Congratulations on making the choice to study part-time at Wilfrid Laurier University! Whether you’ve just graduated highschool, returning after an absence from the classroom or are taking a few courses for personal interest, we are confident that you will find your studies here to be a rewarding experience with many benefits.

Work, family commitments, financial obligations and time (just to name a few) can present themselves as obstacles on the path to achieving your academic goals. However, recent research (2001), found that the median household income, in families in which the primary earner had a university degree was 51 per cent greater than households where the primary earner had a high school diploma\(^1\) You’ve obviously decided that a university education is worth having to juggle a few of life’s other important commitments, so let us be the first to wish you well in your pursuits.

As a part-time student at Laurier, you have many options to chose from! You may:
- take up to 1.5 credits per term\(^*\)
- register for day, evening and distance education courses
- cross-register for courses offered at the University of Waterloo
- meet with an academic advisor to discuss your academic program and career options
- receive academic writing assistance

These are just some of the resources and services available to support your studies at Laurier. It is our goal to keep part-time students informed of what is going on at Laurier’s campus. In order to be successful in this pursuit, you will receive a PDF version of The Loop once per term in addition to important emails and updates on the Part-Time Studies website (www.wlu.ca/pts). Of course, should you have a question that has not been previously addressed, please email it to pts@wlu.ca. We can then answer your question and share resulting information with the rest of our part-time student community.

\(^*\)unless otherwise stated in your offer of admission

Sources:
Meet Chris Noakes -- a recent addition to the long list of Laurier alumni; a journey that was 14 years in the making and well worth waiting for.

Chris first arrived at Laurier’s Waterloo campus in the early nineties and admits he was in over his head. “I coasted through high school and thought I could do the same at university,” he wrote in a recent email to our office. His friends were also attending post-secondary campuses across Ontario; they were getting good grades and generally having a great time at school. Not knowing why his university experience was differing so drastically from that of his friends, Chris discontinued his studies at Laurier and entered the working world.

Although Chris enjoyed the career field he ventured in to, he felt something was missing. As luck would have it, Chris says, he found himself laid off from work. He turned a negative into a positive and took his new-found “freedom” as a sign – he needed to complete his degree. While looking for work, Chris returned to Laurier as a distance education student. “It afforded me the flexibility to work on my own time, in my own home, without a shirt on – it was perfect!” Courses with online testing tools and nearby midterm centres also made studying via distance a success for Chris.

Chris jokes about the 14 years it took to complete his degree: “I know lots of people who go to school for that long; they’re called doctors!” All joking aside, Chris learned that persistence does pay off in the long run. “Distance education helped me to reach my goals and without it, I would not be as happy or as fulfilled as I am today.”

As pictured above, Chris proudly stands next to a Laurier campus sign at spring convocation that was held this June. Last time our office heard from Chris, he had yet to hang his framed degree up on the wall next to those of his wife. Hopefully Chris won’t let another 14 years go by before he hangs up his recent achievement!

Chris Noakes demonstrates that with a little bit of time, support and dedication, achieving your academic goals can happen. Congratulations again, Chris!

Meet Lisa Fanjoy: Manager, Distance & Continuing Education

Meet Lisa Fanjoy, manager of Distance and Continuing Education at Laurier. Lisa has been with the Office of Teaching Support Services (the “parent” office to Part-Time, Distance and Continuing Education) since 1998. Coming from Career Services, Lisa brings with her an excellent background to anticipate the many questions, needs and requirements of the part-time student body. She has worked closely with other learning and service units on campus to improve the university’s overall communication to part-time students.

This newsletter, the part-time student orientation sessions as well as the new part-time student handbook are just a few of the projects that Lisa has undertaken to ensure part-timers are kept informed of Laurier’s campus activities.

Lisa oversees Laurier’s Distance (credit) and Continuing Education (non-credit) programs. She is working with the director of Teaching Support Services (TSS), Sandy Hughes, to bring new courses to distance and continuing education. She is also responsible for the coordination of the national Stock Market Competition for Laurier’s undergraduate and graduate students and is continually striving to involve more high schools, colleges and universities from across the country in the competition.
You’ve likely received your invoice for tuition by now. You’ve likely looked at it and wondered about some of the additional fees listed on the invoice. You’ve probably wondered what they are for and why you have to pay them! Some of the fees listed on your invoice are mandatory; some though, you have the choice to “opt out” of. Keep in mind though, if you do choose to opt out of some of these fees, it is up to you to ensure the paperwork is submitted correctly and on time.

One of the first fees you may have noticed on your invoice are for the health and dental plan. In order for you to opt out of these fees and the opt-out application to be processed, proof of coverage must be submitted at the same time as the opt-out application form.

If these opt-out procedures are not followed, you will be responsible for the payment of health and dental plan fees. The deadline to opt out of the health and dental plan fees is September 27, 2006. Once the opt-out application has been approved and processed (please allow 5 business days) you will be able to view the fee adjustment to your account via LORIS at http://telaris.wlu.ca.

If your application has been approved and processed there will be no health and/or dental plan fees indicated under fall term 2006. If you include the fees along with your tuition payment any credit balance remaining will be automatically applied to your winter term fees.

So then, what is acceptable proof of coverage? Proof of coverage must indicate the type of coverage that you are opting out of. Your proof of coverage must indicate name of insured, policy number, name of insuring agency and type of coverage (e.g., health, dental). For example, a pay-direct drug card (health only), letter from your insurance provider or company benefits provider indicating coverage details or a copy of plan membership identifying health and/or dental coverage are all acceptable forms of proof of coverage. A letter from your parents, doctor or your OHIP card are not acceptable forms of proof of coverage.

Please note that once the application has been received and processed you are not eligible, under any circumstance to opt back into the plan for the coverage term from September 1, 2006 through to August 31, 2007.

For complete details and a link to a PDF version of the opt-out form, please visit Laurier’s student union website at www.studentwise.ca.

Other program related fees have also been assessed on your invoice. If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, the Arts Student Advancement Program (ASAP) fee of $15 has been added to your account. This fund has been established to enhance the educational experience and opportunities for students within the Faculty of Arts. Should you wish to opt out of this fee, you may do so no later than the second week after the first day of classes of the term. This fee is charged once per term.

A fee of $25 for the Science and Technology Endowment (STEP) fund also may have appeared on your invoice. If you are registered in the Faculty of Science, these fees are used to enhance the science programs at Laurier and helps purchase equipment for general and instructional use in each of the four science departments. It is also used to fund activities which are educational, but also designed to increase awareness of the Science programs at Laurier (e.g., the STEP lecture series). Should you wish to opt out of this fee, you may do so no later than the third week after the first day of classes of the term. This fee is charged once per term.

If you are a part-time student in the School of Business & Economics, your invoice will reflect a $65 PRISM fee. This fee supports wireless computer labs, media equipment rentals, discounted photocopies and so on. Should you wish to opt out of this fee, you may do so no later than the second week after the first day of classes of the term. This fee is also charged once per term.

All full- and part-time students have been charged the Laurier Students’ Public Interest Research Group fee (LSPIRG) of $4.75. This will be charged each term. LSPIRG is a student-led corporation that seeks to engage students in the provision of resources, community collaboration, research and education. Academic opportunities, community engagement and an informed student body are all goals of LSPIRG. Should you wish to opt out of this fee, you may do so no later than the second week after the first day of classes of the term.

To view a chart of the eligible opt out fees, as well as links to additional information about the fees, please visit the Business Office website (www.wlu.ca/busioff) and select “Eligible Opt Out Fees” from the left-hand menu.

Are you a part-time student success story? Do you have a story idea for The Loop? Have you achieved one of your goals through part-time studies at Laurier? If so, please contact Rebecca Kieswetter at rkieswetter@wlu.ca. Your words may appear in The Loop, on the Part-Time Studies webpage or in a future Laurier advertising campaign (with your permission, of course).
You’ve Got Mail!
Using Your Student Email Account

All students at Laurier are provided with a student email account which is operated through Novell. Although we realize you likely have a personal and/or work email account (or both), it is university policy to only conduct email communication with students through the Novell system only. Far to often, email communication is returned to university office’s due to the instability of many popular email systems. Thus, important information does not reach you! Once you have accessed your Laurier student email account, it is imperative that you check it regularly.

For questions about using your student email account, please contact the Help Desk at 519.884.0710 ext. 4357 (HELP) or help@wlu.ca.

A Look at Learning Services:
Central Academic Advising and the Writing Centre

As a part-time student, you have access to the resources and supports available through Learning Services. Four key academic support units are “parented” by Learning Services: the Central Academic Advising Office, the Mathematics Assistance Centre, the Study Skills and Supplemental Instruction Centre and the Writing Centre. As a new (or newer) part-time student, you may be wondering what you can do with your degree, who you can talk to about enhancing your academic performance or how you can improve your academic writing skills. Two key sub-units of Learning Services at Laurier, Central Academic Advising and the Writing Centre, offer excellent resources, supports and staff to assist you in your part-time studies.

The Learning Services website (www.wlu.ca/learningservices) is an excellent resource for part-time students. You will likely have questions about your undergraduate program, specific course requirements and post-studies options. A link to the Central Academic Advising website, complete listing of program, faculty and school advisors and and their contact information, can be found from the Learning Services website. Once you have arrived at Central Academic Advising’s website, you may want to explore career options for your degree. Selecting the link entitled “What Can I Do With My Degree?” will connect you with a host of skills and careers specifically for your degree!

Although academic advisors are available to assist you, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that you are properly registered and that you meet the requirements of the course and program for which you are registered. How do you do that? You should make time to review the university calendar, your relevant program requirements and all course information carefully. A copy of the 2006 - 2007 undergraduate calendar is available online from the Office of the Registrar at www.wlu.ca/registrar. Program requirements are also available from the online calendar.

The Writing Centre’s website, also linked from Learning Services website, has several resources for you make use of. Proper grammar, citing resources correctly and types of academic writing – just to name a few – are just some of the topics you will find PDFs on. Individual appointments are available to part-time students, too. One-on-one sessions with a trained writing assistant can meet with you to address some of your specific writing concerns and issues.

Should you wish to make an appointment with Central Academic Advising or the Writing Centre, please call 519.884.0710 ext. 2220. Please ask about appointment times as they can vary by term.

Continuing Education:
Spread the Word!

Laurier’s Office of Continuing Education offers a unique selection of non-credit courses. With the fall months just around the corner, registration for these courses is now open.

Looking to participate in some additional education courses for their current position in the insurance and financial planning fields? Continuing Education at Laurier offers the required courses for the Canadian Risk Management Certificate, in conjunction with the Global Risk Management Institute. Courses in Risk Assessment and Risk Control are both offered this fall beginning in mid-September. Risk Financing will begin in early January, 2007.

Also being offered this October is the Financial Planner Preparatory Examination course. This review course is designed for candidates preparing for the Financial Planners Standards Council (FPSC™) Certified Financial Planner Examination. This course is often of interest to those who have already qualified for the CFP™ designation and are in search of CE (Technical) credits. The course runs for three consecutive weekends (Saturday and Sunday) beginning October 22, 2006.

These are just a few of the courses that are beginning this fall. For a complete listing of courses, fees and registration information, please visit www.wlu.ca/coned or contact the Office at 519.884.0710 ext. 6036 or conted@wlu.ca.