

Maple League of Universities Quarterly Report
October 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021



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Executive Director's Note:

This quarter there has been noticeable buzz around the Maple League, both externally and closer to home. Whether it is the grouping of these four universities in HESA reports, showing up in Ken Steele's presentations on pandemic innovations, or mentions in PSE future reports, the Maple League has become a shorthand for a particular model of undergraduate education. The Maple League is also a term that is increasingly mentioned internally – in hallways and board rooms, in committee meetings and benchmarking exercises.

And yet, what does this now-familiar term *mean* and how does it circulate in our diverse communities?

Mikhail Bakhtin, an influential philosopher of linguistics, argues that language “lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's.” He goes on to say “it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his [sic] words, but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own.”

Unpacking what the “Maple League” means within various communities and to diverse audiences is a tricky exercise and in many ways an impossible endeavour. And yet, a clear and shared understanding of what the Maple League *is*, and equally what it is *NOT*, is necessary as we move into the next phase of creativity and innovation.

What *is* the Maple League?

In its most fundamental form, the Maple League is a belief that together we can be better together when we collaborate on high-quality undergraduate education. The consortium, therefore, is a vision, which is critically hopeful (and disruptive to long-standing attitudes of competition that pit universities against one another).

But how do you anchor an idea into practice?

The Maple League is made up of the following “practical” parts:

- A bank account at Bishop's University
- Canadian and US Trademarks for the name “Maple League”
- An incorporation certificate for “The Maple League of Universities”
- A website and social media accounts

- A high-level MOU that acknowledges that, in principle, a 3-credit course recognized at one university is valued as a 3-credit course at all four universities (with the acknowledgement that there are several steps of approval, vetting, and consent at the faculty, departmental, divisional, and registrar levels in compliance with collective agreements and calendars)

What is the Maple League NOT?

This consortium is sometimes referred to with monolithic connotations: “the Maple League thinks this” or “the Maple League wants to do that.” However,

- The ML is not a business or a start-up (though it is very entrepreneurial); it is NOT a not-for-profit nor is it a foundation (it does not, for example, have its own bank account); nor is it an institute or think tank (though the consortium is active in research and design)
- The Maple League has no employees. Consultants lead various portfolios and are compensated through external funding and/or from the operating budget
- There is no agreement or MOU about the Maple League as a consortium
- The Maple League is not a degree-granting organization (it does not run courses or programs independently, nor does it fund courses)

But, one might wonder, how does the consortium operate?

The Maple League has a robust governance and oversight structure:

- The Maple League Presidents Council (MLPC) meets monthly as a board of directors: they contribute to and approve strategic visions, review progress and deliverables of the strategic plan
- The Vice Presidents Academic Council (VPAC) meeting monthly and oversee three signature initiatives: Maple League shared courses, the OLTC program (funded through BHER), and the VMLTLC (including the micro-certificate in teaching and learning)
- Reporting happens monthly, quarterly, and annually to both internal stakeholders (the MLPC and the VPAC, the Board of Governors, three ML committees, 16 ML Communities of practice) and external partners (BHER, CEWIL, CSJ, and other funding agencies like McConnell Foundation and the Jarislowsky Foundation)
- Detailed financial transaction reports are submitted to the MLPC quarterly and annually (the latter in an AGM where the annual budget is approved)
- There is a governance map (included in monthly reports, and in this Q2 report)

How is it funded?

- The consortium is funded through an annual membership fee
 - 50% of the operating budget funds the following: ED honorarium, part-time admin support, student fellows, website and other costs, events and travel;
 - the other 50% is redistributed to faculty and staff in the ML for research, teaching innovation, professional development, and travel
- The Maple League has also received external funding from the McConnell Foundation, BHER, CEWIL, Canada Summer Jobs, ICTC, and indirectly through the Jarislowsky Fund (supporting the work of Dr. Riddell as Jarislowsky Chair), RBC Futures, and other national funding agencies

So perhaps a better question is: *who* is the Maple League?

The Maple League is animated by active membership in a broad range of collaborative clusters

- Three Committees: Research, Academic, and Teaching and Learning
- 16 Communities of Practice (see Appendix A)
- The Maple League is steered by four consultants on fixed-term contracts:
 - Dr. Jessica Riddell is the Executive Director and is paid an honorarium for ~two days/week (her full-time job is as a Full Professor in the English Department and Jarislowsky Chair of Undergraduate Teaching Excellence at Bishop's University)
 - Lauren Boulton, Lead on Advancement, Communications, and Project Management (her consultant fees are funded 50% by the ML and 50% by BHER)
 - Matthew Dunleavy, Student Experience Lead (his consultant fees are funded 100% by BHER)
 - Neil Silcox, Faculty Excellence Lead (consultant fees funded 100% by residual ML budget from 2020-2021 through unspent funds from MLTLC and MLAC)

Most importantly, though, every member of the four universities *IS* the Maple League. In order to initiate change, we need to deconstruct the narrative of a “monolithic institution” and understand that power – through a Foucauldian lens – is dispersed, local, “embodied and enacted rather than possessed, discursive rather than purely coercive, and constitutes agents rather than being deployed by them” (Gaventa 2003, 1).

According to Foucault, we *are* the system, so when we talk about the Maple League, we are, in fact, talking about ourselves. So let's focus on the story we want to tell.

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

I. Extraordinary Student Experiences

Maple League Signature Initiatives:

Maple League Shared Courses & the Focus on Sustainable Systems

Fall Shared Courses are a Success

The fall-term Maple League Shared Courses were a success in terms of learning opportunities, student engagement, and participation, including the course with the largest number of students enrolled from outside institutions: *Teaching, Pedagogy, and Technology in Courses*, which had 15 of its 28 students attending from outside Mount Allison. Feedback from a survey of students taking Maple League Shared Courses is very positive with **75% saying they would recommend a friend take a Maple League Shared Course.**

One aspect I appreciated was being able to make connections with a range of students from the other Maple League institutions. This provided a range of perspectives that I felt enriched the course I took and was worth the additional scheduling considerations.

~ Anonymous respondent to Maple League Course Follow-Up Survey

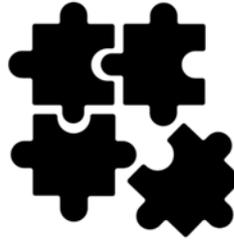
The Winter 2022 Maple League Shared Courses Launch



Cult of Grape in
Ancient Greece



Gendercide:
Genocidal Histories
of Gender Crimes and
Sexual Violence



Shakespeare's Guide
to Wicked Problems



17th Century Studies:
Paradise Lost

Thank you to our Faculty Excellence Lead, Registrars, Deans, and innovative professors for ensuring such interesting courses are made available across the Maple League. For more information about the above courses and steps on how to register please visit [our website](#).

Systems Building for Maple League Shared Courses Makes Strong Inroads

Neil Silcox, the Maple League Faculty Excellence Lead, working with the four Registrars, has been documenting and operationalizing the processes for Maple League Courses in order to help streamline and optimize the process moving forward. An [overview of the process for Maple League Shared Courses](#) is now available on our YouTube page, and an in-depth report on the state of the ML Shared Courses is being workshopped with key players, including Registrars, VPs Academic, the Deans, and the Presidents.

A call for ML Shared Courses for the 22/23 academic year also went out in mid-December. This new, earlier timeline (developed as part of the work with the registrars) endeavours to ensure that Shared Courses are on course calendars when students are first planning their years, and not last-minute additions to the course offerings. We hope this will ensure more students make Maple League Shared Courses a part of their educational journey.

Dr. Riddell Hosts a Hope Summit for the Fall OLTC Maple League Course

On November 24, 2021, Dr. Jessica Riddell joined SOC499 the OLTC Maple League Course (hosted at Mount Allison with

30+ students from across the ML universities) to engage in a three-hour Hope Summit. Over the course of their time together, Dr. Riddell delivered two plenary talks -- one on building “hope-full” spaces, and the other on building Hope University. The focus on co-design meant there were a number of break-out sessions,



writing reflections, think-pair-shares, and workshopping case studies. Students were given a series of theoretical lenses and come out of the session with concrete and actionable strategies for helping faculty design 21st-century classrooms animated by hopeful and resilient systems.

OLTC Program Has a Successful Semester Focused on Professional Development & Knowledge Sharing

OLTCs Remain Available to Offer Faculty Support on Winter Course Design

After a successful fall supporting over 150 Fall 2021 courses the OLTCs remain at the ready to assist faculty with Winter 2022 course design/maintenance. To register your interest in having OLTC assistance for your Winter class(es), please follow [this link](#) to find the registration form for your university.

Learner-Centred Syllabi Reviews for Student Success

In addition to offering full support for Winter courses, OLTCs are now also offering learner-centred syllabi reviews for courses, that take less time but can still have a large, positive impact on your courses. A learner-centred syllabus is one that considers students as partners in learning, where the assignments are meant to guide students to get to where they want to go in their learning and meet learning objectives and outcomes. A learner-centred syllabus accommodates the various strengths of students rather than privileging one type of learner. It successfully communicates the requirements of your course but ensures all content on the syllabus is delivered with student success in mind. From scaffolding of assignments to clear, accurate, and measurable learning objectives, OLTCs will provide you with a verbal and/or written review of your syllabus with a series of recommendations that you may wish to utilize as you edit your syllabus. If requested, they are also available to help you implement those changes.

OLTCs Continue Their Professional Development

Students involved in the OLTC program transform each and every course they interact with, but the transformation does not stop there. OLTCs themselves grew continually through the semester with weekly team regroup sessions and professional development. The topics below are just a few of the topics they reflected on:

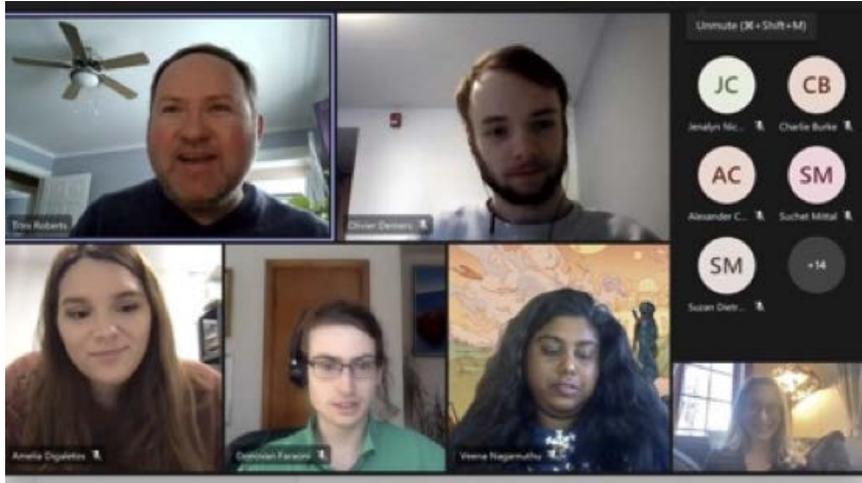
- Educating for Compassionate Communities of Interdependence
- Goofball Pedagogy: Authentic Teaching for Authentic Learning
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization in the Classroom

Mount Allison OLTCs Reflect on Student-as-Partners in New Micro-Blog

In “[More than Just Moodle: Student-Educator Collaboration in the OLTC Program](#),” on the Maple League blog, Shannon Heather Goguen and Christelinda Laureijs discuss their work with faculty over the last term and reflect on how they “are in the unique position of being able to take what [they]’ve learned about pedagogy and combine it with [their] lived experiences as students.”

Teaching, Pedagogy, and Technology in Courses Students Host Final Symposium

December 1st marked the final class for the Teaching, Pedagogy, and Technology in Courses. 29 students in this Maple League Course with Dr. Toni Roberts worked with nine faculty members and presented their final presentations and reports to their classmates and faculty members. After multiple meetings with their assigned faculty “client”, each student group consulted on the course and created a series of recommendations based on the pedagogical and edu-technology training gained over the semester.



This first iteration of this course would not have been made possible without the invaluable support of a Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada iHub grant. The course was able to achieve all four [key outcomes](#) identified by CEWIL Canada for work-integrated learning:

- Expanding access to WIL opportunities, particularly for under-represented students;
- Removing barriers for students to participate in work-integrated learning;
- Leveraging technology to enhance programming or extend access, including the use of technology to support virtual or remote WIL experiences in response to COVID-19;
- Innovating work-integrated learning through new partnerships and new models for curricular WIL.

Students Represent the OLTC Program at the Innovations in Education Conference

On December 10th, Christelinda Laureijs (Mount Allison), Shannon Gougen (Mount Allison), and Emma Trumble (Bishop’s) joined Matthew Dunleavy (Maple League), Dr. Jessica Riddell (Bishop’s), Toni Roberts (Mount Allison), & Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon (Bishop’s and Laval) during a roundtable at the Innovations in Education Conference at the Macpherson Institute, McMaster University, Ontario.

OLTCs offered great insights during the Q&A period about their experience working using a Student-as-Partners model of collaboration and being engaged in a co-curricular work-integrated learning experience.



The roundtable (*“Student as Partners in Curricular and non-Curricular Work-Integrated Learning”*) fit with the conference theme of “Partnership in Teaching and Learning” and educators and educational developers across Canada were introduced to the OLTC Program and how it has grown and been adapted over the past two years. This was the first time the students presented at an internationally recognized conference and it was a wonderful example of early professionalization and knowledge mobilization.

Maple League Reboots 3M Student Fellowship Mentoring Program for 2022

Maple League Leads 3M Mentoring Program with Record Number of Student Nominees

Dr. Riddell and her team are mentoring 44 students from across the four universities who are applying for the *3M National Student Fellowship*. This is Canada's highest recognition for student leaders: because this national award values the incredible and heroic work students leaders do - often in grassroots ways, in the margins, or on the edges of institutions. Unlike the Rhodes or McCall McBain, this fellowship does not focus on academic standing, nor does it

favour student leaders in elected positions. Instead, this fellowship values people who build things for others on their campuses and in their communities (and who are sometimes also critical or challenging of the status quo). Despite the fact our small universities are incubators for extraordinary student leaders, we were historically at a disadvantage compared to larger universities who have full-time staff dedicated to dossier preparation. Over the past few years, the ML ED has worked with past 3M Student Fellows to create resources (handbooks, info sessions) and support (mentorship, individualized and small group help) to identify student leaders and help them through the process.

The 3M Student Information Session is Transformed into a Micro-Work Integrated Learning Experience

On December 15, Dr. Riddell and the 3M Student Champions hosted an information session with over 40 invitees. Developing dossiers is an opportunity for early professionalization and critical reflection. It is not an intuitive or easy-to-navigate process, so these sessions are designed to make the process more accessible and help students and their nominators creatively problem solve. In many ways, this is a micro-work integrated learning experience, where students curate a dossier that requires time, thought, revision, collecting various documents, working with the nominator, and more. It requires students to exercise emotional intelligence muscles just as much as their project management and organizational skills. These are competencies that will serve students well as they think about the job market, graduate school, and future awards.

Maple League Team Offers Live Support for 3M Student Nominees to Be Used as Future On-Demand Resources

On December 15, the Maple League 3M Mentoring Mentoring Team hosted an information session for the 2022 student nominees. [Click here to access the video on our YouTube Channel.](#)

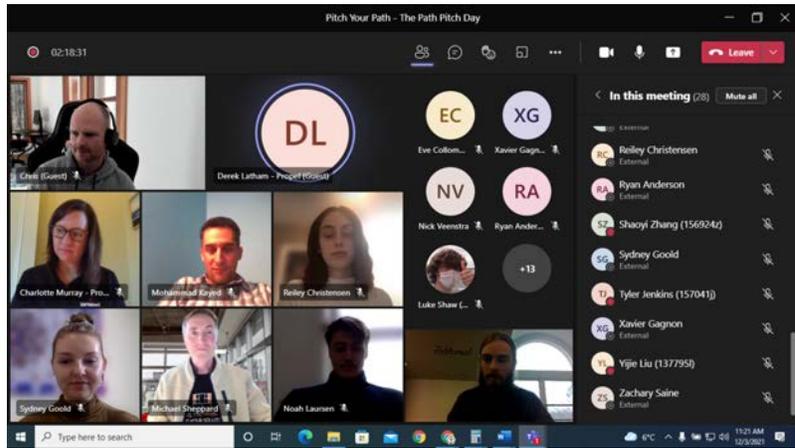
As a follow-up to that session the students were asked to do the following:

- Complete a short survey – to learn where the student is in the application process and what help they might need along the way.
- Complete a short form – the Maple League’s (ML) support for 3M Student Fellowship applications comes under the umbrella of Work-Integrated Learning (WIL). The student’s input will help the Maple League to design more inclusive and more equitable access to high impact practices (such as this application process).

Maple League Supported Initiatives:

The Path Has Successful First Launch

Student entrepreneurs involved in the Acadia-led Path program spent the past few months developing their startup ideas into viable, feasible, and desirable business models. At the end of the semester, they pitched their “Startup Story” to investors and startup programs applying skills in leadership, critical thinking, and presentation skills in a live (virtual) setting. The top 3 pitches in the inaugural pitch competition won \$850 in prizes and made some great connections. Watch the finals [here](#).



Featured above is 1st place team – HalfBaked – Sydney Goold, Reiley Christensen, Noah Laursen, Julien Auffrey, Gabriel Shnurr (Bishop’s) - Pitch 4

The Path hosted over a dozen workshops and panels this semester including a case competition and a pitch competition training students on ideation, money management, generating traction, and pitching, as well as creating connections with industry professionals and other entrepreneurs. This program was able to launch with support from the Maple League and its Idea Based Course Fund. In addition, CEWIL Canada provided \$197,000 in funding to The Path for all curricular entrepreneurship students across the Maple League. This enabled students to receive \$800 for working on their startup and \$200 for startup expenses.

Recruitment for next semester is underway thanks to additional CEWIL funding and will focus on enrolling any and all interested students across degree programs to [receive support in launching a startup](#) and gain access to Alumni Mentors from across the Maple League.

International Offices Launch *Nation to Nation: Building Indigenous Knowledge Across International Borders*

The four international offices continue to meet weekly to ensure this reconciliation initiative is shared with students successfully. A few milestones in December include:

- Opening student registration which can be [found on the Maple League website](#)
- Releasing a call for the faculty supervisor and Indigenous Elder/Knowledge Keeper position
- Hosting an information session for Indigenous students and their families on December 20th

Nation to Nation: Building Indigenous Knowledge Across International Borders



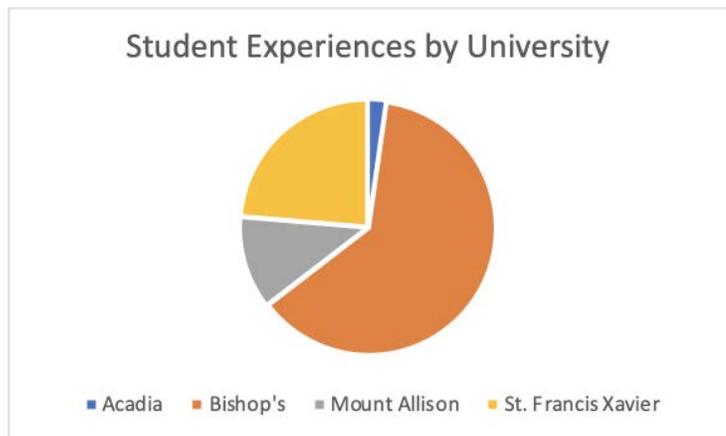
Maple League & Riipen Reflect on Their Three-Year Collaboration as Contract Comes to a Close

Our four Maple League Universities have had access to Riipen through a collaborative partnership with RBC Futures Launch providing our faculty and staff access to a platform worth \$80,000/year. We’ve benefitted from this access for the past three years (with a total value of \$240,000 in external funding - and, notably, at zero cost to the universities). Riipen is a platform that helps faculty and teaching staff find and connect with industry partners to support course-based experiential learning opportunities.

Use by Maple League Faculty

From the data provided by Riipen, the platform has been used across the four universities and supported the following:

- **621** Student Experiences
- **72** Projects
- **23** Courses
- **19,070** Learning Hours



Feedback from Industry Partners

Riipen embeds industry feedback directly on their platform (in addition to the one-on-one feedback provided to students during their projects). Here are some of the comments shared by industry partners:

Social Impact Marketing Plan:

“When I first started, I thought that I'd be helping students learn, and would hire a professional after. Both during, and when they'd completed it, I realized that the "professional" is basically the same as the students, but simply earlier in their career. What they shared was beyond awesome, completely.”

~ ***BrainSTRONG Network of Canada***

Transitioning a Business to a Public Launch:

“The students I worked with at Mount Allison University were fantastic. They never shied away from ambitious goals, and they took the frequent pivots many startups face regularly in stride. Each of the students provided significant value to Trelent in numerous forms, be it through a competitor analysis, or simple suggestions to improve the platform. I could not recommend working with them enough!”

~ ***Trelnet***

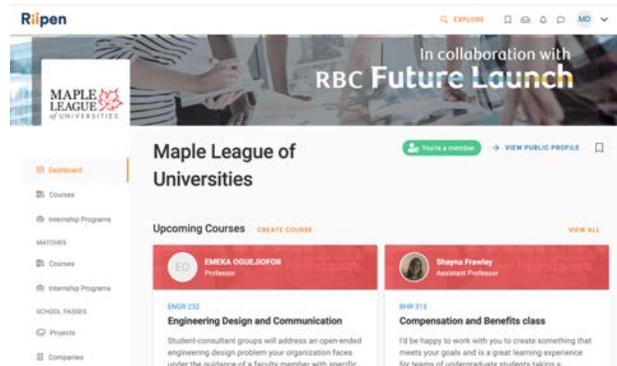
Social Media Content & Advertising Direction:

“GREAT project! The students did their due diligence and research. They came back with an eye opening look at my business and industry overall and gave me an awesome presentation. I'd hire each one of them if I could. KUDOS!!”

~ ***Domestic Divas, LLC***

Future of the Program

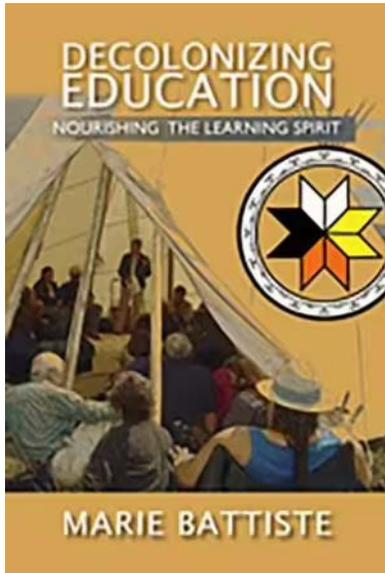
In August 2022, our funding agreement with Riipen and RBC comes to an end. The individual universities can explore future collaborations as institutional partners, with membership fees associated with the new partnerships.



II. Faculty and Staff Engagement

V_MLTLC Continues to be a Meaningful Hub of Professional Development

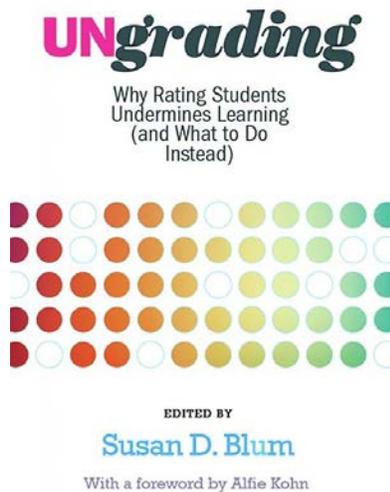
A Transformative Book Leads to Powerful Conversations with the Maple League Book Club



The Fall term Maple League Book Club was a success. 66 Faculty, Staff, and Students from across the Maple League and beyond attended six bi-weekly sessions to read and discuss Marie Battiste's *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit*.

Five Book Club sessions were run every other week, facilitated by Toni Roberts, Erin Austen, and Mary Sweatman from the MLTLC, as well as the Maple League's own Matthew Dunleavy and Neil Silcox.

When asked about their overall experience of the Book Club, 83% of survey respondents rated it an 8 or above (out of 10).



I thoroughly enjoy participating in the Maple League Book Club. It's been a great opportunity to network with awesome people at other institutions and I have learned a whole lot from the unique combination of perspectives that gets pulled together in each group I've been a part of.

~ Anonymous Book Club Survey Respondent

We have just announced the launch of the Winter Book Club, where we will be reading *Ungrading* - a collection of essays edited by Susan D. Blum. The first sessions begin the week of January 17, 2022.

The Pilot of the Micro-Certificate in Teaching and Learning Brings Together a Cadre of Dedicated Educators



This September saw the launch of the Maple League’s Micro-Certificate in Teaching and Learning. The program enrolled 12 participants from across the Maple League. These intrepid pedagogues engage with, and reflect on, workshops and readings offered through the Better Together seasons, and the Maple League Book Clubs in order to imagine new and better ways to teach.

Working with mentors from the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee, and supporting each other in co-mentorship, each participant is developing a capstone project which will contribute to our understanding of how we can best serve our students.

Better Together’s Fall Season Fostered Rich Conversations and Collaborations

The Fall Season of Better Together was an experiment in efficiently spreading the word about the great work being done at the Maple League. In just six sessions we had over 350 registrants, including over 250 unique attendees, from across the Maple League and from 46 outside institutions.

Better together sessions allow me to revisit old tricks, learn new tricks and connect with colleagues across several institutions to improve my teaching. These sessions motivate me to continuously look for ways to improve my craft!

~Juan Carlos López (Departments of Biology, Acadia University)



The sessions were a huge success, with an average rating of 4.2 out of 5 stars from survey respondents, and 100% of respondents saying they would take part in future Better Together sessions.

These professional development sessions provide key support in a time of great upheaval. At my own university our bandwidth for tackling these issues is limited as people are stretched out to breaking points. This series offers a community of thought partners to help guide us through a crisis that has no map. My professional and personal practices are greatly enriched for this series and this has an impact on my classrooms and communities.

~Anonymous Better Together Survey Respondent

The Winter term Better Together season will be announced in January 2022, with incredible sessions planned on student co-design of courses, bringing diversity to STEM classrooms, knowledge mobilization and more. We'll also host two luminaries from the world of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Gavan Watson, Associate Vice President, Teaching and Learning from Memorial University, and Natasha Kenny, Senior Director of the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning at Calgary University.

The Maple League Faculty Care Centre: A New Program Launched in the Light of a New Wave of the Pandemic

The close of the quarter saw the rise of Omicron and increased uncertainty about what the Winter term would look like. Across the Maple League schools opted to start their terms online, and with the increased transmissibility of Omicron flexibility in terms of online, hybrid, and in-person teaching will be inevitable.

In the face of this, the Maple League is launching *Maple League Live: Faculty Pedagogical Support Peer Consultation*. This is a bi-weekly, drop-in space where faculty can connect with one another for support and encouragement. Whether they have a specific challenge to talk about, or just need some emotional support, the Faculty Care Centre will be a place to refill their tank, and be reminded that they're doing a great job!

Maple League 3M Faculty Mentorship & Pipeline is Active
Maple League Leads 3M Mentoring Program with Record
Number of Faculty Nominees

Developing 3M Faculty dossiers is an incredible time commitment. Each dossier takes between 150 - 400 hours of work, from gathering 40-50 letters of reference to the curation of evidence (of educational leadership, innovation, and teaching excellence), not to mention the difficult and time-consuming work of critical reflection. The nominators and nominees must go through a lengthy process together. This year we have **eight faculty members in the cultivation pipeline**, a number that is **almost double from 2020 - 2021**.



Maple League 3M Support includes:

- **‘How To’ Handbooks** for the 3M National Student Fellowship and the 3M National Faculty Fellowship: these handbooks are available to both nominees and nominators within the Maple League with the aim of improving the number and quality of applications from Maple League universities. These handbooks include excerpts from successful dossiers, tips and advice, and guidance on structure and critical reflective practice that constitutes a successful dossier
- A network of **institutional champions** help identify and support nominations (both faculty and student)
 - **3M Faculty Champions:** Dr. Jeff Banks (Acadia), Dr. Jessica Riddell (Bishop’s), Drs. Andrew Nurse, Robert Lapp, Elizabeth Wells (Mount Allison) & Dr. Angie Kolen (St. FX)
 - **3M Student Champions:** Dr. Matthew Lukeman (Acadia), Katie Bibbs (Bishop’s), Adam Christie, Drs. Andrew Nurse, Robert Lapp, Elizabeth Wells (Mount Allison) & Dr. Angie Kolen (St. FX)
- **3M mentorship network:** 3M faculty and 3M students from Maple League universities work with nominators and nominees in the compilation of dossiers
- **Administrative support** in compiling dossiers, collecting reference letters, and copy-editing through the Jarislowsky Chairship
- **Webinars** and on-demand **digital resources** (such as [Teaching Dossiers Q&A with a 3M Teaching Fellow](#))

Maple League Committees & Communities of Practice Answer Two Guiding Questions

The three Maple League committees and sixteen communities of practice embody what it means to a part of the Maple League of Universities. These groups continue to meet bi-weekly, monthly, or quarterly, to answer our two guiding questions which are:

1. What can we do together that we cannot do on our own?
2. How does working together enhance what we already do on our individual campuses?

The discussions had at the various tables not only provide a space for these questions to be asked and answered, but it often acts as a safe space where therapeutic conversations can be had about the current issues in their various professional practices. Below are a few examples of what our committees and communities of practice have discussed over this quarter. To see the members of our [committees](#) and [communities of practice](#) see the appendices section of this report.

The Four University Librarians Meet for the First Time as a Maple League Community of Practice

On December 6th the four University Librarians met for the first time as a community of practice. The group is looking forward to conversations in the new year around systems, advocacy, student library knowledge, and doing a collective SWOT. Below from left to right: Heather Saunders (Dean of Libraries and Archives, Acadia), Catherine Lavallée-Welch (University Librarian, Bishop's), Laura Landon (Interim University Librarian, Head of Access Services, Mount Allison), and Sandy Iverson (University Librarian, StFX).



Maple League Athletic Directors Rotate Presenting on Best Professional Practices

This quarter the Athletic Directors welcomed Brian Finnis as the new Athletic Director at Acadia. Many of the communities of practice, including the Athletic Directors, rotate chairing monthly meetings with a new topic discussed each month. The rotation of topics this quarter included joint branding, community engagement and metrics, and shared awards. The Athletic Directors look forward to doing a deep dive into these topics and more in 2022 with the help of their department and the support of the Maple League.

Maple League Committee Chairs Dive Into Strategic Discussions at Quarterly Meeting

The Maple League Committee Chairs, Mark Adam of Acadia (Maple League Academic Committee Chair), Anna Redden of Acadia (Maple League Research Committee Chair), Erin Austen of StFX (Co-Chair of the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee -MLTLC), and Toni Roberts of Mt. A (Co-Chair of the MLTLC) met December 6th for a ‘tour of table’ updating the other chairs on what their respective committee has been working on over the previous quarter, followed by a review of the working Maple League strategic vision. This led the group to discuss the importance of converging a grassroots and top-down approach and the ways they can help execute that idea. As the meeting progressed the group discussed their terms of reference and expressed an interest in refreshing them in 2022 prior to any committee/chair turnover. These Chairs are an incredible example of the brilliant leaders that make up the Maple League.



Award-Winning Educational Leaders & Hope University Podcast is Underway

A new venture, co-produced by the Maple League, Bishop’s University Jarislowsky Chair and the Stadelman Student Fellowship, highlights the award-winning educators from across the Maple League. From National 3M Fellowships, to AAU Teaching Awards, to internal awards unique to each university – we aim to celebrate and amplify the voices of educational leaders and innovators.



Through a new series, *Hope University*, the Maple League Executive Director, along with Stadelman Student Fellows Annika Bradley and Connor Knibbs, will interview the award-winners and share the interview through all major podcast platforms, as well as in video and blogs. The Maple League will also do a social media profile of each faculty through Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The first episode featured Dr. Susie Andrews, an associate professor of East Asian Religions at Mount Allison University and a scholar of narrative. Dr. Andrews is the Maple League OLTC Champion at Mt. A, and a regular attendee and facilitator through V_MLTLC programming. In 2021, she received the Herbert and Leota Tucker Teaching Award, Mount Allison University's highest award for teaching excellence.

The Award-Winning Educational Leaders series and the *Hope University* will not only add meaningfully to our understanding of what groundbreaking teaching and leadership looks like, but it will also demonstrate how the Maple League Universities are punching well above their weight on the national educational scene.



Maple League Builds Strengths in Knowledge Mobilization

The Maple League is officially the first consortium of universities to join Research Impact Canada, an organization that works to build institutional capacity for researchers and students to collaborate and connect with stakeholders who can use their research to add value to their work. This membership gives faculty and staff access to workshops, grant support in writing Kmb plans, connect them with faculty across the country engaged in similar projects, and more.



Future planning also includes expanding the Knowledge Mobilization Graduate Certificate currently held at Bishop’s into a Maple League initiative, where faculty could benefit from a practicum student to support their own knowledge mobilization practice.

Maple League’s First Visiting Scholar Lynn Aylward



In October, we hosted a visioning retreat with the first Maple League Visiting Scholar Dr. Lynn Aylward from Acadia University. Dr. Aylward spent the month of October on the Bishop’s campus in the CRC Health and Wellness Lab and met with a broad range of thought partners.

Dr. Lynn Aylward (left), is pictured with Dr. Heather Lawford, Dr. Jasmeen Sidhu, and Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfacon (BU graduate and 3M National Student Fellow) October 25, 2021.

The Maple League Research Committee (MLRC) Has A Phenomenal Quarter

Promoting Research Excellence Across the Maple League

The fellowship of the Royal Society of Canada is comprised of over 2000 Canadian scholars, artists, and scientists, peer-elected as the best in their field. Fellows are distinguished scholars from all branches of learning who have made remarkable contributions in the arts, the humanities and the sciences, as well as in Canadian public life. To recognize scholars who are at an early stage in their career and have demonstrated a high level of achievement, the RSC has created the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists.



Maple League discussions and efforts to identify and promote research excellence of faculty, both senior and early career researchers, led to the December 2021 nominations of four faculty members with strong research leadership profiles in their respective disciplines. Two nominations to the RSC are for lifetime membership as a Fellow (Acadia, StFX) and two nominations are for College membership (7-year term; Mount Allison). Outcomes from the nomination reviews and elections are expected to be announced by September 2022.

Supporting Maple League Canada Research Chairs

To provide greater support for the small number of Canada Research Chairs at each of the Maple League universities, the ML Research Committee formed a ML Network of CRCs. The 2nd semi-annual meeting, facilitated by Dr. Peter Ludlow (Manager of Research Grants and Programs at Acadia) took place on 10th November via Teams. Nine of 13 current chairs were in attendance, including Bishop's newest Tier II Chair in Multi-Messenger Astro Physics, Dr. John Ruan. The agenda ranged from researching in a pandemic all the way to general experiences and challenges. Much of the discussion centred around experiences as CRCs in small teaching-intensive institutions. Specifically, how CRCs relate to their departmental colleagues and how they are perceived campus-wide. It was agreed that work needs to be done to educate faculty and staff about the role of the Canada Research Chairs Program. The CRCs expressed interest in eventually meeting in person to network and form research collaborations.

MLRC Continues Sharing Research Practices, Tools and Policies

One of the great benefits of the Maple League is the commitment to discussion and sharing of research practices, tools and policies. This sharing helps to improve practices and reduces efforts in reinvention. During this quarter, the MLRC held discussions on CFI post-award management processes, Research Support Fund use, post-doctoral appointments and supports, NSERC undergraduate funding practices, animal care training and education, and research facility user fees. To foster greater sharing, the MLRC has committed to establishing ML research networks for Animal Care, Biosafety, and Research Ethics.



Joint Research Training and Advising for Faculty and Students Across the Maple League

Maple League-wide training of both faculty and students has been effective in enhancing the strength of applications for both research grant funding and scholarships. David Bruce, Research Grants Director at StFX, has continued to deliver Common CV training for faculty, with two training sessions held in December. These were attended by faculty at Acadia, StFX and Bishops. During this quarter, David also provided three CGS-M training sessions leading to the advising of 49 scholarship-seeking students and benefiting all four universities.

Maple League Wide Workshop on Grant Writing for the SSHRC Insight Development Program

On 10 November, the Maple League Research Committee hosted a virtual SSHRC Insight Development Grant Workshop/Q&A panel. The session was moderated by Maria Thistle, Director of Research Services, Mount Allison, and recorded for those unable to attend. The panel consisted of Dr. Michael D’Arcy (STFX), Dr. Mario Levesque (MTA), Dr. Adam Perry (STFX),

Dr. Dawn Wiseman (BU), and Dr. Corinne Haigh (Acadia). All have extensive experience serving on SSHRC Application Selection Committees. The session covered four important topics: a) common mistakes/problems in applications; b) budgets – writing, justification, and key tactics; c) knowledge mobilization; and d) training of personnel.

Collaboration in Research Data Management

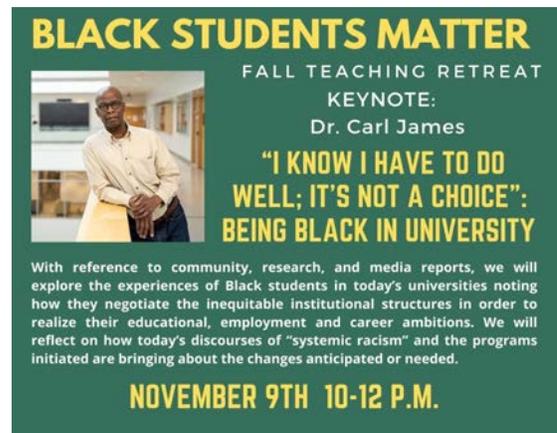
All Canadian universities are required to develop an Institutional Research Data Management Strategy (due March 2023). RDM Plans will soon be expected of faculty applying for Tri-Council (NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC) funding. Research office staff from all four universities attended a series of national webinars on RDM requirements (held in October) and have been in discussion about a possible collaboration in the submission of a SSHRC Connection Grant application, focused on RDM knowledge mobilization and training, in early to mid-2022. Planning efforts will continue in the coming months.

Joint Membership in CAGS

All four Maple League universities are jointly applying for Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) membership, with cost savings based on our collective graduate student numbers, commencing January 2022. CAGS promotes graduate education and university research through national webinars and meetings, publications, conferences, mentorship, dissertation awards, and advocacy. The CAGS mission is to provide leadership, foster community and promote collaboration to advance excellence in graduate education, research and scholarship. For more information, visit [their website](#).

Black Students Matter Teaching Retreat Includes Maple League partners

Maple League partners were included in Part Two of the Black Students Matter Teaching Retreat hosted by St. Francis Xavier University. This retreat featured Dr. Carl James on November 9, and referenced community, research, and media reports to explore the experiences of Black students in today’s universities.



III. External Engagement

MAPLE Business Council & Maple League Business Deans Discuss Future Collaboration

On November 18th the Maple League Business Deans met with Stephen Armstrong (Co-Founder and President of MAPLE Business Council) and John Costanzo (New York Executive Director of MAPLE Business Council) to brainstorm potential next steps in an emerging partnership. As the MAPLE Business Council reaches a wide audience of business and industry leaders, they are eager to make cross-border strategic alliances to create more value. They are drawn to the innovative work that the Maple League is doing in higher education and the Quebec and East Coast regions where innovation is flourishing. The group discussed potential areas of engagement such as OER resources, a non-financial MOU, internship/mentorship possibilities, and network expansion through knowledge mobilization. John also shared his conversation with the Dean of Hofstra University's business school in Long Island, NY who is interested in a certification in cross-border business potentially in collaboration with a Canadian university.

Dr. Riddell Meets with Founders of the Future of Work Skills Program to Explore Collaborations

The Maple League is, at its heart, an academic entrepreneurial endeavour, and supports competencies of creativity, innovation, and design thinking. It is therefore a natural conversation to have between the consortium and this new educational start-up that engages in transition training for entrepreneurship mindsets for new employees moving from Higher Ed into the workforce. Founded by three Bishop's alumni, Adam Peabody, Katie Leclair, and Shayne Cowan-Cholette (*pictured, with Dr. Riddell*), The Future of Work Skills program is on a mission to future-proof the Canadian workforce while accelerating ROI for employers. Launched in 2020, the twelve module curriculum focuses on the Top 10 Skills Wanted by Employers today. Adam and his team met with Dr. Riddell during a work retreat November 15-19, 2021. The Future of Work Skills program is seeking partners in private industry, education and government as they look to scale program access across Canada starting in 2022. The Maple League is a rich space for exploratory conversations about collaboration around the development of social and emotional skills through a 21st-century liberal education. Stay tuned!



EduNOVA & the Maple League Explore the Future of Collaboration in Higher Education

EduNova’s mandate is to work with members to raise the profile of Nova Scotia’s education and training expertise. [EduNova’s focus](#) is on “collaborative international recruitment activities and the identification of international project opportunities”. EduNova’s Shawna Garret has met with the two Nova Scotia-based Maple League university Presidents as well as the Executive Director of the Maple League, Dr. Jessica Riddell to discuss potential overlaps and explore the possibility of joint knowledge exchange, particularly around internationalization and international mobility, micro-credentials, and the education pipeline that ensures we are ready for future skills in a rapidly changing job market and global economy.

The Maple League Supports Communities of Practice Apply for Funding

Maple League International Offices Awarded \$800,000 to Collaborate on Decolonizing Education Abroad

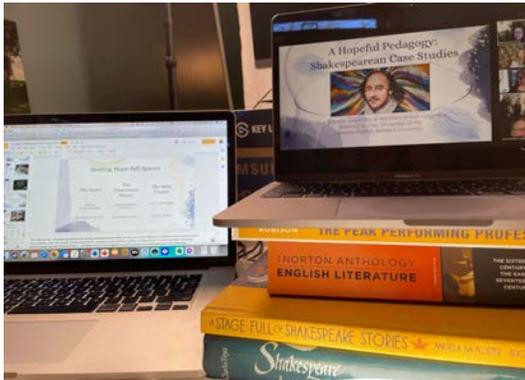
Member institutions of the Maple League of Universities have received a Global Skills Opportunity grant to develop and launch a program for Indigenous students to participate in an international experience together. The program is called “Nation to Nation: Building Indigenous Knowledge Across International Borders”. Students from Acadia University, Bishop’s University, Mount Allison University, and St. Francis Xavier University will come together to have a short-term study abroad experience in Belize through Galen University in the spring 2022-2024 terms focusing on sharing their Indigenous experience and learning about other indigenous cultures abroad.

Maple League Submits Joint Grant Proposal with the Student Affairs Teams to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

The four student affairs teams put together a grant in a very short time frame in October for a funding call that was only available for umbrella organizations, consortia, and associations. The Maple League was eligible for this grant and Dr. Peter Ricketts (President of Acadia and Chair of the Maple League Presidents Council) urged the ML team to prioritize this opportunity. This funding would allow the four universities to create a “Maple League Mental Health Hub” (ML Hub) to fill a demand and gap in mental health promotions programs and strengthen upstream primary prevention efforts on the four campuses. This ML Hub will expand upon a series of campus-specific pre-existing programs and scale them across the four universities. Working on the grant allowed the four teams to identify some fundamental problems, and imagine multi-pronged solutions in a post-pandemic world.

Dr. Riddell Delivered a Keynote Address to the International Federation of Teaching Fellows

Dr. Riddell delivered a keynote address to the International Federation of Teaching Fellows on October 20, 2021. That talk, titled “A Hopeful Pedagogy: Shakespearean Case Studies” was given by Dr. Riddell, Dr. Shannon Murray (UPEI) and Dr. Lisa Dickson (UNBC) to launch the speakers series.



Maple League Featured Across Media Platforms

OLTC Program in the Maclean’s 2021 Canadian Universities Guidebook

A former Bishop’s OLTCs, Loch Baillie, wrote about the Program for the *Maclean’s 2021 Canadian Universities Guidebook*. This print edition of Loch’s article lands in the hands of over 118,000 readers this month! Below is an excerpt of the article that can be found [here](#).

“My work has made me further appreciate what teachers do and has taught me that it is essential for students to co-design their learning journeys. So much unseen planning goes into the creation of university courses, from choosing the topics that will guide the curriculum to assigning percentages to assignments in the gradebook. I was able to witness this process as an OLTC while giving insight as a student about what I believed would work best in a digital classroom. After all, who better to advise teachers on their instruction than those being taught?”



Research Findings on Bishop’s OLTC Phase I Now Published

Dr. Jessica Riddell, Scott Stoddard, and Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon have recently been published in the *International Journal for Students as Partners*. Their article, “**Building institutional capacities for students as partners in the design of COVID classrooms,**” presents their findings from the OLTC Phase I pilot at Bishop’s University and “demonstrate[s] that working with students as partners in the design of COVID classrooms increases students’ social and emotional intelligence, technical and digital literacy skills, critical thinking, project management skills, and other significant learning gains.

Maple League Puts Transparency, Accountability, & Sustainability at the Heart of Design

As the Maple League continues to grow in scope and complexity, an ongoing set of conversations are underway to help strengthen the foundations upon which we create and innovate. As more and more people see the value of collaboration, this leads to growth for ML-supported projects. We celebrate the innovation and at the same time understand we must concomitantly design systems to mitigate risk. There are so many kinds of risk: operational, emotional, financial, reputational, systemic versus non-systemic, and compliance risk are some of the many.

Mitigating Operational Risk with Humane Human Resources

In the intense pressure of a global pandemic, mitigating operational risk ensures those vital to operations are able to reflect, rest and recover. Our people are our most valuable resource; however, their goodwill and wellness are not renewable resources unless we invest in support, flexibility, valuation, and compensation. The Maple League core team (Lauren Boulton - ML Strategy and Advancement Lead, Neil Silcox - ML Faculty Excellence Lead, and Matthew Dunleavy - OLTC Program Director) led by Executive Director Dr. Jessica Riddell, has been, and continues to be intentional about team building, trust, and reflection. Below are some of the few ways the core Maple League team is accountable to each other as they grow as individuals and as a team:

- Weekly one-on-one meetings with team members (Mondays);
- Weekly team meetings for project management (Mondays);
- Weekly review of the week objectives with a focus on gratitude (Fridays);
- Reciprocal quarterly performance assessments;
- Professional development, research, data collection and analysis;
- Monthly and Quarterly internal and external reporting to the Maple League and to funders.

Mitigating Reputational Risk by Understanding Spheres of Control Versus Spheres of Influence

Mitigating reputational risk is also at the forefront of our thinking. There are spheres with differing levels of reputational gains and attendant risks:

1. The spheres of control

This include the signature initiatives (design, delivery, assessment, reporting & communications), managing the ML team of consultants, building and maintaining relationships with external partners, and operationalizing directives from the Maple League Presidents Council. Maple League Signature Initiatives Include: Maple League Courses; Online Learning and Technology Consultants (OLTC); The Virtual Maple League Teaching and Learning Centre (VMLTLC) which oversees programming & professional development (Better Together series, the book club, the micro-certificate, and innovative educational leadership spotlights, 3M mentoring). In these spheres of control we have the highest degree of quality control, most control over the impact, and carry the lowest reputational risk. We have a clear understanding of the objectives, are able to measure impact, adhere to a timeline, and problem solve as challenges arise. There are clear reporting structures for the VP Academics (OLTC, ML Courses, and VMLTLC) and the MLPC (quarterly and annual detailed financial reports, strategic planning).

2. The spheres of influence

This includes **supporting the three ML committees** (assessment, reporting & communications), managing the 16 Communities of Practice, connecting internal people with potential external partners (e.g. Riipen, CEWIL, etc), and building relationships through town halls, community consultations, webinars, delivering reports to boards and senate, etc. In these spheres of influence we have some impact on quality control, less control over the design, and carry moderate reputational risk. In these spheres of influence, we support committee chairs and groups to develop a clear understanding of their objectives and facilitate how working together might align with their professional and institutional strategic visions. We provide some administrative support (meeting organization and note-keeping, curated teams channels); ask for reports and support these teams to measure impact. Projects in this category have clear Primary Investigators/Project Leads and a home institution. The ML is not responsible for project management, reporting, budgets or finances. PIs follow their own institutional reporting structures and report to their external funders directly. This is parallel to research grants with PIs, and there are well-established infrastructures for this model.

3. Spheres beyond our control: Communications within institutions

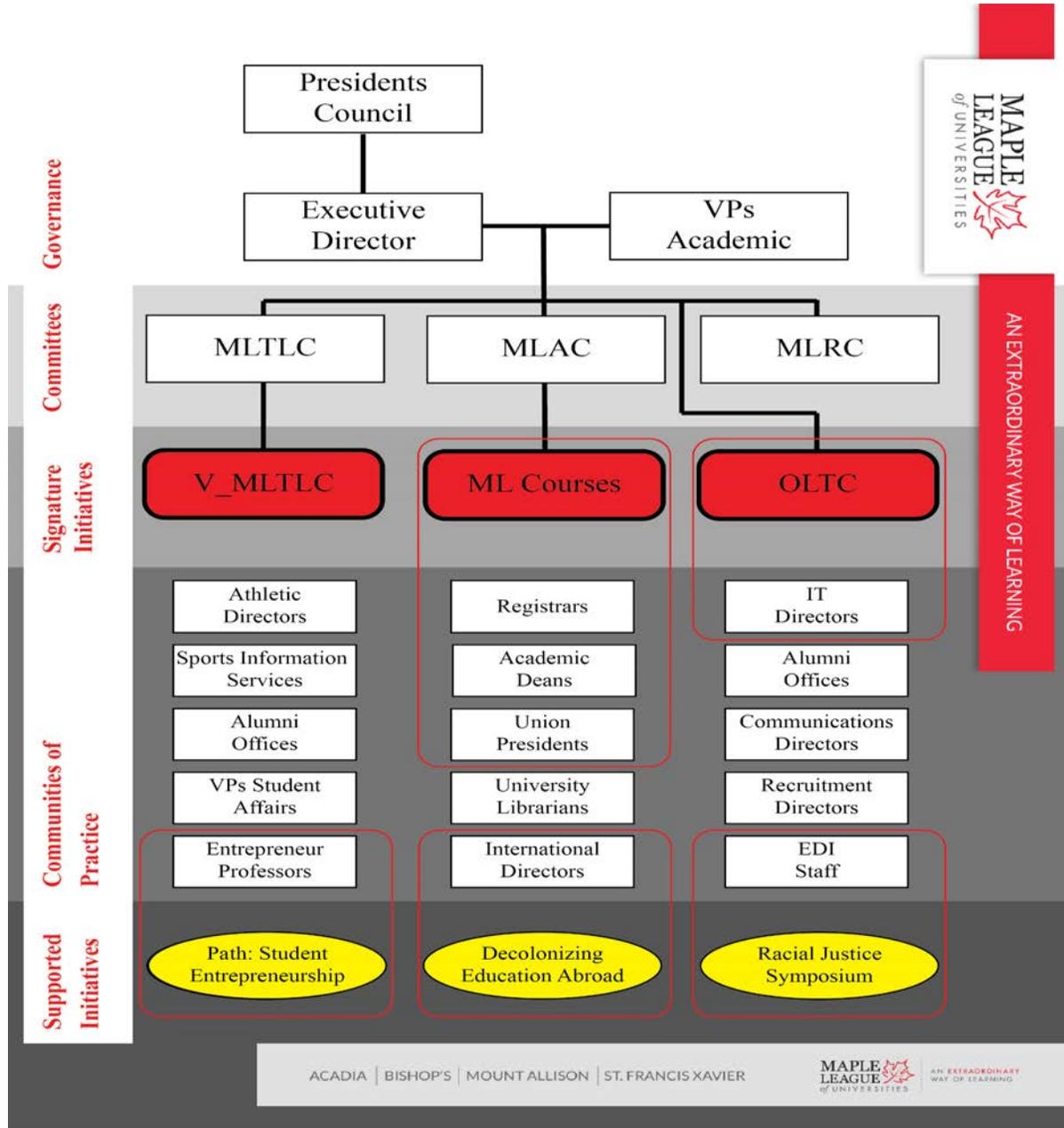
There are many things outside both the spheres of control and spheres of influence that have the highest level of reputational risk without any control over the quality or dissemination. We can design a beautiful program but when both Maple League Signature Initiatives and Maple League Supported Initiatives move through internal institutional structures, there is little or no control and yet barriers or challenges that arise here pose the biggest reputational risk to the consortium brand. There is no dedicated ML representation on the boards or senate at the other universities; there are no staff embedded in offices or departments to steer ML projects; and no access to institutional channels for communications with internal members. It is also impossible to navigate the complex political landscapes of individual universities. This sphere requires dedicated thought and re-design in 2022.

A New Financial Dashboard Creates KPIs for Strategic Progress

Mitigating financial risk is very important: in addition to up-to-date financial reports, quarterly and annually detailed transaction reports, we have designed a new financial dashboard. This dashboard is flexible and allows for strategic, nimble, and accurate future-spend planning. This dashboard and other financial reporting are put together by Lauren Boulton, Maple League Strategy and Advancement Lead, in consultation with David Boulton, a Chartered Professional Accountant with a strong background in IT, reporting, and change management, and current Vice President Finance and Operations at Double Digit Sales in Toronto. David is a Bishop's University alumnus and has multi-industry experience that provides him with a unique perspective that allows him to quickly identify critical challenges and determine the best way to address them. We are fortunate to have David's support and remain grateful for his generous, pro-bono help.

Maple League Structures & Governance

In our ongoing work of mapping the network and pathways that make up the Maple League we created an infographic. As you can see below it shows the various levels including the Maple League Supported Initiatives, communities of practice, Maple League Signature Initiatives, committees and the initiatives they are connected to and current reporting structures.



Appendix A - Maple League Committees

Maple League Academic Committee

Chair - Mark Adam (Acadia)

Members - Mariah Cooper (Acadia), David Duke (Acadia), Sarah-Myriam Martin-Brûlé (Bishop's), Dawn Wiseman (Bishop's), Chris Forstall (Mt. A), Mark Hamilton (Mt. A), Donna Trembinski (StFX), James Hughes (StFX), Dave Risk (StFX)



Maple League Research Committee

Chair - Dr. Anna Redden (Acadia)
Members - Peter Ludlow (Acadia), Amy Svolteis (Bishop's), Jason Rowe (Bishop's), Glen Briand (Mt. A), Maria Thistle (Mt. A), Richard Isnor (StFX), David Bruce (StFX)

Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee

Co-Chairs - Dr. Erin Austen (StFX), Toni Roberts (Mt. A)

Members - Mary Sweatman (Acadia), Jeff Banks (Acadia), Estelle Chamoux (Bishop's), Toni Roberts (Mt. A), Elizabeth Wells (Mt. A), Angie Kolen (StFX), Erin Austen (StFX)



Appendix B - Maple League Communities of Practice

Athletic Directors

Brian Finnis (Acadia), Matt McBrine (Bishop's), Pierre A (Mt. A), Leo McPherson (StFX)

Communication Directors

Sherri Turner (Acadia), Olivier Bouffard (Bishop's), Robert Hiscock (Mt. A), Kyler Bell (StFX)

VPs Student Affairs

James Sanford (Acadia), Scott Dugay (Acadia), Stine-Linden Anderson (Bishop's), Anne Comfort (Mt. A), Elizabeth Yeo (StFX)

International Directors

Michael Holmes (Acadia), Annick Corbeil (Bishop's), Tina Gjertsen (Bishop's), Robin Walker (Mt. A), Larissa Strong (StFX)

EDI Staff

Polly Leonard - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer (Acadia), Zabrina Whitman - Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs (Acadia), Dominique Pelletier - Sexual Aggression Response Coordinator (Bishop's), Vicki Boldo - Special Advisor Indigenous Student Support (Bishop's), Shawna Chatterton Jerome - Indigenous Student Support Assistant (Bishop's), Jesse Dymond (Bishop's), Ivan Okello - Black Students Advisor and Diversity Educator (Mt. A), Adam Christie - Director of Student Life and International Affairs (Mt. A), Patty Musgrave Quinn - Indigenous Affairs Coordinator (Mt. A), Tara Reddick - Black Students Advisor (StFX), Aimee MacDonald - Gender and Sexual Diversity Advisor (StFX), Terena Francis - Indigenous Student Advisor (StFX), Megan Fogarty - Manager, Human Rights & Equity (StFX)

Alumni Officers

Oonagh Proudfoot (Acadia), Robert Burns (Bishop's), Sterling Mawhinney (Bishop's), Carolle de Ste Croix (Mt. A), Eric Donovan (Mt. A), Shanna Hopkins (StFX), Madeline Horne (StFX)

Committee Chairs

Anna Redden Chair of the Maple League Research Committee (Acadia), Mark Adam Chair of the Maple League Academic Committee (Acadia), Erin Austen Co-Chair of the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee (StFX), Toni Roberts Co-Chair of the MLTLC (Mt. A)

Presidents Council

Peter Ricketts President of Acadia University and Chair of the Maple League Presidents' Council, Michael Goldbloom President of Bishop's University, Jean-Paul Boudreau President of Mount Allison, Andrew Hakin President of StFX University

Registrars

Mark Bishop (Acadia), Hans Rouleau (Bishop's), Christiane Major (Mt. A), Tara Buksaitis (StFX)

IT Directors

Gary Doucette (Acadia), Scott Stoddard (Bishop's), Mark Caduc (Bishop's), John Gillis (Mt. A), John DeLorey (StFX)

VPs Academic

Dale Keefe (Acadia), Miles Turnbull (Bishop's), Jeff Hennesy (Mt. A), Tim Hynes (StFX)

Academic Deans

Laura Robinson - Dean of Arts (Acadia), Suzie Currie - Dean of Science (Acadia), Corinne Haigh - Dean of Professional Studies (Acadia), Anna Robbins - Dean of Theology (Acadia), Reena Atanasiadis Dean of the Williams School of Business (Bishop's), Michelle Murray - Dean of Arts (Bishop's), Kerry Hull - Dean of Science (Bishop's), Anthony Di Mascio - Interim Dean of the School of Education (Bishop's), Vicki St. Pierre - Dean of Arts (Mt. A), Jennifer Tomes - Interim Dean of Science (Mt. A), Nauman Farooqi - Dean of Social Science and Business (Mt. A), Lace Marie Brogden - Dean of Education (StFX), Bobbi Morrison - Dean of Business (StFX), Joe Apaloo - Interim Dean of Science (StFX), Karen Brebner - Dean of Arts (StFX)

Union Presidents

Andrew Biro (Acadia), Mark Labenski (Bishop's), Heather Lawford (Bishop's), Erin Steuter (Mt. A), Martin Van Bommel (StFX)

Sports Information Services

Eric Cederberg (Acadia), Martin Rourke (Bishop's), Melissa Lombard (Mt. A), Krista McKenna (StFX)

Recruitment Directors

Liam Dutton (Acadia), Dan Seneker (Bishop's), Kutay Ulker (Mt. A), Brain Scriver (StFX)

University Librarians

Heather Saunders (Acadia), Catherine Lavallee-Welch (Bishop's), Laura Landon (Mt. A), Sandy Iverson (StFX)

Appendix C - OLTC Program Receives Glowing Testimonials

“As we move forward into the technological age where the virtual world is just as tangible as the physical, a question can be posited - does academia need a teaching revolution? The world has changed dramatically, yet the education system stays remarkably the same.

Go to lecture, listen passively, create a paper, and write an exam. Get a decent grade, obtain the credential, and then move on.

Sound familiar? Are we adequately training students to use all the tools at their disposal?

Probably not, but how do we overcome this?

As academics, we are constrained by our own very traditional training as well as our workload. However, the OLTC offered me a unique opportunity to innovate my teaching and move my courses forward into an increasingly modern design. Through student partnership, teaching support, and cutting-edge pedagogical tools, the OLTC offered me the ability to reflect and modernize my courses, and more importantly, my teaching philosophy. I can now better reflect my principles of equity and accessibility in my classes; as such, I could not recommend the program enough.

~ Dr. Jasmeen Sidhu, Bishop's University

“On behalf of all of us, we greatly appreciate your efforts to make this course so inclusive, accommodating, and very special for everyone. This course feels like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity where we are learning something valuable, applicable, and essential, and we are very grateful to you for creating this space. Thank you so much for your continued support.”

~ Anonymous, Curricular-WIL Student

“Working as an OLTC has been a great opportunity for me. As someone who is interested in web design it is interesting to do so with the goal of student wellbeing and ease at mind. Learning how various professors go about their learning goals/how they express them is interesting as well. It is nice to assist those professors in delivering their content and personalities better. It is also a rewarding feeling knowing that you assisted the professors in making a student's life a little be easier by helping them design the best way to deliver their knowledge.”

~ *Edison Wood, Acadia University OLTC*

“The OLTC program has been amazing so far! Through this program, I have worked with professors to curate their Acorn/Moodle pages in order to better enhance their students' learning. While I have my own experiences as a student with Acorn/Moodle, it has been incredible to work with professors and gain an understanding of their perspectives when they are teaching classes. Being able to talk to professors about pedagogies, universal design for learning, and accessibility from the perspective of a student with a disability has been so beneficial. It is so incredibly important for us to be able to have these conversations and make connections between the student and professor experience, and this program has definitely made room for all of us to have these greater dialogues that may not have happened otherwise.”

~ *Emily Rafuse, Acadia University OLTC*

“Being a part of the OLTC program has been a huge learning and growing experience. With this program it has allowed me to work collaboratively with educators to ensure they are giving student's the best possible learning experience. Understanding pedagogy and the different ways in which we learn as humans has been knowledge that I value as a student and employee of the OLTC program. To see positive outcomes result from our work with educators continues to be extremely rewarding. As we navigate this pandemic collectively, I hope this spirit of collaboration persists within the classroom. Breaking the hierarchy between student and educator is something I am incredibly passionate about and I hope it shows in my work with the program.”

~ *Shannon Heather Goguen, Mount Allison University OLTC*

“As an OLTC I have enjoyed helping most Professors with increasing student engagement through ice breakers, participation marks and other creative methods. I have also been helping in designing Moodle pages that are more user/student friendly and appealing. If the Moodle is appealing, most students tend to feel excited or become attached to the course. I have also had the opportunity to help with the OLTC LinkedIn page. Our aim is to sensitize other students on the benefit of using such platforms and conduct surveys such as choosing a preferred online learning platform between zoom and teams. Student’s views and opinions from such surveys will help us to become more informed when we have recommendations meetings with Professors.”

~ Keith Chipare, Acadia University OLTC

“Being an OLTC has been such a rewarding experience; getting to work with professors in a partnership allows us to present a student voice in course preparation and creation. Since I started as an OLTC this summer at Bishop’s I have learned a lot about myself while getting to help others. This program allows me to share my technical knowledge and student view with professors. Being part of a program that looks to make classrooms more accessible and inclusive for everyone is really amazing and shows that even our small group can make a huge difference for others.”

~ Zoe Ingleby, Bishop’s University OLTC

“When you begin teaching a course for the first time, you never quite know what to expect. There are always challenges; always things to learn for both students and faculty. This course was a new venture on various fronts – innovations, pedagogy, delivery (hyflex to three universities), content and integration with work. The course was intended to break barriers to access, by making the course accessible technologically and financially but also across UDL and EDID. This course was a resounding success on all fronts. It was by far the most diverse student group I have seen in my almost 18 years at Mount Allison. The students mentioned several times how they felt included, listened to and engaged. It was a great experience for me as well. We co-created the course and also used it as a template for review and analysis. Our end of term symposium where student work groups presented their findings was wonderful. The students demonstrated their deep critical analysis, thoughtfulness and expertise in reviewing materials and analyzing technology for (online) course delivery. Several students who plan to go into education, some as educational technologists, some as academics, some as K-12 teachers, indicated they found the course inspiring, helpful and informative. The success of the course would not have been possible without student diversity and this was made possible only with the funding from CeWIL. Not only did the students learn important skills, theory and knowledge, they were able to share and develop values and inspire compassion and hope through diverse voices.”

~ Dr. Toni Roberts, Mount Allison University