**LINGO for Students Thinking About**

**University or College**

Academic Year

 

**Def:** An expression normally used to describe the period between the start of the Fall session (September) and the end of the Winter session (April).

There are three ways that universities/colleges organize their year:

**Full year programs**

* Courses run the full length of the academic year (from September to April).
* Some courses have two parts: part A from September to December and part B from January to April.

**Semestered programs**

* Semester one is from September to December
* Semester two is January to April

\*\*Some programs require students to take classes that run the full length of the year, and courses that only run one semester. It is important to look at the class start date and end date to know how long your class will run.

**Trimestered programs**

* The school year is divided in to three parts. September-December, January-April, and May-August. At the college level, these programs are often labeled “intensive” and students often have previous experience in the field before being admitted to them. For example, Algonquin offers an intensive Early Childhood Education program that requires students to attend class for 35 consecutive weeks in a row.

**Certificates, Degrees and Diplomas**

**1. Certificate:** Issued if a student completes a series of courses in one subject matter (e.g. 1 year programs at Algonquin are offered in General Arts and Science that provide students with a certificate in a particular subject area. There are also certificates that students can take only after they have completed previous postsecondary study)

**2. Diploma:** Diplomas are often 2 year college programs and are issued when students complete further study in a field at a college.

**3. Bachelor’s Degree:** Otherwise known as *undergraduate* degree. A Bachelor’s degree is a document students receive when they have successfully completed a three or four year university program.

**4. Bachelor’s Degree with Honours:** Also known as an *undergraduate degree.* A document students’ receive after completing a four year university program, including a special course that is designed for that particular program. Sometimes this course is an independent research project or a thesis and is supervised by a professor in the student’s department.

After their first year, most students specialize in one or two subject areas.

* **Honours Bachelor’s Degree with Specialization:** Degree received after completing a program requiring in-depth training in a single area or in an variety of areas with a minimum amount of courses the area of specialization.
* **Major**: Area of focus requiring students to complete a minimum number of courses in a single discipline. You can choose a major when registered in both a 3 year Bachelor’s Degree and a Bachelor’s Degree with Honours.
* **Double Major**: Requires students to complete a minimum number of courses in two areas of study.
* **Minor:** Are of focus requiring students to complete a minimum number of courses in a single discipline. Requires less courses than a Major.
* **Double Minor**: Requires students to complete a minimum number of courses in two areas of study.

**5. Master's Degree:** Usually a two year full time program. It usually requires a honours bachelor's degree as a prerequisite.

**6. Doctorate Degree:** The highest academic degree offered. Usually it requires a bachelor's degree and a master's degree to qualify. It involves a thesis and may involve courses. It is available in most programs (history, geography, etc.) but is not available at every university.

**7. Professional Degrees:** There are a number of professional degrees such as: Medicine, Law, Pharmacy, Optometry, Dentistry, Engineering, Chartered Accountant, Nursing, Chiropractor, etc. The prerequisite is often a bachelor's degree thus they are often referred to as graduate programs.

Faculties and programs (University Only)

When choosing a program, it is important to understand where it fits in relation to the university structure. Universities are organized differently than high school. The easiest way to understand the structure of a university is to visualize the structure of a house!

**The house** itself (the frame that contains the rooms that hold people and things) is the university itself.

Inside the house **are rooms**. Rooms are the different Faculties at the university. Faculties are streams of study and include Arts, Social Sciences, Sciences, Engineering etc. Faculties are made up of different departments or programs.



**The stuff** that rooms hold. Rooms hold stuff. Similarly, faculties hold programs. For example, the Faculty of Engineering holds Mechanical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Biomedical Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering etc. house can be compared to faculties at a university.

Registering for Courses: Understanding Program Requirements and Credits

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**What are program requirements? Do I need to know about them??!!**

Your program requirements describe the specific courses and the number of credits required for you to graduate from your program of choice.

You are responsible for ensuring you are complete all the requirements for your program of choice.

There is **no guidance counselor** to **chase you down** if you are missing coop hours or a required credit!!

**I don’t know anything about credits!!!**

Similar to earning your high school diploma, colleges and universities require you to earn a certain number of credits to graduate. Also similar to your high school diploma where you were required to take compulsory courses (4 credits in English, 3 credits in Math, 2 in Science etc) and elective credits (optional courses), your university or college diploma or degree requires you to take a number of compulsory courses and a number of elective courses. These courses vary depending on the program you are in.

**How do I find out what credits I need to take?!!**

You should receive an email or a letter indicating which courses to take or, with a link to a website that explains how to register and your program requirements. If all else fails, type in the name of your postsecondary institution and “undergraduate course calendar” into google and you can search for your program (i.e. Carleton undergraduate course calendar”).

**How do I “read” course codes?**

Similar to high school, college and university courses have course codes. It is important to become aware of how to read these codes to decipher which credits you need to register for in each year of your program.

Reading College Course Codes

* Often start with letters that indicate the course they represent. Most colleges will create a timetable for you – this means you don’t have to register for classes.
* However, you should make sure your timetable matches the courses you are required to take for your diploma or certificate.

Reading University Course Codes

Reading Course Codes

* University credits that begin with a 100 are first year or first level classes
* University credits that begin with 200 are second year or second level classes
* University credits that begin with 300 are third year or third level classes
* Begin with 400 = 4th year
* Begin with 500 = Graduate level courses

Half vs. Full Year Courses

* Many university programs require students to take courses that run the entire year, and courses that are only one semester long
* You can tell if the course is a half credit course or a full credit course by the value placed beside the course.



VS.



**Carleton Credits vs. Ottawa U Credits…more complexity!?**

* Another important note to take is that different universities place different values on courses
* Carleton, for example, calculates each single semester course as a half credit (if you take 5 courses in one semester, you will earn 1.5 credits, because each course is worth 0.5). At Carleton, you are therefore required to take 5 credits a year and 20 credits to graduate (these requirements are made up of courses that run one semester and courses that run the entire academic year.
* Ottawa U, however, requires students to complete 120 credits (each course is worth 6 credits).

**Types of classes: Lectures, Tutorials/Discussion Groups and seminars**

**There are three different types of classes at university:**

1. Lectures: Lectures are classes where professors ‘lecture’ about a specific topic to a large group of students. Lectures are often accompanied by break-out sessions where students break into smaller discussion groups or tutorials to review the information conveyed in class. If you are registering for a lecture, make sure to check to see whether you also need to register for the discussion group or

tutorial.

Example of what ANTHRO 1001 Lecture looks like on carleton central:



1. Discussion Groups/Tutorials: See description above.

Example of what ANTHRO 1001 Tutorial/Discussion Group looks like on Carleton Central:



1. Seminars: Are classes focused on a special topic and are characterized by small-sizes. Students are expected to actively participate in discussions and lead portions of the class. All first year students are required to take one first year seminar at Carleton and at UOttawa.

Example of what a First Year Seminar looks like on Carleton Central:



**Registration**

* It is important to register as soon as you are able to. Classes fill up quickly and this makes it difficult to build a conflict-free timetable.
* You should receive an email or a letter indicating your registration date and time. This is the date and time you are able to begin registering for classes, and is usually between May and June.
* Carleton students – Log on to <https://central.carleton.ca/> to begin building your timetable - make sure you register for both fall and winter classes for courses that are full credit courses (i.e. Anthro 1001 [0.1]). Many classes also have tutorials or Discussion Groups which you are required to register for in addition to the lecture.
* UOttawa Students – Log on to Rabaska to register for your courses. You can login by going to <http://www.uottawa.ca/en/students>
* Algonquin Students – Your timetable will be put together for you. You should be able to access a copy of it by mid August through <https://acsis.algonquincollege.com/students/>
* La Cite creates your timetable for you. Logon to the student portail at <https://www3.lacitec.on.ca/> to access your timetable

**Difficulties…**

Administrative Holds

* You may get a registration warning if you are trying to register for a course you do not have the prerequisites for, or if you are trying to register for a course that has limited number of seats and is not mandatory for your degree

Prerequisites

* University and college courses have prerequisites, just like high school courses
* In high school, you couldn’t take a grade 10 English without first taking a grade 9 English, right? Same goes for university and college courses
* You may run into trouble if you try to register for a 200 level course, without having taken the 100 level course in that discipline, or, if that course has a limited number of spaces and will not work towards your degree
* For example, you cannot register for a 200 level anthropology course without first taking the 100 level introductory anthropology class. Also, you cannot take a 100 level Architecture course if you are not in the architecture program as there are a limited number of spaces and they are reserved for students in the program. However, programs with a larger capacity (psychology, sociology, anthropology, history etc) often allow students in different disciplines to take a course as an elective
* You can email or call the registrar’s office if you would like to request an exception to be admitted to that course.

Timetable Conflicts

* Because you are in charge of creating your schedule, you will have to make sure to avoid scheduling two classes at the same time. If there are no options and you need to get into a class section that is full, you should contact the registrar’s office.

Registration Support

* Most universities offer free registration support sessions where you will receive one-on-one support building your timetable.
* Go to your school website and search for registration support to book a time to get assistance.

**List of Terms – Other**

**Course Calendars for College/University**

Each school publishes a calendar listing all the programs and courses offered by the school. It also includes information such as: admission requirements, fees, admission policies, etc. This information is also posted on their web sites.

**Joint/Collaborative Programs**

This is a program that is offered by both universities and colleges. It provides the benefits of applied knowledge through college and theory-based university environment. The student receives both a diploma and a degree. The program can start in college or start in university.

**Co-operative Education**

It is a combination of academic study (courses) and paid supervised work terms. Unlike high school, you do not get actual credits for it, but you are paid. The work terms may be for 4, 8 or 12 months. Internship is similar, but usually just involves the summer months.

**Distance Education**

The student and teacher communicate via correspondence courses, the Internet, audiotapes, cable television broadcasts, or satellite hook-ups.

**Residence**

Many students will live at home while attending university. Others will live in rented accommodation. In the first year, many students will choose to live in university residence. In university residence you may share a room or have your own single room. It usually involves shared washrooms, laundry rooms, kitchenette and a recreation room (T.V.). A variety of meal plans are available at cafeterias and fast food vendors.

**Scholarships and Bursaries**

Scholarships are free money awarded to attract outstanding students to a university. Usually the decision is based on marks. Bursaries are also free money. They are based on criteria like: need, extra-curricular involvement, volunteer work, association with organizations or employers.

**Tuition**

Tuition is the amount of money paid to the university for you to attend. In addition to the tuition there will be additional fees for things like: student extra-curricular activities, library use, administrative fees.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN UNVERSITIES AND COLLEGES**

 **COLLEGE UNIVERSITY**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Accreditation** | Graduates earn a diploma 2-3 years | Graduates earn a degree 3-4 years |
| **2. Type of program** | Most programs are designed to prepare the graduate for a type of work or profession. Examples: nurse, photographer, law enforcement, etc | Most undergraduate programs are subject based. Examples: English, biology, sociology, etc. |
| **3. Course Load** | The student must take all the subjects in a program. There are usually 10-15 courses. Many of the courses have a practical component (laboratory, work experience, shop, hands on). | The student chooses from a great variety of subjects according to his/her prerequisites and interests. Most students take five courses at a time. |
| **4. Instructors** | Instructor's qualifications are based on their experience and knowledge in the field of study. Most have diplomas, but degrees are not usually required. | Instructors are often required to have at least a master's degree and be working towards a doctorate degree. Experience in the workplace may not be required. |