

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



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Laurier to offer Canada's first one-year MBA program

Waterloo, Ont. (Feb. 18) — Wilfrid Laurier University will offer Canada's first one-year MBA program beginning this fall.

Features will include:

- research projects with businesses;
- service with not-for-profit organizations;
- workshops with identified leaders in applied business practices;
- opportunities for international experience;
- and an integrated curriculum designed by a team of professors.

The seven prerequisites for the current program have been eliminated and both the curriculum and its delivery have been revised to promote the integrative thinking necessary in the management of the future.

Gene Deszca, director of the program, says the more intensive, integrated program resulting from the curriculum changes will better meet the needs of employers and students.

"'Business as usual' is no longer a viable option for universities offering MBA programs," he says.

Deszca says market demand is prompting MBA schools in Europe and North America to move toward programs that can be completed in a year and that better reflect the way managers must work. The changes to Laurier's program are the result of a two-year study.

Dropping the prerequisites, difficult to obtain outside Waterloo Region, will allow the program to draw people with a broader range of technical and professional expertise,

(More)

Deszca says. The program will admit students based on strong GMAT scores and work experience. In 1993, for example, students entered the program with an average of five years' work experience.

The program will compensate for the prerequisites by providing students with recommended readings; asking them to be familiar with such skills as word processing and the use of a spreadsheet; and, potentially, offering a two-week "boot camp".

The program itself will increase from 18 half credits to 20 half credits.

During the first term, students will take seven required courses including strategic management, marketing, financial management, organizational behaviour, information and decision sciences, economics, and accounting. The policy course has been moved to the first term to help link all course material, Deszca says.

The seven faculty members who will teach the first-term courses will design them as a team. For example, the same case used to discuss mergers and acquisitions in finance will also be used to have students consider the implications of downsizing in organizational behaviour. As well, evaluation will be based on functional areas and the student's ability to integrate the material.

"It's an integrated world people are managing in," says Deszca. "Functional myopia is too costly."

In the second and third terms, students will take 10 electives and integrated business research, worth three half credits. The research course includes classroom instruction, workshops by identified leaders in applied business practices, and two projects — one with a business and the other in a not-for-profit organization.

The break between second and third terms has been lengthened to three weeks to facilitate overseas travel for students seeking international experience as part of a course.

For example, 10 students will be in Mexico in late February to conduct market research for eight Ontario companies as part of a program that has just been named the Ontario winner in the Conference Board of Canada's 1993-94 National Awards for Excellence in Business-Education Partnerships. Another 14 will go to Germany in April.

Laurier has offered a part-time MBA program since 1976 and a full-time MBA program since 1986. There are currently 52 full-time and 143 part-time students.

Wilfrid Laurier University



Founded 1911

The MBA at WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY A Fact Sheet

GENERAL

- Laurier will offer Canada's first one-year MBA program beginning in the fall of 1994
- the university has had a part-time program since 1976 and full-time program since 1986
- there are 52 full-time and 143 part-time MBA students

THE ONE-YEAR PROGRAM

- the existing full-time program has been redesigned to create Canada's first one-year program
- it will admit its first class in the fall of 1994
- the curriculum, designed and taught by a team of seven professors, will promote the integrated thinking necessary in the management of the future
- features of the program include research projects with businesses, service with not-for-profit organizations, opportunities for international experience, and workshops with leaders in applied business practices

THE STUDENTS

- students enter the MBA program with an average GMAT score of 600+ and an average GPA of B+
- Laurier requires a minimum of two years' work experience; the average is five years
- about 50 per cent of the students have a background in science, mathematics, or engineering

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- the curriculum is oriented to the challenges of the global economy
- MBA students have opportunity to gain international experience while earning a credit
- about 10 MBA students have done research in Mexico for Canadian companies in each of last three years
- 14 students will travel to Germany in April
- the program currently has students from Trinidad, Austria, France, Germany, and China

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

- small classes — 50 per cent have less than 20 students — allow for dynamic interaction among students
- students are involved in the projects of Laurier's three business-related research centres
- an independent directed studies course allows students to tailor the program to their interests and needs
- a course in entrepreneurship is among the MBA electives

SUCCESSES

- the Conference Board of Canada has named the Laurier Trade Development Centre the Ontario winner and a national finalist in its 1993-94 National Awards for Excellence in Business-Education Partnerships. The winning entry involved MBA students doing research in Mexico for Canadian companies.
- Laurier students won the national Technology Management Case Competition in Ottawa in 1993
- Laurier finished in the top ten in the Sixth Annual MBA Canada Hong Kong Trade Competition 1992-93
- Laurier now stands in the top ten in the ongoing Asia's Canada's Last Hope competition at Queen's