

## **Introduction**

Renison University College, an affiliated college of the University of Waterloo, is privileged to submit this proposal to Tohoku University for the General English at Renison (GEAR) online program to be offered August 30 – September 24, 2021.

For more information about any aspect of the proposal, please contact Andrea Brandt, [andrea.brandt@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:andrea.brandt@uwaterloo.ca), Administrative Officer in the English Language Institute.

## **About the University of Waterloo**

The [University of Waterloo](https://www.uwaterloo.ca) is a leading comprehensive university with 36,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs. Known for world-changing research, innovative technology, and inspired teaching, the University of Waterloo is home to more than 100 undergraduate and 190 graduate programs in the faculties of Arts, Engineering, Environment, Health, Mathematics, and Science.

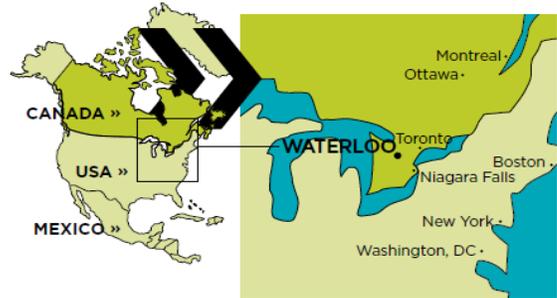


The University of Waterloo is recognized as:

- Canada's #1 comprehensive research university (Canada's Top 50 Research Universities Survey)
- Top 200 institutions in the world, and a recipient of a QS 5+ Star Rating (QS World Rankings)
- Canada's #1 university for career preparation (Globe & Mail University Report)

The University of Waterloo is located in the city of Waterloo, the heart of Canada's technology triangle, in Southern Ontario, Canada's most populous region. The city of Waterloo is:

- a modern, mid-sized city, with a regional population of 563,000 people, offering a unique blend of rural and urban communities, conveniently located 100 km from Toronto – Canada's largest city
- considered Canada's Silicon Valley of the north, home to leading technology companies like BlackBerry, Google, Cisco, and Sybase
- a student-oriented city with two universities and a community college, with one of the youngest populations in Canada



## **About Renison University College**

[Renison University College](#) is one of four affiliated colleges at the University of Waterloo. Located on the Waterloo campus, Renison provides a small community experience within the larger University of Waterloo student population. Renison supports the University of Waterloo by providing the following academic programming, services and facilities:



- undergraduate degree courses in Social Development Studies and Social Work
- language and culture courses in Arabic, Chinese, English, Japanese, and Korean
- residential and cafeteria facilities for students
- academic and student experience support services for registered students

Since 1970, Renison's English Language Institute (Renison ELI) has delivered innovative English courses and programs that help students, teachers, and other professionals succeed in academic and professional environments.

Students enrolled in English language programs at Renison University College will receive the following programming:

- high-quality intensive English programming (accredited by Languages Canada) within a Canadian university environment

- professional instruction and individualized attention from experienced TESL-certified instructors
- small class sizes
- opportunities to interact with Canadian students living in Renison University College and studying at the University of Waterloo

Renison's English Language Institute also provides a variety of expertise and programming including:

- consulting and language proficiency testing services
- academic university preparation programs for prospective University of Waterloo international students
- short-term English language programs for international university partners and government scholarship funds
- custom programming combining English language instruction with extra-curricular experiential learning

### **General English at Renison (GEAR) online program description**

The General English component focuses on developing a student's general English language skills. This program component is comprised of online courses in presentation skills, writing / grammar, and listening / reading. In addition to receiving general English courses, students attend virtual innovation enrichment sessions designed to provide them with an online experiential learning opportunity. Students also participate in a cultural studies course that supports them in developing their cross-cultural communication skills.

The 4-week program features:

- A total of 20 hours of GEAR programming each week comprised of live, synchronous teacher-led class sessions (12 hours/week) and asynchronous online course materials for students to work through outside of scheduled live class times
- Multiple levels from high beginner to advanced (*if student numbers permit*), with an initial placement test to determine a student's language level
- Teacher feedback on all assignments and an opportunity to meet teachers online during real-time office hours

- Interactive, virtual Canadian enrichment activities designed to support language learning development (including conversation hang-out events, Canadian trivia events, and other virtual social activities) and to provide opportunities to connect with other students via virtual events
- A team of Peer Helper Volunteers (made up of University of Waterloo students) to join GEAR students during virtual social and cultural events and activities to enhance cultural immersion experience
- Customized e-newsletters sent to students' inboxes at the beginning of the program and every Sunday, outlining upcoming classes, events/workshops, and important program reminders
- An engaging virtual texting community using a texting app based on the physical locations of students (ie. LINE for Japan) where students can connect and interact with members of Renison's Student Experience team and fellow classmates
- Language course curriculum based on the international standard Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) where possible
- End of program achievement report (transcript) and certificate

The General English program component is recommended for students with a CEFR level ranging from **A1 to B2+** (high-beginner to high-intermediate).

## **GEAR course descriptions**

The GEAR curriculum consists of five courses – Presentation Skills, Writing and Grammar, Innovation Enrichment, Cultural Studies, and Listening and Reading.

### **Presentation Skills**

*Synchronous real time class: approximately 4.5 hours/week*

*Asynchronous study time: 1.5 to 2 hours/week*

Presentations are an essential skill in many professions. Being able to speak in front of a group with confidence and clarity is useful in many different contexts. Mastering the elements of presentation skills will also give you a number of useful transferable skills such as effective body language, tone, and the ability to use visual aids effectively, which can help you in many other situations.



This course focuses on aspects of the spoken monologue (e.g. pacing, intonation, emphasis) design (e.g. the use of visuals) and delivery (e.g. stating your purpose, connecting with an audience, the need for engagement, fielding questions and so on) in English.

### *Course Outcomes*

Students will:

- explain what public speaking is and the skills that presenters need.
- develop presentations through an effective planning process and organizational structure.
- display effective body language, intonation, and other elements of effective presentations.

### **Writing and Grammar**

*Synchronous real time class: approximately 2 hours/week*

*Asynchronous study time: 1.5 to 2 hours/week*

At lower levels teachers treat this class as a more traditionally focused grammar class (using methodologies like Present, Practice, Produce) and contextualize grammar within appropriate writing exercises. At higher levels teachers frame grammatical choices within genre analysis – particularly professional and academic text.



Students at higher levels engage in the analysis of various text types aimed at heightening awareness around grammatical (and lexical) choices made in association with imagined audiences. Students go on to choose their texts from contexts of their choice (with a heavy emphasis on either academic or professional contexts) and perform their own analysis. Assignments completed within this course include the construction of professional (e.g. a brochure) or academic (e.g. an essay) text.

### *Course Outcomes*

Students will:

- review and extend their contextual knowledge of grammar
- conduct genre analysis of text
- construct academic and professional text

### **Innovation Enrichment**

*Synchronous real time class: approximately 2 hours/week*

*Asynchronous study time: 1.5 to 2 hours/week*

Our Innovation Enrichment sessions are very much student led (especially as the content of these sessions are dependent, to some extent, on the virtual excursions that are held). These sessions are meant to support the virtual excursions that students participate in. Students engage in pre, and post tasks that are meant to give structure to these virtual excursions.

Pre tasks might include online searches of the sites, as well as 'lectures' on the topic of the visit (class time might be spent on what a 'good' search looks like, credibility of sources, content lectures, and so on). Post tasks are comprised of reflecting on the experience (with class time spent on constructing critical, reflective writing).



During virtual excursions students are expected to engage actively within the excursion. This might be completing a task sheet that they have been previously given (information to find, questions to ask while on the visit, and so on). Live class time in preparation for excursions include time dedicated to note taking (as research activity). Homework (asynchronous materials) for this course relates to either pre, during, or post tasks.

### *Course Outcomes*

Students will:

- better understand how to conduct an online search (secondary research)
- improve their note taking skills
- seek information on academic topics in a group setting
- participate in an authentic academic environment
- develop reflective thinking and reflective writing

### **Cultural Studies**

*Synchronous real time class: approximately 3 hours/week*

*Asynchronous study time: 1.5 to 2 hours/week*

This course seeks to capitalize both on cultures within the online classroom in a look at cross cultural communication and intercultural competence as well as aspects of identity – what does being an Engineer, a Teacher, a Scientist involve? What does pedagogy within these spaces look like? Students will also investigate how those around them perceive aspects of culture – e.g. what it means to be a Canadian (and hopefully start students on paths of self-reflection). Through primary investigation this course seeks to avoid teacher led truisms (e.g. Canadians like hockey, always eat at Tim Hortons etc.) and lead students to more subtly nuanced understandings of notions involved in the construction of identity.

Students in this course initially complete a very basic overview of conducting qualitative research and discussions / reading on the aspects and nature of culture.

### *Course Outcomes*

Students will:

- better understand elements of qualitative research
- come to a more nuanced understanding of the term culture
- reflect on various aspects of identity

## Listening and Reading

*Synchronous real time class: approximately 1 hour/week*

*Asynchronous study time: 1.5 to 2 hours/week*

This class focuses on the receptive process of reading and listening. In this series of classes, class time is spent on vocabulary acquisition through the discussion of reading journals (completed outside of class time), discussing and practicing reading strategies (which focus on marking and annotating text), examining text types (e.g. explanative, summative and so on) and exploring the communicative aspects of image vs. word.

Listening is an important skill. Being a good listener builds trust, makes you approachable, and increases your knowledge. Listening involves a number of steps: receiving messages, selecting message content, interpreting the content, and responding to messages. Effective listening involves competence at all of these stages.

### Course Outcomes

Students will:

- examine styles of listening and non-listening
- improve active listening and reading strategies
- increase receptive and productive L2 vocabulary

## Virtual enrichment activities

Students will take part in a variety of virtual activities that will engage them in both Canadian culture and the unique culture of Waterloo. The following table provides a sample list of activities that will be organized (based on availability). All scheduled activities are included in the program fees.



ACTIVITY EXAMPLES	
<b>ORIENTATION</b>	Students will take part in a mandatory orientation session to learn about all the program requirements, resources and tools available to them, and some program study-management tips.
<b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> Social Event	Our weekly Conversation Hang-outs online have become widely known as a safe space for all English Language Learners to practice their English skills with our Peer Leaders. Each week, students come together on a specific conversation topic. Past topics have included hometowns, holiday traditions, music, hobbies, and more.

<p><b>LIFE IN CANADA</b> Educational Workshop</p>	<p>Our Student Advisor introduces students to some interesting and fun aspects to life in Canada. Learn more about Canadian food, currency, slang, weather, traditions, holidays, and more!</p>
<p><b>SPEED FRIENDING</b> Social Event</p>	<p>Speed Friending is an amazing chance for students to make some good friends and improve their English conversation skills. Students will rotate every ten minutes and meet someone new while engaging in small talk with Canadian and other international students.</p>
<p><b>STUDENT DESIGN TEAM SHOWCASE</b> Engineering Event  <a href="#">Sedra Design Centre</a></p>	<p>The Sedra Design Centre at the University of Waterloo houses student design teams led by visionary student leaders from the Faculties of Mathematics, Science, and Engineering. Students work together on innovative projects including robots, concrete canoes, solar race cars, autonomous driving vehicles, and more. At the Showcase, hear from these teams and what they are working to create.</p>
<p><b>VIRTUAL CROSS-CANADA BUS TRIP</b> Social and Cultural</p>	<p>Students will be taken on a virtual tour across Canada to see what makes our country so beautiful and exciting! From coast, to coast, to coast, this interactive activity will showcase various bits of trivia, historical information, and fun facts! We are joined by special guest speakers from tourism bureaus across our country.</p>
<p><b>STEM MEET &amp; GREET WITH UPPER YEAR STUDENTS</b> Social and Academic</p>	<p>Students have the opportunity to meet and mingle with upper year students from UWaterloo. Students can ask questions about their classes, student experience, co-op, volunteer experiences, etc. Breakout rooms are organized based on specific disciplines, including Engineering, Science, and Mathematics.</p>
<p><b>LEADERSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA WORKSHOP</b> Educational Event</p>	<p>Leadership is often looked at in isolation, but did you know there is another, more important, side to every leader? Join this workshop to explore what it means to be an effective leader, learn some valuable approaches to leadership, and gain a new appreciation for the balance of leadership and followership.</p>
<p><b>BONFIRE PARTY</b> Social Event</p>	<p>Students are invited to participate in a social bonfire party, emulating what students experience when they attend a traditional bonfire party in Canada. At the event, students</p>

	<p>enjoy a virtual bonfire while playing icebreaker games to get to know each other in a fun, relaxed, and welcoming atmosphere.</p>
<p><b>BIG PROBLEMS = BIG BUSINESS</b>          Entrepreneurship &amp; Innovation</p> <p><a href="#">Conrad School of Entrepreneurship and Business</a>          And  <a href="#">UWaterloo Entrepreneurship Society</a></p>	<p>Students will get an understanding about the renowned entrepreneurship and innovation eco-system at the University of Waterloo.</p> <p>The world has big problems that need solving. How do we identify those problems? Who is affected? How can we solve them? This lecture aims to motivate young students to start thinking big and provide problem-identifying and problem-solving skills to the forefront of their critical thinking abilities.</p>
<p><b>ONLINE GAMES NIGHT</b>          Social Event</p>	<p>Students take part in interactive online games to get to know each other, including Kahoot, Skribbl, Jackbox and other virtual games that are easily accessible to all students globally. The event is a great way to practice English while competing in interactive games online.</p>



## **Sample schedule of weekly live classes**

The following sample live class schedule is given both in Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), the time in Waterloo in August-September, and in Japan Standard Time (JST). The final class schedule will be confirmed in the course orientation.

	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>
7:00 – 8:00 am EDT	Writing and Grammar	Presentation skills			
8:00 – 8:30 am EDT		Presentation skills			
7:30 – 8:30 pm EDT	Innovation Enrichment	Writing and Grammar	Listening and Reading	Innovation Enrichment	
10 minute break	<i>Break time</i>	<i>Break time</i>	<i>Break time</i>	<i>Break time</i>	
8:40 pm – 10:00 pm EDT	Cultural Studies	Cultural Studies	Presentation Skills	Presentation Skills	

### **Asynchronous course material/study**

1.5 to 2 hours/week for each course

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30 – 9:30 am JST		Innovation Enrichment	Writing and Grammar	Listening and Reading	Innovation Enrichment
10 minute break		<i>Break time</i>	<i>Break time</i>	<i>Break time</i>	<i>Break time</i>
9:40 – 11:00 am JST		Cultural Studies	Cultural Studies	Presentation Skills	Presentation Skills
8:00 – 9:00 pm JST	Writing and Grammar	Presentation Skills			
9:00 – 9:30 pm JST		Presentation Skills			

**Asynchronous course material/study**

1.5 to 2 hours/week for each course

# GEAR online program sample virtual activities calendar

The following is a sample activities schedule of virtual online programming. The specific dates and activities on offer are subject to change based on program dates and availability.

  <b>GEAR</b> <small>GENERAL ENGLISH AT RENISON</small>					<b>JANUARY VIRTUAL COMMUNITY EVENTS</b>				
MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
11	 <b>ORIENTATION DAY!</b>  » 9:00PM - 10:00PM	12	 <b>SPEED FRIENDING</b> » 10:30AM - 11:30AM  <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00PM - 11:00PM	13	 <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00AM - 11:00AM	14	 <b>LIFE IN CANADA WORKSHOP</b> » 7:00PM - 8:00PM	15	 <b>RENI MOOSE'S VIRTUAL BIRTHDAY PARTY</b> » 8:00PM - 9:30PM
18	 <b>NEW YEAR, NEW START: PLAN YOUR TERM RIGHT WORKSHOP</b> » 9:00PM - 10:00PM	19	 <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00PM - 11:00PM	20	 <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00AM - 11:00AM	21	 <b>LEADERSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA WORKSHOP</b> » 7:00PM - 8:00PM	22	
25	 <b>LATE NIGHT SPEED FRIENDING</b> » 9:00PM - 10:00PM	26	  <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00PM - 11:00PM	27	 <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00AM - 11:00AM <b>BIG PROBLEMS = BIG BUSINESS</b> ENTREPRENEURSHIP TALK » 8:30PM - 9:30AM 	28	 <b>SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING &amp; MATH STUDENT MEET &amp; GREET</b> » 8:30PM - 9:30PM	29	
1	 <b>VIRTUAL CROSS-CANADA BUS TRIP</b> » 8:30PM - 9:30PM	2	 <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00PM - 11:00PM	3	 <b>CONVERSATION HANG-OUT</b> » 10:00AM - 11:00AM	4	 <b>FAREWELL CELEBRATION</b> » 9:30PM - 10:30PM	ALL TIMES ARE LISTED IN CANADIAN EASTERN STANDARD TIME ACCESS VIRTUAL EVENT LINKS AT <a href="http://www.uwaterloo.ca/eli/virtual">www.uwaterloo.ca/eli/virtual</a>	

## Student support services

The following staff members are employed by Renison to provide support virtually to all University of Waterloo students and international students registered in Renison programs.

**Student Experience Manager:** Renison's English Language Institute has a dedicated Student Experience Manager who ensures students are aware of all services and facilities available to them. The Student Experience Manager oversees our events calendars and Peer Leader program, where senior University of Waterloo students organize social activities to provide students with opportunities to practice their language skills outside of the classroom.



**Student Advisor:** A dedicated Student Advisor within the English Language Institute supports students in developing their academic and communication skills through regular one-on-one check-in meetings and success coaching appointments. The Student Advisor also assists with university application guidance and answering questions about life in Canada.



**Student Experience Coordinator:** A dedicated Student Experience Coordinator within the English Language Institute supports students in developing their leadership and teamwork skills and in gaining Canadian volunteer experience through volunteer leadership teams. The Coordinator also supports with organizing academic excursions that help students to develop their language skills while also experiencing Science, Technology, Entrepreneurship, and Canadian experiences in southwestern Ontario.



**Peer Leader Team:** Senior student leaders at the University of Waterloo help to facilitate a large amount of the virtual programming provided for students. Peer Leaders also guide social media texting communities throughout the program. Through the use of apps like WhatsApp, WeChat, KakaoTalk, LINE, or Facebook, our Peer Leaders help to share fun facts about life in Canada and the University of Waterloo, and encourage engagement at our virtual events by sending out regular reminders in our texting groups.

