

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **How does the distance component work?**

We have a teleconference component only, and it is free for students living in Northern Ontario. The government of Ontario program Contact North covers your long distance charges. Students outside Northern Ontario are welcome to participate, but you must pay your own long distance charges. Each course involves a 3-hour teleconference class each week, and each course is 12 weeks long, so there are 36 hours of long distance per course. In addition, each course requires 1 hour per week of computer conferencing by electronic mail; therefore you need to have the appropriate computer equipment and an internet connections.

### **What background do I need?**

A 4-year degree in a Humanities discipline is the normal requirement, but students with other undergraduate degrees may be admitted, in some cases directly, in other cases after taking make-up courses in a Humanities discipline. Please click [admissions](#) for more details on possibilities. Essentially you need to demonstrate to us that you have achieved the [equivalent of our 4<sup>th</sup>-year learning objectives](#) (THIS IS THE PDF FOR FAQ).

### **What is special about the Practicum?**

The practicum is a unique feature of our program. Unlike the professional practicum or internship, in which the student is basically an apprentice, the HUMA practicum is essentially an exercise in “reading the world” – in other words, bringing Humanities thought into dialogue with the human world as it exists its social and cultural reality. In most cases, the student does indeed acquire valuable professional skills – in writing, communications, organizational skills on the textual and practical levels – as well as practical knowledge of how the world works. And the work done during a practicum often leads to employment as a result of those acquired skills and connections. But the student also learns how to reflect, analytically and theoretically, on the world in which s/he is engaged and how to hone her/his critical awareness of that world’s textual, discursive or rhetorical make-up. Given that each practicum is a unique encounter between an individual and an organization, pursued under the guidance of a specific academic supervisor, the practicum is always an intellectual adventure. For example, a student whose practicum is with a public school will likely learn much about the everyday problems of teaching and/or school administration, but may also be moved to reflect on specific challenges faced by teachers in the school system as it exists, or on sociocultural and political problems faced by the school system as a whole, or perhaps on educational theory in relation to Northern Ontario or Canadian society. The academic supervisor helps the student to focus his/her research interests and give direction to the reflective research that will result in a major research paper and a Colloquium presentation.

Our students have done practicums with a wide range of organizations in all sectors, from schools to non-profit community groups, from government ministries to MP constituency offices, from the Canadian Mental Health Association to Sudbury Cinéfest or the Théâtre du Nouvel Ontario. About 30 organizations have hosted practicum placements in the past, many of them repeatedly, and the list is growing.

### **How much does this program cost?**

Please see the appropriate section on [student fees](#).

**Is there any financial support?**

Full-time students are eligible for a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (approximate value \$6,750) and a Summer Fellowship (approximate value \$2,000). Applications received by the end of April will have first consideration for funding.

**Est-ce que je peux étudier en français?**

Laurentian University is officially bilingual. Students may submit written work in French, write a thesis in French, or pursue a practicum in a francophone milieu. However, at this point all courses are given in English, and all students must be competent in that language.

**I don't have a second language. How can I fulfil the language requirement?**

If you are Canadian, you have likely studied French. You can try the French-language exam upon entry into the program. If you are unsuccessful, you can take any first-year language course offered by Laurentian (French, Spanish, Italian, German, Greek, Latin, Ojibwe) at some point in your program. Many language courses are offered in the spring/summer session.

**I think I want to write an MA thesis, but I haven't yet got a clear idea about what.**

Writing thesis is an *option*, not a requirement of this program. The thesis option is especially suited to very self-motivated students with highly developed writing skills. During the first semester of your program, you can think about your germinal idea for a thesis, talk to various professors about it, and then decide whether you want to undertake such a project. Work on the thesis normally begins in the second semester of your first year in the program.

**My undergraduate degree is in a particular discipline. If I choose the thesis option, must I do a thesis in the discipline of my undergrad background?**

No, you can choose in consultation with your supervisor the kind of thesis you would like to write. Depending on your interests, you may want to write an **interdisciplinary** thesis, or you may prefer to do a **single-disciplinary** thesis.