



WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY WATERLOO | Brantford | Kitchener | Toronto

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## Canada's largest academic conference to infuse \$7 million into Waterloo Region economy

Congress 2012 to attract 7,000 delegates to University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University campuses May 26-June 2

WATERLOO – An estimated \$7 million in economic spinoffs will be infused into the local economy when 7,000 delegates attend the 2012 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences from May 26 to June 2 at the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University.

The estimate, provided by Waterloo Regional Tourism Marketing Corporation, is based on the Ontario government's Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model (REIM). In addition to being an academic conference, Congress 2012 will connect the universities with the community through a number of events open to the public.

"There's a direct benefit to the region from delegates paying for hotel rooms, meals, transportation and entertainment while they are here, and the indirect benefit of showcasing Waterloo Region as a great place to visit for an ongoing boost to tourism," said Professor James Skidmore, Congress academic co-convenor for the University of Waterloo.

Hotels in the area are expected to be booked to capacity throughout Congress, and attendees are also being accommodated at university residences on both campuses. Business will likely be booming at local restaurants and retail outlets with the influx of visitors from across Canada, the United States and abroad.

The annual Congress is organized by the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and brings together scholars, students and policy-makers involved in a broad spectrum of disciplines such as literature, history, theatre, sociology, education and population studies. It's the first time in the 81-year history of Congress that the event has been held in Waterloo. The theme of this year's event is 'Crossroads: Scholarship for an Uncertain World.'

"For delegates from Canada and abroad who have never been to Waterloo, this is an ideal opportunity to acquaint them with what this area has to offer," said Professor Eleanor Ty, Congress academic co-convenor for Wilfrid Laurier University. "We're connecting Congress and the community through collaboration with the City of Waterloo, Waterloo Region and local organizations for special events and attractions."

To make visitors welcome and share the Congress experience the major Congress events open to the public include:

- **"Big Thinking Lectures"** featuring such luminaries as: His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada; authors Margaret Atwood and Jane Urquhart; former war correspondent Chris Hedges; technology guru Don Tapscott; and chair of Global Systems at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, Thomas Homer-Dixon. The full list of

speakers as well as lecture times and locations are available at [www.congress2012.ca](http://www.congress2012.ca) and lectures will be simulcast on the website.

- **Experience Waterloo Uptown Celebration** will be held May 28, 29 and 30 from 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. each day at the ConnectTent at the Waterloo train station at Erb Street and Father David Bauer Drive. The events will feature live entertainment and food provided by local hospitality partners. Tickets are available at: [www.congress.catertrax.com](http://www.congress.catertrax.com)
- An **Aboriginal Welcome** will be staged Sunday, May 27 at 1:30 p.m. at the Laurier Senate and Board Chamber, featuring the Red Tail Hawk Drummers from The Chippewa of the Thames with a sampling of food prepared by Six Nations chef Dennis Robus.

Other cultural events available to attendees during Congress include the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, art exhibits, local tours, and a train connection to the quaint village of St. Jacobs, just north of Waterloo, where delegates can interact with technologies from the University of Waterloo's newest high-tech business accelerator REAP (Research Entrepreneurs Accelerating Prosperity).

### **About the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences**

*Organized by the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Congress is the largest interdisciplinary conference in Canada. Described as a "conference of conferences", Congress involves close to 70 academic associations that represent a rich spectrum of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, including literature, history, theatre, film studies, education, music, sociology, geography, social work, and others.*

### **About Wilfrid Laurier University**

Wilfrid Laurier University is known for academic excellence and a culture that inspires lives of leadership and purpose. With more than 17,000 students, Laurier has a distinct commitment to teaching and research combined with a strong student focus and a deep sense of community. The university is a leader in integrated and engaged learning, connecting the classroom with co-curricular activities. Laurier specializes in arts and social sciences, business and economics, music, science, social work, education and theology. Laurier is home to 32 research centres/institutes and chairs, and is committed to exploring some of the world's most challenging issues, from human security to water science. The university has campuses in Waterloo and Brantford, as well as offices in Toronto and Chongqing, China. Laurier was established as the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary of Canada in 1911 and remains the home of the affiliated Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

### **About the University of Waterloo**

In just half a century, the University of Waterloo, located at the heart of Canada's technology hub, has become one of Canada's leading comprehensive universities with 34,000 full- and part-time students in undergraduate and graduate programs. Waterloo, as home to the world's largest post-secondary co-operative education program, embraces its connections to the world and encourages enterprising partnerships in learning, research and discovery. In the next decade, the university is committed to building a better future for Canada and the world by championing innovation and collaboration to create solutions relevant to the needs of today and tomorrow. For more information about Waterloo, visit [www.uwaterloo.ca](http://www.uwaterloo.ca).

- 30 -

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