

059-1985
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June 28, 1985.

Four year degree program
in music therapy at Laurier

wilfrid Laurier University will now be offering a four year degree program in music therapy, the first English language university to offer this program in Canada. The program was approved by the provincial government earlier this month.

Until now, students interested in music therapy have had to go to the United States or to England for their training, or to the two year program at Capilano College in Vancouver. As of September, there will be a three year program at the University of Quebec in Montreal; Laurier's program will be a four year Honors Bachelor of Music Therapy degree.

Since January 1981 when the Faculty of Music decided to prepare a proposal for a full degree program in music therapy, a committee has been researching the programs currently offered in England and the United States, as well as consulting regularly with the Canadian Association of Music Therapists. CAMT is strongly backing the establishment of a university degree program at WLU.

Dr. Anne Hall, part of the working committee since 1981, said that the Laurier program attempts to combine the best features of British and American music therapy education.

The Laurier degree will comprise 23 courses in music, psychology and sociology. Skills in musical performance will be emphasized because music therapists use music as a means of communication, which requires a high degree of musicianship. The emphasis on psychology is necessary because music therapists function as therapists and often work on teams with other kinds of professional therapists.

Although WLU will not have a music therapist on staff until 1986, students will not take specific music therapy courses until their second year of the program and therefore the approval of this program is of interest to students about to enter university.