual award for full-time undergraduate students in **Year 3 or 4 of Honours Specialization** in Mathematics, Applied Mathematics, or Statistical and Actuarial Science
- **Eligibility criteria:** Minimum 70% average and demonstrated financial need
- **Award value:** \$3,500
- **Application deadline:** September 30th

RBC Scholarship in Data Science

- **Year 3 students** in the programs: Computer Science, Data Sciences, Mathematics, Statistical, Actuarial Sciences, or **4th year BSc/vey**
- **Eligibility criteria:** Academic achievement and interest in big data, data science, AI, or advanced analytics
- **Award value:** \$25,000 two-year (\$12,500 per year)
- **Application deadline:** September 30th

Mercer Human Resource Consulting Alumni Scholarship

- **Year 3 or 4 students** in **Honours Specialization** or **Double Major** in Actuarial Science, Applied Statistics, Financial Modelling, or Statistics
- Based on academic achievement and financial need
- **Award value:** \$2,000
- **Deadline:** September 30th

V.M. Joshi Memorial Scholarship

- Awarded to a student in **Honours Specialization** or **Double Major** in Statistics
- **Eligibility criteria:** Maintained an 80% average and demonstrates financial need
- **Award value:** \$750
- **Deadline:** September 30th
- Application forms available on Student Centre

TELUS Health Continuing Career Scholarship

- **Year 2 student** of an **Honours Specialization** in **Financial Modelling**
- Based on academic achievement and financial need
- **Award value:** \$3,000, continuing for two years plus two 4-month work experiences.
- **Deadline:** September 30th

...and much more!

For more information regarding all DSAS scholarships such as application details, eligibility criteria and application deadlines, click [here](#).

SCHOLARSHIP TESTIMONIAL



Ella Donovan

TELUS Health (formerly LifeWorks) Continuing Career Scholarship Recipient

I received the LifeWorks Continuing Career Scholarship. This scholarship is for students in actuarial science or financial modeling and it comes with two, four-month work terms with the defined contribution pension consulting team at TELUS Health (formerly LifeWorks). I just finished my first work term this summer and loved it! I learned so much about what the company does and got my own projects and tasks to work on for clients.

My advice is to not be afraid to put yourself out there. If you are interested in a scholarship but have questions or doubts, just apply anyway! You never know what could happen and there is no harm in applying. I didn't hear about the LifeWorks scholarship until the day the application was due, but I quickly applied anyway thinking there was no way I would get it, and I surprised myself. Also, don't hesitate to talk to someone about any questions you may have, whether it's a professor, upper year, or one of your peers. People are always willing to help out but it's your responsibility to ask them.

Qualities that will make a student stand out are eagerness to learn, a strong work ethic, and great communication skills. Recruiters are looking for people who are interested in learning more, not just who have a lot of knowledge. Always ask questions if you have the opportunity to because it shows people that you are interested in the topic of conversation and are curious to know more. A strong work ethic involves taking the initiative to explore new topics, suggest ideas, and take on responsibilities without being directed. Lastly, it is very important to be able to communicate well with others because you will always be engaging with different people. Speaking well in interviews, being able to ask questions in front of a group of people, and discussing your ideas with someone are all situations where communication skills are key.

My interview was with three people from DSAS and they were all so nice. It was 30 minutes long and I got asked straightforward questions such as "tell us about yourself" and "why do you want this scholarship". Like many interviews, I also got asked about my leadership skills. This is a very common interview question, so it is best to already have in mind experiences where you have shown leadership skills in the past. It is very important to relax and just be yourself in an interview because interviewers want to see who you are as well. I prepared for my interview by thinking of my answers for the basic questions beforehand and making a list of all my past jobs and experiences that show the skills I have.

SCHOLARSHIP TESTIMONIAL



Michael Ritacco

RBC Scholarship in Data Science Recipient

I first learned about the RBC Scholarship in Data Science through a department email. At the time, I was in my third year, pursuing an Honours Specialization in Data Science and was already interested in a career that revolved around big data, AI, and advanced analytics. The scholarship's criteria, which focused on academic achievement and a desire to work in tech-related fields, made me realize that this was a perfect opportunity for someone with my aspirations. The scholarship spans two years and is valued at a total of \$25,000. Initially, I was quite hesitant to apply. I thought my chance of

receiving the scholarship would be slim to none, and I asked myself, "Why even apply?" After thinking about it more, I came to the consensus to give it a shot.

The application process was straightforward but required some effort. I filled out the necessary forms and prepared for the interview, which I found to be both challenging and engaging. The selection committee included representatives from both RBC and the Faculty of Science, who asked questions that tested my knowledge, as well as my passion for data science and technology. I prepared for the interview by revisiting my academic and professional experiences that demonstrated my interest and aptitude in the field. As practice, I went through presenting the application questions verbally in front of my peers as well.

Receiving the scholarship was not just a financial relief but also a great confidence booster. It helped affirm that I'm on the right path and that my efforts thus far have been worthwhile. The scholarship covers two years and requires that I maintain an 80% average, keeping me motivated to stay on top of my academic game. Furthermore, it opens the door for potential internship opportunities with RBC, offering a head start in your professional career. From my own personal experience, this aspect played a pivotal role, and ultimately led to me securing my first internship in industry at RBC.

In terms of standing out, apart from academic achievement, committees look for passion and a well-rounded personality. Be prepared to talk not just about your grades but also about your genuine interest in the field, your extracurricular activities, and even your soft skills. You might not think they're important, but these aspects make you a whole person, not just a grade point average.

For anyone interested in applying for the RBC Scholarship in Data Science or any scholarship in general, my advice would be simple: don't count yourself out before you've even tried. Put yourself out there and apply, because you might be exactly what the selection committee is looking for. Always keep an eye out for communications from the department; you never know what opportunities might come your way.

STUDENT CONFERENCES

1

Actuarial Students' National Association (ASNA)

ASNA, stands as one of the largest networking events and conferences, with its roots firmly planted in Canada. Attending ASNA opens doors to valuable networking opportunities with a plethora of prominent companies within the actuarial industry. Students can find themselves securing internships or full-time positions as a result of these connections. Beyond networking, ASNA offers enriching seminar discussions, engaging case competitions, and informative webinars, all designed to enhance your skills and boost your employability. ASNA serves as a powerful platform to connect with industry professionals and take those crucial first steps towards a successful career. **Excitingly, the 2024 ASNA convention will be held in Montreal!**



2

Canadian Statistics Student Conference (CSSC)

The CSSC focuses on four key aspects: research presentations, networking, skill development, and career information. Attendees from various statistical fields, including actuarial science, biostatistics, and survey methods, have the chance to present their work and learn from invited speakers from government, industry, and academia. Originally known as the SSC Student Conference, its goal is to integrate students into the world of statistics and prepare them for future careers by enhancing presentation, communication, and critical thinking skills. Additionally, it offers insights into various career opportunities and facilitates networking among participants and potential employers. Western students in the DSAS departments have placed 1st and 2nd in recent years.





ASNA TESTIMONIAL

Jordana Gaerber

ASNA Attendee

Leading up to my first ASNA Conference, I was extremely nervous. This was my first big networking event, and I didn't know what to expect. However, the support of my classmates, friends and ASUA family instantly calmed my nerves. From pre-conference preparation to networking and interview planning, we were all in this together. Talking to my peers who have previously attended the conference was also very beneficial. They were able to better set my expectations and provide valuable advice.

I believe the most important part of the conference is the Career Fair. This is when you have the opportunity to talk to each company and give out your resume. At first, walking into the Career Fair may feel overwhelming as the room is filled with students, each wanting to talk to a recruiter. I was particularly nervous as I did not think my resume would be able to stand out on its own. For this reason, I knew it would be especially important to put myself out there and find another way to make myself stand out. Once I got over the initial nerves of pitching myself to recruiters, I felt far more confident. Recruiters are not only looking at how many exams you have or past experience, but they are also looking for people who will be enjoyable to work with and are a good fit for the company. It is crucial to be able to have conversations and showcase your personality rather than simply reading and repeating what is already on your resume.

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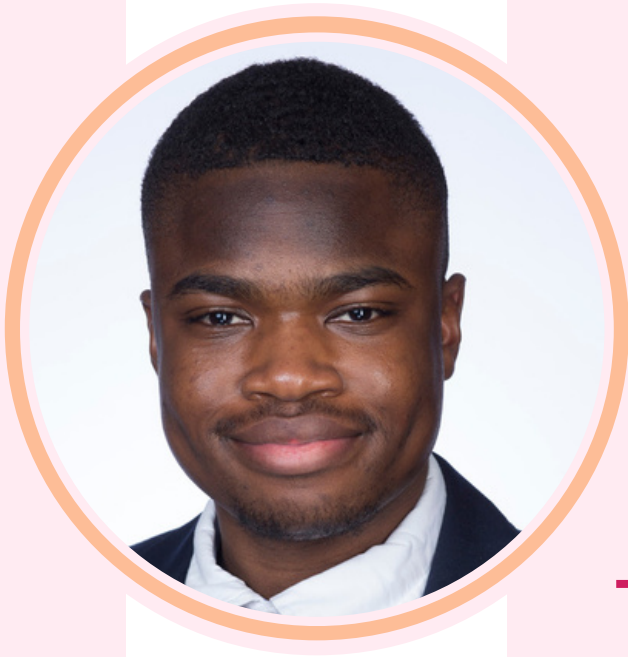
ASNA TESTIMONIAL

Jordana Gaerber

ASNA Attendee

The most valuable thing I got out of ASNA was building new connections. I made new friends with students from other schools and built relationships with recruiters from various companies, some of whom I remain in touch with. Not only did I form new bonds, but I also strengthened my friendships with those I already knew. Throughout the conference, I felt immense support from my Western peers and felt the weekend was an excellent opportunity to grow closer.

The best piece of advice I would give any DSAS students attending ASNA is to step out of your comfort zone and truly put yourself out there. ASNA is an incredible opportunity to meet students from other schools as well as to build connections with those already working in the field. This goes especially for those first and second-year students who may not be looking for a job yet or do not think that their resume is quite established enough. ASNA is great practice for networking, and even if you don't end up with a job, recruiters will be able to keep you in mind for the future. Although I had high hopes for the conference, I had very little confidence going in. I really tried to push myself when talking to each company and forming connections. That is how I earned my summer internship at Canada Life, as well as formed many new relationships with recruiters from various companies. Most importantly, don't let the stress take over your whole weekend. Remember to find time to relax and have fun!



ASNA TESTIMONIAL

Duro Ogunsola
ASNA Attendee

When I first heard about ASNA, I thought that the event was as exciting as many tried to market it as. I couldn't envision much enjoyment in attending a professional convention, especially as a first-year student when I still felt relatively inexperienced in the industry. However, I was convinced to take a chance on it in my second year, and I'll never forget the rush I received from trying to learn more about the industry I am headed towards. This professional event was seamlessly catered towards students that don't know everything, and it allows many opportunities for professional development as well as exposure to the field.

The career fair is the most well-known event at the ASNA convention as this is where many students get the chance to mingle with potential employers and professional actuaries. With booths lining the wall and friendly representatives always ready for a conversation, you have the opportunity to ask the questions you want answers to. These individuals are often best equipped to understand your position and provide responses based on their life experiences. It can be a little hectic with so many people moving around all at once, but watching students market themselves and make connections for the future is a truly beautiful sight.

(continued)

ASNA TESTIMONIAL

Duro Ogunsola

ASNA Attendee

Some of my most memorable moments from ASNA came from the Social Nights, hosted on Friday and Saturday night. After a full day of professional activities, it was really nice to unwind and network in a more casual environment with students and representatives alike. I got to meet so many students on the dance floor, and I even got to chat up reps from Manulife and Intact that I hadn't gotten the chance to see earlier in the convention.

My best advice to anyone interested in ASNA is to go with an open mind. It might seem intimidating being one of around 1000 people at the event, but you have to remember that everyone else at the convention feels the exact same way. Growth lies outside of your comfort zone, so if you are willing to take a chance and attend the ASNA experience, you'll be guaranteed to leave with something you didn't have before.



CASE COMPETITIONS

ASNA Case Competition

Any student that is enrolled in a Bachelors program is eligible to participate in this multi round competition, where the 3 finalists have to present at the ASNA convention! Cross-university teams are welcome and if you are struggling to fill a team, members at ASNA will help you build one. The topic of this year's competition is an Actuarial Perspective on Climate Change. Skills that this will require are analyzing and interpreting datasets, presentation/ public speaking, and teamwork. If interested, make sure to register before September 21st.



CSSC Case Studies in Data Analysis Competition

This is a Data Analysis Poster Competition, offering graduate and senior undergraduate student teams the opportunity to use data analysis to address pressing societal issues. Each team can choose between two case studies. Teams are encouraged to seek faculty support as they develop their analytical approach and final poster presentation. Awards of \$1,000 each will be presented to the top team in each case study. It is unknown when registration will open, however, expect it to be in late April. Late registration is allowed under certain conditions. This case competition is a great opportunity to get involved with CSSC in a collaborative way.



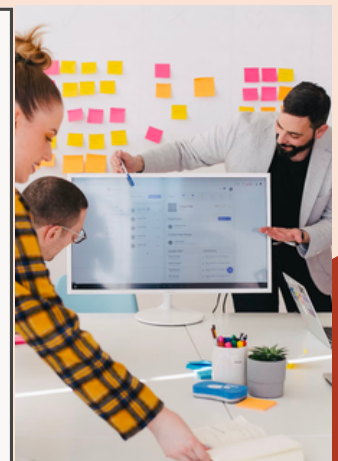
ASUA Case Competition

Last year's Case Competition garnered such substantial acclaim that its return is assured. Students will participate in a multi-round case competition and present their work to industry professionals working at a major Canadian actuarial firm. There will also be networking events exclusively for participating students. ASUA's case competition encourages all students in the department, regardless of your year, to compete. Working with friends on your case competition allows you to strengthen your academic skills while having fun with other DSAS students!



Munich Re Cup

This is North America's premier actuarial case competition, welcoming students from both Canada and the United States. This competition provides a unique opportunity for participants to develop and apply their analytical, presentation, and problem-solving skills to real-world business challenges. Furthermore, it offers valuable networking opportunities, connecting students with Munich Re executives and industry professionals. The top-performing team stands a chance to win \$13,000, and the second-place team receives \$7,000. Students will gain insights into reinsurance while seizing the chance to gain real-world experience and explore potential career paths.

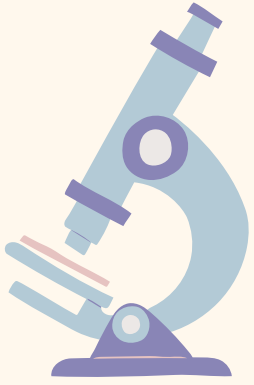


MUNICH RE CUP TESTIMONIAL



Alexa Liebman, ASA, ACIA

I participated in the Munich Re Cup in my second year of university. Prior to this, I had zero actuarial experience, so it was my first exposure to the industry. I didn't feel that being so "green" hindered me - my teammates and I were still able to work together to come up with an innovative solution for an industry issue. We presented our solution to company executives and had the opportunity to network with other participants and Munich Re staff from all levels - juniors all the way up to C-suite executives. My teammates and I did not place, but this exposure was enough to leave an impression to get a summer internship and ultimately a full time job offer. This experience was truly invaluable and I can honestly say this was the best thing I ever did for my future career!



RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH INTERNSHIP

The Faculty of Science offers a 16-week full-time summer internship program that pays \$8680, known as **USRI (Undergraduate Student Research Internship)**. This program aims to provide local and international students with valuable exposure to research, while working closely with faculty mentors. Students, with a minimum cumulative average of 65%, are encouraged to participate, with preference given to those in Year 3. While in the program, students are expected to engage in at least four professional development workshops and contribute to program evaluation through surveys. At the end of their internships, students have the opportunity to showcase their research accomplishments in a virtual research exhibition. This is a great opportunity to enter a statistically related field.

USRI

TESTIMONIAL



Lauren Klavir
Undergraduate Student
Research Internship

I discovered the USRI program after hearing friends in other universities conduct research during the summer, and wanted to explore similar options offered at Western. I approached Dr. Katsu Goda about a potential research opportunity. After several email exchanges as well as in-person meetings, we constructed a plan for a project that intrigued me and aligned with his expertise - linking natural hazard related insurance risks with social vulnerability towards equitable disaster risk management. To complete the application process, Dr. Goda wrote a research proposal and

reference letter to the USRI committee who ultimately approved his supervision of my role for a 16 week summer term.

I started with basic research training, focusing on literature reviews and statistical data analysis, as well as refining my coding skills in MATLAB. In the later stages, I replicated the procedure of a scientific article by using Canadian census data to develop social vulnerability indices across Canada. I met with Dr. Goda on a weekly basis to provide updates on my progress and ask questions.

USRI

TESTIMONIAL

continued



Lauren Klavir
Undergraduate Student
Research Internship

At the end of the term, I compiled my findings to produce a comprehensive lab report. As part of the USRI criteria, I participated in various professional development workshops throughout the summer to assist in the creation of my research output.

I would highly recommend the USRI program to anyone interested in learning about the research process, working in a professional environment, and applying the key skills involved in entering such a dynamic field as actuarial science. I was constantly challenged to improve my technical

skills to do something innovative as well as enhance my written and verbal communication skills when presenting my work. My research experience was also an integral part of later securing an industry position as an actuarial intern in an insurance firm, and I am extremely grateful to Dr. Goda for the early opportunity he gave me to work under his guidance.





MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

CIA Mentorship Program: ASUA x Canada Life

ASUA will be hosting a mentorship program throughout the school year for all DSAS students alongside the **Canadian Institute of Actuaries (CIA)** for the first time! This program will give you the opportunity to connect with an experienced actuary who can provide guidance and advice on obtaining your professional goals along with answering any related questions regarding the field. With the help of Canada Life, you will be matched with an actuary who will help you explore the following:

- Different actuarial pathways and opportunities: you will be able to learn more about what departments exist, as well as the different pathways and choices to make along the way
- Actuarial exams, internships, full-time jobs, and day-to-day work experience
- Support for personal and professional development: you will get the opportunity to speak to actuaries who once were in your position too
- Develop a wider network, and work on your abilities to coffee chat!

More details on the program will be provided later in the year!

Science Student Council x ASUA

The **ASUA x SSC Mentorship program** is here once again! This collaboration aims to partner upper year students with younger students in the Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences. From coursework selection advice to internship and resume tricks, your mentor will be there to help you navigate the first few years of undergraduate life.

Each mentee will be paired with a mentor in their program to ensure that each student can get the most relevant advice and help with courses, aid for obtaining internships and more! This program caters to students in the department and anyone who is interested in pursuing a career in the industry, and is a great way to form meaningful connections and friendships within the department. We highly recommend signing up!



CAS PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

The CAS Student Central Summer Program

The CAS Student Central Summer Program is a non-paid eight-week online program created by practicing actuaries to support the career growth of university students. It offers technical and soft skill development, mentorships, and networking opportunities. Participants engage in weekly modules covering various property and casualty actuarial topics, connect with mentors for discussions, develop soft skills, and collaborate on a case competition. The program also offers a flexible six-week Independent Summer Program for those with limited availability. It's open to university students worldwide interested in gaining actuarial experience and knowledge in the property and casualty insurance industry, particularly beneficial for those without summer internships lined up. Successful participants receive a certificate from the CAS.



Austin Do
CAS Summer Program Mentee

Well, it's kind of a funny story about how I found out about the CAS Summer Program. After my first year of university, I tried applying for internships, but I got rejected from all of them. It was a bummer, and I felt a bit lost about what to do next.

I really wanted to do something that could help me in my future career, and that's when I started looking around online. One day, while scrolling through LinkedIn, I saw this ad for the CAS Summer Program. It seemed pretty cool – they were talking about learning stuff that's actually useful in the real world of insurance.

What caught my attention was that the program wasn't just about technical knowledge, but also about meeting people in the field and getting some practical skills. I thought this could be a way to make the most of my summer and get back on track after those internship rejections.

So yeah, it was a mix of my not-giving-up attitude, stumbling upon that LinkedIn ad, and realizing that the CAS Summer Program could be exactly what I needed.



CAS PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL



Austin Do
CAS Summer Program Mentee

At the CAS Summer Program, I gained a bunch of useful skills and insights that I know are going to be super valuable in my future career. First off, they taught us some basic Excel skills that I didn't really have before. I mean, I knew the basics, but they showed us some cool tricks that make handling data way easier. I even got the hang of pivot tables, which I used to find pretty intimidating. But that's not all – they dived into something called P&C ratemaking which is all about figuring out how insurance rates are set. It was a bit complex, but they broke it down in a way that made sense. Learning about the factors that go into pricing insurance policies was eye-opening.

One of the coolest parts was the team case competition. We were put into groups and had to work on this real-world insurance problem. My team didn't end up winning, but the experience was so rewarding. It was my first time working on something like that with a team, and I learned a ton about collaboration, problem-solving, and presenting our ideas.

All in all, the program wasn't just about sitting through presentations – it was really hands-on, practical learning that's going to make a big difference in my future career. And even though my team didn't come out on top in the case competition, I gained so much from the experience, and that's what truly matters.

The CAS Summer Program turned out to be a game-changer for my actuarial career. One of the most significant benefits was how much it boosted my resume. When I applied for internships later on, having this program listed stood out. Interviewers were genuinely intrigued and interested in hearing about the experience. It wasn't just another line on my resume – it was a conversation starter that set me apart from other candidates. Speaking of interviews, the program was a fantastic talking point. Interviewers seemed to really appreciate the initiative I took in learning beyond the classroom. They were impressed that I was proactive about gaining skills that would directly contribute to my role as an actuary. The program wasn't just theoretical, it was about hands-on, applicable learning.

What I found even more rewarding was that most of the skills I picked up during the program were highly transferable to an internship setting. The Excel skills, understanding P&C ratemaking, these were all directly applicable to the work I would be doing in an actual actuarial internship. Being able to talk about these skills and experiences in interviews made a significant impact. And thanks to the program, I managed to secure my very first actuarial internship in the P&C field. I joined CAA's specialty insurance arm, Echelon Insurance, working in their personal lines auto pricing team. The knowledge I gained from the program was not only relevant but also gave me an edge during my time at the company. I felt well-prepared and confident in applying what I had learned.

If you're considering the CAS Summer Program, it's a decision you won't regret. It was a stepping stone that opened doors for me. It enhanced my resume, gave me great interview stories, and equipped me with practical skills that directly contributed to landing my first actuarial internship. Looking back, I can confidently say that participating in the program was one of the best decisions I made for my career.

ASUA X SSC TESTIMONIAL



Hatem Abdeen
ASUA x SSC Mentee

Going into Actuarial Science as a first year was really challenging and scary. I had a lot of questions about the program and career, but I did not have anyone I could look towards for answers. That all changed when I heard about the mentorship program. I originally learned about the mentorship program through the ASUA general meeting in 2022. Immediately I was intrigued at the opportunity to have someone who can help me one-on-one and push me in the right direction while pursuing Act. Sci. Deciding to join was definitely the best decision that I have made during my undergraduate journey so far. This mentorship program has been a transformative experience for me. The guidance, support, and insights I received have given me a newfound confidence in navigating my career and personal challenges.

The mentorship program has had a substantial impact on both my personal and professional development. Through my mentor I was able to learn how to properly build and present a professional resume. Building a resume can be quite difficult especially if you are unaware of what companies look for from students. Having a mentor made overcoming this challenge substantially easier as I had someone with both the knowledge and experience of the industry directly guiding me. My mentor provided critical insights into presenting my skills, experiences, and aspirations in the most compelling manner. With their guidance, I was able to craft a resume that truly reflects my capabilities.

Through the mentorship program, I've been exposed to opportunities and networks I wouldn't have known about otherwise. First, I learned how the SOA exams functioned in-depth. The SOA pathway can be extremely confusing and overwhelming for those who do not know much about it. Having someone teach me how the general layout worked and how to prepare for taking an exam was extremely valuable especially as a first-year. This allowed me to plan ahead and focus on how and when I'd begin studying for an exam. It provided me with the opportunity to get started on completing exams as a first year. It's truly been an accelerator for my professional journey.

ASUA X SSC TESTIMONIAL



Hatem Abdeen
ASUA x SSC Mentee

One of the unexpected, yet highly rewarding aspects of the mentorship program has been the incredible networking opportunities. Not only did I gain a mentor, but I was also introduced to a diverse network of professionals and peers. The friendships I've made as a result also furthered my knowledge of the industry. Additionally, I was able to further develop my networking skills with my mentor. As a first year I had no experience in the Actuarial industry. However, through my mentor, I learned what parts of my skills and background I could highlight for potential employers so that I'd be able to increase my chances of acquiring an internship. This was a crucial resource as it allowed me to better prepare myself for ASNA.

The mentorship program has positively affected my social life. Transitioning from high school into university was extremely nerve racking and stressful. Joining the mentorship program helped me ease into the flow of things much quicker. My mentor was able to provide me with a lot of personal insights that reshaped my perspective, easing my anxieties and paving a clearer path for my academic and social journey in university. Through my mentor I was able to make many friends and easily connect with people. As a result, I was a lot less shy which allowed me to actively put myself out there and be more outgoing.

I would highly recommend first and second years to join the mentorship program. It'll be a memorable experience that will also provide you academic and social opportunities to further your undergraduate experience.

(continued.)



WHY OUR MODULES ARE UNIQUE

Actuarial Sciences

Actuarial Science at Western is an interdisciplinary program that trains students to become sophisticated business professionals who assess probabilities and the impact of risk issues to mitigate challenges. Offered as a Major module or an Honors Specialization module, this program gives students exposure to various mathematical techniques and analytical skills that will be useful should a student decide to pursue a career as an actuary or as a financial risk professional in Risk/Actuarial Consulting, Property and Casualty Insurance, Life Insurance and more.

Data Science

Western's Data Science program contains modules that give students a strong foundation in Computer Science, Statistics and related fields. This program gives students the opportunity to learn how to manage, visualize, model and interpret data in a way that allows them to solve problems across many fields including -but not limited to- health, finance, sports, entertainment, etc. This is also offered as a Major, an Honours Specialization, a Minor or as a Certificate program.

Financial Modelling

The Financial Modelling module offered at Western is great for analytical minds, problem solvers and strategizers. By exposing you to mathematical, statistical, and computational aspects to generate quantitative techniques, intricate formulas and sophisticated mathematical models. The skills you will gain in this module are useful in making crucial investor decisions and advancing technical innovation, and are highly sought-after by employers everywhere in fields such as Banking, Pensions, Securities, and more.

Statistics

Through this module, you will learn to gather and analyze data, and also to read in between the lines to find patterns that explain why certain things occur in a particular way. By understanding and learning how models are created to describe data and make predictions, you will be opening yourself up to a world of opportunities. These include -and are by no means limited to- Banking and Investment, Biological Research, Marketing, etc.

PROFESSOR OUTREACH



Ashley McAlpine
Lecturer, FCIA, FSA

If you could tell your first year–undergraduate–self something, what would it be?

I would tell myself to take full advantage of the opportunities. Western University is a hub of various experiences, clubs, and events. I would advise myself to get involved and explore as much as possible. Engage in extracurricular activities, join clubs related to my interests, and attend networking events. It's a chance to broaden my horizons, build connections,

and enhance my skills beyond just academic studies. I would say don't be afraid to step out of my comfort zone and make the most of the opportunities available as they can greatly enhance my personal and professional growth.

What do you think is most special about the Actuarial Science program at Western?

I believe the Actuarial Science program at Western has a strong faculty, with members who have experience in industry, research, and professional organizations. Their expertise enhances the quality of education and provides valuable insights to students. The program has a well-designed curriculum which is regularly updated to align with the Canadian Institute of Actuaries (CIA) and the Society of Actuaries (SOA) curriculum so that students have the best opportunity to succeed in earning their designation(s).

What are some words of advice for students under the DSAS department?

Be sure to connect with your professors, as we are here to help you! Don't be afraid to approach us with questions or concerns. Building a relationship with your professors can lead to valuable mentorship and insights.

I would encourage students to actively participate in class discussions by asking questions and sharing your thoughts. Your engagement enriches the learning experience for both you and your peers.

Developing effective organization and time management skills will play a significant role in your academic success. Balancing classes, assignments, exams, a social life, and your well-being requires planning and prioritization. Create a schedule that works for you and stick to it.

PROFESSOR OUTREACH



continued.



Ashley McAlpine
Lecturer, FCIA, FSA

What are some words of advice for finding your path?

Finding your path is a personal journey, and there's no one-size-fits-all formula. Don't worry if you are unsure of what career you want when you start university. I encourage you to take the time you need to explore your interests and strengths. It's okay to try different things because often the process of elimination can be just as important as finding the

right fit. Each experience, whether successful or not, contributes to your growth.

Don't hesitate to ask for advice from mentors, professors, career counselors, and professionals in fields you're interested in. Learning from others' experiences can provide valuable insights and help you make informed decisions.

Along your journey, be sure to celebrate your achievements, both big and small. Every milestone reached is a result of your dedication and hard work. Recognizing progress can boost your confidence and provide motivation along the journey.



PROFESSOR OUTREACH



Holly Steeves Assistant Professor

If you could tell your first year-undergraduate-self something, what would it be?

Get better at time management! The root of all my anxiety and stress in my first few years stemmed from “not having enough time” but really, I just wasn’t good at time management! Make a calendar day 1 when you get all your syllabi and add ALL DATES! Start scheduling when to work on what assignments, and scheduling study times. Don’t forget to schedule

free time to socialize or just decompress alone! Mental health is more important than any of this, so don’t forget to put yourself first!

What do you think is most special about the Statistics program at Western?

I think the camaraderie and closeness of our department is really great. Professors interact frequently with students and graduate students during departmental events and socials. WE get to know our students more than I have seen at other institutions.

What are some words of advice for students under the DSAS department?

Use your resources! One of the biggest resources you have at your fingertips is the professor/instructor themselves! Go to office hours, ask questions, whether about the course content or about a future career in the field. Your professors have been in the exact spot you are, so they can help to guide you.

What are some words of advice for finding your path?

Ask questions. Talk to everyone you possibly can! And experiment. Take courses you might not think you’ll like. For example, I thought I would hate stats! But it was required. So I took it. And look at me now! I obviously fell in love with the subject, even though I thought I hated it. You never know what you might find. Now is your time to explore different avenues to see if there might be one that is a better fit for you.



SCIENCE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Are you looking to gain experience in your field, but don't know where to start?

Apply to Western University's **Science Internship Program**, a paid co-operative experience taking place after your third year of studies! There are a multitude of relevant jobs, resources, and support available to interested students throughout the DSAS.

For any questions, concerns, or clarification, reach out to Western Science Career Services at scicareers@uwo.ca for individualized support or to book a one-on-one meeting!



What is the Science Internship Program?

The **Science Internship Program** is an 8, 12, or 16-month work term after your third year of study with the opportunity to get paid, practical, career-related work experience. Any students in the Faculty of Science or Medical Science at Western University are welcome to apply. Apart from work experience, taking part in the program earns you 1.0 course credits, 100+ employers and many different forms of preparation for your upcoming work experiences. This includes LinkedIn workshops, resume workshops, mock interviews, and much more!

How does the application process work?

Check out [this link](#) that includes: eligibility criteria, application, benefits of the program, info sessions, and more!

If you are interested in applying and you are currently in your third year (or in your fourth year, with plans to return for a fifth year to complete your program), [online registration is now open](#). **Registration will close at 4:00pm on September 29th, 2023.** If you wish to register after this date, please contact the Science Internship Team at scijob@uwo.ca.



SCIENCE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Why is the Science Internship Program helpful?

The Science Internship Program helps you explore opportunities in your field of study or a new field of interest. You not only gain experience, but also the chance to obtain a full-time job post-graduation. You are able to discover your passions in the workplace and gain some perspective into where you want to work full-time. Working in an internship role will also give you the opportunity to develop your professionalism and technical skills, while also giving you good experience for your resume to help you stand out with impressive practical experience.



Where have past/current DSAS members spent their internships?



SCIENCE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

Emma Stencill Canada Life (Actuarial)



Where did you work and for how long?

Over the course of the past 16 months, I had the opportunity to work and gain hands-on experience at Canada Life's head office in London, Ontario.

How was the application and interview process for you before obtaining your role?

The application and interview process were made easier through the help of the Science Internship Program. There were many opportunities to learn about interview techniques as well as resume building. Although at times interviews may seem overwhelming, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. If you prepare and practice for your interview, this can ultimately assist you in receiving an offer. I also personally found that the interviews started to get easier with practice, so don't be discouraged and always keep trying!

What did you gain from your internship experience?

While on internship I gained many technical skills that will assist me greatly in future roles. I had the opportunity to increase my confidence with many programs that actuaries use daily such as Excel, VBA, Access, Python and Power BI. Prior to my internship at Canada Life, I had limited experience with Excel and felt a major learning curve in my first term but with lots of support from my leaders and co-workers, I got to watch myself grow professionally and learn skills that substantially helped me with my everyday work. I also had many opportunities to enhance my interpersonal skills such as communication and teamwork through various presentations and projects. Canada Life does co-op presentations and this is where you get placed in a group with a predetermined topic and a FCIA leader for guidance. These presentations allowed me to work in a team setting and take a leadership role within my group in order to motivate, support, and establish a shared goal. These are skills that I know I will utilize in my future, and I am extremely thankful that the past 16 months helped me grow into a confident intern.

SCIENCE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

Emma Stencill Canada Life (Actuarial)

continued.



Do you encourage students from the DSAS to pursue the internship program at Western?

If you have the opportunity to do the Science Internship Program at Western, I strongly encourage you to do so. I personally didn't have any internship experience going into my third year of Actuarial Science and knew that this was a critical component in hiring post-graduation. Although there are many chances for those without experience as well, I wanted to increase my likelihood of receiving full-time opportunities. On top of increasing my chances to get hired post-graduation, I also feel more confident with transitioning from school to the workforce now as the past 16 months taught me many different technical and soft skills that I know will transfer into my future career. Lastly, the internship program is an excellent opportunity to take the year and determine if you are on the right career path without a permanent commitment. Partaking in an internship or multiple internships can help you narrow down the type of work and environment that you enjoy best and ensure that you truly understand what you are looking for in a company as well.



SCIENCE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

Yimeng Luo

Canada Revenue Agency (Data Science)

Where did you work and for how long?

I worked at the Canada Revenue Agency for 12 months. I'm an Actuarial Science student who worked in a Data Science position, but it is not in the Data Science industry.

How was the application and interview process for you before obtaining your role?

From this job, I practiced the process of data analysis, and gained experience on how to make the process feasible to real-life problems. They have a training course on Excel and on graphic tools that I could choose to participate in. From the course, I learned how to present better through data visualization.

What did you gain from your internship experience?

My responsibility is mainly doing data analysis for the Government of Canada. It is a testing position for the government in coping with big data, so I have been given many flexibilities in tools to use and approaches to take. The most helpful courses I found are CS2034 (teaching Excel), SS2864 (teaching R), and DS3000 (teaching data analysis approaches). Knowledge I gained from these courses has been my guidance in doing the projects. During the work term, I was able to complete a data analysis report on my own. However, there are still times of difficulty. Real-life projects are not like school assignments, there are much more uncertainties which require not only profound knowledge about the industry but also adequate past experiences in real-life analysis. Since this is a new position, even though my supervisors have given all the support they had, there are still issues which I could not solve with my ability. I would suggest Actuarial students who would want to work in the data science field to first select an industry that has a well-established procedure in doing data analysis. It would be much easier to enter the data science field with guidance from seniors in the same industry.

Would you recommend the Science Internship Program to students in your department? Why?

Yes. The program in my department relies heavily on application, so participating in the internship is the best way to know how the knowledge I've learned is applicable to real-life situations.

WACC

Western's Actuarial Case Competition



Last winter, after months of planning and tons of effort, we finally hosted the first-ever **Western Actuarial Case Competition**, or **WACC** for short. We're happy to announce that ASUA is once again planning to host the WACC in January, in the hopes that this event can remain as a staple for years to come!

For those of you who didn't get a chance to participate in last year's case competition, here's a little summary of what went down. Eight teams were given a week to try and solve an insurance-related business problem. During that time, students did their best to break down the data, sort out the information and to try and come up with a unique and innovative solution. The teams also had to prepare a presentation of the highest quality in order to impress the judges.



On the day of the case, the teams first presented their solution to a panel of student judges, where each solution was evaluated under many different criteria. Then, after giving it some thought, four teams were selected to present in front of the second group of judges: **the professors and industry professionals from Canada Life.**



WACC

Western's Actuarial Case Competition



This time, however, only one group could be crowned as the winners of the first-ever WACC, and it was the team of **Jenna Nanne**, **Khalisa Bharmal** and **Daniel Petrov** who took home the victory.



On top of the case itself, this event provided the opportunity to network with the professors and industry professionals who helped plan and judge the event. We also had a keynote speaker, **Matt Bartley** from Canada Life, give an inspiring speech and provided some useful advice to all the students who were willing to lend an ear. Overall, it was a fantastic way for students to work on their professional development and make new connections.



Following the last case competition's success, we couldn't imagine this academic year without it, so we're running it back and hosting the WACC for a second consecutive year. The event is already in the works, so lookout for updates in the months to come. We look forward to seeing all of you this winter for the event and best of luck to all those who are hoping to participate!



WACC TESTIMONIAL



Matthew Jones
WACC 2nd place team



What did you enjoy most about the Case Competition?

My favourite part of the case competition was building relationships with my peers. Teams can consist of up to 4 people, and I decided to team up with 3 of my classmates. Although I was already friendly with my teammates, I believe the competition further solidified our friendships and allowed us to become much closer.

In what ways did WACC challenge you?

Last year's case competition challenged me in several ways. The biggest challenge I had to overcome was not being familiar with insurance. The case required knowledge of both Life Insurance and P&C Insurance, and due to my non-actuarial background it was my first time hearing about either of them. Luckily, through the help of my teammates and some self-research, I was able to familiarize myself with both insurances and help contribute to my team.

Did you like the networking portion of it?

I really enjoyed the networking portion of the competition. Before the competition begins, there is time allocated towards networking with the judges. The judges consist of Western faculty and industry professionals. So, this time serves as a great opportunity to create relationships that can later turn into research or internships.

Do you have any advice for other ASUA members?

My advice would be to sign up! Last year's competition was my first ever case competition, and as I said, I had no background knowledge on insurance. Despite all of this, my team was able to get second place! Overall, ASUA's case competition is far more about the experience than it is about winning. It allows you to form relationships with faculty members, professionals, and peers, as well as provide you with an opportunity to apply the skills learnt in class to a real-world scenario.

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!



Entering this upcoming academic school year, ensure that you are prioritizing YOUR mental health. It is crucial to take time for yourself whether that be doing things you enjoy, going on a walk, catching up with friends or simply just taking a break. Making your mental health a priority will improve your educational outcomes, decrease stress, and set yourself up for long-term success.

ASUA is here to support you and be there for you when dealing with any mental health struggles. The following are many resources that may help you in times like these..

Western University Mental Health Resources

- Mental health support and counselling - click [here](#)
- **Take Care Western**
 - Health and Wellness - UCC



519-661-3030



health@uwo.ca



Services for Students Living in Residence

- Residence Counselling - click [here](#)
- Ontario Hall, Room 3C10
- Students can consult a residence counsellor whom provides professional, confidential counselling services on numerous topics and potential disagreements.



needtotalk@uwo.ca

Peer Support Centre

- For more information - click [here](#)
- A safe space on campus that provides non-judgemental, non-professional, confidential support from trained peers
- Monday-Friday in UCC Room 40 @ 10am - 4pm

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!

Additionally, the following are a variety of resources surrounding all health and wellness that may be very useful for you...

Careers & Experience

Each aims to support and guide students in search of academic support

- Career Education – click [here](#)
- Experiential Learning – click [here](#)
- Employer Relations – click [here](#)
- Academic Support & Engagement – click [here](#)



DSAS Academic Counselling

For more information – click [here](#)

- The Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences counsellors are:
 - Hristo Sendov (Chief Counsellor)
 - Steve Kopp
 - Jennifer Peter
- For queries about **Actuarial Sciences, Financial Modeling, and Statistics**, contact stats-inquiry@uwo.ca
 - They can help with questions concerning the following:
 - Questions and graduation checks for our modules (for graduation checks, review the information and fill out the appropriate form from the [science counselling website](#))
 - Special permissions for our courses and modules
 - Entry requirements for our modules
- For queries about **Data Science** courses and modules, submit a ticket to the [Data Science Counselling Help Portal](#) (requires log in with your UWO username), which will be addressed by the coordinator of the Data Science modules, Jörn Diedrichsen.

NEED SOME ADVICE?



For first years...

- **Go to all of your classes!**
 - Even when you feel a class is less helpful to attend or it's an 8:30 morning class, actually showing up to class helps information stick better, and you'll be able to learn valuable information like what concepts will be important for midterms, and meet people in your classes.
- **Try to reach out to other students and make friends in your classes!**
 - It can be a little bit difficult to meet people in your program in first year because the classes tend to be full of students in other departments, but a great way to do this is to join ASUA. You'll be able to meet other first years in your program to be able to collaborate and bounce ideas off each other throughout the year!
- **Take advantage of the support available!**
 - Go to office hours to ask questions, reach out to professors after class, and attend study sessions – there are many different opportunities available for study help around midterm and final season.
- **Join the ASUA Mentorship Program!**
 - By joining the Mentorship Program, you'll be paired with a student in third or fourth year in your program who can help guide you through your classes they've also taken, give advice throughout the year, and help build your community both socially and academically.

NEED SOME ADVICE?



For second years...

- **Reach out to your professors!**
 - The professors in the DSAS are amazing and want to see you succeed, so reach out to them if you're having trouble and are looking for avenues to become more comfortable with the material you're learning.
- **Build your DSAS network!**
 - In second year, a lot of the classes become more specialized, so this is a great chance to meet more students in your program. The classes also tend to become more demanding in this year, so it can help to have a community to bounce questions and ideas off of when it comes to assignments or midterm time.
- **Apply for internships available through Western Connect and posted by ASUA!**
 - There are so many internships open in September to students in all modules. Apply for positions even if you're worried you won't get an interview. Even just the process of building a resume and applying to internships can be extremely helpful - even if you don't have relevant experience or actuarial exams completed yet, everyone starts somewhere!
- **Apply for scholarships!**
 - Check out the scholarship section of the Welcome Package to find the many opportunities available to students in your year and program - these can be offered for academic achievement, financial need, and more.

NEED SOME ADVICE?



For upper years...

- **Join the Science Internship Program!**
 - Taking part in the Internship Program will allow you to get valuable work experience, make connections in the industry, and be able to discover what you want out of a job both professionally and informally. Working in the Internship Program also gives you an added advantage when it comes to applying for full-time jobs, as some companies will give return offers and now you have more experience in your field.
- **Join the Mentorship Program as a mentor!**
 - Now that you're in the second half of your undergraduate experience, give back to your community and help those who went through the same fears and experiences that you did when you were first starting out.
- **Embrace change!**
 - These are some of the most exciting years of your life - opportunities are available to you in so many different avenues, whether it comes to a given field or work location.
- **Expand your professional network!**
 - Even if you have a job lined up, don't stop networking! You'll never know when those connections will come in handy. Also, for those in actuarial science, continue to go to ASNA in your final years - you'll still be able to network and make connections at different companies and through your peers.



**WE LOOK
FORWARD TO
MEETING YOU
THIS YEAR!**

**PLEASE DON'T HESITATE
TO CONTACT US!**



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