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## Laurier receives more than \$1M in provincial funding for online learning initiatives

WATERLOO – Over the past two years, Wilfrid Laurier University has received over \$1.1M in funding from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) for initiatives related to online learning and curriculum development. The funding will support efforts to evaluate course and academic program learning outcomes, as well as to develop new fully online courses to be offered through the Ontario Online initiative.

Laurier was one of five partner institutions to receive funding through MTCU's Productivity Innovation Fund for a project designed to facilitate the assessment of program-level learning outcomes. In addition to funding to support the faculty and staff involved in the project, the funding also provides a five-year license to Desire2Learn's (D2L's) Insights analytics module, which will allow faculty to link course assessments to learning outcomes, and align them with program-level objectives and degree-level expectations.

"This success recognizes Laurier's exemplary team-based approach to online course development," said Pat Rogers, associate vice-president: teaching and learning. "The Ministry is placing a strong emphasis on online learning, and Laurier is well positioned to provide online courses and programs that offer excellent learning experiences for students."

The most recent round of Ministry funding brings the total number of awarded projects related to the Ontario Online (OO) initiative to 14. Through Ontario Online, the Ministry aims to establish a centre of excellence for developing and supporting effective online teaching and learning practices and to provide a centralized location for students to access online programs and courses.

Twelve of the 14 funded projects involve development of online courses for the OO initiative. Two projects, undertaken by Laurier's Centre for Student Success, involve developing modules to be used as open educational resources in online courses. The third was a research project led by the Centre for Teaching Innovation and Excellence focused on providing recommendations for quality standards for online courses and programs within the new Ontario Online Institute.

Courses approved for funding through Ontario Online include Astronomy, Environmental Studies, Geography, Mathematics, Religion and Culture, Interdisciplinary Studies, Music, Psychology and History.

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