

# THE CORD

THE TIE THAT BINDS WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY SINCE 1926

VOLUME 99 ISSUE 1 • SEPTEMBER 4, 2025

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AND DIVISIVE”**

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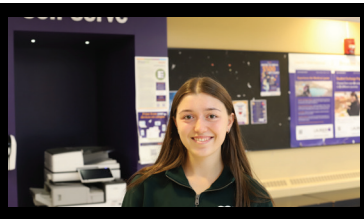
*What are your expectations for school this year?*



"I am going to focus on applying for grad school. I am looking to do a masters in Public Health" - Leah, 4A Health



"I am originally from St. Clairs, I'd like to know about the differences between college and university" - Derius, 1A Communications



"I'm expecting to meet a lot of people and just have a blast... learning and growing as a person" - Taylor, 1A Kinesiology



"The exceptions are very high! My sister went here for four years, she highly recommended it" - Madhav 1A BBA

## THE CORD



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### PHOTO OF THE MONTH



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/SANGJUN HAN  
Far East Asian Market at Downtown Kitchener

# THE CORD

THE TIE THAT BINDS WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY SINCE 1926

Dear Life is your opportunity to write a letter to life, allowing you to vent your anger with life's little frustrations in a completely public form. All submissions to Dear Life are anonymous, should be no longer than 100 words and must be addressed to your life. Submissions will be minimally edited for grammar, spelling or punctuation. All submissions must be sent to the QR code by **September 22** to be featured in our December issue.



### CORD'S PLAYLIST FOR SEPTEMBER

Gotta get Up// Harry Nilsson

Sinner // The Last Dinner Party

the cool // Oso Oso

Australia// The Shins

Freaking out the Neighbourhood// Mac DeMarco

She's American// The 1975

12:51// The Strokes

Archie, Marry Me// Always

Summer Salt// Summer Salt

Authority// Doctor Dog

September// Earth, Wind and Fire

Morning Glory// Oasis

Have You Seen Me Lately// Counting Crows

It's Easy// Avro Arrows

Linger// The Cranberries

Doomsday// Lizzy McAlpine

Halloween// Novo Amor

Vertigo// Griff

Supercut// Lorde

Playlist created by Radio Laurier



#### NEXT ISSUE OCTOBER 2, 2025

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#### EDITOR'S CHOICE

"Even watching lectures at double the speed or skipping dialogue in video games for the sake of convenience points to a selective attention span rather than a diminished one. When students perceive an activity as meaningful, they can sustain their focus just as effectively as ever." - Birnavan Varnacumaaran.

#### ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

All advertising inquiries can be directed to Ayden Elworthy at ads@wlusp.com or (226) 789 4102.

#### COLOPHON

The Cord is the official student newspaper of the Wilfrid Laurier University community. Started in 1926 as the College Cord, The Cord is an editorially independent newspaper published by Wilfrid Laurier University Student Publications, Waterloo, a corporation without share capital. WLUSP is governed by its board of directors. Opinions expressed within The Cord are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board, The Cord, WLUSP, WLU or Master Web Printing Inc. All content appearing in The Cord bears the copyright expressly of their creator(s) and may not be used without written consent. The Cord is created using Macintosh computers running OS X 12.5 using Adobe Creative Cloud. Canon cameras are used

for principal photography. The Cord has been a proud member of the Ontario Press Council since 2006. Any unsatisfied complaints can be sent to the council at info@ontpress.com. The only limits of any newspaper are those of the world around it, and so The Cord will attempt to cover its world with a special focus on Wilfrid Laurier University, and the community of Kitchener-Waterloo, and with a special ear to the concerns of the students of Wilfrid Laurier University. Ultimately, The Cord will be bound by neither philosophy nor geography in its mandate. The Cord has an obligation to foster freedom of the press and freedom of speech. This obligation is best fulfilled when debate and dissent are encouraged, both in the internal workings of the paper, and through The Cord's contact with the student body. The Cord will always attempt to do what is right, with fear of neither repercussions, nor retaliation. The purpose of the student press is to act as an agent of social awareness, and so shall conduct the affairs of our newspaper.

#### PREAMBLE

The Cord will keep faith with its readers by presenting news and expressions of opinions comprehensively, accurately and fairly. The Cord believes in a balanced and impartial presentation of all relevant facts in a news report, and of all substantial opinions in a matter of controversy. The staff of The Cord shall uphold all commonly held ethical conventions of journalism. When an error of omission or of commission has occurred, that error shall be acknowledged promptly. When statements are made that are critical of an individual, or an organization, we shall give those affected the opportunity to

#### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge that Wilfrid Laurier University Publications is located on the Haldimand tract, traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. This land is part of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty between the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe peoples. We recognize, honour and respect these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and water on which Student Publications is now present.

Cover made by Photo Editor Vraj Pandya, Creative Director Rytham Sahni and Editor-in-Chief Bronte Behling.





REMEMBRANCE

Honouring those affected by Residential Schools

Reconciliation Day is an annual event to commemorate Indigenous victims



CLARA ROSE  
LEAD REPORTER

September 30th, 2025, is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, celebrated throughout Canada. Known also as Orange Shirt Day, September 30th is a day to commemorate and reflect on the tragedy of residential schools, as well as the ongoing impacts of trauma inflicted against many Indigenous communities. Truth and Reconciliation Day is an annual event held to reconcile Canada's relationship with its Indigenous population. For years, the Canadian Government worked to assimilate any Indigenous culture into the Western ideal, building residential schools, taking Indigenous children away from families, and introducing racist narratives of

Indigenous savagery and uncleanness. Though the Indigenous community still stands proudly today, the aggressive colonization of their culture is still felt in intense waves of generational trauma. Education around assimilation of the Indigenous community is still lacking in many Canadian school curriculums around the country, this article only contains a brief synopsis of the systemic abuse curated by the Government and ignored by our society, readers are recommended to take the time to expand their knowledge around this topic via academic articles, or through Laurier's own variety of Indigenous-centric courses. "I think it's fair to say that Canadian governments have taken good first steps towards reconciliation, specifically in terms of implementing Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing into education." Said Dr. John Lewis, Director of Indigenous Faculty Relations at the Office of Indigenous Relations at the University of Waterloo. "However, what has been done so far are first steps - there's still much that needs to be done to address recon-

ciliation in Canadian education. Wilfrid Laurier University and the surrounding Waterloo-Kitchener region proudly celebrate Orange Shirt Day in many ways.



CLARA ROSE/ LEAD REPROTER

Students are invited to don their own orange apparel throughout the campus. Orange Shirt Day was directly inspired by one Phyllis Webstad, who was only six years old when she was taken from her

family and sent to a residential school, she recounts the memory of having been stripped from her clothes, including an orange shirt gifted by her grandmother, the orange shirt stands as a symbol for the many children like Webstad who survived residential schools, and refuse to relinquish their identity. The Indigenous culture is one of celebration, and so, the University of Waterloo hosts a variety of events throughout the school year. This upcoming September 27th marks the 22nd anniversary of the Gidinawendamin/Ska'nikú•lát annual Pow Wow, a non-competitive event filled with Indigenous vendors, dancers, and singers local to Waterloo and beyond. The Pow Wow is open to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals; all are welcome to gather at the University's outdoor field and join in the commemoration of Indigenous music, art, and dance. There are a few events scheduled for Reconciliation Day itself, students are invited to watch an assortment of ceremonies throughout the day, such as the Sunrise

Ceremony, the Commitment Polishing Ceremony, the annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Remarks and Walk around Ring Road, before finishing the day with a Drumming and Round Dance, all information can be found on the UW Office of Indigenous Relations website regarding time, and location. "The University of Waterloo's commitment to reconciliation includes educating our students, faculty and staff about First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, and the ongoing effects of colonization and the residential school system." Continued Lewis, "The events on Orange Shirt Day are a reminder of that commitment and of the University's collective responsibility towards reconciliation." As a Canadian citizen, it is essential to understand the heritage from which you came. Although it is a time of reconciliation, it is also a time of listening and education. Remember to wear an orange shirt and stand proud with your Indigenous community as September dawns on the school year.

Student Union is back with their Club Fair season

Students are invited to Laurier's Clubs Fair during orientation week by the SU



CLARA ROSE  
LEAD REPORTER

As the newest school year begins, Wilfrid Laurier University has the utmost pleasure of inviting its next wave of first years onto its campus. The month of September is an intense and confusing period for first-year university students. With a huge array of resources at your fingertips, it can be overwhelming when figuring out where to begin. Throughout the University experience, it is important to involve yourself in the Laurier community; one of the ways to do so is through the abundance of clubs and communities to be found on and off campus. This upcoming semester, students are invited to Laurier's very own Clubs Fair during Orientation Week in September. Run by the Student Union, first-year students are encouraged to get involved with our wide variety of clubs and associations. There is a club for every person, from academics to general interests. There are many benefits and opportunities available through

clubs; most students wanting to join a co-op are highly recommended to have at least one or two to help bolster a resume. Not only that but involving oneself in the Laurier community is a great way to meet new people and expand one's social base. "I was a marketing exec for a club I was in called Women in Leadership Laurier (WIL)." Said Katrina Brady, Vice President of Clubs & Associations at Laurier.

"I was able to connect with like-minded women who were invested in business, and I was able to bring together women who wanted to connect while using my marketing degree. It's an opportunity to use experiences in the future." With more than 250 student-run organizations, finding the perfect club to suit your interests is that much easier. Film enthusiasts may enjoy clubs such as Film Makers of

Laurier or WLU Film Society. Those looking for a diverse community space can find their place in clubs such as the Chinese Student Association, the Laurier Autism Awareness Society, the Laurier Pride Society, and a wide variety of clubs dedicated to those who align with various minorities. From the Bhakti Yoga and Mindfulness club to the Alzheimer's Society, there are endless examples of interesting clubs and activities to participate

in throughout the school year. "Our facility associations offer program-based opportunities that allow their students to really do club-based work in the field of their interest." Said by Ryan Jobby, President and CEO of the Student Union, "The synonymous component of all of it is the soft skills you develop, it's stuff that will carry forward in your professional environment." Hosted in the Laurier Athletic Complex, students will walk through an assortment of booths advertising clubs, sports, and the variety of fraternities running around the Laurier campus. The Cord Newspaper will have a table, and those interested in a world of journalism, photography, and radio are highly encouraged to attend. Though it may seem daunting, involving yourself in the Laurier community is one of the most fulfilling things in a school experience, all the way until the days of being a Laurier alumnus. The club fair is not only a way to join your community, but to actively participate in it. "Go for an hour and scope, have that personal connection upfront. Even if you just come, grab a sticker, and learn a little more about a club. Those intentional conversations are what's important. Go in, explore, and try one thing." Said Brady.



CLARA ROSE/ LEAD REPROTER



LOCAL

# East Asian market makes a comeback this year

*Far East Asian cuisine & culture returned to the City of Kitchener for a second year hosted by BIA*



SANGJUN HAN  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

On Aug. 17, 2025, the City of Kitchener hosted its second annual Far East Asian Night Market at the east end of downtown.

The Downtown Kitchener Business Improvement Area (BIA), a non-profit organization that provides marketing, event support, and street beautification in Kitchener, organized this event. The festival featured more than 50 food and retail vendors, family entertainment, a photo-booth, drop-in workshops and a karaoke room. The event not only highlighted Asian traditions but also boosted economic activity in downtown Kitchener. Food stalls offered everything from Takoyaki to Vietnamese iced coffee, while retail vendors showcased hand-made crafts and cultural goods.

"We want to be the first in Waterloo Region to do an Asian Night Market, and they pulled this off," said Linda Jutzi, executive director of the Downtown Kitchener BIA. "What a fantastic job they've done. What visionaries they are."

The entertainment lineup, curated by Good Company Productions, featured live music, DJs and traditional performances, blending cultural traditions with the feel of a late-night street party. Eventgoers took part in workshops and inter-

active activities, while young adults crowded around karaoke stages and live performances from groups including Haebeat Dance Group, KW Breakers, Waterloo Kung-Fu Lion Dance Team, Korea Town Acid and the Robert Lee Group.

"I've travelled around the world to many night markets, including those in the Greater Toronto Area," said an event organizer who addressed the crowd. "A lot of times this is the east end of Kitchener, and we don't get a lot of love down here."

However, the night market's popularity came with challenges. By mid-evening, some vendors had sold out, and long lines stretched down King Street. It wasn't the first time organizers had to adapt. Last year, heavy rain forced much of the event indoors at the Kitchener Market, highlighting the difficulties of staging larger outdoor festivals in unpredictable August weather.

Kitchener's Far East Asian Night Market reflects a cultural shift in Canada. Night markets are a tradition in East and Southeast Asian cultures and have gained popularity in major Canadian cities such as Toronto and Vancouver. Now, mid-sized cities like Kitchener are embracing the trend.

As the festival continues to grow, organizers face the challenge of balancing demand with accessibility. Organizers are already considering expanding to more streets, adding vendors and improving crowd management. For now, the market remains a summer highlight in Waterloo Region, one that captures both the energy of a night out and the warmth of a community celebration.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/SANGJUN HAN



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/SANGJUN HAN

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# Dear Life

Dear Life,  
Red Orange is the worst and the colour of fruit orange is fine and other orange is fine

Dear Life,  
Brooklyn 99 is leaving Netflix. I do not know what to do in life.

## FAR EAST ASIAN MARKET PHOTO SPREAD

Photos by SangJun Han





CAMPUS

# Forever a Golden Hawk: Laurier's football legacy

*Donation will be used for new endowed professorship in voice and choral music education*

ADAH POZZOBON  
OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

For many high school students, choosing a university can feel overwhelming. Just one more decision in a whirlwind of applications, deadlines, and uncertainty. But for some of us, the choice comes naturally. For me, that school was Wilfrid Laurier. From the moment I visited the campus, I felt it. The sense of community, the welcoming spirit, and the undeniable pride carried by generations of Laurier alumni. That same pride runs deeply in my family.

The photo here captures three men, two of them Wilfrid Laurier alumni and all of them passionate football players. On the left is my uncle Mike McMahon, who suited up for the Golden Hawks from 1966 to 1970. In the middle is my uncle Ed McMahon, who played from 1974 to 1977. Their legacy at Laurier is part of why I knew this place was for me, and I couldn't be happier that I became a Golden Hawk.

The man on the right is my grandfather, Jim McMahon. Although he wasn't a Golden Hawk, his Varsity Blues won the very first Vanier Cup in 1965. He, like his brothers, carried a lifelong passion for football. For the McMahons, the game was never just about the scoreboard; it was about family and brotherhood. That bond carried from Port Credit High School, where all three brothers were all-stars, to the university fields where they each made their mark.

Mike's legacy at Laurier is one of leadership and firsts. He became the program's first-ever All-Canadian in 1969, a three-time team captain, and a provincial most valuable player. He helped Laurier capture two provincial championships and, decades later, was named captain of Laurier's "Team of the Century." He was inducted into the Golden Hawk Hall of Fame in 1987, later returned as a coach, and remained a lifelong supporter of the program. Laurier Athletics described him best after his passing in 2022: "Mike left a legacy at Laurier through his contributions and dedication as a former student-athlete, coach, and Golden Hawks Hall of Fame inductee. He will truly be missed."

Ed, too, carried that Golden Hawk pride long after his own playing years. As a linebacker, he wore number 52, just one number away from Jim (53) and Mike (54). After graduating, he went on to serve as president of the Laurier Letterman's Club and received the award for "Person Contributing the Most to Athletics." But when he reflects, it isn't the stats or trophies that stand out most. "Laurier football meant everything to me as a 19 to 22-year-old," Ed says. "My teammates were not teammates, we were brothers, and we fought hard in every game as we tried to be the number one team in the country."

That sense of brotherhood is the heart of Laurier football. It's what makes Homecoming so special. Every fall, Laurier alumni return



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/ADAH POZZOBON

not just to watch a game, but to reconnect with teammates who became family. For Ed, who still hasn't missed a Homecoming game, the weekend is about reliving that bond. For current students like me, it's about seeing firsthand the pride that carries across generations.

Homecoming is more than purple and gold parades or cheering from the bleachers. It's about the way Laurier pulls people back

together. Graduates, current students, faculty, and families, to remind us of what it means to belong here. It's about celebrating legacies like Mike's, honouring contributions like Ed's, and embracing the community that makes Laurier feel like home. For my family, that tradition is deeply personal. It's the stories I grew up hearing, the pride I saw in my uncles' voices, and the reason I felt instantly at home when I first stepped onto campus.

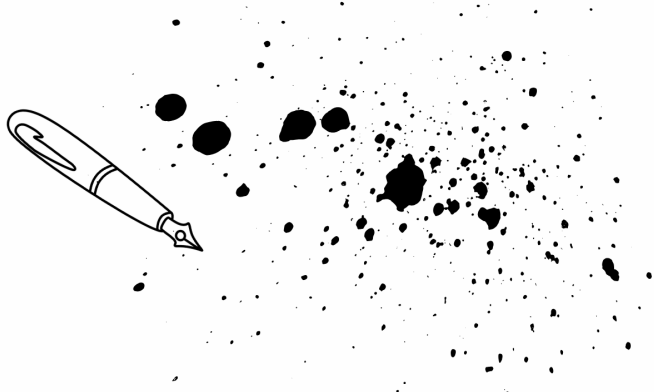
For others, it's the lifelong friendships, the unforgettable games, and the shared sense of belonging. Homecoming isn't just a celebration of football; it's a celebration of family. Both the one you're born into and the one you find at Laurier. And that's why, for my family and so many others, we will forever be Golden Hawks. For the love of the game, and the love of Wilfrid Laurier University.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/ADAH POZZO-

## THE CORD

THE TIE THAT BINDS WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY SINCE 1926



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ARTS & LIFE EDITOR  
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# Nabokov's *Lolita* serves as a controversial classic



From the outset, *Lolita* was banned in several countries, including France, England and Argentina. Its notoriety came not only from Humbert's criminal actions but also from Nabokov's choice to give him a witty, seductive voice that forces readers to

In reading *Lolita*, I found it less a tale of romance than a chilling study in control and delusion. Humbert is persuasive because he is eloquent, but that eloquence makes his predation even more disturbing. The novel works not by glorifying him but by forcing us



was like the composition of a beautiful puzzle, its composition and its solution at the same time." For him, the novel was a carefully

*Lolita* may be disturbing, but its disturbance is its purpose. It remains a work of profound literary and cultural significance, one that should be read, debated, and challenged, but never silenced.



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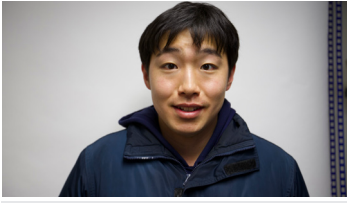


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# Ontario's Bill 33 offers more power to the C



SANGJUN HAN  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Bill 33 offers more power to the premier's office over school boards while tightening oversight of children's aid societies, colleges, and universities, under new legislation introduced by the Ontario government on May 29.

The Supporting Children and Students Act, 2025, Bill 33, would amend four major laws - including the Education Act and the Child, Youth and Family Services Act.

First, Bill 33 introduces new administrative and fiscal oversight measures for children's aid societies, such as providing information about the

Ombudsman to children and youth, reviewing by-laws and making them available to the public, obtaining ministerial approval for financial decisions that impact approved budgets, and expanding the definition of "institution" to include maternity homes.

It also makes changes to the residing Education Act, where there will be more ministerial oversight and new cooperation requirements for Ontario school boards, with requirements such as: submitting to increased ministerial authority, where the education minister has more supremacy to investigate school boards, issue binding directives to the public, and establish guidelines on board expenses. Other requirements include obtaining ministerial approval for the name of

a new school or changing the name of an existing school, collaborating with police services on school programming, and implementing internal audits conducted by the ministry to enhance financial accountability.

Scott Miller, director of education for the Waterloo Region District School Board, said the board will continue to work with local police and the community if the legislation passes.

"The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) prioritizes safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning environments for all students," Miller said. "As a school board, we work closely with the Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS) to support the safety and well-being of WRDSB school communities. Bill 33 is still under review

but if the bill is passed, we will continue to engage thoughtfully with our community partners, staff, students, parents, and families to ensure decisions reflect the needs and values of WRDSB school communities."

Beyond K-12 schools, the bill also targets Ontario's colleges and universities.

The Bill also amends the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities Act, focusing on admissions practices, research security, and fee regulations. They plan to implement publicly accessible, merit-based admission standards, with details to be defined through regulation, develop and implement research security plans to safeguard and mitigate the risk of harm to or interference with research activities, and comply with government

regulations regarding ancillary student fees, which may restrict fee structures and affect funding for student services.

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities also received a new name, the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security. This change, along with the new requirements for colleges and universities to develop and implement research security plans, reflects heightened governmental focus on research security.

"At this point, the university, along with our Ontario post-secondary education peers, is closely monitoring the legislative discussion of the proposed Bill 33 and its potential impacts on universities," said Aonghus Kealy, Communications and Media Relations Officer at Wilfrid Laurier



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/ABDULLAH ZAFAR



# Govt. in Education sector than the students



ONTARIO GOVERNMENT BUILDING

**“On governance, the province should explicitly preserve Senate authority over academic matters and commit to meaningful consultation with students, not just anonymous surveys,”**  
**- Bruce Gillespie, President of the Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty Association (WLUFA)**

University.

Bruce Gillespie, President of the Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty Association (WLUFA), emphasizes that there are more risks involved in this bill than benefits.

“It centralizes control over admissions, enables ministerial directives for research security, and broadens authority over student fees,” said Gillespie. “Universities already publish admission standards and safeguard research; layering new

directives and fee control adds red tape and cost without fixing chronic underfunding.”

He added that the bill will burden staff and students at post-secondary institutions such as Laurier.

“It increases compliance workload and puts student-funded services at risk, while the real issue—operating funding—goes unaddressed,” said Gillespie.

He also explains that if provincial rules destabi-

lize student-funded services (from peer supports to transit and campus media), the unmet need doesn’t disappear; it shows up in classrooms and office hours. Faculty across ranks, and especially contract faculty, will end up doing more informal advising, crisis triage, and support with fewer resources.

Gillespie said he opposed the bill, arguing it undermines the autonomy of admissions and fees, risks weakening

equity initiatives, and expands oversight that bypasses normal scrutiny, without improving teaching, research, or student supports. He hopes that Bill 33 will either remove or substantially amend the bill to protect equity-based admissions in statute, avoid fee controls that destabilize student services, and provide transparent, consultative research-security guidance.

“On governance, the province should ex-

plicitly preserve Senate authority over academic matters and commit to meaningful consultation with students, not just anonymous surveys,” said Gillespie.

As Bill 33 moves through legislative debate, its impact on Ontario’s education and child welfare systems remains a central concern for educators, administrators, and policymakers alike.



LIZZDREW TAKE ON THE ‘LOO

# Waterloo’s Hot Pot Hot Spot:Qing Shu Hot Pot

ANDREW EATON  
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

ELIZABETH MENDEZ  
ARTS CONTRIBUTOR

LizzDrew Take on the ‘Loo Edition 14: Hot Pot Hot Spot

Hey Golden Hawks. Your favorite friendly foodies are back this year with more reviews, more humour, and even more good eats!

We wanted to start this year off strong and visit a place we knew would be good, cheap, and within walking distance—perfect for any university student not wanting to cook after just moving in but craving something personal and packed with flavor. That’s why, for our September issue, we decided to review Qing Shu Hot Pot for some yummy Malatang, a popular Chinese Street food, at 160 University Ave W.

The name of the game at this fine establishment is customization: every meal is fully customizable, meaning you get to choose what goes in and the final price point. Not big on sharing? No sweat! This hot-pot style cuisine is great if you love a hearty soup but tend to lean overall “Joey doesn’t share food” thing.

As such, the specifics of what your reviewers put in the soup are not clear, a testament to the variety of options available. What we can say for certain is that Lizzie got the Pork Bone soup, whilst Andrew got the Spicy Beef Bone soup (the better of the two). From there, they filled it up with a vast mountain of vegetables (lettuce, potatoes and

mushrooms, etc), proteins and seafoods, dumplings, noodles, and much, much more.

To be frank, these dishes were absolutely delicious, packing incredible amounts of flavor into each bite. A perfect harmony of spicy and savory, it did not disappoint and scored high on the food coma probability scale (it nearly put Lizzie down for the count!).

Aside from food coma-inducing goodness, another that stands out at Qing Shu is the pricing, as two large bowls with plenty of food go for a very reasonable ~\$35. Especially when considering each soup could easily be stretched to two meals, that price point can’t be beaten when it comes to quality hot pot.

In summary, this quaint and intimate restaurant is a great place to bring a friend and indulge in soup that warms the heart and fills the belly. Grab some friends, fill your bowls, and play a fan-favorite prediction game by guessing how much your bill will come to and seeing how close you can get. And if you do, remember to let them know that LizzDrew sent you!

Here’s our ratings: Ambiance: 8 out of 10 - Drinks: 8 out of 10 - Food: 9.5 out of 10 - Affordability: 9 out of 10



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY SHERYL MADAKKAI/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF







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LIZZDREW TAKE ON THE ‘LOO

# Let’s make: Taylor Swift’s Chai cookies



In many ways, September is a time of transition. This month not only marks the beginning of a new academic year, but also the changing of seasons. While some of us use this time to soak in the last sunny days of summer, others (me included) are anxiously awaiting the first signs of autumn. In the spirit of the season, I’ve decided to share a recipe that was created by fellow home baker and autumn enthusiast, Taylor Swift.

Here’s what you’ll need to make these chai sugar cookies:

- Oven
- Baking sheets
- Bowls
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- 1 stick (½ cup) of unsalted butter
- ½ cup of vegetable oil
- ½ cup of granulated sugar
- ½ cup of powdered sugar
- 1 egg

2 teaspoons of vanilla extract  
2 cups of all-purpose flour  
½ teaspoon of baking soda  
¼ teaspoon of salt  
1 chai tea bag  
Start by lining a few baking sheets with parchment paper and preheating your oven to 350F. In a medium-sized bowl mix together your softened butter, vegetable oil, and both sugars.

Pro Tip: make sure your butter and egg are at room temperature, as this will ensure that they blend smoothly with the other ingredients, achieving a homogeneous mixture (which is always the goal in baking!).

Once the mixture is creamy and light yellow in color, add in your egg and vanilla extract. Mix until light and fluffy. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda, and salt. While sifting is not absolutely necessary, it is recommended, as this technique helps eliminate any clumps in the dry ingredients and helps produce a pillowy final texture. Next, cut open the chai tea bag and add the contents to your bowl.

Substitution: if you don’t drink chai tea but still crave the cozy flavor, try this homemade spice blend - 1 teaspoon of cinnamon, ½ teaspoon of ginger, ¼ teaspoon

of cardamom, ¼ teaspoon of all-spice, and ¼ teaspoon of clove.

Finally, combine both mixtures to make the cookie dough. Refrigerate the dough in a covered bowl for an hour, allowing it to firm up



MADDIE MCGRATH/ARTS CONTRIBUTOR for rolling. Then, use a tablespoon to measure out your dough balls and place them a couple inches apart on your baking sheets.

Optional: for some added sweetness and a crunchy exterior, roll

your dough balls in a cinnamon sugar mix (approximately ½ cup of granulated sugar and ½ teaspoon of cinnamon).

Flatten the tops slightly using a cup or the palm of your hand and bake the cookies for 10-12 minutes. While your cookies cool, whip up a quick icing by combining 1 cup of powdered sugar, ¼ teaspoon of cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon of nutmeg and 3 tablespoons of milk. Taylor uses eggnog, but it’s tricky to track down this time of year (if you make this recipe closer to the holiday season, I definitely recommend giving it a try). If your icing is too thin, add more powdered sugar. If it’s too thick, add more milk/eggnog. Adjust the icing one tablespoon at a time in order to achieve your ideal consistency. Once the cookies have cooled completely, top with your icing and, in true Taylor fashion, add an extra sprinkle of cinnamon on top.

I encourage you to fully embrace this recipe, whatever that means to you. Personally, my favorite way to make these cookies is by the light of a fall candle, singing along to Red (Taylor’s Version). Whatever you decide, may this be your sign to channel your inner Swiftie and get making.

# Back to school burnout: Signs to watch & cope up



Burnout isn’t waiting for mid-terms anymore. For many students, it starts the moment the semester begins, silently draining motivation before you’ve even bought all your textbooks. For the first years, the rush of university life feels like diving headfirst into a whirlwind they’ve never navigated before; for returning students, it’s like stepping back onto a treadmill that never really stopped running. Both journeys are challenging, but they can be made easier by recognizing the signs of burnout early and taking steps to address them.

The start of the school year used to be a slow climb: a few syllabus reviews, icebreaker games, maybe a week or two before your first assignment. Now, it feels more like a sprint from day one. Professors are posting multiple weeks’ worth of readings, tuition invoices are flooding your inbox, and your calendar looks like it was decorated by a toddler with a Sharpie. This intense routine means that many students are already running on fumes before they’ve even found a comfortable study routine. When

the semester starts at full speed, there’s less space to adapt, breathe, or recover.

Burnout doesn’t always arrive with a dramatic breakdown; it often creeps in quietly. You might notice mental fog, where you find yourself reading the same paragraph over and over without absorbing a word. There’s the constant fatigue that lingers no matter how much you sleep, and a loss of interest that turns even your favorite activities into chores. Irritability can set in, making every minor inconvenience feel like a crisis, and you may slip into avoidance; skipping classes, ignoring messages, or procrastinating more than usual. These aren’t just the marks of a bad day; they’re warning signs that your mind and body are asking for a reset.

Burnout isn’t just about being too tired to do work, it’s a cycle that can quietly erode your motivation, focus, and mental health if left unchecked. When caught early, it’s often easier to reverse with small changes: adjusting your workload, improving your sleep routine, or making time for activities that recharge you. If taking three or four courses a term helps you balance out your workload and reduce the immense stress you carry, it’s completely okay to drop a couple courses! It’s more beneficial to your sanity and mental health to take a couple extra semesters to graduate then graduate on time with your mental health hanging on by a

thread. Ensure you aren’t pulling constant all nighters. In the crunch during midterms and finals, an all nighter might help with back-to-back exams, however the continuous lack of sleep will lead to bad performance and irritability.

According to a 2023 Mayo Clinic

article, if ignored, burnout can snowball into more serious issues like chronic stress, anxiety, or even depression, making recovery longer and harder. Be recognizing the warning signs sooner rather than later, you’re not just protecting your grades, you’re protecting

your overall well-being and setting yourself up to actually enjoy this semester instead of simply enduring it.



SANGJUN HAN/PHOTO CONTRIBUTOR



## OPINION

# Bill 33 is Anti-educational and divisive



**ZACK MASON**  
SUMMER REPORTER

Bill 33 is Ontario's conservative government's plan to hoard and preserve as much authority as it possibly can. It is anti-educational and controlling, a wolf in sheep's clothes, claiming to protect the rights and pockets of students. Ultimately, however, Bill 33 is designed to remove student autonomy, divide the student body and silence voices that might espouse more left leaning views.

Overall, it's fucking terrible. Here's why:

Policies affecting post-secondary institutions only make up a small portion of Bill 33. The two sections that are there, however, are destructive to student life and access to education. The bill's first problematic section, Section 21.1, is related to ancillary fees.

"Section 21.1 authorizes regulations to be made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council governing fees that colleges of applied arts and technology or publicly assisted universities may charge to students or require students to pay."

Ancillary fees are a woe that many students (me included) have bemoaned forever. We've all been there: you're reviewing your term bill and hundreds of dollars are being taken from you to pay for a bunch of clubs you aren't a part of, and services you never use. At a glance, cutting ancillary fees might

seem like a win.

This is untrue. Sure, without ancillary fees, you would pay less for your schooling, but the schooling you'd receive would be less valuable. Student clubs, organizations, and programs, especially those in the arts (the ones Bill 33 will affect most), are a crucial part of building a campus' vibrancy and life. They create a culture.

But there are broader implications to Section 21.1 beyond making campus life duller.

While presented as a piece of legislature meant to protect students, Bill 33 is actually a strategic move to maintain the provincial government's authority. Cuts to ancillary fees would hamper student bodies' ability to coordinate politically. Things like sports or healthcare, for example, won't be that affected by Bill 33. The real victims of these cuts will be things like student papers, political clubs, and unions.

These, not so coincidentally, are the kinds of spaces that foster criticism of political power. Members of a badminton team, for example, are less likely to challenge a political policy than a student union. Arts organizations are more likely to notice and make a stink when their government does something they don't like. Doug Ford knows this and has been trying to attack student organizing since 2019, when he tried to pass the Student Choice Initiative. During his campaign for the SCI, he called what student unions do, "crazy Marxist nonsense." Bill 33's goal of cutting ancillary fees isn't about protecting students, it's about silencing



ONTARIO GOVERNMENT BUILDING

opposing voices.

But there's an even more sinister part of Bill 33:

"New section 16.0.2 requires colleges of applied arts and technology and publicly assisted universities to assess applicants based on merit and to publish the criteria and process to be used for assessment into programs of study. The Lieutenant Governor in Council is given authority to make related regulations."

The implication that equity and merit are mutually exclusive is an argument used by conservatives and rightwing rhetoricians all the time. It is a strawman designed to

drive wedges into our communities by creating mistrust between identity groups. I am not arguing here that all EDI initiatives are productive and should not be questioned. However, the implication made by Bill 33, that students with no merit are being handed positions and scholarships on the basis of identity, is simply false.

Politicians like Doug Ford thrive on sewing these kinds of seeds because creating division inside the voting population is especially useful for conservative governments. People won't want to vote for parties that seek to use tax dollars for the benefit of the collective,

if they believe that the collective is undeserving. Right wing governments love to attack Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion programs because it ensures them power. By turning the population against itself, they create a social climate of division and fear that allows their policies to thrive.

So, fight Bill 33 in any way you possibly can. Far from supporting students as it claims to, Ford's government is trying to drive apart anyone who might challenge them and divide Ontario's population. Don't let the conservative government encroach on your power and autonomy.

## CAMPUS

## Is Independence overrated for University?



**ETHAN KULIK**  
OPINION EDITOR

Amidst the anxiety of living away from home for the first time, the typical first year of university experience arrives wrapped in promises of absolute freedom, self-discovery and a life unrestrained by parental or guardian oversight. At every turn – from upper-year anecdotes to Reddit and TikTok insights – the message is clear that you are finally the architect of your own life. However, beneath the excitement and allure of complete autonomy lies a newly realized set of responsibilities – some that can feel just as overwhelming as the freedom feels thrilling.

Moving in and saying goodbye to those who dropped you off is the first big shock, but O'Week also feels like a lot. As you're speedrunning through icebreaker games and putting on matching t-Shirts in between "where are you from and what's your major" conversations, these activities all start to get really

exhausting. You know networking is worth the effort, however, as some of the people you met in that week might end up being your closest confidants for the remainder of your university experience, or even roommates in your upper years. By the time you get back to your residence, you find that dorm room you just set up a few days ago becomes the only place you can find solace in.

The first week of classes rolls in, and you're met with lectures packed with 700 students and a professor with a booming mic to reach even the students at the back with a hoodie covering their earbuds. At this stage, nobody is here to remind you about late assignments or discussion posts. Through all the tedious work of gathering all your textbooks, bookmarking due dates, and learning office hour etiquette you'll refine your time management, and hopefully realize that asking for guidance early is a strategic move and not a sign of weakness.

Regardless of your level of independence before September of freshmen year, these are all new experiences for anyone entering university. It's good to remember

that at least everyone else around is just as rattled as you are.

Outside lectures and finding friends, the to-do list grows. Everyday life starts to settle in, and you quickly realize you're now your own chef, janitor and financial planner, and those lectures you thought you could skip start to catch up to you. Amidst everything you imagined your freshman experience to be, you begin to ask yourself, is living away from home overrated?

I don't think so, the chores of living on your own ultimately translate into meaningful rewards in return. You still get to wake up in a place arranged exactly how you like it, find a go-to study nook that no one else needs to know about, and last-minute plans will never be this easy to commit to. Autonomy may lead to more work, but it certainly brings with it a newfound sense of ownership over your everyday life.

Ultimately, independence is not just a one-time milestone, or something to be handed to you or switched on. It's a skill you hone through daily choices and strategic self-care. While it may be overrated if you expect instant mastery,

it's something most people would much rather learn before they get even older, and not being able to cook your own meals becomes increasingly more embarrassing. Even looking into the near future, getting ahead start on learning how to maintain a living space will be something your upper year roommates will be thankful for.

By the time October comes, the opening sprint winds down, and you begin to map out your coming days and weeks far easier. Midterms may be around the corner,

but you have a better grasp on study habits and work-life balance. At this point you might think to yourself this is all going to be okay.

The first-year experience varies a lot from student to student. Some students get to their first-year dorms and it's their first time spending a night away from their parents, while others might have lived independently from a far earlier point in their life. Regardless though, everyone leaves their first year as a more well-rounded person than they were before.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/ABDULLAH ZAFAR







ENTERTAINMENT

# Movies that are worth a Study Break



SNEH LEIGHL  
ARTS & LIFE EDITOR

This semester is filled with incredible films ranging from highly anticipated sequels to adaptations to original stories. Whether you're a horror fan, a cinephile, or a Timothée Chalamet stan, there's something for every moviegoer on this list.

Here's a guide to a few films you can look forward to this semester.

**The Conjuring: Last Rights** - Sept. 5 (60 words)

Set to release on Sept. 5, *The Conjuring: Last Rights* reunites Conjuring fans with Ed and Lorraine Warren (Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga, respectively) as they tackle a new paranormal mystery — the Smurl family haunted house. Based on the real life haunting, this film takes place in the early eighties and comes after the events of *The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It* (2021). It is the fourth movie about Ed and Lorraine in the Conjuring cinematic universe.

**Palestine 36** - Sept. 5

*Palestine 36* is a historical drama directed by Palestinian filmmaker Annemarie Jacir. The film was chosen as the Palestinian entry for the Best International Feature Film at the Oscars next March. The film follows the Palestinians who

revolted against British colonial rule in 1936. Shots of the film online show a rich visual palette that is bold and vivid with expansive shots that feel straight out of a western. *Palestine 36* is set to debut on Sept. 5 at the 2025 Toronto International Film Festival.

**Sacrifice** - Sept. 6

Featuring a list of A-listers like Chris Evans, Salma Hayek, and Anya Taylor-Joy, *Sacrifice* is satire directed and co-written by Romain Gavras (Athena). The story will follow Jane (Anya Taylor-Joy), a member of a radical group intent on sacrificing three people to save humanity. The three kidnappees: Mike Tyler (Chris Evans), a movie star, Braken (Vincent Cassel), the world's richest man, and Katie (Ambika Mod) – an unlucky citizen. And if the premise of the movie doesn't sell you on *Sacrifice*, the BRAT herself, Charli XCX, is said to make an appearance in the movie. *Sacrifice* hits theatres on Sept. 6.

**The Long Walk** - Sept. 12

Based on Stephen King's novel of the same name (albeit originally published under the pen name Richard Bachman), *The Long Walk* is set in a dystopian future where each year, a group of young men must participate in a walking contest in which they must maintain a speed of at least three miles per hour or else they risk being executed. The contest will end when only one participant remains. Directed by Francis Lawrence (*The Hunger Games* trilogy), the film debuts on Sept. 12.

**One Battle After Another** - Sept. 26

Paul Thomas Anderson's thriller, *One Battle After Another*, is about. A former member of a revolutionary group, Leonardo DiCaprio) must get help from fellow revolutionaries to find his missing daughter. The film starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Teyana Taylor, Benicio del Toro, and Sean Penn will be released on Sept. 26 – this is the first of Anderson's films to be released in IMAX.

**After the Hunt** - Oct. 10

*After the Hunt* is a psychological thriller about Alma (Julia Roberts), a college professor who is caught in between a case of alleged sexual abuse. When Alma's protégé, Maggie (Ayo Edebiri) accuses her friend, Hank (Andrew Garfield) of misconduct, Alma finds herself navigating both professional and personal fallout. This film features a talent-packed ensemble including Andrew Garfield, Julia Roberts, Ayo Edebiri, and Chloe Sevign. Directed by Luca Guadagnino (*Call Me by Your Name*, *Challengers*), this film is set to be released on Oct. 10.

**Wicked: For Good** - Nov. 21

*Wicked: For Good* serves as part two of Universal's two-part adaptation of the Broadway musical and will take place three years after the events of the first film. Audiences can expect to follow Elphaba (Cynthia Erivo) as she continues to fight for the rights of animals living in Oz. Glinda (Ariana Grande), now styling herself as Glinda the Good,

is starting to resemble her counterpart in the film, *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). Jeff Goldblum, Michelle Yeoh, Jonathan Bailey, and Marissa Bode will all reprise their previous roles in this second installment. Jon M. Chu's film will hit theatres on Nov. 21.

**The Kidnapping of Arabella** - Dec. 4 (Italy)

An Italian film, *The Kidnapping of Arabella* is a film you won't want to miss. Starring Chris Pine (in his first-ever non-English role!) and Benedetta Porcaroli (*The Nun 2*, *Baby*), the film centers on Holly (Porcaroli) as she grapples with the feeling of her life not turning out the way she wants it to. When Holly meets Arabella (Lucrezia Guglielmino), she becomes convinced that the girl is her younger self. Holly kidnaps a willing Arabella and the two pursue adventure. The film premieres on Dec. 4 in Italy, but it is likely that the film will be available to stream on MUBI Canada.

**Avatar: Fire and Ash** - Dec. 19

In James Cameron's third *Avatar* installment, a new Na'vi clan will serve as the antagonists – Mangkwan clan or Ash People. It is likely that the antagonist, Quaritch (Stephen Lang), will be taken in by the Ash People, led by Varang (Oona Chaplin), in order to bring ruin and war to the other Na'vi clans. After their homeland was destroyed by fire, the Ash People ceased practicing their faith and no longer connect with Eywa. This new installment is set to have a much darker, grittier feel than the



PLAESTINE 36 FILM POSTER

previous films. *Avatar: Fire and Ash* is set to release on Dec. 19.

**Marty Supreme** - Dec. 25

Hollywood's golden boy, Timothée Chalamet, takes on an A24 comedic sports drama in *Marty Supreme*. Loosely based on the life of ping-pong player Marty Reisman, the film is about a fictionalized version of Marty – Marty Mauser – as he pursues greatness in a sport no one seems to respect – ping pong. The film will also star Gwyneth Paltrow, Tyler the Creator, Kevin O'Leary, and Odessa A'zion. Chalamet is credited as one of the producers on the film – his third producing credit following *Bones and All* (2022) and *A Complete Unknown* (2024). Josh Safdie's *Marty Supreme* hits theatres on Christmas Day.

With releases like *Wicked: For Good* and *One Battle After Another*, Laurier students have the perfect excuse to step away from the books for a few hours and hit the theatre for a study break.

# From Bus Conductor to Superstar: The Journey of Rajinikanth



SANTOSH CHANDRASEKAR  
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

On August 14, 2025, the much-awaited Superstar Rajinikanth starrer *Coolie* released worldwide with grand fanfare in five different languages. The date was not just another film release — it also marked the 50th year of Thalaivar (as he is fondly called by millions of fans) in cinema.

As an ardent fan myself, I've always been fascinated by this journey of how a bus ticket collector/conductor named Shivaji Rao Gaikwad went on to become "Thalaivar," a global icon.

Born in 1950 into a modest Maharashtrian family in Bangalore, Shivaji displayed a natural flair and charisma even in his early years. He worked many jobs to support his family and later became a bus conductor in Bangalore, India. During this time, he also joined a

theatre troupe, where his raw talent was quickly recognized. Encouraged by his peers and supported by his close friend Raja Bahadur, Shivaji enrolled in the Madras Film Institute. This decision marked the beginning of his cinematic journey — one that would eventually crown him as Thalaivar and Superstar Rajinikanth, a name synonymous with style, humility, and stardom.

During his institute days, he was noticed by veteran director K. Balachander, who introduced him as Rajinikanth in *Apoorva Raagangal* in 1975 and gave him several other iconic roles in his early career. Over the next decade, Rajinikanth became a star across many Indian film industries and released his 100th film, *Sri Raghavendar*, in 1985.

In this initial decade, he starred in many iconic films such as *Moondru Mudichu*, *Avargal*, *16 Vayathinile*, *Bhuvana Oru Kelvi Kuri*, *Mullum Malarum*, and *Aval Appadithan*. He also gained his position in commercial Tamil cinema with hits like *Billa*, *Murattu Kalai*, and *Padikkadavan*. Between 1983 and 1988, Rajinikanth made

his Bollywood debut with *Andhaa Kaanoon* and appeared in the Hollywood production *Bloodstone*.

The rise of Rajinikanth during this post-colonial era is fascinating because he redefined the image of leading men in the Indian film industry. Unlike the stereotypical fair-skinned, groomed appearances of traditional heroes, Rajinikanth's dark complexion and unkempt hair were unusual for the big screen. For many youngsters at the time, his journey to stardom and his looks were both relatable and inspiring, earning him millions of fans across the country. His humble and approachable off-screen persona further complemented his image.

When being honored by the Indian news channel NDTV in 2013 as one of India's 25 living legends, he said: "Miracles do happen, you just need to believe in them. Here I am, an ordinary bus conductor, sharing the dais with the living legends of this country."

What makes Rajinikanth a true Thalaivar is his authenticity. Even after 50 years of superstardom, he

has not endorsed a single product, choosing instead to support public ventures and charity organizations such as the Tamil Nadu Eye Bank. In fact, during his campaign for eye donation, the number of volunteers who signed up exceeded the province's requirement, a testament to the influence he continues to hold today. He has also spoke openly about his personal struggles with health due to smoking

and alcoholism.

The actor has faced significant criticism throughout his career — from his film choices and acting style to his political views. In the late 1980s, he was even labeled "mentally ill," leading to trolling and criticism that persist to this day. However, his resilience and longevity over these 50 years have earned him a loyal fan base across generations.



CONTRIBUTED GRAPHIC/SANTOSH CHANDRASEKAR



CAMPUS CLUB

Ways to get involved at Laurier's Volunteership roles



SNEHL LEIGHL  
ARTS & LIFE EDITOR

Whether you're a first year, or a returning Golden Hawk looking to expand your community, getting involved at Laurier has plenty of opportunities. Getting involved on campus is also a great way to build friendships, develop new skills, and take advantage of everything Laurier has to offer.

WLUSP (The Cord, The Community edition, The Blueprint, Radio Laurier)

No matter if you love writing, photography, or graphic design, WLUSP has something for you. The Cord, The Community Edition, The Blueprint, and Radio Laurier are all great places to start getting involved. Being a part of WLUSP is a great opportunity to get your voice out there, tell stories that matter, and to learn or expand on new skills. No prior skills are required – editors and staff will happily welcome new volunteers.

The Cord is Laurier's primary newspaper – and we are always looking for volunteers! It's a great place to report on stories that matter to us. The Community Edition is Laurier's newspaper that focuses

on a greater Kitchener-Waterloo audience. The Blueprint is a magazine for creative writing, poetry essays, and art submissions. Radio Laurier hosts a range of different podcasts and music shows for you to stream.

Volunteering with us is as easy as a quick email to [president@wlusp.com](mailto:president@wlusp.com)

Join a Club! (Campus arts and community clubs)

Laurier is home to an endless amount of student-run clubs from cultural groups to athletic teams to academic societies to art clubs. Whether you're interested in ultimate frisbee or philosophy club, Laurier has a club for you!

You can find a list of clubs and associations on the Students' Union website or at the annual club fair.

Community connections

The greater Kitchener-Waterloo community has a vibrant arts and culture scene. Whether you're interested in art galleries, the symphony, museums, or theatres, KW consistently welcomes student involvement. These broader connections not only enrich the student experience, but also strengthen the bonds between Laurier and the wider arts community.

Whether you're interested in

writing at The Cord, or making the ultimate frisbee team, Laurier has so many opportunities to expand your skills, grow, meet new people, and make the most out of your time at Laurier. You belong at Laurier — so get involved, share your voice, and let the arts help you find your people.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/SANGJUN HAN

BUSINESS

The Business Education Blind Spot: Soft Skills

OJUS RAWAL  
OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

In corporate life today, having an undergraduate business degree and technical expertise may secure you a job in your field— however chances are slim. A 2024 study conducted by Deloitte indicates that 92% of companies now “prioritize soft skills over technical expertise.” (1) For years, a business education from a Canadian university at large meant developing foundational expertise in financial strategies and key-performance indicators ensuring success in your field of study. But the recent shift to prioritizing soft skills begs to question whether a business education still delivers the changing needs today's market now demands.

Soft skills are “non-technical skills that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with others.” (2) They extend beyond possessing broad communication skills, helping to shape every facet of businesses — from the leadership of management and the collaboration of workers to the growth and drive of entrepreneurs. The research agency Hult International Business School and Workplace Intelligence analyzed



CONTRIBUTED GRAPHIC/OJUS RAWAL

recent graduates who had received an undergraduate degree focusing on either finance, accounting, or marketing. They reported that, “nearly all of recent graduates (94%) regretted their degree,” citing a lack of job preparedness with respect to essential employee skills. (3) This finding suggests a fundamental mismatch between workplace skills taught in post-secondary education and subsequent real-world expectations — making students ultimately question the utility of their degree.

Business education that prioritizes these skills has recently been on the rise. Since 2020, the Centre for Professional Skills (CPS) has allied with Rotman School of Business professor Ralph Tassone, to incorporate relevant workplace skills such as team building and strategizing into courses. In one of Tassone's introductory accounting courses, students engage in online modules, in-class workshops and mandatory appointments with teamwork mentors. (4) The Ivey School of Business and Economics also prepares students' soft skills through experiential learning by

using the case-competition method of learning. (5) This learning technique has been extremely effective in developing crucial employee skills such as collaboration, teamwork, and emotional intelligence.

Despite these increasing efforts to incorporate human skills into curricula, the method of teaching remains suboptimal. Business faculties have implicitly attempted to insert essential employee skills into a broader business model, without the skills themselves being the primary focus. While Rotman's

teamwork model and Ivey's case method initiatives present opportunities for collaboration, teamwork and communication, the underlying structure is inherently technical. For example, accounting courses and business case competitions, at its base, prioritize analytical business problem solving over complex interpersonal dynamics or cross-disciplinary issues. Consequently, organizational situations that deal with heavier, and more complex emotional and collaborative situations are deemed secondary and/or not fully explored.

Bridging this educational gap is hardly an easy task and requires genuine effort from all players involved in post-secondary institutions. Business faculties should emphasize soft skills as essential requirements, not voluntary tasks. Further, experiential learning opportunities must involve more than solving financial case-studies but real engagement with students facing authentic interpersonal situations. Hence, while significant strides have been made in recent years, until soft skills in business academia are treated as supplemental rather than truly essential graduates will risk remaining underprepared for the human struggles that define modern business.



SPORTS

# Golden Hawks enter 2025 season with new quarterback and familiar expectations



BIRNAVAN VARNACUMAARAN  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Wilfrid Laurier Golden Hawks are looking to build on one of the most memorable campaigns in program history as they begin their 2025 season with new leadership under centre and championship ambitions firmly intact.

Last fall, Laurier stormed through the OUA, capped by a 51-31 victory over Western to capture the 116th Yates Cup and

a 48-24 win over Bishop's in the Uteck Bowl. Their dream run fell just short in the Vanier Cup, where they dropped a 22-17 decision to Laval. Even with the heartbreak, head coach Michael Faulds views the season as a testament to the program's culture.

"It's about being more concerned with the process than the results," Faulds said. "When you do that, the wins and the accolades tend to follow. Our guys buy into that every week."

The offseason brought a monumental shift when quarterback Taylor Elgersma, the face of Laurier's resurgence, signed with the NFL's Green Bay Packers. Replac-

ing him was the biggest question mark heading into training camp, but Faulds believes the Golden Hawks have their answer in Ohio transfer Callum Wither.

Wither, once a Division I recruit, arrived in Waterloo as one of the top-ranked Canadian quarterbacks available. After winning an open competition in camp, he impressed in his debut against Guelph, shaking off three years without live game action.

"He has a very high ceiling," Faulds said. "He brings athletic ability, a quick release, and leadership qualities. We expect him to keep settling in as he gets more comfortable with the playbook and

his receivers."

Wither will have a talented roster around him, including a deep receiving corps and a defence that stifled opponents throughout 2024. The Golden Hawks' 2025 schedule is loaded with challenges, including early matchups with Windsor and McMaster, as well as a rematch with Western that is sure to be circled on both calendars.

The expectations surrounding Laurier are higher than ever, with fans packing Knight-Newbrough Field after last year's breakthrough. Faulds is quick to remind his players that outside noise can't outweigh internal accountability.

"No one should ever put more

pressure or higher expectations on you than you yourself," he said. "Because of last year's success, teams are going to give us their best every week. That means we must be sharper in practice and continue improving game by game."

With the program's first Vanier Cup appearance since 2005 fresh in memory and a new quarterback era underway, the Golden Hawks enter 2025 with both excitement and scrutiny. The target is squarely on their backs, but if Faulds' process-driven philosophy holds, Laurier believes it is ready for another national run.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/ABDULLAH ZAFAR

★

PRINCESS CINEMAS INVITES YOU TO OUR 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

★

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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

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INDOOR MOVIE

CASABLANCA

AT THE PRINCESS ORIGINAL

9:00PM

OUTDOOR MOVIE

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