

# Graduate Diploma in General Interpreting

## Glendon College, York University



Glendon College of York University is launching a new, one-year, full time, online training program: the **Graduate Diploma in General Interpreting**. Career after completion of the program looks very bright as Ontario is facing a high demand for qualified interpreters, especially in the healthcare and law courts systems.

This training program targets fluent speakers of English with proficiency in one of seven languages – Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, Cantonese, Arabic, Russian, and French. Students who complete this one-year full time diploma training program will be well positioned to take the healthcare interpreter certification exams or the court interpreter test offered by the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General. Students can also continue for an optional second year and obtain a Master of Conference Interpreting degree.

As a community partner of Glendon College, the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada (CPAC) is working with the College to recruit qualified participants from within the target linguistic communities. In addition, CPAC will provide participants with one-on-one employment support counseling services towards the end of the program.



**For inquiries, please call Steven  
at CPAC 416-298-7885 Ext. 102  
or email to:  
[szeng@chineseprofessionals.ca](mailto:szeng@chineseprofessionals.ca)**

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### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What qualification/background is required to enroll into the program?**

The minimum requirement is for applicants to have an undergraduate (bachelor's) degree from a recognized university in Canada or abroad. This degree may be in any discipline, as interpreters need all kinds of knowledge to work well. Special consideration may be given to those who trained internationally as healthcare professionals.

At the same time, we also recognize that not everyone has had equal opportunity to attend school, and that people can learn valuable lessons from professional experience. For these reasons, it may – under certain circumstances – be possible for us to admit applicants who do not have a prior university degree but who have considerable work experiences. Applicants who fit this profile are encouraged to contact the Glendon School of Translation to discuss their particular situation.

#### **Is there any language assessments required for admission?**

The aptitude test is designed to measure applicants' potential for interpreting. It will require applicants to perform writing or speaking tasks in all their working languages. For example, if someone indicated they are able to use English and Mandarin as working languages, they would be asked to perform certain communicative tasks with these two languages.

There is also a specific language test that we must administer – the Michener English Language Assessment (MELA). The MELA requires test takers to demonstrate their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills through a series of language tasks that are situated in the context of healthcare generally. For more information on the MELA, have a look at the following website: [www.michener.ca/access/mela.php](http://www.michener.ca/access/mela.php)

#### **Are the students required to go the campus for classes?**

Students who wish to receive the Graduate Diploma in General Interpreting and work in the healthcare or court settings don't need to come to the Glendon campus. They can complete a year of study entirely online. All their courses will be offered remotely, which means that they can "attend" class from the comfort of their own home – or from wherever they happen to be!

Students who are interested in earning the full Master of Conference Interpreting must pass a transition exam at the end of Year One and come to us for a second year of study. This second year is given face to face, on the Glendon campus.

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#### **How is the course practice/home work organized and marked?**

Students submit homework and assignments for the asynchronous modules through a course management platform called Moodle. Moodle allows you to see all your assignments, grades, and instructor feedback in one place, and it takes the worry out of managing your progress in the program. You'll be able to visually determine how your abilities are improving over time. In the synchronous components, you will use a Skype-like tool called Adobe Connect to complete assignments and take tests. This is because your work as an interpreter will largely consist of spoken communication, and Adobe Connect allows us to record this communication. Grades and instructor feedback on recorded material can be archived in Moodle, again so that all your information is in one place.

#### **How is the student's progress assessed and monitored?**

In addition to the progress-tracking tools mentioned above, students will enjoy a close working relationship with their instructors. This is because class sizes will be very small – around 15 in Year One and smaller still in Year Two. Your teachers will therefore be very familiar with you and your work, and they will be able to intervene quickly with personalized feedback to help you develop your skills.

#### **Since it is an on-line based is there any person to person interactions between the student and lecturer?**

Yes, as a student in our on-line courses, you will have plenty of opportunity to interact both with your teachers and with your classmates. This interaction will take mainly in two ways. First, all of your courses will contain asynchronous learning modules. In other words, you will consult a specialized webpage – at a time that's convenient for you – in order to work collectively on exercises, complete group assignments, and assess your own and others' performances. Second, each course will also have some time set aside for synchronous learning modules. This means that you will be online at the same time as your instructor and your classmates, participating in live discussions, interpreting practice, and assessment exercises.

#### **Any chance I can study part time?**

The College does not recommended students to study part time. There will be synchronous components in the Program and will not allow flexible time. However, there was individual that can manage his or her time with full time work. It is your personal decision.

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#### What are the options after earning the diploma?

Students who complete the Graduate Diploma in General Interpreting will be well positioned to

- Take the court interpreter test with the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General;
- Sit a certification exam as a healthcare interpreter, either with the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters or with the National Board for Certification of Medical Interpreters;
- Enrol in the second year and earning the full Master of Conference Interpreting, with a view to working as a staff or freelance interpreter with some of the world's elite organizations the Government of Canada, the United Nations, the European Institutions, or the private market;
- Seek advanced standing in the Master of Public and International Affairs;
- Seek advanced standing in the Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law; and
- Leverage their interpreting experience in creative ways to pursue innovative career paths in business.

#### How to apply the Ontario Court Interpreter Test?

More information on the Ministry of the Attorney General's Court Interpreting Test can be found on the Ministry's website. The MCI at Glendon has had numerous conversations with MAG, and plans are underway for MCI students to receive information and support as they prepare to take the MAG tests.

#### What can I do after the Graduate Diploma?

The College is working alongside a number of industry partners to help ensure our students have access to important accreditation exams. Here in Ontario, the Ministry of the Attorney General has agreed in principle to organize information sessions on and help enroll students to take the Ministry's Court Interpreter Test. Similarly, the two new certification bodies in the US -- the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters and the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters -- want to work with us to help make it easier for students to take their tests. In other words, someone who successfully completes the Graduate Diploma would be on track to take these tests, and therefore to gaining an important credential for work in the court and healthcare settings.

#### How much is the second year tuition fee if I want to complete the Master Program?

The tuition fee is the same for first and second year. In both cases, it is roughly \$5,500 a year for Canadian citizen. International student's fee is different. Please check with the College.

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**How useful are the two US healthcare interpreter exams for getting a job as an Interpreter in Ontario? What is the general requirement of Ontario hospitals hiring interpreters?**

Currently, there is no accepted certification process for healthcare interpreters in Canada. That said, we would encourage all interpreters or student interpreters to consider taking the NBCMI or CCHI tests for the following reasons.

a) The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario has just announced that it will add "healthcare interpreter" as a category for certification. There is a strong likelihood that it will not create its own test for this category, but rather that it will use an existing test. ATIO has begun a preliminary conversation with US colleagues concerning the use of one of the US tests in Ontario. If such a test is recognized in Ontario, only those who have passed it will be able to call themselves certified healthcare interpreters. It is also likely that other Canadian provinces would opt to use the same system as Ontario.



b) Even if the US tests have no influence on this side of the border, the US still remains a significant market for Canadian interpreters, especially with more and more interpreting work being done remotely. To put things another way, Canadian interpreters may well find many clients in the US through phone or video interpreting, and US certification will come in handy.

**It is in the news that Toronto hospitals are demanding more interpreters. Does it mean the future is brighter for Interpreters?**

The demand for interpreting services is going nowhere but up. A recent pilot test of over-the-phone interpreting at the University Health Network in Toronto saw demand jump by over 700%, and a similar spike in service is now taking place following a decision by the Local Health Integrated Network of Toronto Centre to offer phone interpreting to the institutions in its catchment area. Initiatives such as these seem to be indicating very firmly that the demand is high, and that opportunities for interpreters are on the rise.

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#### How long is the Master of Conference Interpreting program?

The MCI Program is two years in length, and we are only able to accept full-time students. Year one is delivered entirely online, and students can exit the program at the end of Year One in order to earn the Graduate Diploma in General Interpreting. This means that you can take classes and earn a graduate credential all without ever setting foot on the Glendon campus. If you want to continue on to Year Two, you will have to take classes with us face to face. At the end of Year Two, you will earn the full Master of Conference Interpreting. Students don't have to take Year Two immediately on the heels of Year One. Indeed we expect that many will want to complete Year One, engage in professional practice in key settings such as the courts and healthcare, and then return to us at some point in the future.



#### How do I get more information and apply to the program?

To learn more about application requirements and how to apply online, you can have a look at the York University website - <http://futurestudents.yorku.ca/graduate/programs/conference-interpreting>

#### About Glendon College, York University

Glendon has a strong tradition of preparing future leaders through a world-class liberal arts education. They are one of the only university campuses in Canada to specialize exclusively in the liberal arts. They are the only one to do so in more than one language.

#### About CPAC

Established in 1992, the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada (CPAC) is a federally registered not-for-profit organization with over 27,000 members across the country. It is one of Canada's most active organizations providing career development and training services for immigrant professionals from diverse ethnic communities.

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