

Distance Component

For many students throughout Northeastern Ontario an attractive feature of Laurentian's Humanities M.A. in Interpretation is its distance component. Traditionally, residency is an important way to insure that graduate students have concentrated time in an academic environment, with access to peers, supervisors, faculty members, and the library. Today, however, electronic media overcome much of the deficiency that distance education once presented in these areas. All courses in the program are offered to on-campus and distance students *at the same time* via **audio teleconference** link, and we are now experimenting in some courses with a videoconference link. (This is not a correspondence program.) Courses also set up computer networks to enable distance students to contribute to discussions with other students about the course. **Electronic mail** and **fax** capabilities speed up the exchange of written work between student and supervisor or professor. These resources are available to students at the Laurentian and Contact North learning centres spanning the north. In addition, a student with a personal computer and a modem can do much of her/his work from home for minimal phone line charges. Laurentian is part of a network involving Cambrian, Sault, Canadore, and Northern Colleges. Once local students set up computer accounts at one of these centres, they can gain access to the Laurentian computer at no cost. Instruction in basic techniques is provided by Laurentian's Computing and Telecommunication Services.

Students attend each class for 2 hours per week via teleconference and complete a 3rd hour per week for each class via e-mail. Please note: long distance charges are paid by Contact North for students in northern Ontario **ONLY**. Other students must pay their own line charges. To undertake the program realistically at a distance, students need a computer with an internet connection.

Research materials also are accessible through Laurentian's computer system. Via the **Internet**, for example, students have access to the catalogues of the major libraries of the world. There are on-line periodical databases which list holdings of thousands of journals, and which provide 24-hour fax services. Laurentian's J. N. Desmarais Library processes regular and interlibrary loan requests for distance students and ships the materials by priority post once they are ready, at no cost beyond regular interlibrary loan charges.