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Laurier expert alert: International Education Week

WATERLOO – International Education Week is celebrated worldwide every third week of November to highlight the importance of international education and support international engagement efforts.

Wilfrid Laurier University is celebrating International Education Week by highlighting [global engagement opportunities for students](#). The Fresh Food Company on the Waterloo campus is also serving meals from around the world this week.

Laurier has several experts available to speak about topics related to international education.

[Avis Beek](#), assistant professor in the Faculty of Education, is an expert in international teacher training, education for refugees in transit, and STEM education in global contexts. Prior to joining Laurier, she was an educator in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Beek teaches a range of courses in Laurier's International Education Studies and Bachelor of Education programs. Contact: abeek@wlu.ca

[Ardavan Eizadirad](#), assistant professor in the Faculty of Education, has written and taught about inclusion and decolonization in education in Canada and abroad. His research interests include equity, standardized testing, community engagement, anti-oppressive practices, critical pedagogy, social justice education, resistance and decolonization. He is an educator with the Toronto District School Board; author of [Decolonizing Educational Assessment: Ontario Elementary Students and the EQAO](#); and co-editor of [Equity as Praxis in Early Childhood Education and Care](#), [Counternarratives of Pain and Suffering as Critical Pedagogy: Disrupting Oppression in Educational Contexts](#) (forthcoming) and [International Handbook of Anti-Discriminatory Education](#) (forthcoming). Eizadirad is the founder and director of [EDication Consulting](#), which offers equity, diversity and inclusion training to organizations. He is also a community activist with the non-profit organization [Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education](#) in the Jane and Finch community in Toronto; a board of directors member for [Amadeusz](#), which provides educational programs and services for incarcerated youth and young adults; and a member of the Race and Identity-Based Data Collection Community Advisory Panel with the Toronto Police Services. Contact: aeizadirad@wlu.ca

[Alexandra Gottardo](#) is a professor in the Department of Psychology. Her research focuses on oral and written language development in individuals, including reading development among learners who speak English as a second language and a variety of first languages, such as Spanish, Arabic, Farsi and Chinese. She has researched reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition with children from preschool to high school and with undergraduate university students. In 2020, Gottardo and [Professor Eileen Wood](#) helped bring an [interactive literacy program to children in remote communities in Kenya](#) who had been forced out of school because of the pandemic. This program has subsequently been integrated into regular programming by stakeholders in the community. Gottardo, Wood and their colleagues at Concordia University, the Aga Khan Academy and World Vision are also examining the effectiveness of a Teacher Professional Development program for teachers in Kenya to facilitate implementation of the online and offline versions of this literacy program. Contact: agottardo@wlu.ca

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[Steve Sider](#) is a professor in the Faculty of Education, coordinator of the International Education Studies program and director of the [Centre for Leading Research in Education](#), a university research centre focused on issues related to education across the lifespan. He is an expert in school leadership and special education, as well as comparative and international education. He is currently studying how school principals support students with special education needs in Canada, as well as inclusive education practices in both Canada and Ghana. For the past few years, he has also been involved in the [Educator and Leadership Institute](#), designed to build the teaching and leadership capacity in schools in Haiti. [Read more about his research](#).
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