NEWS RELEASE

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SEPT 10, 2015 | 146-15

Laurier's new online Policing BA targets serving officers

BRANTFORD – Wilfrid Laurier University is launching a unique program, targeted specifically at working or retired law enforcement officers. The university's new Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Policing – which will host its first cohort in January of 2016 – will be offered entirely online. To qualify for this interdisciplinary program, applicants must have at least one year of professional work experience in policing. The fully online nature of the program, combined with the fact that admission is restricted to officers with a minimum of twelve months of on-the-job experience, make it unlike any other policing program found in Canada.

"The BA in Policing was designed after comprehensive consultations with senior members of police services across Canada on the types of courses needed to develop competencies required by police officers in increasingly diverse and complex societies," said Lauren Eisler, acting dean of Laurier's Faculty of Human and Social Sciences.

Input from these consultations helped to shape the topics that are covered in the program, including leadership, communication, diversity, ethics and building resilience. The program offerings, including such courses as Mental Health, Addiction, and Crime; Media, Social Media, and Crime; and Diversity and Inclusion within the Force, provide officers with content that is readily applicable in their daily work lives.

"The program has a volunteer advisory board comprised of members representing police services, the legal system, and academics and trainers who offer input into course content," said Eisler. "It was designed this way to ensure the offerings are relevant and meaningful to officers in the program."

Traditional classroom learning is often not an option for working officers, whose rotating shifts or geographic locations can preclude them from attending classes regularly. The online delivery of the new Policing BA program helps to eliminate scheduling barriers, and makes learning accessible to officers from across the country. Earning a degree allows officers a chance to continue their professional and personal development, and can help better position them for leadership opportunities within the forces they serve.

Each course in the Policing BA program is six weeks long, with six hours per week of course work. Transfer credits will be offered for previous courses completed at community college, university or via police colleges or academies, allowing officers to enter the program having already earned up to half of their required 20 credits. By completing two to three courses per term, officers can earn their degrees in three to four years.

Applications for the first cohort of the program will open on October 8, 2015 on the Ontario Universities' Application Centre website. To be sent a reminder email for the opening of applications, visit the Policing BA program webpage and click the 'Remind Me to Apply' box on the right hand side. Questions regarding the program may be emailed to policing@wlu.ca

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