



"We were very happy that VSB was open to working with us – that you were willing to go back to the table and figure out how to make the software better."

– Jane Fridrich, Assistive Technologist

## VSB at LAURIER: COLLABORATING TO CREATE A SEAMLESS SCHEDULE PLANNING EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS OF ALL ABILITIES



### Accessibility is Everyone's Responsibility

What would a truly accessible university experience look like – one in which every student, regardless of ability, has equal access and ease?

At Wilfrid Laurier University, accessibility is much more than a set of standards. The team at Laurier is continuously working toward true accessibility all across the University, by listening and responding to the needs of their students.

"We look at and work from student experiences – we listen to students and understand their experiences, and then bring those back to the table to figure out how we can do better," says Gwen Page, Associate Director of the Accessible Learning Centre at Laurier.

Visual Schedule Builder knows the value of partnering with our clients to continually improve our software. By listening and responding to client needs, we provide the best schedule planning experience on the market. In partnership with Laurier, we worked to create true accessibility within our software, above and beyond compliance with industry standards.

### A better registration experience for all students, a better university

Laurier is continuously working to create true accessibility throughout their institution: an equal university experience for students of all abilities. Within the context of this philosophy of inclusion, they hold all partners to a high standard and ask for active proof that all services and software provide the level of seamless accessibility they request. Can students with disabilities use this service or software simply and successfully? Do they have access to all of its functionality?





The answer is all too often no, and the process of figuring out how and from whom to request adaptations can be frustratingly complex. Vendors and institutions often lack understanding of the barriers facing students with disabilities, and as a result do not know how to meet the challenge of removing those barriers. How can an institution weave accessibility through every domain? When it comes to student schedule planning, VSB is the answer.

Although VSB already exceeded industry standards for software accessibility, the administration at Laurier knew that they needed more features to remove all barriers for students with disabilities, particularly those with visual impairment. Together we went back to the table and discussed the challenges and needs Laurier's staff had heard from their students in relation to educational software. We worked collaboratively to create a set of new accommodations for VSB, to provide a seamless course schedule planning experience for students of all abilities.

"We want to help our partners understand who everybody is on campus, and how we can respond to different needs as a whole – helping our partners figure out their role in creating greater accessibility."

– Gwen Page, Associate Director of the Accessible Learning Centre at Laurier.

## Working from the client's perspective

The staff at Laurier University have made great strides toward fully integrating the needs of students with disabilities on their campus. Their work toward supporting the independence and fully equal educational experience of all of their students is setting a new standard.

Visual Schedule Builder was created with the goal of providing a simple, intuitive tool to make it easy for any student to quickly find a schedule that meets their needs. In working with Laurier, VSB was given the opportunity to recognize and address a broader set of needs in educational software. Listening to the suggestions and requests of students and staff alike, we continually refine and add new features and functions. Collaboration with clients like Laurier, leading in their industry, helps VSB to remain the most flexible and comprehensive schedule planning system available on the market today.

