

GOOD NEWS BITE

34% Increase in Student Numbers at University of Guelph's Ridgetown Campus

September 17, 2009, Ridgetown – It's been a very busy registration and orientation week for new students at Ridgetown Campus, resulting in part from a significant increase in student enrollment figures. The September, 2009 enrollment of more than 600 full-time students represents an approximately 34% increase over fall 2008 figures.

The cornerstone Agriculture Diploma program has almost double the number of first year students it had last September. The program hasn't had this many students enrolled on over two decades reported Liz Meidlinger, Manager, Communications and Campus Recruitment Committee Chair. Other programs with significant increases include the Environmental Management Diploma and the Veterinary Office Administration Certificate.

"These increases are the result of a number of factors including a changing economy, government retraining programs, a strong agricultural industry base, supportive WESTAG and OAC alumni and concentrated recruitment efforts," states Dr. Art Schaafsma, Campus Director.

This week, officials at the campus also announced two new one-year certificate offerings including a Performance Horse Handler program that will be delivered at the Regional Equine and Agricultural Centre of Huron (REACH) in Clinton, and a Laboratory and Processing Technology Certificate that will be delivered at Ridgetown.

"The 34% increase in total enrolment at Ridgetown this fall is very encouraging," said Dr. Robert Gordon, Dean of OAC at the University of Guelph. "Finding innovative ways to maintain and extend this growth across our various programs and campuses is a priority for the college as we prepare the next generation of leaders for the opportunities and challenges in agriculture, food, the environment and rural communities".

Ridgetown is one of four OAC campuses, providing Associate Diploma programs in Agriculture, Horticulture, Environmental Management and Veterinary Technology as well as a number of certificate programs. The campus also hosts degree students in the first two years of the Environmental Management major of the Bachelor of Bio-Resource Management program.

Other OAC campuses are located at Guelph, Kemptville and Alfred.

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