



Ontario/ Rhône-Alpes Student Exchange Program

Handbook

2018–2019

for students coming to Ontario
from

RHÔNE-ALPES

Updated March 2018

Rosanna Furgiuele
ORA Academic Director



The **Ontario Rhône-Alpes Program Office**, located in Toronto, is there to help you and to answer any questions you may have before or during your stay in Canada. If you are phoning us from abroad, please take into account the time zone differences.

Contact Information

Ontario Program Office
Ontario/Rhône-Alpes Student Exchange
270 K & L York Lanes
York University
4700 Keele Street
Toronto ON M3J 1P3

Fax: 416-736-5709

Website: <http://ora.ouinternational.ca/>

Rosanna Furgiuele Academic Director rfurgiuele@ouinternational.ca 416 532-5492 437 776 9899 (cell)	Agnes Poleszczuk Program Manager apoleszczuk@ouinternational.ca 416-736-2100 ext. 40006	Dagmar Todd Program Administrator dtodd@ouinternational.ca 416-736-2100 ext. 22919
---	--	---

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	3
<i>Expectations and Responsibilities</i>	3
<i>Travel Arrangements to Canada</i>	4
<i>Admission to an Ontario University</i>	5
<i>Tuition Fees (= \$0.00) / Student Activity Fees</i>	5
<i>Study Permit (Visa)</i>	5
<i>Other Formalities</i>	6
<i>What to Bring with You</i>	7
<i>Finances</i>	7
<i>Advice and Support</i>	8
<i>Arriving in Ontario: The Orientation Workshop</i>	8
<i>Arriving at Your Host University</i>	9
<i>Accommodations</i>	9
<i>Eating, Drinking, Smoking, etc.</i>	10
<i>Registering at your Host University</i>	10
<i>Course Selection</i>	11
<i>The Rhythms of the Ontario Academic Year</i>	13
<i>Working and Studying</i>	14
<i>Taxes</i>	14
<i>Getting Credit at Your Home University</i>	15
<i>Meeting People, Social Life, Recreation</i>	15
<i>Stereotyping and Intercultural Differences</i>	15
<i>Communications</i>	16
<i>Travel</i>	17
<i>Your Participation in the Program: One Year Only</i>	18
<i>Closing Formalities</i>	19
<i>Appendix 1: Contacts at Ontario Universities</i>	20
<i>Appendix 2: Common Abbreviations</i>	21

Introduction

Congratulations! You have been chosen to participate in the Ontario Rhône-Alpes (ORA) Student Exchange Program, a member of Ontario Universities International (OUI). The exchange is a personal opportunity for you to pursue your studies at one of the participating universities in Ontario while remaining a degree candidate at your home university, and to benefit from the experience of living in a foreign culture.

This handbook gives you information that will help you make the most of your stay in Ontario. You should also consult the website of your host university for further information and practical advice regarding your time in Ontario.

Be alert to this symbol: It signals key information worth noting and knowing



This Handbook focuses on **generic** rather than **specific** issues. The information is based on the experience of the Program Office, official and unofficial sources, and the advice of former participants, to whom we are especially indebted. Technical terms and common abbreviations are listed in an appendix.

Expectations and Responsibilities

In the interest of avoiding misunderstandings, please be aware of, and hold to, the following list of expectations and responsibilities:

- 1) You are expected to engage in full-time, **NON-DEGREE** study at your host university for a maximum of one academic year.

The definition of “full-time study” may vary by discipline and level. Advanced students engaged in research are responsible for obtaining the approval of their home program for the type and amount of work to be done.

Students engaging solely in course work should plan to be formally enrolled in at the very least three courses per academic term. **Please note:** Attending a course as an “auditor” does not count as being formally enrolled.

- 2) You are responsible for keeping the ORA Office informed of your current address, telephone number, and e-mail address.
- 3) You are responsible for **all aspects** of your participation in the Program, including, but not limited to, your health, safety, lodging, course selection, study program, travel plans, legal status and financial obligations. The ORA Program, your home and host universities, and their representatives and agents assume no financial or other liability arising from or related to your participation in the Program.
- 4) You are responsible for submitting a written report to the ORA Office upon completion of your exchange, and for responding to requests for information during the year.
- 5) As a student officially enrolled at **both** your host university and your home university, you are expected to be aware of, and observe, the regulations of both institutions. **Do not forget to enrol at your home university.**
- 6) Credit for work done abroad is granted at the discretion of your **home university**. You are responsible for documenting work done abroad, and for applying to your home university for credit you wish to receive.
- 7) After you return home, we hope that you will stay in contact with us. We hope, too, that you will want to act as a mentor for Ontario students coming to your home university and as an ambassador for the ORA Exchange Program.

Travel Arrangements to Canada

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements to Canada. The sooner you do this,

the better chance you have of finding a relatively inexpensive flight.

Please refer to the section on “Orientation Workshops” for suggested dates of arrival.

You may wish to book an “open-jaw” flight (meaning that you fly into one airport [such as Toronto], but plan ahead to fly home from another airport [such as Vancouver]).



Especially if you are not taking a direct flight to Toronto, pack a “survival kit” with a change of clothes in your carry-on luggage. There have been many reports of checked luggage arriving days after the passenger to whom it belongs.

Check out the orientation schedules of your host university before booking your flight; in some cases it may make sense to go to your host university before coming to the Program’s Orientation Workshop. This will give you the opportunity to “get settled” before meeting up with the larger group. We strongly advise you to inform the university’s International Student Office when you are coming, and to get their confirmation that they are expecting you.

After the Program’s Orientation Workshop, you will also have to get to your host university. Students studying outside Toronto will have the following options: rental car, bus, train or plane. The ORA Program Office does not have the expertise or ability to make travel plans for you. (For general travel information, see the 17 section.)

Youth hostels exist in a number of Ontario locations: Maynooth (near Algonquin Park), Niagara Falls, Ottawa, and Toronto. More information for Hostelling International hostels is at: www.hihostels.ca/; other hostels (www.hostels.com) are in most university cities.



These hostels are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and are busy in the summer months. In Toronto, wherever you wish to stay, book in advance!

If you wish to become a Youth Hostel member, memberships cost \$35.00+tax in Canada. The following links may help you find inexpensive accommodation:

Ontario: www.travellerspoint.com/budget-accommodation-en-co-37.html;

Toronto: www.travellerspoint.com/budget-accommodation-en-ci-1288.html.

And don't forget these two sites:

www.couchsurfing.com;

www.hospitalityclub.org/.

Your host university (or other universities) may also be able to function as a short-term hostel in August. To find out whether this is possible, please contact the International Office of the university in question. Often the residences are managed by the university's "Hospitality Services" or "Conference Services" in the summer.

Admission to an Ontario University

You have been admitted as a **non-degree** student (sometimes this is called a "special student") which means that, although you are formally enrolled in courses, **these courses are not part of a program of study toward a degree at the host university.**

Many students from abroad make two assumptions about Canadian educational systems. First, they assume that the university system in Canada (and Ontario in particular) is the same as that in the United States. Second, they assume that the distinction between degrees in their home country will be understood in all contexts as equivalent to undergraduate and graduate study in Ontario.

Although both assumptions are understandable, neither is valid. Given the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the academic programs and individual universities, it is not possible to give a "rule" for when a student ceases to be an undergraduate and begins to be a graduate student in Ontario. Some universities and academic programs will see a degree as sufficient in itself; others will be more interested in the number of semesters studied; still others will look at a combination of these (and perhaps other) factors. Please do not be insulted if you are admitted as an undergraduate. Your host university will do its best to see that you enrol in courses for which you are qualified.

Although universities tend to admit exchange students for the period from September to April, in exceptional circumstances, students who are participating may ask to study for up to one full year (twelve months). If you wish to continue your studies throughout the following summer, ask your host university whether it will be offering appropriate courses and whether you may enrol in them. Please remember that you must ensure that your Study Permit is valid for the full duration of your studies in Canada. There

is some variation from university to university as to whether you would have to pay tuition for those courses. If fees are assessed, please remember that it is ultimately your host university that will decide. If you receive financial support, please refer to the section [Financial Aid](#) below.

Tuition Fees (= \$0.00) / Student Activity Fees

As a student participating in the ORA Exchange Program, you are exempted from paying tuition fees to your host university.

For you, the following rules apply that protect you from paying tuition fees in Ontario:

- 1) You remain a part of the degree program at your home university.
- 2) You pay tuition fees according to your home university's regulations while you are on exchange.
- 3) You are not enrolled in a degree program in Ontario.

Despite this, in a few cases, if you want to take special courses that are not part of the regular curriculum (for example: English as a Second Language), you may be charged extra. Some universities also require students to pay student activity fees and the policies (and prices) vary from university to university. Ask the International Student Advisor at your host university.

Study Permit (Visa)

We have done our best to ensure the accuracy of the following information. But misunderstandings are possible, and regulations can change. You may wish to check out certain aspects for yourself.



To study in Canada for more than 90 days, you must have a "Study Permit" (a kind of visa). The bilingual form

"Application for a Study Permit/ Demande de Permis d'Études" is available online:

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/immigration-refugies-citoyennete/services/etudier-canada/permis-etudes/presenter-demande.html>

You can download the Study Permit guidelines and application from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/5269ETOC.asp>

This material is also available from the Canadian Embassy: 37, avenue Montaigne, 75008 Paris (01 44 43 29 00)



A fee applies to obtain a Study Permit. Please check the fee for this year.

If you need to have your Study Permit extended you can get the information you need at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/application-change-conditions-extend-your-stay-canada-student.html>

When you have been formally admitted to an Ontario university, you will receive a letter of admission from the host university. This is an important document that you will need for your Study Permit. Do not lose it!

Keep all documents with you when you fly and do not put them into your checked luggage, which you will claim only after you clear Canada Customs and Immigration

- *Travel to the USA*

If there is a chance you will be visiting the United States, be certain you are aware of that country's entrance rules. Check this website: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/visit/visitor.html#apply>.

If you do need a U.S. visa, however, it may be more convenient to get it in France. For information on U.S. visas, contact the nearest U.S. consulate or the embassy. The following website can give you orientation: france.usembassy.gov/. You can also check www.travel.state.gov/.

Other Formalities

Canada does not have residence registration offices, registration offices for non-citizens or radio and television taxes, so you don't have to worry about any of that.

Make certain that there is someone at home who can take care of university and other business that might arise while you are away.

Health & Other Insurance

You do need to arrange for [Health Insurance](#) in Canada. Moreover, you should also enquire about liability insurance and insurance for your personal property while you are traveling and in your home in Ontario.

- *Health Insurance (UHIP)*

The universities of Ontario have arranged for international students to be covered by the "University Health Insurance Plan" (UHIP; pronounced "you-hip").



Participation in UHIP is COMPULSORY for international students as well as their dependents. UHIP is regulated by the Council of Ontario Universities. It is in effect at all Ontario universities except the University of Windsor, which has its own required insurance plan ("Green Shield"). Universities cannot alter or waive UHIP fees or conditions.

UHIP covers you for the time you are *studying* in Canada, beginning the 10th day of the month before term starts (i.e.: August 10). If you are arriving in Canada earlier than that, please ensure that you have coverage for the interim.

Coverage for one person costs \$51.00 per month (\$204.00 for one semester). These rates are in effect for the 2017-2018 academic year. You will pay for the first 4 months when you arrive at your host university. The coverage is different from that in your home country and we strongly recommend that you inform yourself about what is and what is not covered. For more information on UHIP: <http://uhip.ca/fr/DefaultHome.aspx>

UHIP covers you for hospital and medical services that you need to maintain your health in Canada. It does not cover the cost of most prescription medicines or of most dental services. If you plan to travel outside Canada, you need additional health insurance. Find out whether your home insurance will cover you.

- *Telehealth Ontario*

The government of Ontario provides 24-hour-a-day free and confidential health advice under the toll-free number 1-866-797-0000. If you have a health concern, you can speak to a registered nurse who will advise you on the best course of action. **Please note: This service does not replace the number for emergency situations: 9-1-1.**

- *Other Categories of Insurance*

They include: auto, travel, home, and special coverage for sports accidents and the like. Trip cancellation insurance is also useful. If you rent a car you will need auto insurance.

For your room (in residence or shared accommodation) you may want to buy home insurance and especially home contents insurance. Theft is

the number one crime on campuses. If you are concerned about personal possessions such as a laptop, camera, music instrument, etc. make sure you know what type of insurance you have for all your portable electronics and other valuables. Or you can consider buying an insurance policy while in Canada.

Please remember – insurance companies do not issue policies *after* something happens. Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage from the beginning!

What to Bring with You

When you arrive you may be wearing shorts and a t-shirt. Summers can be quite hot; but in winter it can get **very** cold. You will need a good winter coat, hat, gloves, and boots. Some of these may be less expensive here in Canada (consult the students on last year's exchange).

The following items are absolutely essential:

- ✓ passport
- ✓ Study Permit
- ✓ airline ticket
- ✓ letter of admission from host university
- ✓ money (some cash, credit card, traveler's cheques)

One student's checklist included the following:

- ✓ international driver's license
- ✓ vaccination record
- ✓ notes on where to go
- ✓ receipts (e.g. for residence deposits)

If you have a laptop, bring it. Please do not bring other electrical devices such as hair dryers or frying pans. Electric razors are probably okay. Voltage in Canada is 110.

Finances

Your host university is the best source of information on the costs and other money matters in general and on your host city in particular.

Expect to spend at least \$1000 CAD per month. The following estimate can be used as an example:

Rent	\$400-600/month
Food	\$350/month
Utilities & Cable	\$100/month
Internet	\$10-40/month
Phone	\$50/month

Personal	\$100/month
Books & Supplies	\$1500 per year (depends on program of study)

Money

You may choose to bring with you some traveler's cheques to tide you over until you can transfer money from bank to bank. Buy Canadian dollar traveler's cheques from your bank at home, although you may have to order them a few days ahead. If you use US dollar cheques, you will pay twice for the conversion. In addition, bring at least \$300 CAD in cash. Once you get to your host university, one of the first things you should do is to set up a bank account. You will need an institution to which funds can be transferred from home and a way of paying bills while in Canada. There are different kinds of bank accounts in Canada and you will be interested in a chequing account. With such a "current account," you can pay bills online or by cheque. You should check with your bank at home to see if it has a correspondence or partner bank in Canada. You will probably get a bank ATM (automated teller machine) card or debit card to access your Canadian account; ask for such a card when you open your account (there may be a delay in issuing it).

Credit Cards and Bank Drafts

Major credit cards are also handy to have, but you probably will not be able to get one in Canada. So if you want one, bring it with you. They can be a convenient means to transfer money quickly from your home country to Canada. If you give your parents or some other **trusted** person power of attorney to access your credit card account at home, they can deposit money in that account up to the credit limit. You can then simply withdraw the money from that account in Canada. You should not be charged interest. **This is the theory, but we recommend that you consult your bank at home about the details of this kind of transaction (especially transaction fees) before you leave for Canada.** A credit card is almost a must if you are planning on renting a car; without one, the rental company may require a large cash security deposit. Canadians use credit cards to pay for everything. Another way to transfer money is by bank draft. Someone at home can purchase a bank draft in Canadian dollars and send it to you by mail. You then deposit it in your account in Canada. The Canadian bank will charge you a service fee; you should ask prospective Canadian

banks about their service charges in this regard, and also how long it takes before you can get the cash. You may find a branch of one or more major banks at your host university.

Budgeting

You will have substantial costs at the beginning of your stay in your host city.

- Transportation from orientation to your host university city;
- [Accommodation](#) (see page 9);
- You may also have to pay a student service fee;
- Health and other insurance;
- Books;
- Because you do not know your host city, you will not be able to live as economically. Student discounts are available for some events, but they are not as widespread or as generous as they are in France.

It is important that you have a personal monthly budget and that you monitor it, especially at the beginning of your stay. Food, accommodation, travel, and living in Canada will take up most of your budget.

Advice and Support

The best way to get official information about (or from) your host university before and after you arrive in Ontario is to contact its International Office. It may be called the International Student Centre, “[name of university] International,” or something else, but all Ontario universities have one. This office can give you details on procedures, help arrange for a room in residence, and generally advise you on all aspects of academic life. Some offices have special “survival guides” for international students, and some sponsor inexpensive and interesting outings. Others have peer mentor programs that match you with a local student who can help you get oriented.



Each Ontario university has designated someone as the “primary liaison person” for the students participating in the ORA Student Exchange. Sometimes that person is also the university’s International Student Advisor. **Contact persons are listed at the end of this Handbook.** These people will help you with some formalities you will have to go through during the first few days, including finding a room, paying any student

service fees, obtaining a library card, and enrolling in courses.

The most effective support system may well be student-based, relying on the expertise of students who previously participated in the exchange program. The easiest way to do so is through the official Facebook group. There are links on the website.

Also feel free to contact the ORA Program Office at any time. The contact information is listed at the beginning of this Handbook.

Finally, don’t forget the international office at your home university.

Arriving in Ontario: The Orientation Workshop

Because students arrive in Toronto at different dates for the joint Orientation Workshop, we cannot meet you at the Toronto airport. Try to share a taxi/limousine from the airport to York University with other students. Make sure to ask about the flat rate before you accept the ride. Also, do not forget the tip.

The August Orientation Workshop (for students from France, Germany, India, and China) is held in Toronto in August. You will be informed of the exact dates.

Unfortunately, we must ask you to contribute to financing the Workshop which includes accommodation for two nights, meals, transportation in Toronto, recreation, and programming. The registration fee per student will be communicated to you via email. The Ontario Program Office will cover the rest of the costs for these days, except for some optional incidentals.



Please note: Hotmail and Yahoo e-mail addresses may have difficulties with attachments. We advise against using these e-mail addresses. If you still wish to do so, make sure you receive all the documentation we send you prior to the Workshop. Again, if you are changing your e-mail address, please let us know.

If you have already gone to your host university and are returning to Toronto for the Workshop, we regret that we cannot help pay for transportation to the Workshop.

If you are arriving in Toronto prior to the Orientation Workshop, the Program Office will

do its best to help you arrange for accommodation at York University, if you so wish.

Every year one or two students ask whether they can bring a friend or relative to the Orientation. Unfortunately, we are not able to accommodate extra guests, even if they were to pay their own way. More important, this workshop is for “our group” as a group. We ask your understanding for this policy.

Arriving at Your Host University

If you are going to your host university for the first time after the Orientation Workshop, you will appreciate the advantages of traveling light. The Orientation Workshop will end in the late morning and you will have to find your way to your host university.

You should make an effort to contact your host university prior to your arrival. Find out where on campus to go and whether someone can meet you.

Most universities have their own orientation activities in the fall, most of which are intended for first-year students, colloquially referred to as “freshmen/women” or “frosh.” “Frosh week” can be a lot of fun, even for older students, although you must be prepared for a certain amount of immaturity, silliness, and even poor taste. In any case, it is an interesting phenomenon. Find out if your host university has an orientation, and when it is scheduled.

Depending on where you have studied before, you may not have had first-hand experience with a “campus.” There are more and less attractive campuses in Ontario, but all share the notion that the university is a special place that is different from the rest of the city. Campuses tend to have basic amenities such as a bookstore, bank or bank machine, convenience store, and the like, but the level of development and the quality of the services vary from campus to campus.

Some universities are primarily residential; that is, most of the students live on or near campus. Others are “commuter campuses” where students attend classes in much the same way that employees go to work during the day and go home in the evening. Depending on the flavour of the campus, there will be more or less nightlife. In deciding whether to live “on campus” (in residence) or “off campus,” you should consider, in addition to the factors mentioned above, how easy it is to get to the campus in the winter (see the following section on Accommodations).

Accommodations

In Canada, university residences are run directly by the university. On the one hand, this is an advantage: The universities have more direct control over residence space. On the other hand, residences are not subsidized, so the universities have to charge you what it costs them to run the residences.

The universities of Ontario have an understanding that students participating in the Program are eligible for residence rooms. Spaces in residence are limited, however. Some universities will have separate graduate residences, and others do not have residence space for graduate students at all.

Living in residence (“rez”) is very convenient. You are right on campus, and you don’t have to worry about getting to the university for classes. You also have a good chance to meet Canadian students. Canadian students tend to be younger and residences tend to have a high proportion of first-year students (18–19 years old). They often need to “let off steam” before they settle down to university life, and a number of students from abroad have found the noise level, drinking and other activities in residence to be a source of discomfort. (Others, however, have loved living in residence.)

Many residence contracts require you to buy a “meal plan” (see the section on [Food](#)). Residence students may also have to leave over the Christmas holidays (or pay extra): Ask about such conditions before you sign any contract.

Some residence rooms are in a suite; but many are small bedrooms, with bathrooms and kitchens “down the hall.” Specify what kind you would like. Also make it clear that you are older than most Canadian undergraduates, and ask whether you can get a room in a graduate residence or in a residence which is quiet (we hear this is particularly important for those students going to Laurentian – make it clear you want to be in MSR: the Mature Students’ Residence). Find out whether you can cancel the rental agreement if things don’t work out (or what the penalty would be). In some residences at some universities, you are free to cancel your rental contract at any time; in other situations, there can be heavy financial penalties.

If you are living in residence, you will probably be asked to pay several months’ rent in advance. Sometimes the International Student Advisor at your host university can authorize a deferment

(postponement) of payment, although there may be a fee for this service.

Many students choose to live off-campus. The best solution is usually shared accommodation in a house. Find out whether your rental contract or lease will allow you to move out without penalty if things change. Be sure to get a written agreement spelling out what is included and what is not. Consider carefully the length of the agreement: renters often prefer tenants to sign a 12-month contract. The custom is to pay first and last month's rent when you move in, and give a 60-day notice to the landlord/lady before you wish to move out. Your host university's International Office can refer you to the proper place to help you find a room off campus.

When choosing off-campus accommodation, make sure it is conveniently served by local transportation.

There are many websites that offer shared accommodation. You can get advice on where to stay when you first arrive in Ontario from the website:

www.settlement.org/sys/faqs_detail.asp?faq_id=4000326.

Eating, Drinking, Smoking, etc.

If you live in residence, you may have to participate in a "meal plan." This means that you pay for food in advance, whether you eat it or not. You should enquire carefully about the meal plans offered by your host university. Meal plans can be convenient in that you don't have to cook for yourself. On the other hand, they are not inexpensive, and the food is not gourmet. If you do take a meal plan, ensure you are not left with unused credit at the end of the year. Some universities also have "kitchen plans" which give you the opportunity (at a price) to prepare your own meals; and some universities have agreements with off-campus restaurants where you can use meal-plan credit.

It's hard to define "Canadian cooking". There are regional specialties (like pea soup), foodstuffs (like maple syrup), and ways of preparation. Since Canada is a multi-cultural society, Canadian cooking has a lot of variety. Ethnic restaurants and grocery stores, and open-air markets, can be more affordable and a lot more interesting than fast food places. Check around. Organic, fat-free, and cholesterol-free food is quite trendy these days.

Speaking of restaurants: In Canada and the United States, the tip is usually not included in the bill. You are expected to tip for table service (as opposed to cafeteria service). The normal tip in Ontario is about 15%. For additional information, please refer to the section on Taxes.

In Ontario, you must buy wine, liquor, and beer in special stores operated by the Province of Ontario. They are referred to as the "LCBO" (Liquor Control Board of Ontario) and "The Beer Store". In smaller towns only one will be present, but it will sell all alcoholic beverages. In some cities, large supermarkets may contain a wine store.

The "moralistic approach" to drinking is also reflected in laws about which restaurants can sell alcoholic beverages and about drinking in public. You can only drink in public if the place is licensed by the Liquor Licensing Board of Ontario. If you are camping, your tent is considered non-public, so you may drink, but some parks have their own restrictions on drinking.

Important Note: You cannot have an open bottle of alcohol in a car, on the street, on a beach, or in any other "public place" unless it is "licensed." And please remember: Do not drink and drive!



The non-smoking policy in effect at Ontario universities and in public buildings all over the province and in other parts of North America also applies to restaurants and bars. This means that smoking is restricted to certain areas (usually outside).

Canadians tend to be less relaxed about nudity, body contact, and sexuality. Be aware of the patterns of behaviour to which Canadians are accustomed.

Registering at your Host University

Once you arrive at your host university, you will have to do a certain amount of bureaucratic work. It is nothing terrible, but it may involve some standing in line. It's important that you get your student identification card and that the university has your address, etc. Remember, you do not pay tuition, but you may have to pay for student services. The most important thing is that you have to get through all these administrative tasks before courses begin. You have to be ready to study on the first day of classes.

Course Selection

Courses can be distinguished by their level, length, number of weekly contact hours, and type of instruction. Canadian undergraduate degree programs are typically referred to as either “three-year programs” or “four-year [honours] programs.” Some fourth-year honours courses can be as demanding as courses at the Master’s level. Learn how to read course codes.

Two random examples:

1) York University

AP/POLI 4200 6.0: International Relations Theory

- AP = Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies
- POLI = Department of Political Science
- 4430 = fourth-year level;
- 6.0 = 6 credits (in York terms), that is two terms (Fall and Winter)

2) The University of Western Ontario

Political Science 4203F/G: Social Diversity, Gender and the Law

- Political Science = Department of Political Science
- 4203 = fourth-year level
- F/G = one-term “essay course” (i.e., has a significant writing component), which may be offered in either the fall (F) or winter (G) term.
- Later in the calendar description, it is stated that this course has a 0.5 credit value in Western terms. The calendar further states that there are two seminar hours per week.

Courses that meet for one term only are often called “half-courses”; courses that meet for two terms are often called “full courses.” Each university has its own system. For example, a one-semester course may be worth 3 credits at one university (e.g., York, where a normal maximum undergraduate workload would be 30 York credits), 0.5 credit (e.g., Western, where a normal maximum undergraduate workload would be 5.0 Western credits), or whatever.

Note: Sometimes you will hear students or professors referring to courses as “third-year” or “second-year” courses. In most cases, this does not mean that the students are all in their third or second year. It simply designates the level of the course. At some universities graduate course numbers begin with a 5 or higher, but it is not unknown for fourth-level and fifth-level (that is:

advanced undergraduate and beginning graduate) courses to be combined.

It will be clear from the two examples given above that course numbering systems, as well as the information they provide, vary markedly from university to university. The specifics of each university’s system for designating courses cannot be covered here, but you do need to understand the system used at your host university. To do so, you are advised to pay careful attention to the appropriate parts of the university’s Academic Calendar, in which the system is explained.

For lecture courses, the principal mode of delivering information is centralized (from the instructor to the students). But lecture courses may also have discussion or tutorial groups attached to them; and in any case, you will have to submit written work and/or take a mid-term examination or a final examination.

For seminar courses, group work may be less widespread in Canada than in your home country. In general, it is fair to say that in Canada the formal “type” of course is not as important as the kind of work that will be done and the size of the course. You can find out about the kinds of assignments and the marking scheme from the supplemental calendar and/or the course syllabus, which will probably be posted online and handed out at the first meeting of the course. Also, more and more professors use web pages or Course Management Systems such as Moodle, WebCT Owl, or Sakai rather than hard copies to distribute course material.

The Program Office and past participants recommend that you look at a range of course levels and types.

How do you find out about courses? You need to know about three kinds of publications.

- Every university has a “calendar” (in large universities, set of calendars). The calendar lists important dates in the academic year, gives the names of the teaching staff and the officers of the university, and contains the academic and non-academic regulations. The calendar lists all courses which have been approved by the university Senate or equivalent body. In other words, it contains those courses which **may** be taught in a given year. Not all courses listed will be offered during your exchange year.

To find out what is actually being taught, when, and by whom, you may (depending on the university) have to refer online to two other kinds of documents:

- the “academic timetable” or “course schedule” (which gives the times and places of courses scheduled for a given year); and
- the supplemental calendar or “mini-calendar” of the units



Don't restrict your search for courses to a single department or faculty. The course(s) you need may be in a related department. Explore!

Lecture schedules and supplemental calendars for the whole academic year beginning in September are usually available in the previous spring. Course and timetable information can be found on the university web sites. This information is updated regularly, and may alert you to courses that are full or cancelled, or changes in meeting times or places.

Sometimes student groups also issue “counter-calendars” or “anti-calendars” which give students’ opinions on specific courses, often based on questionnaires filled out by students in the previous year. Although they must be taken with a grain of salt, they can often give a good indication of which courses are really good and which are really bad. Student groups (for example: Engineering Students’ Association) are another potential source of information. Talking about courses is also a good way to make contact with Canadian students.

You should also contact the appropriate academic advisor (sometimes called the “Undergraduate Chair”) or the Graduate Chair of the department(s) in which you are interested, either when you arrive or by e-mail. These faculty members can be a big help if you are lacking so-called “prerequisites.” The existence of several course “levels” goes hand-in-hand with the system of prerequisites, or courses which you need to have taken in order to qualify for other courses. For example, you may find that in order to take a fourth-level seminar, you need to have taken a second-level course in the same area. These restrictions are noted in the calendars, and they can prove frustrating to exchange students who have, after all, very little chance of having taken prerequisite courses. You need to “talk your way into” courses by explaining to the instructor or the advisor (1) that you are an exchange student who will only have one opportunity to take the

course; (2) and indicate what kind of course work you have already done in that field.

Enrolling in a course is a formal procedure at Canadian universities. Universities assess tuition fees according to the number of courses a student takes, so they have to know exactly in which courses a student is registered at a given time. Students enrol themselves by computer, usually during the summer; occasionally the department or registrar’s office enrolls the student. In case of difficulty, your host International Student Office can probably help you.

When a course is full (as defined by the computer) no more enrolments can be accepted. But keep trying until the enrolment deadline. When somebody drops the course a spot becomes available.



You can always talk to the person who has the power to make exceptions. Sometimes that is the instructor, but very often it isn't. Talk to the instructor first to see if there is some leeway. Suggest attending the class informally for a while. That way, if someone else “drops” the course you will be ready to “add” it.

Courses usually start at the time listed, and end ten minutes or so before the next class period. Some universities schedule their courses to start on the hour, some on the half-hour, and some may use a mixed schedule. Courses also meet for different periods of time (usually amounting to three hours per week for undergraduate and two hours per week for graduate courses).



Dropping and adding are important because students receive grades for all courses in which they are enrolled after a certain date (the “add / drop deadline”). By all means, shop around in the first weeks of term, but **be aware that (1) to get a grade, you must be formally enrolled in the course; and (2) in order NOT to get a grade, you must drop the course before the drop deadline.** If you simply stop attending, or do not hand in the work, you will get a low, and probably failing grade (F) on your transcript.

Some universities or instructors will allow you to attend a course as an “auditor”; for extra courses of interest this might be a possibility. Advice: If you audit a course and do not do the work, you will not benefit much from it. Good time management is essential, and you should prioritize courses in which you are formally enrolled for credit.

If you don't find any courses to your liking, you can always try to persuade a professor to do an "independent reading course" with you or to let you participate in a project. You should also keep in mind that you can probably enrol in courses outside your major field; this year could be a good year to do something different – something that has always interested you but for which you haven't yet made time or explore an area that is unique to Canada.

You may be tempted to take a large number of courses, either because you want to take full advantage of the different kinds of courses available at your host university, or because you don't want to "waste a year." Obviously, personal choice plays a large role here, but in most cases, three graduate or four undergraduate courses per semester are plenty to keep you busy. You can easily find yourself overloaded to the point where you miss out on a lot of the benefits (academic and non-academic) of being in Ontario (see [The Rhythms of the Ontario Academic Year](#)). In deciding how many courses are right for you, consider the kind and level of course, and whether it is a "full course" or a "half-course": "half-courses" often have a more hectic schedule of reading, writing, and examinations than do "full courses." Be aware that if you take "too many" courses (e.g., more than 10 semester-long courses during your stay), your host university may charge you international tuition fees.

Canadian professors expect you will buy your own books for each course. Certain courses also put books and readings "on reserve" in the library, but the university's bookstore or local bookshops also order copies of the course books listed by the instructor. These books can be very expensive. Canadian students spend over \$1,000 on books per academic year.

Here are some tips for purchasing books. First, you may find that too few have been ordered; thus, it is often advantageous to buy books quickly after the beginning of classes. On the other hand, this means standing in long lines. If you buy them before classes start, you may find that the book is no longer on the reading list. Also for some courses you may have to buy "course kits" (*trousses de cours*) that can be less expensive than books.

Sometimes you can find second-hand books which are highly discounted, but be careful to establish that you are buying the correct edition. If you buy new books, do not write or mark in them in any way until you are certain you wish to

remain in the course. If you do decide to drop the course, you can return unmarked books within a set time limit (check with the bookstore) and get a full refund. If you use the books, you can also sell them back to the bookstore or book bazaar at the end of the course and recoup some of your money.

The Calendar of the Ontario Academic Year

As with many other aspects of university life, the calendar of the Ontario academic year may vary from institution to institution. Starting and ending dates differ according to the university, and so do the terms of the year. Most universities have fall and winter terms (beginning in early September and ending in late April or early May), with or without a summer term. But some are on other systems. Get a list of the "sessional dates" for your host university (check the university calendar or the web).

As an example, see the University of Western Ontario page listing sessional dates, and so on:

http://www.uwo.ca/modlang/graduate/important_dates.html

Courses in Ontario tend to demand a fair amount of work on a regular schedule. If you are in the Humanities or Social Sciences you will probably find yourself writing more papers and submitting more assignments than you are used to at home. We will leave it to you to decide whether the value and level of the work are comparable to what you know from your home university.

Assignments for a course must be handed in by a certain date in the term and there are examination periods at the end of each term. You may be lucky and be enrolled in courses without a final examination. There are also "take-home" (written at home) and "open-book" (with access to documents) exams.

The disadvantages of the Ontario system are obvious, but there are big advantages as well: When you're done, you're done. You can go skiing (or scuba diving) over Christmas with a clear conscience.

Our advice, then, is to keep two things in mind: (1) Don't take too many courses; and (2) don't let homework pile up until the last minute.

Remember, you are working in a foreign language and in an academic culture with which you are not fully familiar, and you won't be as efficient as you are at home, at least at the beginning of the school

year. So don't miss the first day of classes, and start studying from the very beginning.

The type of assignments vary from course to course. Standard forms of evaluation are the "paper" or "essay," which put slightly less emphasis on secondary sources and slightly more on your opinions; the mid-term examination; the final examination ("sit-down" or "take-home"), the test (a shorter examination), and the oral report. In the sciences, lab reports are also usual. In some fields (i.e., business) group projects and oral presentations are very important.

Most universities have an academic counselling service, a writing centre, or other supports, which offer help on study habits and the writing of academic papers. This is not to be confused with services which actually write your papers for you, a form of cheating which can get students thrown out of the university. Avail yourself of the services your host university offers; you will not only improve your study and writing skills, but you'll get an interesting insight into the concept of the "essay" in Canada and how it differs from what you are used to.

Speaking of "cheating" and cultural differences, some students from abroad find that Ontario students don't cooperate readily on projects. This may have to do with a greater sense of competition, but in part it stems from the belief that "everyone should do her or his own work" and that to collaborate is to be dishonest. Please keep these differences in mind.

In the past few years, with the increased use of the Internet, universities have reinforced their battle against academic dishonesty and more specifically plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as "representing someone else's ideas or writing as your own."

Some instructors require that all papers be examined by some kind of plagiarism detection software (such as www.turnitin.com).

Being accused of plagiarism can result in a long and painful disciplinary process. Being convicted can result in a range of penalties, including an F on the piece of work and transcript notation. Make sure you fully understand the concept of plagiarism and know the penalties involved at your host university. If you are not certain about documenting sources, ask your instructor.

Working and Studying

To be able to work you need a SIN. It's your Social Insurance Number, and without it you can't

work in Canada. As an exchange student, you can get a SIN. The number will start with a 9, indicating to employers that you need special authorization to work. **You need to have a job offer to apply for a SIN.** The SIN card is free. Please check the following website: www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/sc/sin/index.shtml.

A **contract of employment** from your host university or from an employer on campus will allow Human Resources Development Canada to issue your SIN. This means that it will be easy to get permission to work on campus (though finding a job may be a problem).

It will be extremely difficult for you to work outside the university, either during or after the academic term. If you are interested in working during your stay in Ontario, you should speak to the International Student Advisor at your host university. You will need a work permit, the fee for which is \$150. For more information see:

www.cic.gc.ca/english/inFORMATION/applications/work.asp.

For tax (and other) purposes, make sure that you leave a valid address with your host university when you return home, so that the university can send you the necessary receipts. If you do earn money, be prepared for a relatively high tax bill: you will probably not be eligible for a number of deductions otherwise available to permanent residents of Canada. For this reason, you should save all your receipts relating to your travel to Canada (plane ticket, hotel bills, health insurance receipts, etc.). See next section on Taxes.

Taxes

If you are employed in Canada, you must file an income tax return by April 30 of the year following the calendar year in which the employment took place. These forms will be available in the spring of 2019 for income earned in 2018, and in the spring of 2020 for income earned in 2019. There are special forms for international students. Your International Student Office may have the forms on hand, or you can download them from the Canada Revenue Agency. For further information, see: www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/nnrstdnts/ndvdlstdnts-eng.html

Ontario has an add-on "**Harmonized Tax**" (**HST**) which applies to almost all items and services bought in the Province. The tax is currently 13%. It includes a 5% federal component and an 8% Ontario component.



All prices in stores and restaurants are shown before adding the tax (and in restaurants, the tip). Don't underestimate your actual total cost.

For example: if a restaurant bill comes to \$60.00, there will be tax added on of \$7.80 (HST); a typical tip (15%) on the base amount would amount to \$9.00. The total, including taxes and typical tip, would then be \$76.80.

Getting Credit at Your Home University

You will get a grade for every course in which you remain enrolled past the “drop” deadline (in other words, if you do not want a grade, make sure you “drop” the course officially on time). Your host university will issue a grade report at the end of the term or year; and you may also request (for a nominal fee) a transcript listing all the courses you took at your host university.

If getting course credit at home is important to you, you will want to document your work so that your home university will recognize it. Keep all course documentation: syllabi, marked assignments, course descriptions, course evaluation breakdowns, etc.

The Ontario Program Office has developed a form that documents in more detail than is possible on either a standard grade report or a transcript the kind of work completed in each course. It is available from the Program Office or can be downloaded from the website.

Meeting People, Social Life, Recreation

It is natural for you to feel alone away from home. The Orientation Workshop in Ontario will ease your first shock of being in North America. You will get over this loneliness much more quickly – and go on to benefit much more from being in Canada – if you make the effort to meet Canadians, students and non-students.

You may know some of the Ontario students who studied in your home institution in previous years, and they can be a great source of help and companionship. But we cannot recommend strongly enough that you take the initiative to meet and make new friends.

Here are three specific pieces of advice:

- 1) Don't get too much into the habit of speaking your native language. If you establish a pattern of speaking English from the first day, even with your fellow exchange students, you will feel much more integrated, and you will interact more easily with Canadians and get more from your stay here.
- 2) Students within the ORA program are great sources of support and fun. But don't become overly reliant on them. It will be disruptive to your studies and your chances to develop a “life of your own” in Canada.
- 3) Find a hobby-oriented or other interest group (drama club, chorus, environmentalist group, sports club) or volunteer work, and start participating! This is a simple and effective way to find Canadians who share your interests. Even a job on campus can be a good way to meet all kinds of people. And sometimes, volunteer work might be as countable as an internship.

Because of the pressure of the academic year, Canadian students tend to concentrate on work very early in the term. Also many of them hold a part-time job while studying. Partly for these reasons (but no doubt as part of our culture in general), Canadian students don't have the same kind of social life that you may be used to. Going out to a pub for the evening for serious or not-so-serious discussions is not as common here as it is in your country. Try to understand the Canadian way at the same time as you are sharing your cultural ways with Canadians.

Stereotyping and Intercultural Differences

Finding out about differences between your home country and Canadian society and culture (academic and otherwise) will be one of the most interesting things about your stay in Ontario. One must always be aware that generalizations are dangerous; indeed, a prolonged stay abroad is a very good way to become aware of the problems inherent in stereotypes.

Still, it is fair to say that Anglo-Canadian society (and to a certain extent North American anglophone society) can be quite prescriptive about “morals.” And “morals” are defined quite broadly. This Handbook has already informed you about formal rules regarding smoking and the consumption of alcohol, and about different concepts of “cooperation” and “cheating.”

There are also informal rules about “fair behaviour” while standing in line. Conversely, anything resembling “queue-jumping” will earn you unfriendly looks and comments.

Communications

Telephones

Internet based voice/video services such as **Skype** (<http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/home>) and **WhatsApp** have radically changed the landscape in the last few years. These are popular and practical options for many people, and especially exchange students, as a way of staying in touch with family and friends in other countries.

You may of course also want to consider other kinds of telephone service, landline-based or cellular (mobile).

- *Land Lines*

At the beginning of the fall term representatives of the main phone companies may come to campus and make it easy to sign up for telephone service. If not, you can visit one of their stores or go online to arrange for service. It usually does not take longer than a week to get your number and phone. If you are living in residence, you may find that the university has in effect decided for you which service you will use.

One advantage of landline service is that Canada does not use the concept of the “message unit” for local calls, so you can talk forever without running up a bill. For long-distance service, do some comparative shopping. Pre-paid calling cards are convenient and offer an excellent deal. You call a local number and with a secret code you access overseas numbers.

Landline telephone bills include separate items for the basic monthly charge and for individual long-distance calls (by date, time, number, and length of call). This form of billing makes it easy to share a phone with housemates or roommates.

If you are a telephone subscriber, you may be able to get a “Calling Card,” a special credit card which allows you to make long-distance calls from any telephone, including public payphones, and bill them to your “Canadian home” number.

- *Cell phones*

It is of course a personal decision whether you should or should not have a cell phone. Be aware that in Canada you pay for “air-time,” whether you initiate the call or receive it. The major

service providers are: Rogers Wireless, Telus, Fido, Virgin Mobile Canada, and Bell Mobility. Check their websites. We advise you to be very cautious about signing a cell-phone contract. For many people “pay as you go” (prepaid) is a more sensible option. Before deciding, you will need to ask around and do some very careful comparative shopping!

- *Public Phones*

They operate with major credit cards or a Calling Card. Otherwise you’ll have to use cash (50 cents is the least you can get away with).

- *Phone Numbers*



In an emergency – for police, fire, ambulance – dial 9-1-1. This number works in most of North America (except in some very small communities). **If you are asking someone to dial for you, say: “Please dial nine-one-one.”**

If you are in a university office or room, you may need to get an “outside line” before dialling 9-1-1; often you first dial 9 before the actual number.

Universities have their own internal emergency numbers and police or security as well.

Please contact the ORA Program Office or our emergency numbers listed on the website if you are in need. But in a real emergency, call 9-1-1 first.

To get someone’s phone number, dial 411 for “directory assistance.” You will be asked which city and the person’s name. On the web, the information is available at www.canada411.ca/.

Local Calls: The Toronto area has multiple area codes. 416 and 647 cover Metropolitan Toronto itself, and 905 covers surrounding areas (along with 289). Within Toronto you must dial ten digits, including the area code (but without the “1” in front that you need for long distance). So-called “10-digit dialling” is now required for area codes 519 and 226 (Southwestern Ontario), 613 (Ottawa and eastern Ontario including Kingston), and 705 (the “near North” with Sudbury and North Bay).

Our advice: Get a local student or your host university’s International Office to explain how to dial in your area.

Long Distance (North America): For North American long distance, dial 1 + area code + number. Some area codes indicate that the call is “toll free” (800, 866, 877, and 888), but be aware

that sometimes the “free status” only works within Canada or the U.S. but not between them.



Long Distance (Overseas): The formula is: 011 + “country code” + area code without the first 0 + number.

Canada Post (“Snailmail”)

Besides regular post offices, postal outlets can be found in pharmacies, drug stores or convenience stores. Canada has a “postal code,” (in the U.S. they are called “zip codes”) which consists of alternating letters and numbers (as in: N6A 3K7). In Ontario the first letter will be K, L, M, N, or P, depending where you are in the Province.

It currently costs \$1.00 + tax to mail a regular-sized letter within Canada, \$1.20 + tax to the USA and \$2.50 + tax overseas.

E-Mail



Please make sure the Program Office has your “real” e-mail address. Hot-mail and Yahoo addresses have experienced problems in the past, especially with attachments. If you change your address, please let us know immediately. The Program Office’s addresses are given at the beginning of this handbook. Remember that your host university will communicate with you using your official e-mail address at that university. Check that account regularly.

Travel

Canada is the land of buses and planes. Intercity buses are a fairly inexpensive and fairly convenient way to go medium distances. For longer distances, you might be able to get some cheap flights. At most universities you’ll find a branch of “Travel CUTS,” (Canadian University Travel Service) www.travelcuts.com/ travel agency which specializes in student travel and is owned by Canadian student organizations (this is not an endorsement). You can call them toll free at 1-866-246-9762 in Canada.

You should get an International Student Identity Card (ISIC card) in your home country, or you can buy it in Canada at any Travel CUTS location \$20.00 (\$21.50 by mail).

- *Air Travel*

Look for “**seat sales.**” Major companies include:

Air Canada www.aircanada.com/

Westjet www.westjet.com/

Air Transat www.airtransat.com/

Porter Airlines www.flyporter.com/

There are of course many more airlines in the U.S.

- *Trains and Buses*

They are of course also very convenient. An ISIC card will get you a substantial discount on the full economy fare with Via Rail (www.viarail.ca/), without an advance-purchase requirement (it is often advisable to book in advance, as trains usually sell out at busy times). You can save up to 50% off regular fare with Via “6-Pack.”

Greyhound Canada (www.greyhound.ca/) offers student fares and other special offers. See: <http://www.greyhound.ca/en/dealsanddiscounts/default.aspx/>

Keep in mind that trains are more expensive and less frequent than buses.

- *Drive-away*

You might also want to consider applying to a “drive-away” company, which arranges for cars to be delivered to their owners in various locations. You drive the car. The arrangements for your expenses and any fee you may have to pay will vary. You can try this one in Toronto: www.torontodriveaway.com/. They offer Snowbird Seasonal Services. (“Snowbirds” are Canadians – usually retired – who spend the winter in warm climates. Common destinations include Canada East and West, Arizona, California, Florida).

- *Car rental*

There are many companies and many deals in Ontario to rent a car. Car rental is the cheapest and most convenient way of traveling if you have a minimum of four passengers. You have to be at least 21 years old to rent a car. If you are under 25, however, insurance will be more expensive. (Students have reported that joining the ADAC and booking rental cars through that organization has saved them money.) Gas is also becoming more expensive.

Car rental companies like you to have a credit card. If you have the right one (check at home), your insurance costs may be covered automatically. If you will be renting a car, a card that covers insurance in this way can pay for itself quickly. If you do rent a car, make certain that you are fully covered by insurance (“zero deductible”) and that everyone who will be driving the car is listed on the rental agreement. If a non-listed

driver is involved in an accident the insurance company can and will refuse to pay anything.

If you are renting a car, always inspect both the outside (for dents and scrapes) and the trunk and glove compartment before driving off.



If you have both a valid driver's license from another country and a valid International Driver's Permit, as a visitor to Ontario you may drive for up to one year without having to get an Ontario license. As long as you are on the ORA Program, and as long as you do not buy a car while in Canada, you are considered a "visitor" under these provisions.

Check the website www.gov.on.ca/ to find information on Ontario. For information on driving in the Province of Ontario and in Canada, check these pages of the Ministry of Transportation: www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/ and www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandv/visiting.htm.

If you resign from the Program, buy a car, or otherwise cease to be a visitor, you must take both the theoretical and practical driving test.

If you are thinking about buying a car, get a letter (in English), from your automobile insurance company at home certifying that you have an accident-free driving record. If you do insist on buying a car, make sure you do it legally and that you observe all the rules on registration and insurance as well as on driver's licenses. Our official advice: Don't buy a car, new or used.

- *Public transportation*

Within cities, public transportation is available. In Toronto, the Toronto Transport Commission is known by its initials: TTC: www.ttc.ca. In Ottawa, there is www.octranspo.com/.

In parts of Southern Ontario there is GO Transit, a regional service operating trains and buses.

In smaller cities public transportation is not as good. Student discounts are not as usual, although daily and monthly passes are often available, and some cities have introduced a Bus Pass for students. Ask the International Office of your host university whether you can get a special student discount.

- *Cycling*

Cycling is possible, but remember that whenever you use a bicycle you have to obey traffic rules, and the law requires that you wear a helmet. Winter weather may also make cycling difficult and hazardous. Sometimes it's better to leave the bike at home.

- *Shuttle buses*

At some universities shuttle buses are available during certain hours. For example, there is a free shuttle between the two campuses at York University (Keele and Glendon).

- *Walk-Home Services*

Every university has a type of "escort" service to walk you, by request, to campus destinations which are in less safe areas.

For information on these services, check with student services, campus security, or the international office at your host university.

Your Participation in the Program: One Year Only

Participation in the program is limited to one academic year.

The ORA Student Exchange Program is conceived as a system-wide exchange of students, not as a study-abroad program for individual students, nor as a "jumping-off year" toward a degree at an Ontario university.

When you return to your home region and university, we expect you to share the experiences and knowledge which you gained overseas with your colleagues, teachers, and society. We also hope that you will help sustain the relationship between Ontario and your home country by assisting newly-arrived students from Ontario who have come to study at your home university.

It is not unusual for students participating in an exchange to become so much a part of the life of the host university and society that they do not wish to leave. Sometimes it is the general lifestyle that appeals. Sometimes it is the academic life that is attractive. And sometimes it is a personal relationship that makes it difficult to leave.



If you wish to stay on, you must be prepared to apply to an Ontario university under all the terms which apply to non-Canadian students. That is, you must fulfill all the criteria for admission; you are subject to the normal enrolment limitations; and you must pay full fees for international students. Application deadlines for September may be as early as December of the preceding year. There are very few scholarships available for international graduate students, but they are issued on a competitive basis and are very difficult to obtain. Just because a professor agrees to

work with you does not guarantee that you will receive a scholarship.

If you do succeed in staying on, you cannot do so under the auspices of the ORA Student Exchange Program. As harsh as it may sound, the Ontario Program Office will not entertain requests for exceptions (in either direction).

Closing Formalities

If you registered with your home country's consulate or an embassy as a citizen living abroad, you should notify them when you are leaving Canada.

Embassy: www.ambafrance-ca.org/

42 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON K1M 2C9;
Tel : 613-789-1795; Fax : 613-562-3735

Consulate: www.consulfrance-toronto.org/

2 Bloor Street East, Suite 2200, Toronto,
ON, M4W 1A8; Tel: 416-847-1900; Fax:
416-847-1901

Other than that, you don't have to deregister from any city offices or from the university, but you

should remember to get yourself reinstated at your home institution. Check in good time to ensure that your student authorization (study or work permit) to remain in Canada won't expire prematurely. Please leave a forwarding address with your host university and the Program Office — we'd very much like to stay in contact with you.

When you arrive home, do not be surprised if you experience a "reverse culture shock." Some past participants report that they not only had to adjust to the "old ways" of being a student; they also had to come to terms with the fact that they and some of their friends had grown apart. That is a danger of a year abroad, but it is also a way of saying that this year will change your life. On balance, most participants find this change good.

**In the meantime, all of us associated with
ORA wish you
a wonderful year!**

Appendix 1: Contacts at Ontario Universities

Note: The “Contact Person” is the person who has primary responsibility for liaising with the ORA Student Exchange Program. Phone numbers are given for the entire university where extensions (indicated by x) are known; otherwise the area code is indicated and the direct-dial number is listed. To reach an extension, dial the university main number and wait for instructions. You will usually be prompted to key in the extension.

UNIVERSITY / INTERNATIONAL OFFICE	TELEPHONE (T) FAX (F)	CONTACT PERSON
BROCK OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES	T: 905-688-5550 F: 905-688-2074	Ms. Jennifer Barton exchanges@brocku.ca
CARLETON INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE (ISSO)	T: 613-520-2519 F: 613-520-3419	Ms. Nancy Leslie 613-520-6600 exchange@carleton.ca
GUELPH CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS	T: 519-824-4120 F: 519-767-0756	Ms. Chen Chen Ms. Haruho Kubota goabroad@uoguelph.ca
LAKEHEAD OFFICE OF GRADUATE & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (OGIS)	T: 807-343-8133 T: 807-343-8068 F: 807-346-7829	Ms. Nancy Gallo internationaladvisor@lakeheadu.ca
LAURENTIAN INTERNATIONAL	T: 705-675-1151 F: 705 671 3833	Ms. Lori Dagg x1551 international_exchange@laurentian.ca
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES & MACABROAD	T: 905-525-9140	Ms. Jenna Levi x 26105 levij@mcmaster.ca
NIPISSING UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES OFFICE	T: 705-474-3450 F: 705-495-2850	Ms. Courtney Hughes x4540 myinternational@nipissingu.ca
OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL OFFICE	T: 613-562-5820 F: 613-562-5100	Ms. Sophie Wauquier 613 562-5820 entrant@uOttawa.ca
QUEEN'S INTERNATIONAL CENTRE	T: 613-533-2815 F: 613-533-3159	Ms. Haley McCormick haley.mccormick@queensu.ca
RYERSON OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	T: 416-979-5026 F: 416-979-5352	Ms. Laura Morello rihelp@ryerson.ca
WATERLOO INTERNATIONAL	T: 519-888-4567 F: 519-725-9971	Ms. Tara Dosman studyabroad@uwaterloo.ca
WESTERN ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES	T: 519-661-2111 F: 519-661-3949	Ms. Ana Chiarelli goabroad@uwo.ca
WINDSOR INTERNATIONAL	T: 519-253-3000 F: 519-561-1472	Ms. Michelle Fitzgerald x3934 exchange@uwindsor.ca
YORK INTERNATIONAL	T: 416-736-5177 F: 416-736-5176	Ms. Glenda Lowndes 416-736-2100 x20060 exchange@yorku.ca
ORA PROGRAM OFFICE	T: 416-532-5492	Prof. Rosanna Furguele rfurguele@ouinternational.ca
	T: 416-736-2100 ext. 22919 F: 416-736-5709	Ms. Dagmar Todd x22919 dtodd@ouinternational.ca
	416 736 2100 ext. 40006	Ms. Agnes Poleszczuk x40006 apoleszczuk@ouinternational.ca

Appendix 2: Common Abbreviations

#	"Number Sign" (e.g., on a telephone or before a number)
9-1-1	"Nine-One-One": Common emergency number for police, fire, ambulance
CAD \$1.00 = 100¢	A nickel = 5¢; a dime = 10¢; a quarter = 25¢; \$1 = a buck (coin = a Loonie); \$2=two bucks (coin = a Toonie)
401	The Four-Oh-One: highway between Windsor and the Ontario / Québec border
a.m., am / p.m., pm	<i>Ante meridiem</i> : before noon / <i>Post meridiem</i> (after noon)
AD/CE	Anno Domini/ Common Era
ASAP	As Soon As Possible
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
BC / BCE	Before Christ / Before the Common Era
BYOB	Bring Your Own Bottle (drinks will not be supplied at a party)
CAA	Canadian Automobile Association
CBC / SRC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation / Société Radio-Canada
CBIE	Canadian Bureau for International Education
COD	Cash On Delivery (pay the delivery person for a package)
ESL / FSL	English as a Second Language / French as a Second Language
EST	Eastern Standard Time (time zone)
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
F/T	Full-Time (see P/T)
FYI	For Your Information
GA / RA / TA	Graduate Assistant / Research Assistant / Teaching Assistant
GPA	Grade Point Average
GTA	Greater Toronto Area (City of Toronto + surrounding municipalities)
HST	Harmonized Sales Tax; 13% in Ontario
ID	Identification (card)
ISC	International Student Centre
LCBO	Liquor Control Board of Ontario (beer, wine store)
LLBO	Liquor Licensing Board of Ontario
N/A	Not Available, Not Applicable (e.g. information on a form or survey)
NHL	National Hockey League
OHIP	Ontario Health Insurance Plan
OPP	Ontario Provincial Police
PJs	Pyjamas
P/T	Part-Time (see F/T)
PTO	Please Turn Over (the page)
Q&A	Question and Answer (session)
QEW	Queen Elizabeth Way (Highway from Toronto to Hamilton)
RCMP / GRC	Royal Canadian Mounted Police / Gendarmerie Royale du Canada
SIN	Social Insurance Number
TBA	To be announced
T.O.	Toronto
TTC	Toronto Transit Commission (public transit; buses, subways, streetcars)
UHIP / RAMU	University Health Insurance Plan / Régime d'Assurance Maladie Universitaire