

# COMMUNITY & WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIPS

## YEAR IN REVIEW 2022-23

Connecting community and industry partners with faculty and students, the Community and Workplace Partnerships (CWP) team integrates experiential learning opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom.



# INTRODUCTION

Future Proof, a 2017 Brookfield Institute report, states that “Canada’s youth will require a diverse set of technical and soft skills, including creativity, problem solving, social intelligence as well as entrepreneurial abilities, such as managing uncertainty and taking risks in order to compete in the workplaces of the future.” Carefully designed experiential learning that emphasizes and teaches critical reflection is perhaps one of best ways to prepare students for the future of work and their life beyond Laurier. “Learning through action and self-reflection primes individuals to cultivate new opinions and viewpoints, altering social and emotional intelligence” (Gavillet, 2018, pg. 141). 91% of Laurier graduates from undergraduate programs in 2022 had at least one academic experiential learning (EL) opportunity. Many of these opportunities were community/industry-engaged and could not have happened without the support of our community, employer, and faculty partners. These experiences are captured on students’ Laurier Experience Record (LER) and accompanying the LER is the Laurier [Competency Framework](#), which lists and defines twelve key competencies. Through critical reflection, students link their experiences to their course content and make connections to the competency framework. In the last year, the top five competencies that students have noted they are developing through EL opportunities are communication, collaboration and teamwork, leadership, problem solving, and professional attributes.

This year in CWP we saw a more fulsome return to both in-person learning and experiential learning opportunities with some partners continuing to offer virtual and remote experiences as well, providing accessibility and flexibility to students who need it.

As we provide you with a snapshot of our evaluation data in this report, you will see we coordinated more than 3500 student experiences with external partners this year, a 45% increase over the last 5 years. We supported close to 100 course sections with 14 new courses added. We have enjoyed re-connecting with the community and faculty again and continue to be grateful for the meaningful experiences that are created for students.

The Premier’s Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel. (2016). Building the workforce of tomorrow: a shared responsibility. [https://files.ontario.ca/hsw\\_rev\\_engaoda\\_webfinal\\_july6.pdf](https://files.ontario.ca/hsw_rev_engaoda_webfinal_july6.pdf)

Gavillet, R. (2018). Experiential learning and its impact on college students. Texas Education Review, 7(1), 140-149. <https://dx.doi.org/10.26153/tsw/21>

## STATS AT A GLANCE

3517 CWP Experiences across 96 course sections:

94 Internships

1318 Community Service-Learning Experiences

1303 In-course/Program Workplace Projects and Experiences

740 Professional Inquiry Experiences

62 Field/Clinical Placements

### Student Highlights

95% had a positive overall experience

88% would recommend CWP to a future student

## CWP IN THE NEWS

We added a new course in Winter 2023 as part of our Virtual Village project with Fairview Parkwood Communities. Read about how our [language students connected with German-speaking seniors](#)

As part of a [CSL project in PS275 during the pandemic](#) this student planned an activity around identifying emotions. This assignment then became the basis for her Master's level thesis and she won an award at [ACERS](#) for it! The student is now a TA and helps with Dr. Law's CARE Lab in Brantford.

Students in a 3rd year Human Rights and Human Diversity course with a CSL project component, [successfully secure grant funding](#) for partner organizations.

[Laurier International Cultural Conversations 3.0](#) in Fall 2022 saw continued success and impact of this model.

# CWP COURSE EXAMPLES

## **INED201 Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy**

Students complete placements (2hrs/week for 10 weeks) working with partners who support culturally diverse individuals and communities including KW Multicultural Centre and CanTeach Connections.

## **PS383 Environment, Psychology & Action**

Students apply theories and principles of different psychological approaches in the context of their community-service learning projects with different local environmental organizations. Students critically reflect on their experience and the course content using an environmental justice framework.

## **PS282 Community Psychology**

Students volunteer in a range of community settings working directly with equity-seeking individuals and communities and/or those with different lived experiences. Students volunteer 2 hrs/week for 10 weeks with partners such as The Working Centre, Adventure4Change, YMCA, Empowerment Squared, and Big Brothers Big Sisters.



## **GG261 Powering Earth**

This course focuses on the analysis of the changing needs for different energy sources. In groups, students worked on projects that addressed different challenges and opportunities such as developing a business case for EV charging stations for Enova Power or making recommendations to Piller's Fine Foods about sustainable energy options for their facilities.

### **KP371 Disability & Physical Activity**

In this online, asynchronous course, students, in groups of 3-4, choose an off-campus, community facility/location (e.g., movie theatre, library, government building, recreation centre, park, etc.) and complete an assessment of its overall accessibility for people with developmental disabilities, physical disabilities and sensory disabilities (including both visual and hearing). Students engaged with a number of community partners by watching pre-recorded videos from self-advocates, a stadium venue, and a community recreation complex. Partners shared what accessibility means in their context. Integrating what they heard from these partners, and doing the accessibility study itself, students reflected on their learning, what skills they developed, and what some future actions might be for them.

### **BU732 Strategic Brand Management**

Working with a large consumer packaged goods company, students work in small groups to carry out a brand audit project. Combining this industry-engaged project with course content examining the role of brands in customer decision-making, relationship management, and building organizational value, students gain insights into the issues and concepts related to brand management.

### **GG502 Environmental Data Analytics (EDA) Applied Research Placement**

The research placement gives students the opportunity to participate in and contribute to a data analytics project in a research, government, business or non-profit agency. Students apply their research skills and knowledge from the environmental data analytics courses to real-world problems in community & workplace settings. Employers for the first two years of this course include: Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership, Reep Green Solutions, Nature Resource Solutions Inc, and Four County Labour Market Planning Board.

### **GS211 Introduction to International Development**

Introducing this professional inquiry model for the first time in Fall 2022, students heard from a community partner working in Disaster Response with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada. Integrating the course content, the Laurier Competency Framework, and what they heard from the partner about his career path, skills needed for work in the development sector, and details about how MCC Canada goes about its work globally, students participated in an in-class reflection exercise and completed a written reflection. The partner also posed two 'real world' questions about the MCC partnership model and their gender analysis framework for students to consider, reflect on and integrate into their learning in the course.


# WHAT FACULTY ARE SAYING

With a return to learning on-campus and in person, 2022-23 was a time of re-connecting, being back in the classroom with our faculty partners for introductory and final presentations and continuing to build new relationships across the institution in order to grow partner-engaged experiential learning opportunities for students. We supported 14 new courses in Anthropology, Business, English, French, Geography, Global Studies and Music.

- Faculty appreciate the support offered by CWP to embed experiential learning opportunities in their classes and to support students throughout the process and experience
- One instructor noted the EL experience added a valuable new dimension to their teaching practice

---

## Survey Highlights

- 10 responses (40% new | 60% returning)
  - 90% felt EL component enhanced student learning
  - 100% say EL experiences aligned with course goals
  - 80% believe EL component helped them better engage students
  - 100% reported having a positive experience overall
  - 100% would recommend working with CWP to colleagues
- 

---

*“The feedback I have received from students is that they really enjoyed and benefitted a lot from the experience. They wish to have this opportunity in more courses at Laurier. Thank you very much for your support.”*

## MORE FROM FACULTY



### DR. EDMUND OKEREE

An experiential learning component was introduced into GG261, Powering Earth, during the Winter 2023 term to allow students to apply concepts learnt in the course at the local level. As part of the experiential learning component, students worked in groups on various energy projects designed by the Laurier Sustainability Office and selected local industry partners. The projects were designed to meet the actual needs of the partners and would be implemented by them if completed satisfactorily. The expectation was that the rich hands-on experience of the corporate world gained by the students would be invaluable in their career development.

This was the first time I incorporated experiential learning into my courses and the support of the Community Workplace Partnerships Office (CWP) was instrumental in the resounding success of the program. Right from the first time I got in touch with the office, they opened their doors to me, guided and worked with me each step of the way to ensure the smooth implementation of the projects. The feedback received from students at the end of the term shows that it was a very positive experience for them and a great deal of it is due to the support received from CWP. Looking forward eagerly to working again with them next academic year.

## MORE FROM FACULTY



**DR. OSAMA J. BUTT**

I strongly believe experiential learning is playing a pivotal role in providing real life experience to my students. This not only enriches their experience of learning, but it also supplements my teaching in which I am able to show my students how to apply their classroom knowledge in business world. This also works as a showcase for them at the time of their internship/job interviews giving them the confidence by discussing their real-life experience while being in class.

Back in 2020 Scott, from Community & Workplace Partnerships (CWP), approached me and introduced the department and its mechanics. Since then, I have been regularly engaging with CWP. It started with Marketing Research course(s) but now I try to engage CWP in pretty much all courses. Scott works with me in understanding my course's needs, requirements, and lines up clients who may be willing to work and provide real life business problem(s) for students to solve.



# WHAT PARTNERS ARE SAYING

Our office has 500+ partner organizations and more than 1000 individual partner contacts. We collaborate with external partners to offer meaningful experiential learning opportunities to Laurier students that also benefit the community and employer organizations. Our partners offer placements, live case studies, research projects, problem-based learning opportunities and job shadows. This past year more than 400 unique organizations provided EL opportunities.

- Our students are described as professional, engaged, prepared, pleasant, and eager to help
- Partners acknowledge that when they work with groups or welcome multiple students there is a range of experiences and overall students did well with the project or placement offered.
- The enthusiasm that students bring along with their open-mindedness is much appreciated
- Having students allows partners to offer enhanced service and overall increased support to those they serve
- The energy that students bring to partner organizations has a positive impact
- Partners recognize they are helping students to gain skills, to understand the work they do and to explore careers
- Many partners expressed their interest in engaging students again in the future

---

## Survey Highlights

86 responses (40% new, 60% returning)

500+ Partner Organizations

99% had a positive overall experience with CWP

98% would offer EL opportunities in the future

89% felt partnership helped organization meet some of its needs

97% would recommend working with CWP at Laurier to colleagues

---

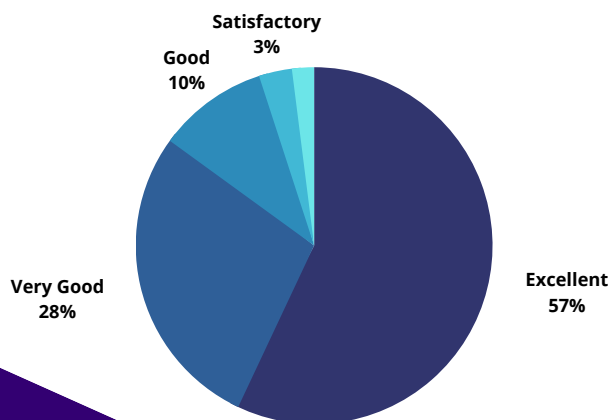


*“The connections with the University in general are helpful to have and keep exploring, and this program aids in this. The ideas the students had, and just watching them brainstorm, was really interesting and helpful and we may explore putting some of their ideas into practice in the future. Also, as a municipal organization, having that younger demographic viewpoint is always an asset.”*

*“We find the students to be extremely helpful in running our programs. Aside from the extra hands, they bring a youth and vigour to our client interactions that is appreciated by our older volunteers and especially our clients many of whom lack positive youthful, cheerful, energetic influences in [their lives, which are, in some cases,]tragic, dangerous, unhealthy, and tenuous. The range of life circumstances among our clientele must also be an eye opening and educational exposure to many of the students and provide impetus to their educational studies.”*

# WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

- In discussing their main accomplishments/contributions in the service-learning experience, the majority (41%) of responses centred around a theme of supporting the wellness and wellbeing of community members. Students also highlighted they built connections in the community and supported the programming and initiatives of their community partner organization.
- Writing, communication, time management, research, and problem-solving skills were developed through the experiential learning opportunities. Students also noted developing better social and interpersonal abilities.
- Students said their experiences were interesting and enjoyable and, in many cases, provided the opportunity to explore career paths and gain a better understanding of post-graduate options.
- Students said the experiences provided new perspectives or challenged some of their previously held views and appreciated how open partners shared of their own experience.
- In-course projects provided students with an opportunity to be in "real world" situations and they appreciated seeing the impact their work had on businesses and organizations with whom they worked.
- Students participating in a professional inquiry opportunity appreciated the opportunity to reflect on their own interests and values as well as see first hand what some career paths and workplaces entail.
- Providing clear instructions and expectations continues to be noted and suggested by students to enhance the experience in any type of opportunity and some students noted they would have preferred in person opportunities in cases where the engagement with partners was primarily virtual or remote.



## Evaluation Highlights

2,275 student responses  
(65% response rate)

95% had a positive overall experience  
90% would recommend our EL offerings to  
a future student

81% say the experience contributed to  
career development or exploration

# MORE FROM STUDENTS

*"This project allowed us to apply some of the social marketing concepts and ideas from class. I think our class discussions helped to broaden how we think about marketing's connection to business and society, which prepared us to think outside the box for this project and take a different perspective than the traditional business marketing view."*

*-BU442 Marketing & Society*

*My overall experience was superb; there are not enough words to describe how wonderful of an opportunity this was for me. The staff at the organization and my supervisor were nothing short of amazing - the environment was welcoming and a truly transformative experience. I gained a wealth of knowledge, awareness and understanding, and would like to continue volunteering with [this organization] in the future.*

*-SOJE621 MA Practicum, Social Justice & Community Engagement*



*"Community Service learning is not only a tool to use for discovering possible future employment or vocations, it allows the student to connect the experience of CSL to key course concepts. CSL has not just helped me in this specific course, it has helped me make connections in other courses."*

*-PS282 Community Psychology*

*The policy brief project offers students a chance to develop research, writing, communication, advocacy, and policy analysis skills that are useful for future academic and professional goals.*

*Additionally, working on a real-world project can build connections with peers and engage with the broader community.*

*PO102 Politics Beyond Borders*

*"This experience contributed to my personal growth because it required me to show up every week regardless of how I felt, or the things I needed to accomplish that week. I got very good at preparing for meetings, sending personalized emails, and providing engaging content. Additionally, it contributed to my professional development because it solidified my passion to work with children, specifically [those] living with exceptionalities.*

*-PS379 Developmental Psychology: Exceptional Children, Youth & Adults*

*"This activity is a great learning experience and can also expose people to different work environments that they have not been exposed to before. This helps expand people's horizons and open more opportunities for career paths."*

*-KP300 Teaching & Coaching Physical Activity & Sport*

# 2022-23 Courses - Waterloo Campus

## Faculty of Arts

Advanced Translation II	FR331
Applied Anthropology	ANTH356
Capstone in Soc. Entrepreneurship	SE400
Colloquium - unpaid	RE690
Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy	INED201
Francophone Culture	FR238
Global Experience Placement	GS392/393
Introduction to International Development	GS211
Introductory German II	GM111
Literature in Revolt	FR435
Politics Beyond Borders	PO102
Professional Skills Option	EN680
Research Practicum	PO690
Social Innovation in the City	SE364
Social Science Theories	PO478
Supervised Internship	RE697
Teach, Learn & Think in French	FR300

## Lazaridis School of Business & Economics

Applied Business Research	BU610
Brand Management	BU470
Business-to-Business Mktg	BU682
Business-to-Business Mrkt	BU462
High-Tech Marketing	BU479
Marketing & Social Networks	BU459
Marketing & Society	BU442
Marketing Research	BU422
Services Marketing Mgmt	BU412
Services Mktg Management	BU622
Strategic Brand Management	BU732

## Faculty of Science

Applied Community Research	PS492
Capstone Urban Sustainability	GES465
Community Practicum	PS615
Community Psychology	PS282
Developmental Psychology: Adolescence and Young Adulthood	PS276
Disability & Physical Activity	KP371
EDA Applied Research Placement	GG502
Educational Psychology	PS283
Introduction to Developmental Psychology: Infancy and Childhood	PS275
Marketing in Sport & Activity	KP442
Org & Admin in Physical Activity & Sport	KP344
Powering Earth	GG261
Psychology Environment and Action	PS383
Psychology of Exceptional Children, Youth and Adults	PS379
Teaching & Coaching Sport	KP300

## Faculty of Music

Community Music Foundations	MU240
Community Music Principles and Practices	MU340
Intro to Community Music	MU141
Leadership & Facilitation in a Community Music Context	MU341
Mus. Psychotherapy Placement I	MU504
Music Therapy Practica III	MU455A
Psychotherapy Placement III	MU603
Therapy Practica I & II	MU363

## Martin Luther University College

Christian Social Ethics Today	GC203
Loving God, Self & the World	GC102
Questioning Ability	GC235
Senior Project Integration Seminar	GC401

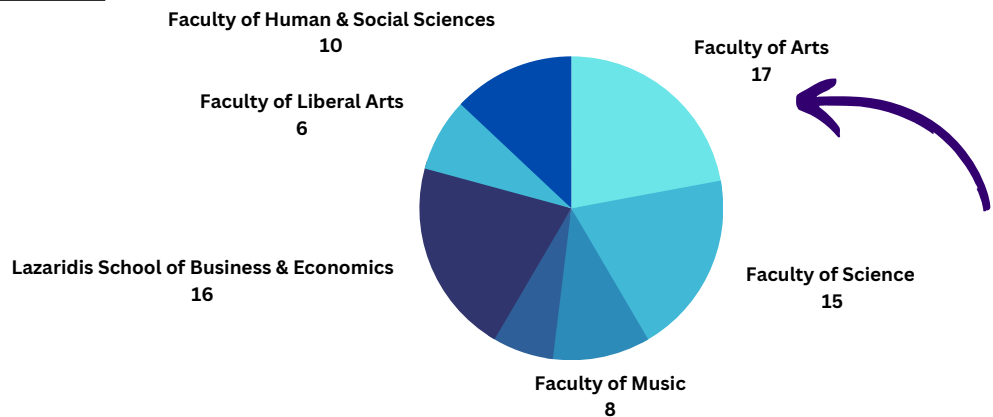
# 2022-23 Courses - Brantford Campus

## Faculty of Human & Social Sciences

Crime Prevention	CC319
Introduction to Developmental Psychology: Infancy and Childhood	PS275
Developmental Psychology: Adolescence and Young Adulthood	PS276
Community Psychology	PS282
Psychology of Exceptional Children, Youth and Adults	PS379
Social Determinants of Health	HS200
Canadian Healthcare System	HS201
Autism: Advocacy, Policy & Practice	HS208
Health Policy	HS322
Health Studies Practicum	HS402

## Faculty of Liberal Arts

Domestic Internship	HR391
Literature and Crime	EN111
Multiculturalism	HR261
Professionalization Seminar	HR300
Social Justice Community Placement	SOJE621
Youth and Community Service-Learning	YC300



\*chart represents support to multiple sections of some courses



*"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*

*-Maya Angelou*

Contact us:  
[cwpartnerships@wlu.ca](mailto:cwpartnerships@wlu.ca)