



APRIL 12, 2017 | 059-17

New experiential learning record for Laurier students is first of its kind in Canada

WATERLOO – A partnership between software developer Orbis Communications and Wilfrid Laurier University will provide students with a comprehensive record of their curricular and co-curricular experiential learning history at the university, including co-operative education, practica, community service-learning, on-campus employment, campus leadership roles, and volunteer activities.

The Student Experiential Record is generated by Orbis' new Outcome Experiential Learning Management Platform, which allows the university to catalogue, track, and recognize all forms of experiential learning at Laurier.

"The collection of these activities will give us powerful new metrics to help guide and encourage students toward meaningful and transformative experiences while on campus," said David McMurray, vice-president: Student Affairs at Laurier. "For our new graduates, we strongly believe this comprehensive tool will help them understand and articulate the scope and breadth of the skills and competencies developed through these experiences."

Laurier's new experiential record will emphasize skill development and student reflection on their experiences. The university will have the power to measure participation in all experiential programming and analyze this engagement in collaboration with graduate outcomes and retention data.

In addition, the tool will enable Laurier to filter data based on unique student groups, such as those in specific disciplines and years of study, students with disabilities, international students, and varsity athletes. The initiative will also provide Laurier with metrics on industry participation and community impact.

"The combination of their academic transcript and the new experiential learning record will provide Laurier students with a comprehensive overview of their post-secondary educational experience," said Kathryn Carter, associate vice-president: Teaching & Learning. "Laurier has always excelled in providing experiential opportunities for our students and this is a new way to formally recognize and celebrate those achievements."

A pioneer in the field of [experiential learning](#), Laurier was the first school to launch a competency-based Co-Curricular Record in Canada. Laurier ranked No. 1 for student satisfaction in the 2017 Maclean's [university rankings](#) and topped LinkedIn's list of universities worldwide for [volunteerism](#). Laurier's Career Development Centre has been nationally recognized as the most impressive model of career services delivery in the 2017 [Canadian Education & Research Institute for Counselling's project](#), "Insight into Canadian Post-Secondary Career Service Models," undertaken by PSE Information Systems.

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For more than 15 years, Orbis Communications has specialized in producing software solutions to manage and record experiential learning programs. Orbis works with post-secondary schools across North America, including colleges and universities in every Canadian province.

"We are excited to partner with Orbis to bring this innovative platform to our students – one that further solidifies Laurier's position as a leader in post-secondary experiential learning," said Jan Basso, assistant vice-president: Experiential Learning & Career Development. "This new initiative will be a foundational tool for students, which will contribute to their career development and their successful transition from post-secondary education to the future."

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About Wilfrid Laurier University:

Wilfrid Laurier University is a leading Canadian university known for academic excellence and a culture that inspires lives of leadership and purpose. Laurier has a distinct commitment to teaching, research and scholarship, combined with a strong student focus, high levels of student satisfaction and a deep sense of community. Laurier's innovative educational model purposefully integrates the academic learning experience with an experiential learning component. The university has close to 19,000 students throughout its campuses in Waterloo and Brantford and locations in Kitchener and Toronto. www.wlu.ca

About Orbis Communications:

Orbis Communications is a fast-paced organization dedicated to creating innovative solutions for experiential and career education programs on post-secondary campuses. Since 2001, its creative and passionate team has worked in partnership with customers to develop industry-leading software that delivers exceptional quality and usability. This collaborative approach to product development and a keen focus on customer service ensures Orbis produces the right software solution for each of its unique customers, and encourages constant growth and imaginative thinking. For more information about Orbis Communications, please visit orbiscommunications.com.

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