

University of Waterloo Grade 10 Family Night webcast, Jan. 19, 2010 19:00-20:30

Notes prepared by Alex Volodarsky, CSPA Communications

Ken Coates, Dean of Arts:

Choosing the Right Program for Future Success

Even with rising tuition costs, university education in Canada is still very affordable when compared to the costs in the United States. There are various sources of assistance available to students to finance their education.

Current UofW trend: student proportion of university applicants and graduates – 65% girls, 35% guys. Where do the boys hide? In parents' basements playing video games...

Video games' impact: when two university students are roommates and one of the students plays video games, the other student's grades go down by a full grade point, from A to B, for example. Message to parents and students, boys in particular: reduce/eliminate your video games/hours.

Girls are smarter than guys, they try harder and they study harder. Guys better learn soon that they have to compete not just against other guys but also against girls.

Message for parents and students: plan for education. Some people spend more time researching a flat screen TV purchase than a choice of universities. Plan and do research. Grade 11-12 students, 17- and 18-year-olds, do not make good decisions, they are just too young for that. Parents must help with university research, which high school courses to take. High school students are advised to take Math, English, and have good writing skills. Message for students: if a sibling or a parent is willing to help you out with your English or writing, you should hug them and thank them!!! Good English and writing are essential life skills and come into play as early as university.

Keep options open, visit universities' campuses, not just Waterloo's; spend a lot of time on research (and not playing video games).

How to succeed at university? Join a sports team: research shows that the best academic students are also involved in sports.

Do not decide on what you want to do in grade 10, or 11; find out what your options are. 70% of Waterloo students change their program major before graduation – that is OK.

Parents, do not let your sons/daughters go to university for free, even if you are in a position to completely pay for their education. Students have to learn the value of money. If education is free, they will not appreciate it the same way, they will not work as hard. What is their contribution to their university education – own savings, summer jobs? Parents and students must have frank conversation on this subject.

Young people today are spoiled. Do they need two or three video game consoles? Do they need an iPhone?

Canadians are blessed: we live in a great country with job opportunities and education. Compare that to the plight of people in Haiti.

Young people have an obligation to make the world a better place for everyone. They must think about the future, the N+1 world (where N is present, N+1 is future).
Top 10 jobs of the future have not yet been invented!

University education is not just about academics, it is a sense of joy, of self-discovery and growth, it is the best part of your lives.

Co-op studies at Waterloo increase studies by about one year. An academic term is followed by a work term. Students get job experience, make employer contacts, and graduate with little or no debt (co-op jobs are well-paid). Co-op makes for a busier life, juggling studies with job interviews, but it is worthwhile.

Grade 11 is the good grade for students to visit campuses, tour facilities, residences, speak with Waterloo students. Waterloo provides campus visitation tours throughout the year. Visit campus before grade 12.

Admission Requirements, Nancy Weiner, Associate Registrar

Make sure the pre-reqs are followed. UofW registration – help is available.
OSSD requirements (high school diploma) – 18 compulsory credits, 12 optional credits, literacy requirement, community involvement (40 hours).

Concentrate on U=University or M=University/College level courses.
Grade 11 Math must be U-level courses.
Students are encouraged to take Math and Science courses; 6 grade 12 courses must be U-level.

Waterloo uses required courses for calculating average as well as personal information form. Personal information/profile – a chance for students to brag about themselves: their community involvement, leadership, other accomplishments, cadets, for example.

A combination of grade 12 marks and personal information is used in the admission decision; sometimes, teacher references and interview/portfolio is also required (Architecture, for example).

If grade 11 average is 90% or above, then early offers of admission are sent out (students are expected to maintain same average or higher in grade 12, obviously).

University applications start mid-January for grade 12 students
- Apply via www.ouac.on.ca

- students receive PIN from guidance counsellor
- current application fee of \$115 entitles students to make 3 choices (could make several choices at Waterloo for different programs, or at 3 different universities)
- additional choices – current fee is \$38 per additional application

Helpful web sites:

<http://findoutmore.uwaterloo.ca> UofW future students

<http://www.electronicinfo.ca> Guide to Ontario universities

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/enq/secondary.html> Ministry of Education

<http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education> MacLean's University rankings

<http://globecampus.ca> Globe and Mail Survey of university students

Financing your university education Maureen Jones and Brenda Denomme, Student Awards and Financial Aid, UofW.

Students must make a budget for themselves; UofW web site has a budget planner/calculator available

Projected costs for 8 months (one school year):

- \$7,700 Arts - \$13,500 Engineering: tuition, fees, books, supplies
- \$6,200 - \$7,900: rent/groceries or Residence with meal plan
- \$2,800: transportation, entertainment, phone (note, basic phone; iPhone is an unnecessary expensive luxury)

How to pay? Have a family discussion; money to come from RESP, trust funds, student's savings, OSAP, student bank loans, part-time job, scholarship/awards, bursaries, co-op earnings.

High cost of eating out – students are encouraged to learn how to cook some basic meals; practice by making meals for your family on weekends, learn how to use a can opener.

Scholarships are based on grades – most often automatic consideration, some may require applications.

Entrance bursaries are based on financial needs; assessment based on parents' and student's income.

OSAP – Ontario Student Assistance Program – loans and grants; loans are interest-free while students study full-time.

Web sites:

<http://safa.uwaterloo.ca>

<http://osap.gov.on.ca>

<http://www.studentawards.com>

<http://www.scholarshipscanada.com>

<http://www.electronicinfo.ca>

<http://www.osca.ca> (Students section)

What I Wish I Knew About University While Still in High School

Comments by UofW students Gary Abbott (4th year Systems Design Engineering) and Jaana Mielonen (4th year Arts and Business)

- University is about development , academic and personal, flexibility, learning various skills
- Professional development opportunities as part of the Co-op program (work at RIM and design next generation Blackberry, for example)
- Personal development – get involved: all faculties have societies, join Engineering society, for example; join a club, currently 160 clubs at UofW, start a new club and get funding for it
- Participate in sports, team sports or individual sports
- University residences (meal plans must be purchased) are a good choice for first-year students; upon admission, first-year students are guaranteed a spot in a residence; get settled, get to know Waterloo, less stress trying to find accomodations and cook for yourself
- Learn valuable skills – how to make presentations, for example
- Co-op program is fantastic: it provides good-paying jobs, opportunity to gain experience, and opportunities to work and study abroad (Europe, US, Australia).
- Attend university open houses/campus tours; ask questions; request information
- <http://findoutmore.uwaterloo.ca>

