

Maple League Executive Director Monthly Report

July 31, 2020



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Executive Director's Note:

Collaborations across the Maple League have continued to accelerate in July as we build upon the momentum of existing projects and relationships while remaining open to new opportunities and connections.

The Virtual Maple League Teaching and Learning Centre (V_MLTLC) continues to thrive, with thrice weekly events averaging 52 participants/per session (compared to an average 38 participants per session in June). We've added a new project under the leadership of Dr. Erin Austen (faculty member at St. Francis Xavier) called Developing Our Courses Together Online Remotely (DOCTOR) that builds spaces for faculty to meet and plan courses for Fall 2020.

Our "Maple League Hosts" monthly session featured the four Maple League university presidents on a panel talking about the future of higher education in the time of COVID. Over 150 people tuned in for the live panel. We also had the opportunity to welcome Dr. Andrew Hakin as the new president of St. Francis Xavier University (July 1, 2020) and thanked Dr. Kevin Wamlsey, interim president, for his incredible service during a challenging year.

This month we spent a tremendous amount of time on inter-institutional course sharing; under the leadership of Dr. Mark Adam (faculty member at Acadia and new chair of the Maple League Academic Committee) and in consultation with the registrars, IT Directors, Union/Faculty Association Presidents, VP Academics and Academic Deans, we have created smoother pathways for proposing, reviewing, and approving Maple League courses for Fall 2020. Our efforts to steer a grassroots, faculty-led initiative to offer unique and boutique courses to students across the Maple League have been labour intensive and highly consultative, and we are confident we will be able to increase course offerings as faculty members see value in collaboration at the pedagogical, departmental, and/or institutional levels.

We've added three student interns through the Canada Summer jobs program who will help us focus even more on equity, diversity, and inclusion - with positions related to decolonization, inclusion of first generation students in high impact practices, and social innovation. We will continue to grow and learn, listen and reflect as we explore how to be better together.

~ Dr. Jessica Riddell, Executive Director, Maple League of Universities

I. Inter-Institutional Collaboration

Better Together: Maple League Teaching Support Series

The 'Better Together: Maple League Teaching Support' series this month - hosted by the V_MLTLC - brought together faculty and students from across the Maple League to offer teaching support, communities of practice, and spaces to collaborate and work through challenges related to teaching during the global pandemic. Sessions included:



Thursday, July 2: Integrating **Experiential Learning** hosted by Jennifer Lussier (Project Lead, RIIPEN), Charlene Marion (Experiential Learning Coordinator, Bishop's), and Tiffany MacLennan (Student, St. FX)

Tuesday, July 7: Course Planning I: **The Story of Your Course** hosted by Dr. Heather Smith (Jarislowsky Visiting Scholar 2020 at Bishop's University)

Thursday, July 9: Course Planning II: **Constructive Alignment** hosted by Dr. Heather Smith (Jarislowsky Visiting Scholar 2020 at Bishop's University)

Tuesday, July 14: **Knowledge Mobilization** hosted by Dr. Heather Lawford (CRC and faculty member at Bishop's)

Thursday, July 16: Ask Us Anything about **Anti-Black Racism in Education**: Creating a safe place to have questions answered hosted by Wendy Mackey, Dr. Ornella Nzindukiyimana, and Dr. Ronald Charles (faculty members at St. FX)

Tuesday, July 21: Supporting **First-Generation Students** hosted by Tiffany MacLennan (student at St. FX and McKenna Fellow), Tanisha Campbell (Knowledge Mobilization Fellow at Bishop's) and Clancy McDaniel (President of Students NS)

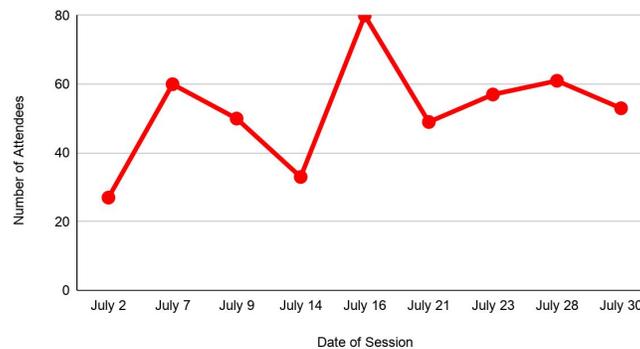


Thursday, July 23: **Best Practices for Accessibility and Accommodation** in the time of COVID hosted by Theresa Gagnon (Manager of Counselling & Accessibility Services Student Accessibility & Accommodation Services at Bishop’s), Amanda Manning (Accessibility Coordinator Student Services at Bishop’s), Anne Comfort (Director of Accessibility and Student Wellness at Mount Allison), and Marissa McIsaac (Manager of Accessible Learning Services at Acadia)

Tuesday, July 28: **All About Assessment** hosted by Jeff Banks (Director of Open Acadia and Faculty member) and Estelle Chamoux (Chair of the BU TLC and faculty member at Bishop’s)

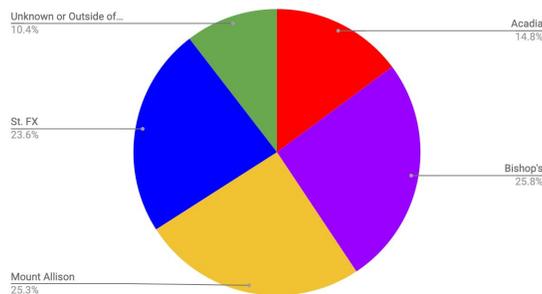
Thursday, July 30: **Even More Moodle** hosted by Scott Stoddard (Director of IT Client Services at Bishop’s) and Keagan Hawthorne (ITS at Mount Allison)

Number of Attendees at July Better Together sessions



Over nine sessions, we had 465 ‘contacts’ with 182 individuals from across our four institutions and beyond participated in at least one of our July Better Together sessions, with an average of 52 attendees per session.

July Better Together Attendee Breakdown by Institution



Participant Feedback from our July Better Together Sessions

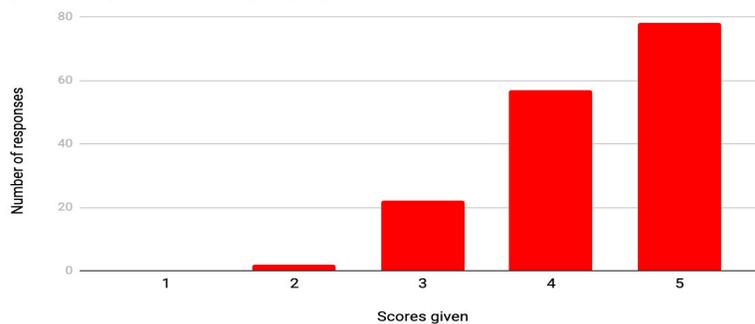
“This session was incredible. Emphasizing the importance of a course story.... [It can] transform the class experience for the professor and the students.”

~ Participant Feedback from July 7: The Story of Your Course

“Very well organized with clear transitions between speakers. Excellent slides that were clear. Many points covered. Inclusion of experiential and scholarly knowledge showed depth of understanding and powerful communication by presenters. Thank you for mentioning various resources for further learning.”

~ Participant Feedback from July 16: Ask Us Anything about Anti-Black Racism in Education

Participant feedback on helpfulness of July BT sessions
(1 = Not Helpful, 5= Extremely Helpful)



“This Better Together session was my favorite of the last dozen. True stories, true solutions, true resources, true message. Very powerful.”

~ Participant Feedback from July 16: Ask Us Anything about Anti-Black Racism in Education

“Gave lots of hands on information with specific details on how to do things and well explained.” ~ Participant Feedback from July 30: Even More Moodle

Wednesday Special Interest Sessions

The Wednesday Special Interest Sessions in July focussed on inclusion and impact, from High-Impact Practices (Kuh, 2008), to a Call to Action on Decolonizing the Consortium from Maple League Indigenous Student Fellow Lara Hartman (Acadia University), and an ‘Ask Me Anything’ session with the Director of the V_MLTLC, Heather Carroll. On July 8, during our **Maple League Student Success Panel on High-Impact Practices (HIPs)** participants joined panelists Tiffany MacLennan (Wallace Fellow), Jessica Riddell (Executive Director, Maple League), Heather Carroll (Director, V_MLTLC), and Krista Steeves (Director of Experiential Learning, Mount Allison) as they discussed High Impact Practices (HIPs), and the positive impact on deeper learning (Kuh, 2008) in the context of COVID.



Brendan McNeil, student union president at Acadia, facilitated the panel. Over 50 staff, students, alumni and faculty from across the four universities joined to learn about HIPs, their importance, and the benefits they offer students. A recording of this panel can be watched here:

<https://youtu.be/hMw3GND38ls>

"I hadn't heard of the term "High Impact Practice" before, but I have greatly benefited from this concept in the past. Hearing new innovative ways that I as a student leader can promote was also insightful."

~ Student attendee from St. FX



"I loved all the panelists, everyone brought a unique lens to the topic which really added to the panel. Your energy, thoughtfulness and ability to play off and build off each other was awesome!"

~Faculty attendee from Mount Allison

V_MLTLC Special Interest Session
July 22nd: 'Decolonizing the Consortium'



On July 22, our Special Interest Session, **Decolonizing the Consortium**: Issuing a Call to Action with Lara Hartman brought together 45 people from our universities and communities at large. During this session, Lara explored the historical and contemporaneous legacies of colonialism across our four universities, and presented action items in order to interrupt the status quo.

“This was an amazing amazing talk, and it definitely inspired me to do more research, reach out and educate myself more, so thank you!”

~ Student attendee from Bishop's

On July 29, our Special Interest Session was an **‘Ask Me Anything’** with the Director of the V_MLTLC. 26 participants joined Heather Carroll to ask questions related to course design, inquire about August programming, and to discuss challenges and opportunities facing higher education during this pandemic.

“I came away feeling more optimistic for the “new newness” that we are facing.”

~ Faculty attendee from St. FX



“Keep it up, I look forward to more in August and September. I love this regular opportunity to not limit the space to just a presentation but allowing an open talking space for everyone to come together”

~ Student attendee from Bishop's

Developing Our Courses Together Online Remotely (DOCTOR) Program

Spearheaded by Dr. Erin Austen (St. FX), through the Virtual Maple League Teaching and Learning Centre (V_MLTLC), the DOCTOR program was a facilitated community of practice; participants have created a shared quiet space to work on designing, developing, and preparing their courses for the upcoming academic year. Participants met twice a week throughout the month of July to develop their courses together.

The first two sessions of the DOCTOR program were the Better Together sessions with Dr. Heather Smith on Course Development on July 7th and 9th. Following Course Development week, participants met twice a week for three weeks. At the start of each session, participants



shared what they planned to work on that day. Following ninety minutes of silent work (and occasional chat!) participants turned their microphones and cameras back on to debrief what went well and what they found challenging in their course development.

For the July iteration of the DOCTOR program, 13 participants from St. FX, Mount Allison, and Acadia signed up and met biweekly. Due to the overwhelmingly positive reviews of the program, and a desire to continue working together, the DOCTOR program will be launching an August session for both new and returning participants.

The August edition of the DOCTOR program will follow the same format as the July pilot edition.

Dr. Erin Austen, an Associate Professor of Psychology at St. FX, is the co-chair of the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee and facilitated the DOCTOR program in July. Many thanks to Dr. Austen for her commitment to this project.

‘On Demand’ Asynchronous Resources

Better Together Video Recordings

July 2: Integrating **Experiential Learning** into Your Course with Jennifer Lussier (Project Lead, RIIPEN), Charlene Marion (Experiential Learning Coordinator, Bishop’s), and Tiffany MacLennan (Student, St. FX) <https://youtu.be/7wX-u4QUdaw>



July 7: Course Planning I: **The Story of Your Course** hosted by Jarislowsky Visiting Scholar Dr. Heather Smith <https://youtu.be/ITw7s8-4LiE>

Thursday, July 9: Course Planning II: **Constructive Alignment** hosted by Dr. Heather Smith <https://youtu.be/YjEOMdjgpSE>

July 16: Ask Us Anything about **Anti-Black Racism in Education**: Creating a Safe Place to Have Questions Answered hosted by Wendy Mackey, Dr. Ornella Nzindukiyimana, and Dr. Ronald Charles (faculty at St. FX) <https://youtu.be/oWf90D83JXE>

July 21: **Supporting First-Generation Students** hosted by Tiffany MacLennan (St. FX), Tanisha Campbell (Bishop’s), and Clancy McDaniel (Students NS) <https://youtu.be/cP9ezJmvjSc>

July 23: **Best Practices for Accessibility and Accommodation** in the time of COVID hosted by Theresa Gagnon (Bishop’s), Amanda Manning (Bishop’s), Anne Comfort (Mount Allison), Ian Ford (Acadia) and Marissa McIsaac (Acadia) <https://youtu.be/xJMGSSo1h6w>



V_MLTLC Resource Guide

Join the V_MLTLC in contributing to a grassroots, open-access Resource Guide about Teaching and Learning. Due to community readership and participation, this guide continues to grow and serve as a resource for teaching and learning across our four campuses. All are welcome to contribute resources that they have found helpful to their teaching and student learning using the forms embedded in the guide. Topics include:

- Designing for Accessibility, Equity & Inclusion
- Anti-Racist Reading Resources
- Trauma-Informed Teaching and Learning
- Teaching with an Ethic of Care
- Supporting Students to Succeed
- Rethinking assessment & Moving beyond the exam

Review the resource here: <https://tinyurl.com/VMLTLC>

Open Acadia - Adapting Your Course for Remote Delivery

“Adapting Your Course for Remote Delivery” is an online course developed by Open Acadia’s Learning Technologies and Instructional Design (LTID) Team and shared with Maple League schools this summer. This online course aims to aid faculty with converting their course(s) from pure face-to-face delivery to a remote delivery format. Bishop’s will launch the six module asynchronous course in early August and the other two universities made it available in July.

View the Course Introduction here: <https://youtu.be/vKGnCS5g4YY>



Bishop’s University hired 23 students as Online Learning Technology Consultants (OLTCS) to help faculty prepare for Fall 2020. As part of the two-week intensive orientation the OLTCS were trained on the Open Acadia Online course.

Shared Maple League Courses (Fall 2020)

Over the past two years, an agreement in principle has existed between the four Maple League universities to facilitate students taking courses across the four institutions within the consortium. There has been a history of shared Maple League academic programming, such as joint courses taught across all four universities, and over the past two years we have identified and addressed many of the challenges of collaborating across campuses.

On April 20, 2020, the four Presidents of the Maple League of Universities – Acadia, Mount Allison, St. Francis Xavier, and Bishop’s – signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that encourages students to take courses from across the four institutions without the often-burdensome administrative processes associated with transferring credits.

Faculty who were interested in opening their courses to Maple League students in Fall 2020 responded to a call for expressions of interest. The Maple League Academic Committee, made up of 2-3 faculty members per institution, assessed the course proposals and then worked with the registrars to support the logistics of opening the course across the four institutions. The MOU is a high level agreement that formalizes past practice; we’ve consulted union/faculty association presidents, academic deans, and VPs (Academic) to ensure that policies and collective agreements were aligned. All Senate related issues – including residency – are governed by the individual institution where the student is enrolled.

Beyond the immediate benefits that the MOU offers in the unprecedented situation engendered by the coronavirus pandemic, the agreement provides Maple League students with increased access to diverse courses and programs, mentors and research supervisors, and the expertise of exceptional faculty across the four universities.

Course: Indigenous Canada (Advanced Topics)

Host School: Mount Allison

Course Number: INDG/CANA 4101

Course Instructor: Karl S. Hele

Description: This course will focus on specific topics in transcolonial-border Indigenous History. Topics may include treaties, borders, state policy, violence, resistance, missionization, and performance set within the theoretical concepts of restorying and survivance.

Course: Directed Readings in Latin

Host School: Mount Allison

Course Number: LATI 4001

Course Instructor: Ilaria Battiloro

Description: This course is a detailed study of one or more Latin authors. [Note 1: Permission of the Department is required. Note 2: LATI 4001 may be taken for credit more than once if the topic differs.] (Format: Lecture 3 Hours)

Course: Mi'kmaw Language and Culture

Host School: St. FX

Course Number: MIKM 105

Course Instructor: Michelle Sylliboy

Description: Using creative inquiry methodology and Indigenous pedagogy, this course introduces students to the various aspects of the Mi'kmaq language: phonetics, morphology, semantics, syntax, and language acquisition. Comparisons will be made between the seven districts of the Mi'kma'ki nations

Course: Archaeology of Modern Daily Life

Host School: Mount Allison

Course Number: VMCS 2991A

Course Instructor: Henry Cary

Description: This course will examine the material culture of everyday life from the mid-18th century to present, with a focus on how our interaction with objects has changed and evolved through time. It begins with the predominately local and small-scale production and use of objects just before the Industrial Revolution and expansion of European empires, then examines the profound impact those events had on the material culture used by indigenous and colonizing societies and across class lines. Moving to the 20th century it will explore how everyday material culture changed in times of both increased affluence and crises, such as during the First World War and Great Depression. Finally, the course will critically assess our “entanglements” with material things in the 21st century as there is increasing concern with globalization, consumption, and waste in a time of climate change, social inequality, and global pandemics.

Course: Group Theory and Physics (Mathematics)

Host School: Mount Allison

Course Number: MATH 4991

Course Instructor: Mark Hamilton

Description: This course studies the application of the representation theory of Lie groups to problems in physics. In particular, we will deduce the structure of the energy levels of hydrogen atom from mathematical considerations.

Course: Who Owns the Past? Archaeological Ethics, Cultural Heritage, Politics, and Practice in Contemporary Society

Host School: Bishop's University

Course Number: CLA365

Course Instructor: Lana Radloff

Description: Archaeological practice raises challenging ethical issues. Archaeologists working in culture resource management and research-generated archaeology often find themselves caught between the goals and standards of their profession and the demands of employers, oversight agencies, stakeholders, and funding bodies. Further conflicts arise between research goals and the commitments entailed by conservation ethics, particularly in the use of looted and trafficked material. But most urgent and most transformative are the issues of accountability raised by descendant communities, especially Indigenous and First Nations communities who regard archaeological sites and artifacts as their cultural heritage. This course examines the interface between archaeology and cultural heritage management, ethics, politics and social systems, and the ways that archaeology and its practitioners are deeply entangled in western value systems and epistemologies. Using history to contextualize contemporary practice, we will consider the ways that archaeologists engage with current issues, debates and controversies within the discipline and beyond. Issues for this course will also include cultural identity, human rights, repatriation, (de)colonization, community outreach, public engagement, cosmopolitanism and collecting, archaeology and looting, cultural heritage preservation, museum acquisition policies, international conventions, and national and provincial laws of ownership.

For more information visit:

<http://mapleleague.ca/student/spring-and-summer-2020-online-and-remote-shared-courses/>

II. External Engagement

The PATH Future Skills Proposal

Dr. Michael Sheppard (faculty member at Acadia University and Entrepreneurship professor), in collaboration with Dr. Jessica Riddell and Brendan MacNeil (student coordinator and Canada Summer Jobs intern for the social incubator), prepared and submitted a proposal on behalf of the Maple League to The Future Skills Centre for approximately \$200K to fund The PATH for a two year period. The Future Skills Centre is investing \$37 million into “innovative and community-based programs to find solutions to Canada’s changing workforce.” The Social Purpose Incubator is a good fit for this program.

The Maple League Presidents Panel



The four Maple League University Presidents sat on a panel on the future of Higher Education in the time of COVID. Peter Ricketts of Acadia University, Michael Goldbloom of Bishop’s University, Jean-Paul Boudreau of Mount Allison University

and Andrew Hakin of St. Francis Xavier University discussed how Maple League universities differentiate themselves with an individualized, immersive experience that are hallmarks of a 21st century liberal education. Over 150 people from across Canada tuned in to hear from the panelists. These four university leaders explored in depth, over the course of the hour, how higher education will be essential for our communities - both local and global - as we navigate these unprecedented times. Andy Hakin, incoming president at St.FX, shared advice he received as an undergraduate student: “Education is good. Go get some.” Jean-Paul Boudreau, president at Mount Allison University, followed up with a message to incoming and returning students, saying that university is the most exciting place to be in these uncertain times. Watch the panel, and learn more about the Maple League’s commitment to student-focused educational experiences here: https://youtu.be/Kr_pY-iGmxQ

Digital Resource Consortium (DRC)

The DRC is a pan-Canadian collaboration of universities, partner organizations, and volunteers coordinated by staff employed on a contract basis. Its goal is to curate, redevelop, and develop open digital instructional resources for use by faculty members and students in Canada's universities and to deploy them in time for the 2020–2021 academic year (i.e., September 2020–August 2021).

As of the most recent revision of the terms of reference (Graham, 22 June 2020), seventeen universities are currently participating in the DRC. In addition, faculty or staff members from other institutions also participate on an individual basis. A small number of volunteers with particular expertise participate in specific areas of the work. The DRC maintains a structural link with the Maple League of Universities through its Executive Director and the Director of the Maple League Virtual Teaching and Learning Centre. The list of partner organizations continues to grow.

Halifax Educational Developers Network

The Halifax Educational Developers Network is a group of teaching and learning professionals from all Halifax post-secondary institutions. The Director of the V_MLTLC was invited to join this working group, which meets monthly, to discuss institutional trends and best practices in Educational Development as we navigate the pandemic. Our membership in this group has resulted in our resources being shared across the Atlantic region, and having participants join V_MLTLC sessions from Halifax universities.

III. The Maple League Team

In addition to our core team of Maple League leaders - including Jessica Riddell (ED), Heather Carroll (Director of the V_MLTLC), and Lauren Boutlbee (Post-Graduate Fellow, Communications and Advancement) - we have a wonderful group of student fellows funded through external sources (the Canada Summer Jobs program and the McKenna Centre).

Tanisha Campbell

Tanisha is the Knowledge Mobilization Graduate Certificate Student working on Advocacy for First-Generation Students in the University Context. Her project aims to bring awareness and inspire changes in behaviour towards first-generation students in academic settings, specifically at the university level. In this role Tanisha works in collaboration with fellow students and her supervisor to disseminate knowledge on existing tools and systems (i.e. High Impact Practices) across the four Maple League institutions, facilitate workshops with stakeholders from the Maple League institutions about their engagement with first-generation students (with a focus on tools and systems available and collaborate with Maple League partners) in order to make innovative recommendations for HIP Implementation.



Lara Hartman

Lara is focussed on leading initiatives and building sustainable programs to decolonize the academy. Lara will work with a team of Elders, faculty members, and Indigenous alliance staff to design a plan for Indigenizing the Maple League. This position will allow Lara to make changes for the present and future, by advancing the design and implementation of educational activities, research projects, student-generated content, and EDI related events and initiatives related to Indigenous issues, pedagogies, and ways of knowing.



Brendan MacNeil

In his role as Student Manager with the Maple League Incubator Brendan oversees and develops the core components of the incubator. This includes developing and launching the virtual program platform, communicating with mentors and offices of advancement on each campus, and developing relationships with partners to deliver workshops and additional opportunities for student entrepreneurs throughout the semester. He is also in charge of communicating and promoting the incubator through social media channels to students and the broader university and the local community.



Tiffany MacLennan

Tiffany, a student at St. Francis Xavier, has been awarded a prestigious McKenna Fellowship for \$25,000 to explore a project that has a meaningful impact on the community. She and Dr. Riddell are collaborating on a project that aims to increase student retention through the use of High Impact Practices (HIPs). Adapting HIPs to in the light of COVID and beyond will be a key focus. In this role Tiffany will facilitate research on HIPs within the four Maple League (ML) institutions, collect and analyze data relevant to HIPs in the ML institutions, conduct a literature review of the outcomes of HIPs in higher education, organize and facilitate workshops with stakeholders from the ML institutions regarding HIPs, and collaborate with the ML to find innovative solutions for HIP implementation. Tiffany will be a key advisor on potential collaborations, emerging ideas and research of HIPs, assist in the implementation/restructuring of HIPs in the ML institutions and work closely with the ML student fellows, Director of the Virtual ML Teaching and Learning Centre (V_MLTLC) and ML Executive Director.



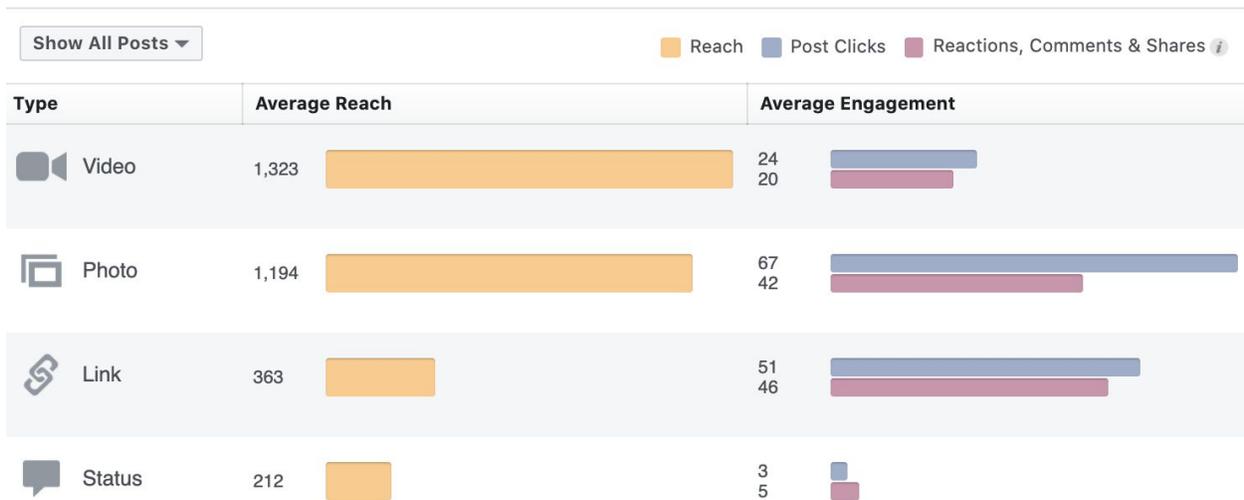
Appendix A: Communications

Social Media Insights

Facebook

Our average reach and engagement based on the type of post we share (video, photo, link, status) can be seen in the graphic below. Of particular note this month is the average reach of videos we have been sharing. This means the videos we have posted this month have been getting a lot of views, likes and shares and therefore reaching a wider audience which is promising for the growth of the Maple League. **Maple League followers are committed to the story we are telling.**

The success of different post types based on average reach and engagement.



Facebook is a platform where we continue to see exponential growth, especially in reach. After analysing the insights for Facebook over the last month, other notable metrics include **video views up 6156%, actions taken on page up 67%, reach up 1% to 7.5K and page followers up 10%.**

Twitter

The Maple League Twitter is a platform where there is consistently continued growth. Not only is our following a very **loyal and engaged** one, but we organically gained **40 new followers** this month. Our **impressions** (times our tweets are seen) have **increased 20.6%** from last month and are currently holding strong at **63.9K** which translates to great exposure for the Maple League. We also had a high engagement rate this month of 3.5%. This not only means again an increase in exposure but confirms the loyalty and engagement of our followers.

Tweet impressions

63.9K ↑ 20.6%



Profile visits

434 ↑ 53.9%



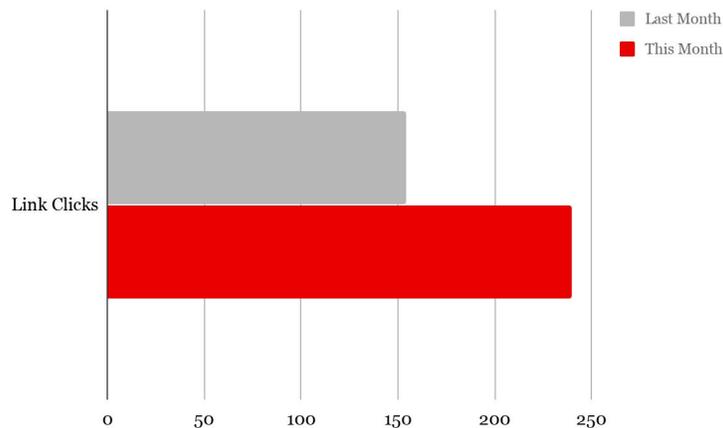
Followers

1,156 ↑ 40



Instagram

Instagram has been a consistent channel with an **average reach per post of 350 people**. Followers often repost content to their story (which allows it to be seen by all of their friends for 24 hours). During these occurrences more traffic is driven to the Maple League account, increasing the number of followers.



We are seeing consistent growth across this social media platform, which is notable because it is usually difficult for organizations to see **continual growth across all platforms**. One of the most significant data points is the growth in link clicks (shown above). Link views have grown significantly this month from **154 to 240**. This is significant because it confirms that we have a very loyal and engaged following; **followers are taking an interest** in Maple League content and making the effort to visit our profile, click on the link, and engage with our story.

LinkedIn

Since focusing efforts to this platform (**April 24th, 2020 - present**) we have seen significant follower growth, engagements and impressions. LinkedIn is a channel that can often be very difficult to see organic (unpaid) growth. Not only have we accomplished significant organic growth, our **engagement rate average for July is 5.46%**, which is extremely high, as anything over 2% for LinkedIn is considered very good. Other noteworthy metrics this month include **30 new followers, 68 reactions, and 17 shares which is up 240%** from last month.

LinkedIn Analytics

