

STUDENT AFFAIRS ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

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Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge, with respect, that St. Jerome's University and the University of Waterloo reside and operate on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. Our University is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land Frederick Haldimand granted to the Haudenosaunee of the Six Nations of the Grand River in 1784 that includes 10 kilometers on both sides of the Grand River and extends from its source to Lake Erie.

The Student Affairs team recognizes the privilege they hold to be able to work on this land. Through the learning that we do for ourselves and the support that we provide to students, we commit to learning how to be active in reconciliation and in building respectful relationships with Indigenous people and communities in Waterloo and beyond.



Student Affairs Team



Back row, left to right: Zeke Schneider, Rebekah DeJong, Mel Chaffe, John Arnou
Front row, left to right: Erika Toffelmire, Michelle Metzger, Angelina Dodds, Tina Nguyen, Britt Scowen

The 2025-26 academic year was a great year for Student Affairs. Fundamental to the work as Student Affairs professionals, the team takes great pride in providing essential support and services to the students of St. Jerome's University and University of Waterloo. Unique to St. Jerome's, its mission, and our team, we focus on whole-person education and human formation.

Beginning in 2023 and moving rapidly since Fall 2025, the team has been busy developing the Student Affairs Curriculum with the finalization of the Learning Goals and Learning Outcomes. The Curriculum will shape the way that the team supports students through in-person programming, drop-ins, and appointments; digital resource access; and broadly what Student Affairs hopes students come to know, do, and value during their time at St. Jerome's. In the upcoming year, the team will focus on offering curriculum aligned programming, services, and resources for our students, and assess student learning based on the learning outcomes.

The team has also been involved in the creation of the first Student Affairs Strategic Plan, with the anticipated launch of Fall 2026. Similar to the Curriculum, the Strategic Plan will communicate our focus and priorities for the upcoming four years (2026-2030). The team has been collaborating with the Student Affairs Strategic Plan Committee, and is excited about the direction the plan is taking.

As always, there are several other highlights for the team in 2025-26. A few of them are:

- Welcomed and onboarded a new Director, Student Affairs
- Opened a new programming space in Sweeney Hall Room 1012
- Facilitated the largest SJU in Peru group to date
- Hired, trained, and accompanied an amazing group of student leaders
- Hosted and collaborated on several successful events, including but not limited to, End of Term Formals, Green & Gold Gala, Open Houses, and Arts Ready Day

The team is looking forward to 2026-27 and building on the success of this past year. In the pages ahead you will read about portfolio specific programming and celebrations. Thank you for taking the time to engage with the team!

Sincerely, the Student Affairs team.

St. Jerome's Fall 2025 Co-Registered Student Snapshot

74 co-registered students, including 4 transfers

64.9%

Honours Arts

35.1%

Honours ARBUS

85.1%

Admitted to Co-op

28.4%

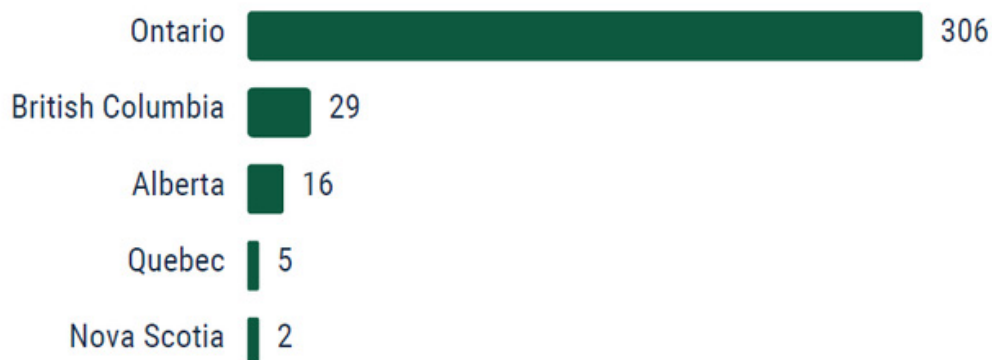
Registered with
AccessAbility Services

Most Popular Prospective Majors

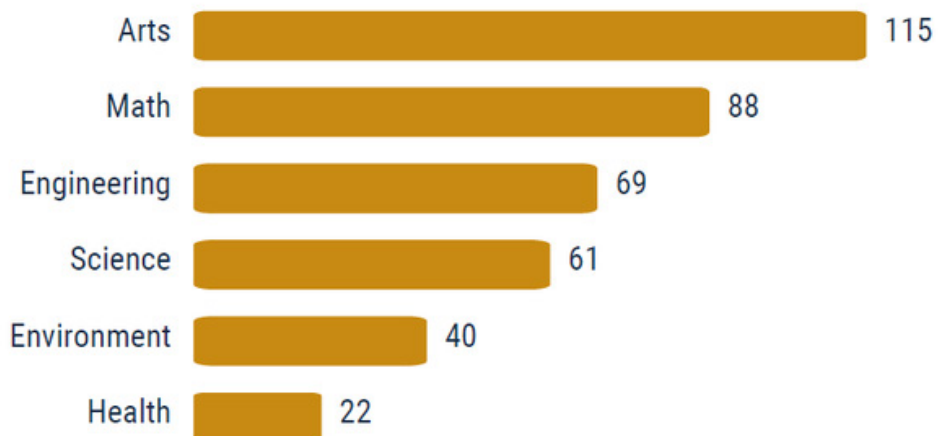
Psychology | Legal Studies | English

St. Jerome's Fall 2025 Residence Student Snapshot

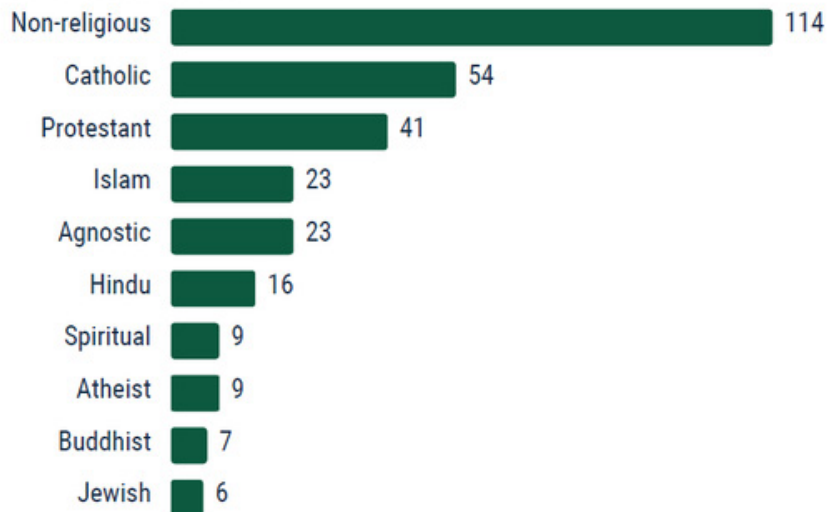
Geographic Origin



Academic Program Blend



Religious Affiliation



Year of Study



Gender Identity



Country of Origin



Residence & Community Life

Team Overview

The Residence and Community Life team at St. Jerome's University is responsible for creating a safe, inclusive, and engaging residential experience that supports students' personal growth, well-being, academic success, and sense of belonging. The team oversees residence operations, student conduct, roommate and community support, residence policies and contracts, and student safety. Their work is grounded in student development, restorative justice, and community values, encouraging students to take responsibility for their actions while fostering respectful and supportive relationships. The team also designs and facilitates programs, events, and involvement opportunities that help students build community, develop self-understanding, engage in reflection and lifelong learning, and connect with peers both in residence and through the broader St. Jerome's community.

Signature Programming

- Residence Green Team of 6 members
- Hosted 9 Community Dinners
- ~400 total attendees at Formals
- Residence Council (37 applicants for 14 roles)
- 8 teams for Residence Intramurals
- Mural Club of 11 students

Words from students

"One of my favorite parts of living in residence has always been the sense of belonging, whether that's through residence events, shared meals, or just running into familiar faces around the building." - Harvin

"The SJU residence experience offers a strong sense of community, belonging, and personal growth that is welcoming to everyone. I especially enjoy the crafts and social events, as they create fun, meaningful opportunities to connect with others and build lasting relationships." - Jolie

Residence by the Numbers

Number of student living in Residence

- Spring 2025 - 56 students
- Fall 2025 - 396 students
- Winter 2026 - 369 students

Off Campus Community Members

- Fall 2025 - 25 students
- Winter 2026 - 23 students

Don & Student Check-Ins

- 354 unique student check-ins

Conduct & Student Follow-Up

- Spring 2025 - 13 incident reports
- Fall 2025 - 145 incident reports
- Winter 2026 - 74 incident reports

*Incident reports refer to the documentation that Dons make as they support students in a variety of circumstances.

**Fall has higher proportion of incident reports due to students transitioning to university living and learning.

Service Learning

Portfolio Overview

Service learning highlights students' meaningful engagement with community organizations and their commitment to service. Through structured reflection, students connect their service experiences to academic learning while developing a deeper understanding of social issues, civic responsibility, and the common good. The portfolio captures the reciprocal value of service learning, demonstrating how community engagement enriches student learning while contributing to community well-being. In doing so, it reflects St. Jerome's University's mission to foster engaged citizenship and social justice.

Signature Programs

- SJU in Peru
- Certificate in Catholic Leadership Service component
- Student Refugee Program (SRP)
- SJU Acts

Student Testimonial

"Because of my experience with SJU in Peru, I have learned that we as individuals can make positive changes in someone else's life from the smallest actions and choices we have. From changing our typical purchase of coffee to a simple hello to a stranger on the streets, we can make a difference. (This experience) gave me insight into where I want to go next in my career – that is to work alongside organizers in any form of community development." ~Pam

"Because of my experience with SJU in Peru, I intend to spread the idea of 'connection'. [Despite] the cultural barriers that distanced us from the Peruvians, we were able to overcome them together and establish strong heartfelt connections. I want to spread that within our highly individualistic society" ~Olivia

Service Learning by the Numbers

SJU in Peru

12 students participated in a 10 day global, experiential learning program.

SJU Acts

38 student participants contributed over 250 volunteer hours to Tiny Home Takeout garden, St. John's Kitchen, and Tiny Home Takeout.

On Campus Collaborations

St. Jerome's students:

- Prepared 50 soup kits for the SJU Community Cupboard for Winter term
- Wrote 75 encouragement cards for community partners around the holidays and were delivered to Tiny Home Takeout Christmas Card Drive, a and Columbia Forest and University Gates retirement homes for Valentine's Day
- Sewed and bound 2 comforter blankets for donation to international relief aid.

Student Advising

Advising Philosophy

In alignment with the University’s objective to educate the ‘whole person’, the SJU Student Advisors work closely with students as they journey through their undergraduate degree. Through relational and strength-based approaches grounded in appreciative advising, Student Advisors are a key partner and support for students as they work toward their goals and navigate opportunities and obstacles along the way.

Programs & Initiatives

Arts Ready Day

- 20 student attendees
- Hosted in July for co-registered students and their supporters to join for a BBQ lunch and informational sessions

Dean’s Brunch

- 37 student attendees
- Hosted during orientation for coregistered students to meet faculty and staff before classes

First Week Welcome

- “Welcome back to school” packs distributed by Advisors and PALs
- Degrees & Donuts
- Hosted by Advisors and PALs in Winter term for students to review their degree, major/minor, and breadth requirements

Declare Your Major Mixer

- 30 first-year student attendees
- Hosted in the Winter term to chat with upper-year students about majors and minors

Book Fair

- 500 books shared with students and community members

Advising by the Numbers

APPOINTMENTS

786 appointments

DROP-INS

72 drop-ins in Fall term

75 drop-ins in Winter term

DECLARE YOUR MAJOR

15% of student unable to declare major

11% of students changed their program

25% of student selected a major different from their prospective major choices or added an additional major

22% of students added a minor that was not one of their prospective majors

FALL VS. WINTER TERM

FALL TERM (382 students) GRADES

Term Avg: 78.68% | Median: 81.2%

55.2% received Term Distinction

83.3% in Good or Excellent standing

WINTER TERM (361 students)

Term Avg: 78.65% | Median: 81.5%

55.1% received Term Distinction

82.3% in Good or Excellent standing

Student Leadership

Portfolio Overview

Student leaders play an integral role in the experience that St. Jerome's students have while living in our residence buildings and engaging with our campus. They work to ensure that students transition smoothly to living away from home for the first time and studying at the university level. Student leaders are a fundamental resource for students throughout their time at St. Jerome's that care for and support the formation of the whole student (mind, body, and spirit).

Student Leadership at SJU

STUDENT LEADERS

Student Leaders hired including: Dons, Peer Academic Leaders (PALs), Student Activities, Off-Campus Community, Green Team, and PRISM.

- Dons - upper year students living in residence to support students on each floor.
- PALs - upper year students who support the academic success of our students by providing programming related to learning strategies and study skills.
- Student Activities - students that support the building of community and social connections of St. Jerome's students.
- Off-Campus Community - upper year students responsible for programming for St. Jerome's students that live off campus
- Green Team - students responsible for programming related to sustainability.
- Prism - student advocacy group that support 2SLGBTQIA+ initiatives at SJU

STUDENT LEADER TRAINING

Each Student Leader participated in 7-9 days of training with interactive sessions on: community building, equity, strengths-based leadership, responding to harm on campus and numerous team specific sessions.

STUDENT LEADER PROGRAMMING

- 50 events facilitated for the SJU student community including:
 - Community Pride Day
 - Coffee House

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Graduating student participants, reflected on their leadership experience and integrated these through workshops and 1-1 conversations with mentors into a plan for their life post-graduation.

For 2026-2027, over 100 students applied for student leader roles, including a record number for the Residence Don role.

Wellness

Portfolio Overview

The wellness portfolio oversees the development and implementation of proactive and preventative programming to support student wellness and mental health. Programming includes psychoeducational and experiential workshops on selected topics, social support, 1:1 wellness coaching, referrals and system navigation support, and training in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) for students, staff, and faculty.

Signature Programs

- Social Steps
- Therapy Dogs
- Ask a Wellness Professional
- Workshops:
- Understanding Anxiety
- Motivation
- Self-Care and Self-Compassion
- Healthy Sleep

Wellness by the Numbers

WELLNESS WORKSHOPS

29 workshops offered with 79 attendees.

1:1 STUDENT SUPPORT APPOINTMENTS

34 total students supported.

PARTICIPANTS TRAINED IN MHFA

90 total participants trained.

SOCIAL DROP-IN

205 total participants in attendance.

SOCIAL STEPS* PROGRAM

22 total participants walking.

*Previously known as Mood Walks and renamed following the discontinuation of CMHA's program.

Student Testimonial

"The Wellness Program, Social Drop-in run by Angelina, is without a doubt my favourite part of school and Waterloo/St. Jerome's as a whole. I go as often as I can since first attending, as it is a great place for students to take a break from studying, to relax, and take a breather.

I go for all of these things, and it is a massive boost and lift for my mental health and wellbeing, with doing something as simple as colouring, bedazzling, chatting, and playing board games with everyone.

Everyone is so wonderful, and I am so grateful for the people and this opportunity to attend every week." — Rozie K. (Student)

Meet The Team

John Arnou

Student Advisor

John is a proud Student Affairs practitioner with over 20 years of professional experience, spending the last 15 years serving and advocating for students at SJU. John holds a BA (WLU) in Geography/Environmental Studies and Psychology; and MEd (MUN) in Post-Secondary Studies. Prior to joining the SJU community, John spent time at Trent University and St. Francis Xavier University working in residence and student life. John's approaches to his work with students are human-centered, grounded in Appreciate Advising principles, and looked through a lens of inclusion and equity. Outside of work, you can find John spending time with family, friends, and cat, watching professional sports, and taking in the local food and drink hospitality scene!

Mel Chaffe

Director, Student Affairs

Mel joins the team with over 15 years of experience in higher education. She started her undergraduate education at University of Calgary and has worked her way east with every subsequent degree (Lakehead University B.Ed., Memorial University M.Ed.). Providing a positive and impactful undergraduate experience for students, and ensuring that her colleagues have what they need to do their work is what keeps her motivated. When Mel isn't at work you can find her hanging with her son and partner, at a soccer field, reading a book, doing yoga, or at the beach.

Rebekah DeJong

Manager, Residence & Community Life

Rebekah (BA, MEd) has been part of the University College Community at UW for more than 15 years as both student and staff. Her student experience sparked a passion for building vibrant communities where students can learn, grow, and discover who they are. Rebekah is motivated by the opportunity to create meaningful experiences and make a positive impact on students' lives. Outside of work, you will find Rebekah caring for her 40+ houseplants, cycling, listening to podcasts, and organizing elaborate "Taste the Film" experiences for her niece and nephew.

Angelina Dodds

Wellness Coordinator

Angelina is a Registered Social Worker (BA, BSW, MSW), joining the Student Affairs team 3 years ago following long-term work in psychotherapy and addictions treatment. She is passionate about holistic wellness and empowering others on their journeys toward health, healing, and success. Angelina brings experience in cognitive, solutions-focused, person-centered, and strengths-based therapies to her work across workshops and student appointments, aiming to meet a variety of student wellness needs. In her free time, you'll find Angelina with her kindle, watching procedural dramas, or playing with her Boston Terrier, Rosie.

Michelle Metzger

Service Learning Program Coordinator

Michelle has worked in SJU Student Affairs for 8 years, blending education and reflection with community service to create meaningful experiential learning opportunities for our students both locally and abroad. She brings her bachelor of Knowledge Integration, MA in International Development, and experience living and working in the global south. She is passionate about building reciprocal collaborations in solidarity with diverse community partners, and encouraging students to consider: what does it really mean to be a socially responsible and active citizen in the world today? Michelle enjoys community music, cheering for the Leafs and Blue Jays, and outdoor activities like skiing, skating, canoeing, and camping.

Tina Nguyen

Residence & Community Life Assistant

Tina brings 3 years of experience at SJU to her role where she is passionate about fostering a welcoming and supportive environment for students in the community. She holds a Bachelor of Global Business and Digital Arts and enjoys building community through meaningful student connections and day-to-day support of student life. Tina values creating spaces where students feel comfortable, engaged, and empowered through their university experience. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, live music, and discovering local food recommendations.

Zeke Schneider

Residence & Community Life Coordinator

Zeke brings a thoughtful and student-centred approach to his work, focusing on both the operational and communitybuilding aspects of residence life. In his role within Student Affairs, Zeke supports the day-to-day operations of the residence program, helping ensure that students feel safe, connected, and empowered throughout their time in residence. His interdisciplinary academic background, including Education (M.Ed.), Law and Society (B.A.), and Business (Dip.), gives him a well-rounded perspective that informs his work with students, staff, and the broader university community. When not at work, you will find Zeke spending time with his family and traveling.

Britt Scowen

Student Advisor

Britt is in her 4th year as a Student Advisor at SJU and works closely with John to support co-registered students, Sexualities, Relationships, and Families (SRF) students, and many other students that find connection points to our campus. Britt brings her educational experiences (BA in Psychology, Certified Appreciative Advisor, Trauma Certification) along with 10 years of experience working in Higher Education into each interaction she has with students to ensure they receive the individualized support and encouragement they need to meet their goals. Britt is also an avid reader and enjoys a long hike that ends with a celebratory baked treat.

Erika Toffelmire

Student Leadership & Service Coordinator

Erika is a proud SJU grad and works both in Student Affairs and Campus Ministry to integrate reflection, service, and leadership opportunities into the student experience. Working at St. Jerome's University for over 10 years, she knows the community well and is dedicated to student growth through local volunteering, student leader training, and spiritually based programming. When Erika isn't on campus, you can find her spending time with her husband and kids, singing in a community choir, enjoying time outside, and reading (or listening) to a good book.