University 101

"Because University is Different!"

Welcome to University 101, a summer preparatory course for students considering university-level studies.

What is University 101?

- University preparatory course.
- Non-credit, certificate-based.
- Taught by learning skills professionals.
- Re-creates the university environment to prepare students.

University 101 is a non-credit, certificate-based course offered by the department of Learning Services at Wilfrid Laurier University.

This course has been designed and is taught by learning skills professionals at the university.

Its purpose is to prepare incoming university students, like yourself, for university studies by providing both instruction on university-level academic skills and opportunities to apply these skills by re-creating the university environment throughout the assignments and tests.

Upon successfully finishing University 101 you will receive a certificate of completion.

Why attend University 101?

- University is different than secondary school.
- Many incoming students haven't developed appropriate academic skills for university.
- Students who don’t further develop their academic skills are more likely to do poorly in their university studies.

You may be wondering why you should attend University 101.

Simply speaking, university studies are different from secondary school studies.

Many incoming students to universities do not have the appropriate academic skills for university-level courses, assignments, and tests.

This is not to say that you don’t have any academic skills or that you lack intelligence. If you have been accepted to university than obviously you have done well in secondary school.

But consider this: How often did you truly study during secondary school? How often did your tests go beyond simply memorizing information? How often were you responsible for managing your own time or reading a novel in a week?

The quantity and quality of work is greater in university. In university you are not graded on your effort but on the final outcome.

The most successful university students are those students who have made the transition from secondary school by further developing their academic skills.

University 101 can assist you with this goal.

Let’s review how else university differs from secondary school.

How is University Different? Time Management

Secondary School	University
• 35 hours in class	• 20 hours in lectures
• homework after school	• tutorials, labs, and homework
• time managed by others	• time managed yourself

In secondary school your time is managed for you by “the bell” and your parents or guardians. Most of your day is spent in the classroom with homework completed after class. Your teachers probably remind you about assignment due dates, extensions on these due dates are common, and late assignments are not penalized.

In university your time is managed by you. No one checks to ensure that you are attending lectures, tutorials, or labs. No one checks to ensure that you are completing your readings or completing your assignments or homework. Due dates are strictly enforced, extensions on due dates are rare, and late assignments can be highly penalized.

Time management is an essential and foundation academic skill in university.

How is University Different? Reading

Secondary School	University
• up to 80 pages per week	• up to 250 pages per week
• group reading	• individual reading
• memorization and facts	• active reading and critical analysis

In secondary school you may spend months reading and discussion a single book. Some reading is still done in the classroom and “book learning” primarily consists of the memorization of facts and main ideas.

In university you are responsible for a lot of reading. The amount of reading differs between disciplines, but on average you should be prepared to read approximately 250 pages per week. In some cases, you may be expected to read a single book in a week. Reading in university focuses on critical analysis and note taking.

You will spend more time reading in University than attending lectures. Learn how to read efficiently.

How is University Different? Lectures

Secondary School	University
• no preparation required	• preparing for lectures required
• up to 35 students	• up to 400 students
• passive listening	• active listening
• questions and answers	• critical engagement

In secondary school your classrooms have no more than 35 students in them. You listen to your teachers instructions and re-enforcement of the course material is normally done through questions and answers.

In university your lecture halls can have up to 450 students in them. Preparation for lectures has to be completed outside of class and you are responsible for listening to the professor and determining the main ideas of the lecture. Re-enforcement of the course material is done through critically assessing the arguments and data presented in the lecture.

If you chose to never attend lectures, your professor may never know. But lectures play an important role in your learning by allowing you to critically engage in the dialogue of the course.

How is University Different? Note Taking

Secondary School	University
• re-copy notes from overhead, slides, or black/white board	• responsible for determining the important points to record
• usually only notes from the classroom	• responsible for synthesizing reading and lecture notes

In secondary school note taking primary revolves around copying your teacher's notes. These notes are normally taken during class time.

In university note taking revolves around the critical assessment of both lecture and textbook materials. You are not expected to copy everything the professor says to your notes. You are expected to listen to the professor, determine the main ideas of the lecture, and record the relevant material. As well, because academic reading is done outside the classroom, you are expected to also take notes from your readings and then synthesize this information together to create a single comprehensive set of notes.

For many students, notes are the only medium they have to study for tests and exams; therefore, you have to ensure that you take notes correctly the first time.

How is University Different? Studying

Secondary School	University
• study material provided	• study material must be created
• shorter period of time required	• long period of time required
• rote learning	• active learning

In secondary school studying usually involves the memorization of the notes provided by the teacher.

In university studying requires you to go beyond your lecture and reading notes. Students who try to memorize material will do poorly in most of their courses. You will need to employ active learning techniques by creating study aids to assist you in your studying.

If you do not study and review regularly, you will be ill-prepared for your final exams that occur a short 12 weeks after the start of classes. To put this point into perspective, for most courses there are only 24 lectures until the final exam.

How is University Different? Tests / Exams

Secondary School	University
• focus on memorization and regurgitation of facts	• focus on critical analysis, understanding of concepts, application, and problem solving
• some tests standardized	
• 1 hour	• 3 hours

In secondary school testing involves the regurgitation of information learnt in the classroom. Many tests are standardized and are normally relatively short in time.

In university testing involves the critical analysis of course materials, illustrating an understanding of concepts, demonstrating the application of concepts, and problem solving. The average final exam is three hours long.

If you have not prepared efficiently and effectively for tests and exams you will experience a high amount of test anxiety and your final grade will suffer. There are no make-up tests or extra-credit assignments in university.

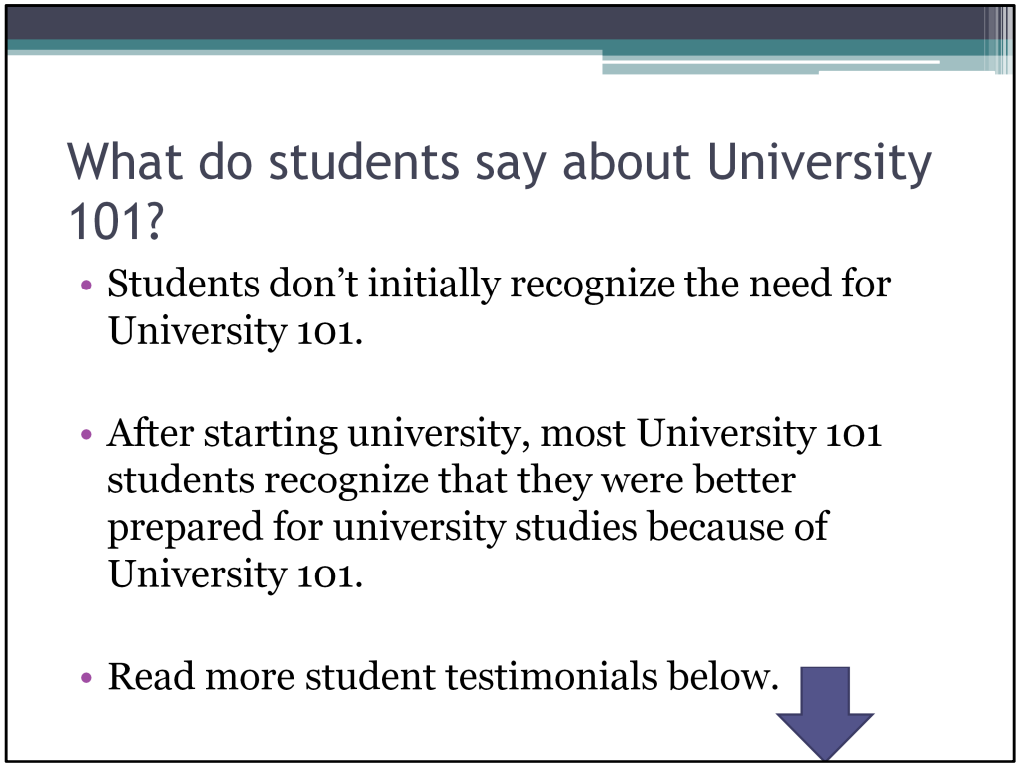
How will University 101 prepare you?

- Academic Skills instruction.
- Application of skills through relevant assignments.
- Mock-grading of assignments.

As you can see, university is different than secondary school. The academic skills you require to be successful have to be more advanced.

University 101 has been designed to provide you with academic skills instruction to improve your time management, critical thinking , active reading, research and writing, active listening, note taking, and test taking strategies. Furthermore, we will also talk about communication and personal wellness strategies to round out the skills you will need for to make everyday decisions while at university. This instruction is done through textbook readings and lectures which will allow you to experience university academic life.

As well, you have the opportunity to apply these academic skills in “real world” examples through relevant assignments. To complete the university experience, all assignments will be graded and commented on to provide you with valuable feedback to prepare you for university studies.



So what do students who have taken the course say about University 101?

The truth is, many students are forced into attending University 101 by their parents or guardians. I hope this isn't true for you.

These students initially believe that they "don't need University 101" and view it as a remedial program.

Each fall the course instructor reconnects with the University 101 students to determine whether the students have found value to taking the program.

Overall, the responses from this meeting are positive.

Students recognize that they were in fact not as prepared for the amount of work required of them as they initially thought; and, that University 101 had taught them practical strategies to assist in the management of their studies.

Some of these student testimonials can be found below this slide cast.

Student Testimonials

"I went into University 101 with the mind set that it would be a waste of my August. It was not until my first year began that I realized and really appreciated what I had learned from University 101. Along with the many other resources and information this course provided, it specifically prepared me for the different styled lectures I would face and also gave me an understanding of what professors expected in papers and assignments."
- 1st-year, Psychology

"Coming out of high school, I thought I had been taught the proper tools to excel in university. Was I ever wrong! University 101 taught me the skills needed to succeed in university."
- 1st-year, Communication Studies

"Thank you for holding the University 101 course, it has helped me so much and I feel so much more prepared for my classes."
- 1st-year, Religion & Culture

Who can attend University 101?

- Anyone.
- Do not have to be attending Laurier.
- Both on-campus or on-line options.
- Grade 11 students are welcome.

Now you may be wondering who can attend University 101.

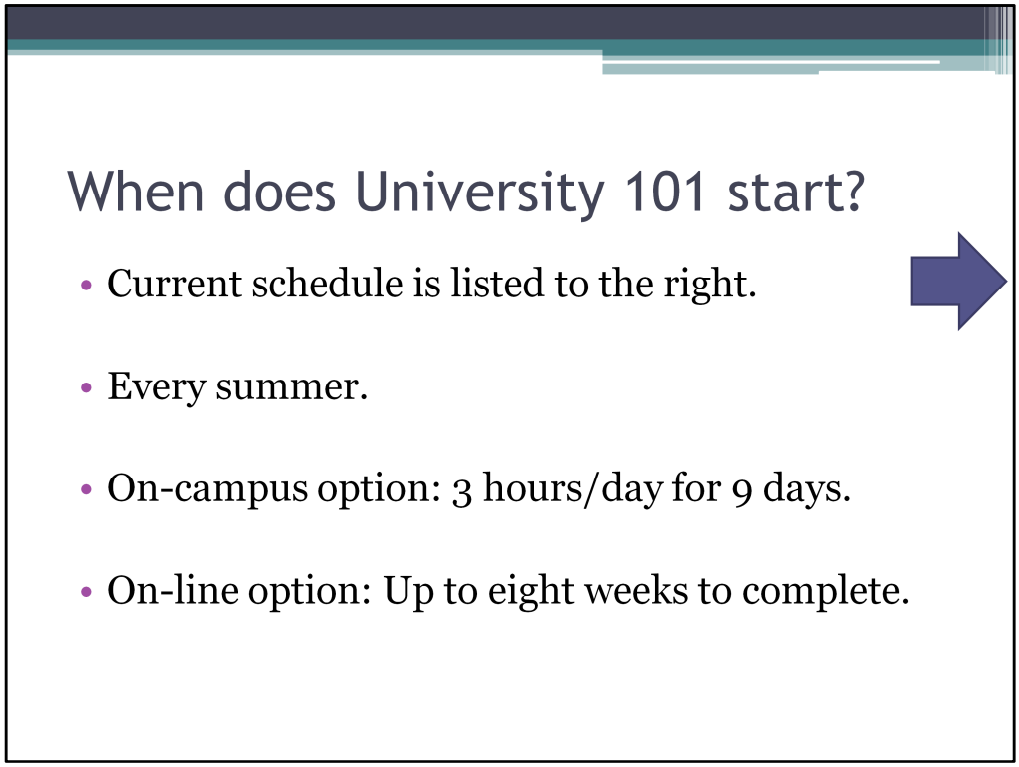
The answer is that anyone who is considering university-level studies are welcome to attend the course.

Because University 101 is a non-credit course you do not have to be a Laurier student to take it. The strategies learnt in this course are transferable to any university environment.

If you live near a Laurier campus then it is advisable to attend one of our on-campus University 101 courses. If an on-campus course is not possible, then sign-up for our on-line learning course.

Both our on-campus and on-line options use the same course materials and similar assignments; however, the on-campus option has the advantage of a lab assistant to guide you through the practical exercises while the on-line option requires independent learning.

If you are a grade 11 student considering university-level studies, then you are more than welcome to also attend University 101.



The most current schedule for University 101 is available to the right of this slide cast.

As you can see, University 101 is only offered during the summer months.

The on-campus option is structured so that you will receive three hours of instruction per day over nine days.

The on-line option is more flexible in its structure and provides you with between two and eight weeks to complete the course depending on when you register.

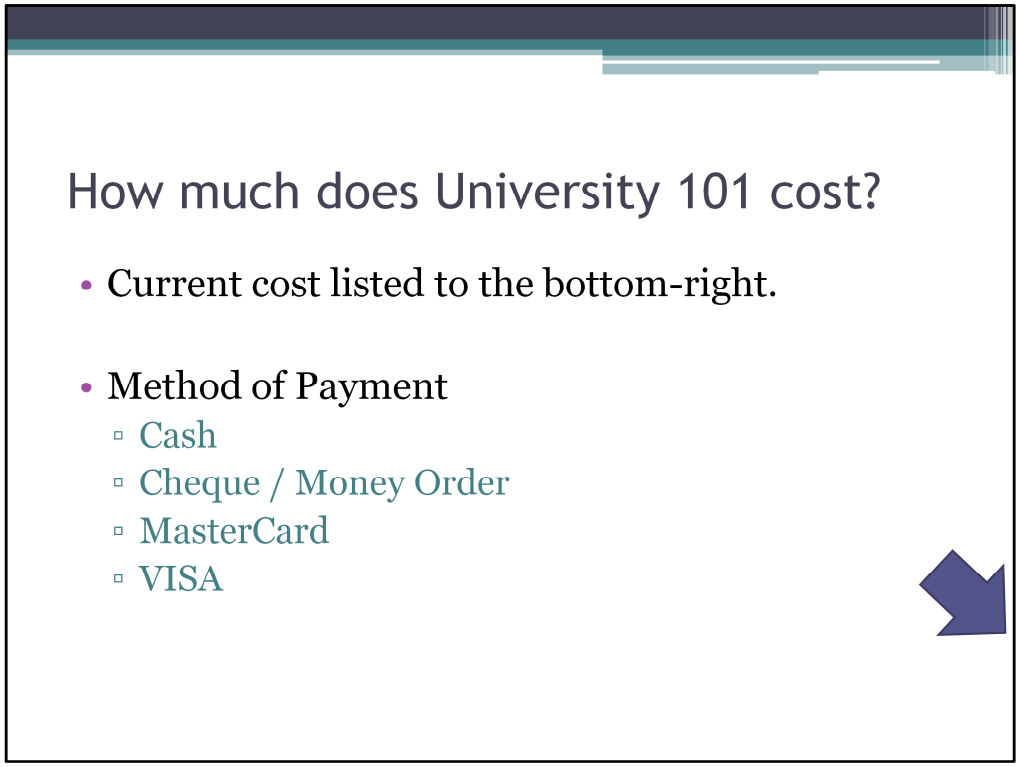
It is important to note that the on-line option requires you to be self-motivated to complete the requirements of the course. It also requires you to have access to an Internet connection. If you lack either this self-motivation or technology it is highly recommended that you take the on-campus option.

2010 Dates, Times, and Locations

July 5th - August 26th, Online
Final Date to Register: August 12th

August 3rd - 13th, 9 am - 12 pm, Waterloo Campus
Final Date to Register: July 20th

August 16th - 26th, 9 am - 12 pm, Waterloo Campus
Final Date to Register: August 3rd



You may be wondering how much University 101 costs.

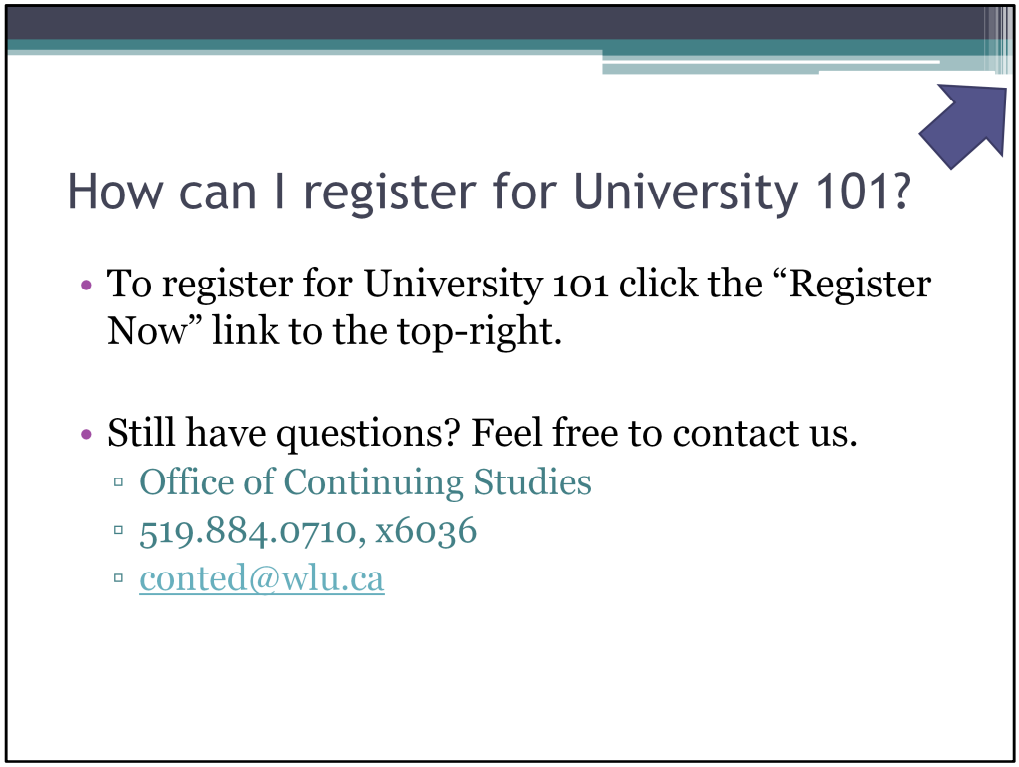
The current cost of the course can be found at the bottom-right corner of this slide cast.

Note that this cost, similar to University, does not cover course materials.

To pay for University 101, we accept cash, cheque, money order, MasterCard, or VISA as methods of payment.

2010 Cost

$375 (now includes materials)



This concludes our information about University 101.

I hope that we have answered your questions.

To register for this course, please click the "Register Now" link at the top-right corner of this slide cast.

Need more information? Please feel free to contact the Office of Continuing Studies by either phoning:

519.884.0710, extension 6036;

or, send an email to:

conted@wlu.ca.