



Katherine Spring, Associate Professor
 Department of English and Film Studies
 519.884.0710 x4149 or kspring@wlu.ca

Lori Chalmers Morrison, Associate Director
 Communications, Wilfrid Laurier University
 519.884.0710 x3067 or lchalmersmorrison@wlu.ca

SEPT. 23, 2019 | 128-19

Expanded Laurier-Vancouver Film School partnership combines English program with writing for film, TV and games

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University’s [Department of English and Film Studies](#) has expanded its existing partnership with the **Vancouver Film School (VFS)** to offer English students the opportunity to earn a diploma in Writing for Film, TV and Games from VFS. Previously the program was available only to Laurier’s Film Studies students.

The **VFS-Laurier Pathway** offers an opportunity for students interested in combining practical training in film production, writing, and acting with an in-depth and comprehensive university education. The pathway provides a fast-track to film education, granting an Honours BA in Film Studies or English from Wilfrid Laurier University and a diploma from the Vancouver Film School in only four years. In the past, students required five years to complete the programs consecutively.

As pathway participants, Laurier English and Film Studies students spend their third year at VFS, taking courses that count toward their Honours BA degree at Laurier while gaining industry-oriented experience in the Writing for Film, TV, and Games program. Double-majors in English and Film Studies can also take the pathway, learning to write for different genres including comedy, crime, action, and sci-fi/fantasy. In addition to the Writing for Film, TV, and Games program, Laurier Film Studies students can also attend VFS’s Film Production or Acting for Film & Television programs. All three types of majors - English, Film Studies, and Combined English and Film Studies - are eligible for VFS’s Excellence in Media scholarships.

The pathway also allows graduates from VFS’s Film Production and Acting for Film & Television programs to proceed into the second year of Laurier’s Honours Film Studies program, while graduates of the Writing for Film, TV, and Games can proceed into the second year of Laurier’s Honours English, Film Studies, or Combined English and Film Studies programs.

“This expanding and continuing partnership between Laurier and Vancouver Film School combines the unique pedagogy of our respective institutions, distinct from one another but identical in our commitment to bring the best resources possible to the student experience,” said **James Griffin, president and co-founder of the Vancouver Film School**. “This commitment means stepping out of convention with the goal to improve. Without doubt, students graduating from the Laurier/VFS pathway initiatives will have unique advantages and make their mark quickly in Canada’s creative industries.”

The **VFS-Laurier Pathway** [was initiated in 2016](#) to bring together Laurier’s traditional academic Film Studies program with the training-based programs at VFS.

“We are excited to add Laurier’s English program to the pathway, making it available to more students interested in training for a career in screenwriting,” said **Philippa Gates, Laurier professor and one of the lead organizers of the pathway**.

... more

"The pathway opportunity builds on the English program's creative writing courses. Students interested in creative writing and screenwriting can now take advantage of the amazing opportunity the pathway provides: combining technical training in filmmaking at VFS with the critical analysis of literature and cinema at Laurier. This is a winning combination for students who are seeking a robust career in the film and or television industries."

The agreement, made between private and public institutions respectively, is among the first of its kind in Ontario.

- 30 -

About the Vancouver Film School: In 1987, VFS revolutionized entertainment arts education with the introduction of the world's first one-year intensive film production diploma program. Today, VFS is Canada's premier post-secondary entertainment arts institution, offering acclaimed and award-winning one-year diploma programs in 3D animation, film, TV, programming, video game, motion and interactive design. For the past 30 years, VFS has been devoted to delivering the highest quality education, and developing the next generation of leaders in the entertainment and creative media industries. VFS was ranked No. 1 Animation School in both Canada and the world by *Animation Career Review* (2019). VFS alumni earned credits on approximately half of total world box-office (18 billion dollars) in 2014 alone, and have credits on 28 of the 30 all-time highest grossing films. VFS is accredited by both the B.C. Private Training Institutions Branch and the British Columbia Education Quality Assurance.

About Wilfrid Laurier University's English and Film Studies programs: Laurier's Honours BA in English offers students a chance to study British, Canadian, American, Indigenous, and World literatures through a progressive curriculum design that emphasizes the most enlivening developments in literary studies and creative writing. Laurier's Honours BA in Film Studies highlights the prominent role played by film and visual media in our experience of the world, and focuses on the study of international film history, film industries, and individual films as texts and artworks. Both programs help students to develop skills of critical reading, analysis, and writing, all in preparation for work in a globally connected world where effective communication is key to professional success.