



AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY OF LEARNING

## Maple League of Universities Quarterly Report

April 1 - June 30, 2021



ACADIA | BISHOP'S | MOUNT ALLISON | ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

MAPLE  
LEAGUE  
*of UNIVERSITIES*

AN EXTRAORDINARY  
WAY OF LEARNING

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## Executive Director's Note:

Last week I had a conversation with one of my trusted thought-partners from a Maple League university. The conversation was ostensibly about advancing a particular project but quickly turned into a conversation about the topic of institutional culture change. This colleague compared trying to innovate at his university as a game of “whack-a-mole” whereby the change-makers are the mole, and organizational structures (and their enforcers) are the mallets. He lamented that despite the best (and often repeated) efforts of an individual or small group of hopeful humans, the barriers (policies, systems, structures, or mindsets) frustrate even the most creative and persistent problem-solvers.

This metaphor framed a larger conversation about how we enact change within institutions – and why change is so difficult. To extend the mole metaphor, mallets are often invisible, fast, and frustrating. After enough whacks, do you dare pop your head above ground, or do you learn through experience to stay in your hole?

With permission from my interlocutor, I shared the “whack-a-mole” metaphor at subsequent strategic alignment meetings to see if it resonated with partners from across the institutional strata. Many staff, faculty, students, and administrators, it turns out, identified with the mole as they shared their experiences stewarding diverse projects and initiatives.

One colleague suggested that the regular Maple League meetings were a crucial form of support; connecting with like-minded colleagues (who were themselves working towards institutional change) made the moles more resilient and the mallets less “whacky.”

Indeed, the theme of resilience emerges as one of the most important “value-add” components of the consortium; when we analyze the large number of testimonials collected over the past year, collaborators across the 15+ communities of practice reported significant benefits in regular Maple League meetings, including: helping them enhance design and systems thinking, providing emotional and logistical support, and sharing good practices to advance strategic thinking.

When I beta-tested the “whack-a-mole” metaphor of institutional culture change with a small sample size, all of the individuals perceived themselves as moles. However, if we surveyed a larger group, how many would self-identify as the mallet? If we ask the right questions, would they be able to identify when they are moles and when they are mallets?

While we might be inclined to sympathize with the mole, the mallets are just as worthy of our attention (and empathy). How we might support those who must wield the mallets by helping them to reframe the systems to be more inclusive and flexible? Can we support the mallets to co-design helpful and hopeful spaces with the moles?

The design thinking we do together helps build resilient and hopeful institutions. As we move into a post-COVID world we must consider what is fundamental to our mission that we can conserve and protect? Where must we open, adapt to evolving contexts, release some deep held assumptions and practices that no longer serve? How can we put equity at the centre of every decision we make?

We have work to do, and the work is more generative and delightful together.

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

## I. Extraordinary Student Experiences

### Three Maple League Students Awarded Prestigious 3M National Student Fellowships

In April, the Maple League of Universities announced that three students from the four universities were selected as recipients of the 2021 3M National Student Fellowship. This fellowship recognizes ten students across Canada who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in their lives and at their post-secondary institution. Congratulations to Leah Creaser from Acadia University, Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon from Bishop's University and Devon Parris from St. Francis Xavier University!

Leah Creaser created a first-year biology lab incorporating Mi'kmaq Traditional Knowledge as a research topic and ensures that the campus is an open inclusive space for all Indigenous students to feel safe.

*"It is wonderful to see Leah recognized for her dedication to research and learning," said Dr. Peter Ricketts, Acadia President and Vice-Chancellor. "She is a leader and active member of our campus and community, and she is thoroughly deserving of the national award."*

Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon, Chancellor's Scholar graduating with Applied Psychology and Mathematics at Bishop's and a member of 2020 - 2021 design team for the Online Learning and Technology Consultants (OLTC) program. He is passionate about building spaces for students to be partners in the design and delivery of a 21st-century liberal education.

*"Georges-Phillipe's insistence that the student voice becomes a first-class consideration in the development and running of classes brings us closer to the student-centred goals of modern education,' noted Scott Stoddard (Director of Information Technology, Bishop's)."*

Devon Parris was recognized for outstanding leadership, including designing a project called the ["Anti-Racist Film Review"](#)—a film review site that analyzes anti-racist discourse within film while critiquing superficial, exploitive, and misrepresentations of contemporary racism.



*“It definitely means a lot to have the opportunity to work alongside the STLHE and the student leaders they are developing. I’m really excited to develop and contribute towards the fantastic projects the STLHE has to offer,’ says Mr. Parris, a graduating fourth-year honours English major and former varsity athlete from Kingston, ON.”*

Special thanks to members of the 3M Student Mentors program who helped to steward a number of students through various stages of the application and submission process.

Read more about Leah Creaser [here](#).

Read more about Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon [here](#).

Read more about Devon Parris [here](#).



### Federal Government Awards \$31,470 to the Maple League Student Leadership Program

The Maple League received **\$31,470** through the Canada Summer Jobs program (with funding decisions received from three of the four universities). This money comes from a federal fund that pays for youth employment opportunities. Students will be employed through the Maple League Student Fellows Leadership program (as social issues researchers, educational coordinators, etc). This fellowship will support the Online Learning and Technology Consultants (OLTC) program. The Maple League aims to provide students with meaningful work-integrated learning (WIL) and professional development opportunities to ensure that students have future-facing skills to be engaged citizens and navigate a rapidly shifting 21st-century job sector. The Maple League works with universities as industry partners; together we create hubs of connectivity to shape the landscape of undergraduate education with students as thought leaders and collaborators.

## Maple League Student Fellows Program Gets a New Strategic Framework

In the developmental assessment of the Maple League Fellows Program (2020 - 2021), we facilitated one-on-one exit interviews with the twelve fellows at the end of their program (April 30, 2020). These spaces encouraged critical reflection and metacognition; we've taken the feedback, combined it with evidence-based research on student leadership, and engaged in strategic visioning with Post-Graduate Fellow Rebecca Mesay. The Maple League Fellows program designed professional development modules and training so students graduate from this program equipped with future-facing competencies:

- ***Social and emotional skills (SES)***
- ***Digital literacy and Technology-supported problem solving***
- ***Design Thinking***
- ***Strategic Visioning and Planning***
- ***Project and Change Management***
- ***Communications & Corporate Stewardship***
- ***Critical reflection***

## Maple League Supports Innovative Spring/Summer Courses

The Maple League of Universities jointly promoted the individual institutions' Spring/Summer course offerings. Students across the Maple League can take Spring/Summer courses through a letter of permission (LOP).

One of the courses featured this Spring was Dr. K.A. (Sandy) MacIver's course *Leadership Through Relationships*. To learn more about this course read a Feature Interview with Sandy [here](#) and watch this [video](#). For more information about Spring/Summer courses visit [our website](#).



## Digital Media Campaign Highlights the Value of Being a Maple League Student Athlete

The four Maple League universities have a strong commitment to fostering growth in the various spheres of their students' lives. Maple League student-athletes benefit from supporting programs that empower our future graduates. Academic excellence, leadership, and community service learning are central to our approach to 21st-century education.

In April, the Maple League released two videos co-created by the four athletic departments; these videos featured student-athletes who shared how being a student-athlete shaped their university experience for the better.

To view Part 1 of the video series click [here](#). To view Part 2 of the video series click [here](#).



## RIPEN Extends RBC Funding to Support Student-centred Experiential Learning

Riipen Founder Dana Stephenson connected with Dr. Jessica Riddell and the OLTC team several times this quarter to explore how RIPEN might support transformative work-integrated learning initiatives across the Maple League. Dana submitted an extension of a funding proposal to RBC to continue to fund the consortium's access to this platform, the largest marketplace in North America for experiential learning and Post-Secondary Institutions.

## The Path Confirms Fall 2021 Launch

The Path - Maple League Incubator is a program that helps students across the Maple League of Universities launch viable businesses while in university. It can be completed alongside courses as a 12-week program that takes the student entrepreneur from any stage of development through to the next steps to scale and get their startup "pitch-ready." The Path is built on three essential pillars of startup success: training, mentorship, and connections. In addition, this social innovation incubator also provides seed funding that can be applied for, as well as a pitch competition to investors and partners at the end of each cohort.



### WHAT WE OFFER

A THREE PILLARED APPROACH TO LAUNCHING AND SCALING STARTUPS

**TRAINING**  
Lean Stack Academy -  
Step by step playbooks



**EXPERTISE**  
Alumni Mentorship  
1 on 1 coaching



**CONNECTIONS**  
Industry Partnerships  
Workshops & Socials



MacNeil (136052m)
PB
John Aylen
MacDonald
MS
Brendan J MacNeil (136052m)
...

The Path team has recently completed the development of their virtual hub, [thepath.mapleleague.ca](http://thepath.mapleleague.ca) where entrepreneurs can find resources, connect with peers, and post their projects. The two project leads, Michael and Brendan, are on track for a Fall 2021 launch of the first cohort; The Path is open to any student across the Maple League who wishes to register; this incubator is a space that connects with entrepreneurship courses to provide these students automatic access to The Path.

## OLTC Program Builds Relationships Across the Maple League

While still in the early stages of the OLTC program expansion across the Maple League, Matthew Dunleavy (OLTC Program Director), Lauren Boultbee (OLTC Project Manager), and Jessica Riddell (Maple League Executive Director) have been meeting with inspiring collaborators across the four campuses to ensure this PILOT program is adapted to align with the strategic vision at each of the four institutions. Building advisory councils with embedded champions at individual campuses -- and providing external funding grants, resources, and centralized support -- will be crucial for building sustainable and high impact programs with the goal to ensure that all Maple League students have the opportunity to participate in such a transformative work-integrated learning (WIL) initiative.



## HIPs Report Published

High-impact practices (HIPs) have a significant and positive impact on students' deeper learning and aids in the development of intellectual and practical skills, civic responsibility, and richer understanding of different cultures around them (Kuh 2008). However, HIPs are often concentrated in business and science degrees, leaving a critical gap in scholarship related to HIPs and liberal education. In 2020 – 2021, Dr. Jessica Riddell and Tiffany MacLennan (Maple League Research Fellow) designed a research project that assesses HIPs across the Maple League universities, designed a HIP spotlight project, presented on panels and delivered professional development workshops. The Knowledge mobilization part of this project has launched and can be found on the Maple League [website](#).

## II. Faculty and Staff Engagement

### **Two Maple League Professors Awarded Highest Educational Leadership Honour in PSE Through the 3M National Teaching Fellowship**

Two Maple League professors have been recognized for their contribution to higher education in Canada as 3M National Teaching Fellows, the highest recognition for teaching excellence and educational leadership in Canada in higher education.

Dr. Martin-Brûlé, from Bishop's University's Department of Politics and International Studies, works closely with students in concrete research and experiential learning opportunities, notably through initiating the annual Quebec Undergraduate Security Conference (QUSC).

*"What an honour to receive the 3M National Teaching Fellowship and to join this community of inspiring professors! I am most grateful for the support of the Jarislowsky Chair and Maple League in stewarding this process,"* notes Dr. Martin-Brûlé.

Dr. Andrew Wilson, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Mount Allison University has also been named a 3M National Teaching Fellow. The award, created by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STHLE) in 1986, recognizes exceptional teachers in higher education across the country. Ten recipients are named each year.

*"I'm honoured and humbled to be named as a 3M Teaching Fellow and join this exciting national network,"* says Wilson. *"I believe education is at its best when grounded within the community. It is from here that learning can most effectively provide deeply rooted, authentic and long-lasting change."*

We would like to thank members of the 3M Faculty Mentors program, led by Dr. Jessica Riddell with the support of the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee (MLTLC), who helped to steward a number of faculty through various stages of the application and submission process.

Read more about Dr. Martin-Brûlé [here](#).

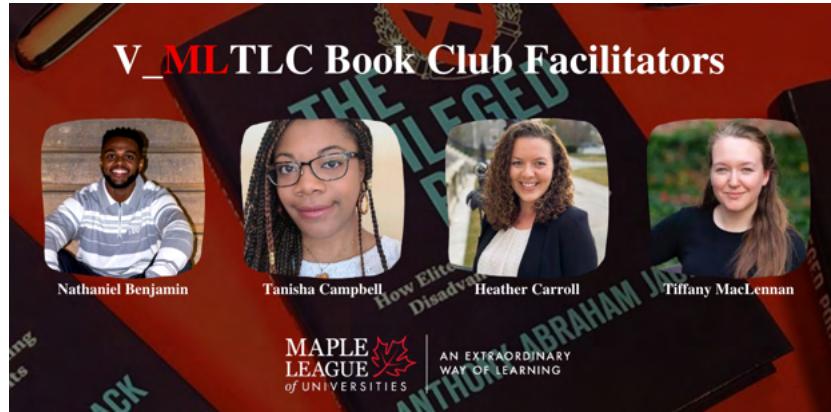
Read more about Dr. Andrew Wilson [here](#).



## Maple League Teaching & Learning Centre Creates Hopeful Spaces During COVID & Beyond *Maple League Book Club: The Privileged Poor*

During the Winter term, Maple League Student Fellows have co-facilitated this semester's Book Club, reading *The Privileged Poor* by Anthony Abraham Jack. Over 70 participants attended to examine issues of class, race, access and inclusion in higher education. In addition to students, staff, faculty and administrators across the Maple League, there are participants from Dalhousie University, Mount Saint Vincent University, Memorial University, Arizona State University, and Texas Southmost College.

These discussions were co-facilitated by Nathaniel Benjamin (Mount Allison), Tanisha Campbell (Bishop's), Tiffany MacLennan (StFX Alumna, Maple League) and Heather Carroll (Maple League). The discussions focused on student and faculty relationships and institutional policies that foster exclusion.



There are plans to extend this project in 2021-2022 year under the guidance of Neil Silcox (Maple League Faculty Excellence Lead) and the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee (MLTLC).

### Anniversary of the Virtual Maple League Teaching and Learning Centre (V\_ML TLC)

In May 2020 the Maple League received a one-year funding envelope from the McConnell Foundation to support the creation of a collaborative infrastructure that would help us build a stronger community post-COVID. The V\_ML TLC officially launched June 1, 2020, and provided a virtual hub of curated and specially created resources tailored to the institutional model shared by the four Maple League universities, which includes a focus on small classes, experiential learning and extra-curricular engagement, community-based learning, and relationship-rich learning environments. The V\_ML TLC is a grassroots, faculty-led virtual space that supports faculty and staff as they prepare for the design and delivery of courses in the 21st-century. We have created a snapshot of the tremendous impact this space had on our communities over the last year that can be found in [Appendix A](#) of this report.

## Maple League Teaching & Learning Committee Gather for a Week-Long Strategic Retreat

The Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee hosted a strategic visioning retreat June 14-18, 2021. Members from all four campuses spent 15 hours in synchronous sessions focused on topics such as:

- Strategic vision and alignment with robust programming
- Micro-Certificate or faculty credential in teaching and learning
- High Impact practices and inclusive pedagogies
- Connecting communities through research and teaching clusters
- SoTL project on the impact of the V\_MLTC

The conversations were lively and rich in both reflection (what have we *done*) and in future-facing directions (who do we want *to be*). While the four Maple League universities do not have “bricks and mortar” teaching and learning centers, the pandemic has inspired new ways of thinking about support beyond the dated concept of a “centre” and moving into high-impact spaces like innovative hubs and interconnected networks.

The Virtual Maple League Teaching and Learning Centre (V\_MLTC) is a dynamic “hub”; this diverse social network energizes cross-connections, improves knowledge sharing and mobilization, and enhances learning across grassroots microcultures. The V\_MLTC takes a “social networks” approach to educational development. We can grow in new ways in 2021 and beyond, especially with Neil Silcox joining the Maple League as the Faculty Excellence Lead ([see ML Team, Section IV](#)).



## Maple League Academic Committee (MLAC) Facilitates Grassroots Conversations About Collaboration

The last few months the Academic Committee has focussed on the continued administration of the Maple League course uptake in support of the MOU between the universities, including a number of ways to support students and faculty in collaborative, academically-rich spaces. The MLAC designed timelines, calls, and approval processes for Maple League-supported courses

(through the MOU of the four universities). The MLAC will begin exploring new ideas for how the Maple League can support new initiatives, interesting course themes, and vehicles for more collaboration, while navigating (and being sensitive to) the various issues of employment and institution differences.

There has been progress on many fronts, including:

- Continued discussion about the understanding of the Maple League in each university and the engagement differences within those universities of the course opportunities.
- A new position - Maple League Faculty Excellence Lead - who will spend dedicated time facilitating the ongoing administration of new MOU supported courses as well as helping codify and build systems for the universities to understand structures and administrative paths unique to each institution to help professors and administrators confidently pursue the Maple League opportunities in teaching and collaboration
- The committee is working in smaller working groups to facilitate “ideas”, structural processes, clusters of collaboration, and more

Maple League Courses offered through the MOU this term include: Directed Readings in Latin (Mt. A), An Introduction to Theology (Acadia), The Business of Aviation (Mt. A), Arts and Culture Marketing (Mt. A), and a Social Sciences course on Educational Technology and Applied Research (Mt. A).

### **Dynamic Professional Communities of Practice Across the Maple League**

In 2021 we are focused on sustainability as institutions and as a consortium, so we have spent some time with each of the groups on strategic visioning. How do we answer the two guiding questions to advance our thinking in a number of areas (“what can we do together that we cannot do on our own? And how does working together improve what we do on our individual campuses?”)? Several of the communities of practice have identified their mandate, membership, and roles: these include project discussions, sharing good/best practices, support (jokingly referred to at some tables as “therapy,” signalling value in diverse ecosystems to foster resilience), and/or advisory capacities for external projects/programs/grants.

The fundamental premise is that the Maple League should not be “one more thing” on peoples’ overloaded desks, but instead help support, advance, or make delightful the work people are already doing - or help take them in directions they want to go but cannot on their own.

The chairs of our ***three committees***, Dr. Erin Austen (StFX) and Toni Roberts (Mt. A) co-chairs of the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee (MLTLC), Mark Adam (Acadia) the Maple League Academic Committee (MLAC) and Dr. Anna Redden (Acadia) the Maple League Research Committee (MLRC) have been meeting quarterly to share their progress and strategic visions. In addition to our three committees, our ***stakeholder groups have grown over the last year from nine to twelve*** as people recognize the value of connecting. These stakeholders include Presidents Council, Union Presidents, VP Academics, Student Affairs, Academic Deans, Registrars, IT Directors, Athletics Directors, Communications Directors, International Directors, Recruitment Directors, and the University Librarians.

A quick snapshot happening across our four universities reveals depth and breadth:

***Communications:*** The communications teams have been a key resource for helping to promote Maple League initiatives and provide expert advice on how to design effective platforms for engaging diverse groups. Their main focus this quarter has been on collaborative storytelling that focused on the various institutional innovations in the time of intense pressure; sharing key messaging and aligning institutional values helped the Maple League lead conversations about quality undergraduate education in Canada and around the world.

#### ***Student Affairs:***

The Affairs Teams has identified a number of themes to critically reflect on 2020-2021, including residence preparations for Fall 2021 and COVID prevention/protection measures. As the Fall 2021 session is fast approaching this group has requested bi-weekly meetings until September in order to share good, evidence-based practices to support alignment of student experiences across the Maple League.

#### ***IT Directors:***

The IT Directors have been valuable thought-partners on a number of topics, including sharing knowledge about LMS systems, and cybersecurity, and working on strategic alignment and change management. They have also been key guides in the expansion of the Maple League OLTC program.



## The Maple League Research Committee Builds Key Research Capacities & Connections

The Maple League Research Committee has been active in identifying challenges and opportunities for researchers at small, primarily undergraduate institutions. They've connected CRCs from across the four campuses, hosted webinars and sessions on research funding, worked on support systems for junior faculty, explored joint initiatives and membership in various associations, and added two new projects to their portfolio:

### ***1. Building Membership with the Royal Society of Canada***

At the April 30th meeting of the Maple League Research Committee, there was strong support for establishing a Royal Society of Canada (RSC) College / Fellow Maple League Nomination Committee to coordinate nominations from the four Maple League universities. RSC alumni and others will be invited to join the committee, which will be led by Dr David Hornidge, a current RSC College member from Mount Allison University.

Planned activities will be mapped on the Maple League's successful 3M design model:

- A. Identify one or two institutional champions on each campus
- B. Identify possible nominees
- C. Design with EDI principles;
- D. Share best practices and success stories;
- E. Develop support for nominees, nominators, and research offices with the following: a handbook with planning schedules, tips, checklists; webinar for FAQs; timely requests for reference letters; pair nominees with mentors and external readers. Resources would include honoraria for external readers, and access to a student fellow and/or administrative support to assist with the nomination packages.

### ***2. Expanding HQP opportunities via MUN's Ph.D. program***

The Maple League Research Committee invited Dr. Aimée Suprenant, Memorial University's Associate VP (Academic) and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, to its 4th June meeting to discuss opportunities for faculty from the Maple League to be primary supervisors of graduate students enrolled in various Ph.D. programs at MUN. A highly successful partnership with St.FX already exists and has provided numerous benefits to faculty, including enhanced HQP training records for competitive grant applications. In addition to the HQP training and related research productivity opportunities, the arrangement involves cost-effective sharing of student stipends and access to MUN's professional development training programs. Future planning will focus on MOU development/renewal between MUN and the Maple League universities.

### ***Maple League Highlights Research with a Series of Canadian Research Chair (CRC) Profiles***

Research is a foundational element of a quality undergraduate education. The Maple League benefits from many researchers who have been awarded Canadian Research Chair positions. The Canada Research Chairs (CRC) Program is a part of the Government of Canada's National Strategy to make Canada one of the world's top countries in research and development. In order to attract and retain the country's best researchers, the Government of Canada commits approximately three million dollars a year to ensure that post-secondary institutions across Canada have diverse academic researchers and training excellence. The Research Committee has created a spotlight series on the CRCs across the Maple League. We will share this series with our communities via our website blog in the coming weeks. To read the profiles in advance of the series launch visit [Appendix B](#) of this report.



### ***Maple League Canadian Research Chairs Meet to Strengthen and Build Relationships***

On Wednesday, May 19, nine of the thirteen Canada Research Chairs (CRC) from the four Maple League Universities gathered virtually for the first time to network, share experiences, and build relationships. They were joined by the research administrators of the four institutions in a lively and stimulating discussion on a range of issues from researching in a pandemic to possible cross-institutional collaboration.

At the opening of the meeting, Dr. Anna Redden, Dean of Research and Graduate Studies at Acadia University and Chair of the Maple League Research Committee, spoke to the group and stressed that Maple League universities with five CRCs or fewer were uniquely positioned to cross-mentor and support their chairs. Bringing together the new Chairs with some of the veterans provides an opportunity to exchange ideas and support CRCs at our individual universities.

The newly formed Maple League CRC Network, which represents a broad range of research activities across the faculties, noted the benefits of meeting on a regular basis (two or three times a year) and focusing each gathering on specific issues so that both opportunities (e.g. collaborative grant applications) and challenges could be addressed in a timely and meaningful manner. There was also a discussion about bringing the research staff from the Maple League universities together to share and discuss practices and support mechanisms for CRCs and other faculty. Among the topics discussed was the importance of cross-campus education to better inform students and faculty about the unique and specific role of Canada Research Chairs in building research strength and capacity.



#### ***Dr. Mary Sweatman Represents Atlantic Region in CCEC Event***

Dr. Mary Sweatman (Acadia) is leading a Maple League-supported SSHRC-funded project on community-campus partnerships. The Seizing the Moment project (May 25 - 26, 2021) hosted by the [Community Engagement and Research Centre](#) at the University of Regina and [Community Campus Engage Canada](#) (CCEC) with support from a number of Maple League faculty, including Dr. Sweatman, Dr. Fox (Mt. A), and Dr. Cash (St. FX). CCEC supports community-driven collaboration with post-secondary institutions through an extensive network and knowledge-sharing community across Canada.

This past year the pandemic exposed long-standing vulnerabilities for many non-profit organizations and marginalized populations. As organizations work to deliver essential services with inadequate resources, the pandemic has also prompted a renewed commitment by universities and colleges to work with their communities to identify research priorities that effectively respond to local challenges and opportunities.

The Seizing the Moment project involves several knowledge exchanges and networking activities to deepen understanding of pandemic impacts in communities and inspire community-campus partnerships for collaborative paths forward. This project will include activities such as the event that occurred in May, a Summer/Fall series of post-workshop discussion sessions, and a [project web page](#).

### **Dr. David Bruce Shares CCV Knowledge Across the Maple League**

Dr. David Bruce, Director of Research Grants at St. Francis Xavier, held three workshops on the Canadian Common CV (CCV) for Maple League faculty and research teams in May. These webinars covered all aspects of how the CCV is set up and used, with particular attention paid to how best to maximize each part of the CCV as part of a grant application.

These webinars provided useful and timely advice to all, as aspects of the program continue to evolve and change over time. Participants who already had a CCV in the system were also able to send their CCV to Dr. Bruce before or after the workshop for review, in order to identify items that are missing and/or that could be added, changed, expanded, to give participants an advantage in their submissions.

**CCV Workshops**  
Tips to best  
maximize each  
part of the CCV as  
part of a grant  
application and  
more!

Dr. David Bruce  
Director of Research  
Grants



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### **Acadia University Hosts a Fundraising A.I. Forum**

This event shared across the Maple League alumni and advancement teams, was organized by Dr. Greg Lee, Assistant Professor in the Jodrey School of Computer Science at Acadia University and Lead Data Scientist at Fundmetric, and served as a collaborative discussion about the most innovative solutions nonprofits can use to overcome the barriers of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.).



LIKE NOWHERE ELSE

The Fundraising A.I. Forum gave nonprofit leaders access to the latest technology and repositioned the nonprofit sector from being under-served to first in line to access experts. Framed from the outset on the ethics and digital challenges faced by nonprofits, Acadia University and Fundmetric brought together leaders in planned giving, major gifts, donor retention, donor experience and A.I. adoption experts for an unforgettable experience. All sessions were transcended by an emphasis on diversity and inclusion and how they serve as a tenant of anti-bias both for machine learning and beyond.

### III. External Engagement

#### **MAPLE Business Council Seeks Cross-Border Collaboration with the Maple League**

On April 26, Dr. Jessica Riddell (Executive Director) and Lauren Boultbee (Post-Graduate Fellow, Advancement and Communications) had an initial meeting with Stephen Armstrong (Co-Founder and President, MAPLE Business Council) and John Costanzo (New York Executive Director, MAPLE Business Council) to discuss potential opportunities for future collaboration. The MAPLE Business Council is an organization committed to growing the economic ties between Canada and the United States. They also believe we can accomplish more together than we can apart as their team of executives, investors, entrepreneurs, service providers, academics, government and professionals work to increase cross-border conversations, networking, content, news and storytelling. They are interested in expanding their academic and east-coast partnerships specifically around extraordinary learning experiences, technology, and storytelling.



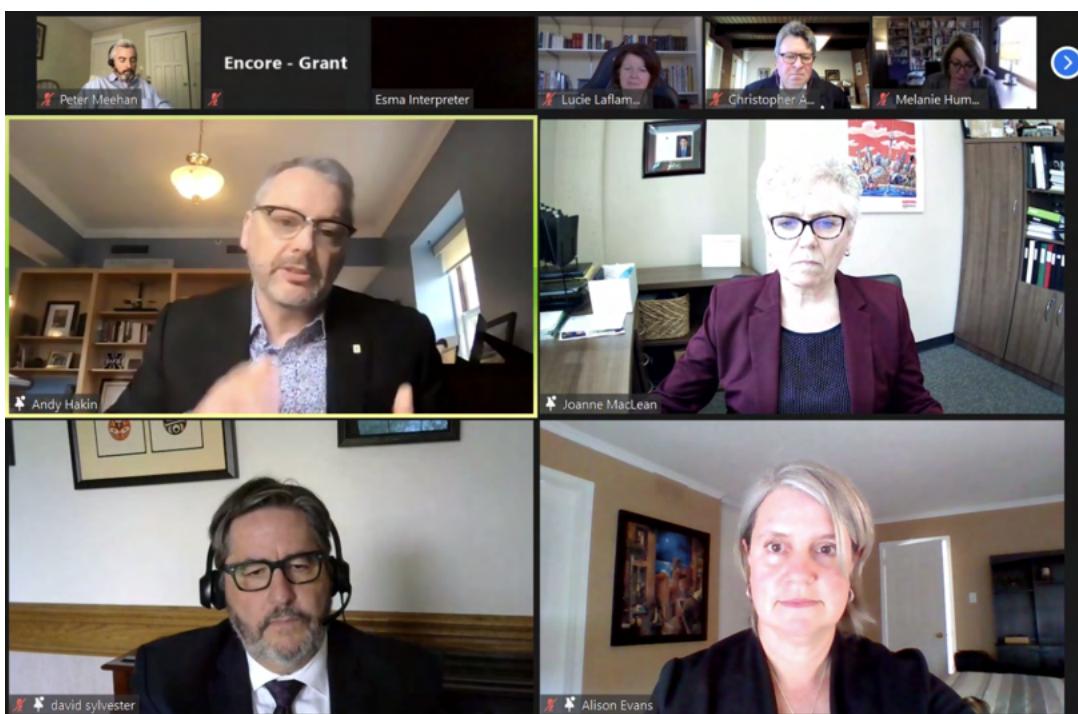
**Market | Access | Promote | Lead |  
Enable**

## Maple League Presidents Promote Quality Undergraduate Education

### *Andrew Hakin on Universities Canada Panel*

On April 28 at the annual 2021 Universities Canada Meeting, President Andrew Hakin sat on a panel of university leaders, including David Sylvester (President, University of St. Michael's College), Joanne MacLean (President, University of Fraser Valley), to discuss the future of undergraduate education in a post-COVID world.

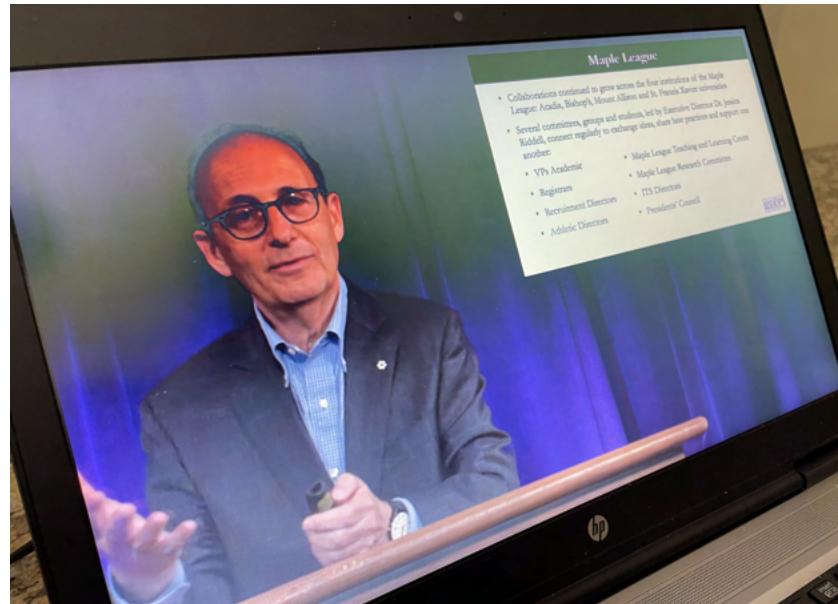
*Program description: "Now is the time for universities to ensure they are well prepared to seize the intensified need for rich and robust undergraduate courses, programs and experiences that prepare people for the future of work and complex social, political, and economic realities. Canada's economic shutdown is having devastating effects on entire sectors of the economy and has resulted in significant unemployment and under-employment. Canada's universities have a critical role to play in driving the country's social and economic recovery by ensuring that the enduring value of an undergraduate education is well understood to provide people with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to be resilient in an ever-evolving labour market and*



*world."*

### ***Michael Goldbloom Includes the Maple League in Bishop's University Townhall***

In a Townhall presentation to the Bishop's community, President Michael Goldbloom spoke about the Maple League and its value moving into a post-COVID world. Updates about the Maple League to the Bishop's community included our vibrant communities of practice and the value they have added to inter-institutional collaborations over the past year, the launch and success of the Virtual Maple League



Teaching and Learning Centre (V\_MLTC), and news that the Maple League received \$170,000 from BHER to scale the OTLC program piloted at Bishop's University in 2020.

**Maple League**

- **Virtual Maple League Teaching and Learning Centre**
  - Launched in June 2020 to support faculty and staff in the design and delivery of courses during COVID-19 and beyond
  - Virtual webinars, lectures and other events
  
- **Expansion of the Online Learning and Technology Consultants (OLTC) program**, piloted this year at Bishop's, across all four universities
  - The Maple League has received \$170,000 from the Business + Higher Education Roundtable to extend the program to Acadia, Mount Allison and St. FX

Bishop's OLTC Pilot - Faculty Testimonial

*"This is a program that allowed me to clarify the things I needed to learn in order to move from a face-to-face environment to an online class that was as dynamic as the one I hoped to create in a face-to-face setting."*

*— Dr. Avril Atkins*  
Full Professor, School of Education

## BHER Gives the Maple League \$170,000 to Expand the OLTC Program Across Four Campuses

Business + Higher Education Roundtable (BHER) has recognized the Maple League of Universities as an industry partner and committed \$170,000 to scale the OLTC (Online Learning and Technology Consultants) program across the four Maple League campuses. While still in the early stages of the program expansion, the Maple League has made significant progress on program design and delivery, including but not limited to:

- Informing all key stakeholders and communities of practice across the Maple League about the program;
- Initiating conversations about how to embed these programs on the other three campuses with the proven “tripod” model (that engages a faculty member, an IT staff, and a student in co-design);
- Hiring a Project Manager and Program Director;
- Confirming Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) positions for Bishop’s University, Mount Allison University and St. FX University totalling \$31,470;
- Recruited consultant OLTCs (students from the Bishop’s Phase I) to reflect on lessons learned since the program’s inception in June 2020.

As part of the Business Higher Education Round Table (BHER) funding, the Maple League is able to expand the team for the 2021-2022 year. The Program Director, Matthew Dunleavy, and Project Manager, Lauren Boulbee, are looking forward to working across the Maple League to expand this program.

"I am honoured to have the responsibility of directing the expansion of the OLTC this year. The Bishop's pilot showed the radical potential for reimaging students as collaborators of their university experience and new models of work-integrated learning. I look forward to examining and developing ways in which this program can grow and adapt to the needs of other students, institutions, and partners. The support of BHER allows us to expand these opportunities and make WILs and micro-WILs available to more students across four campuses and three provinces!"

*~ Matthew Dunleavy, Program Director*

“I am grateful to both Business Higher Education Roundtable (BHER) and the Maple League of Universities for the opportunity to be the Project Manager for this innovative work-integrated learning (WIL) initiative. I am excited to watch this Students-as-Partners OLTC Program disrupt current models of undergraduate education in Canada, and equip Maple League graduates with transferable, 21st-century skills needed to thrive in the workforce. This will be a highly transformative process for all involved, and I am eager to explore how best to create sustainable systems that will allow for the scaling of this program, not only across the four-member universities (Acadia, Bishop’s, Mount Allison, St. Francis Xavier), but across Canada as well.”

~ *Lauren Boultbee, Project Manager*

## OLTCs in the Media

Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon was awarded the 3M National Student Fellow Award for his role as an original Program Coordinator of the Online Learning and Technology Consultants (OLTC) program. This has garnered significant media attention and Georges-Philippe and the OTLC program were featured in [laTribune](#), and [EstriePlus](#), following the 3M announcement. We could not be more proud of the work Georges-Philippe has done building communities of learners and leaders who more fully grasp the ambiguity of advocacy through his guidance and facilitation. He has transformed not just Bishop’s University but also higher education in Canada through his national and international engagement.

## Students as Partners Interview

In an interview titled *Designing for Transformative Learning in COVID and Beyond Through Student Partnerships*, Dr. Jessica Riddell (in her role as Jarislowsky Chair of Undergraduate Teaching Excellence at Bishop’s University) and Sufia Langevin (Joan Stadelman Student Success Fellow at Bishop’s University) explored how working with students as partners help transform not just students but faculty, staff, and institutions through messy, process-driven and co-designed experiences. Read about the rich, transformative process that is Student as Partners work [here](#).



## Organized Academic Interview

Dr. Jessica Riddell was also featured on The *Organized Academic* in April in an interview with Dr. Elizabeth Wells (Mount Allison University). In the interview, Jessica speaks about holistic



alignment, the importance of challenging “productivity” in the neoliberal narratives in favour of a more generative approach, the importance of adaptive organizational systems, balancing work and family, and a final piece of advice for those starting or struggling to find balance in an unbalanced world. Read (or watch) the interview [here](#).

## Maple League Incorporates to Attract Federal Funding Opportunities

We are excited to share the recent creation of the Maple League Foundation. This Foundation has been set up to make us eligible for Federal funding, funding that we would otherwise be ineligible for as provincial post-secondary institutions (PSIs) that are funded provincially. Maple League of Universities Foundation is federally incorporated with a business number and an official named certificate. With the incorporation, we have a corporate registry and official seal (featured to the right), which are all requirements under the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (NFP Act). We will build on relationships with external partners, including

- **ICTC** Information and Communications Technology Council \*Government of Canada's Sector Council Program
- **BHER** (Business Higher Education Round Table)
- **CEWIL** (Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning) Canada\* depending on the funding stream

The Maple League is also trademarked in both Canada and the US. All regular funding from foundations and other philanthropic-related activities continue to go through regular institutional channels.



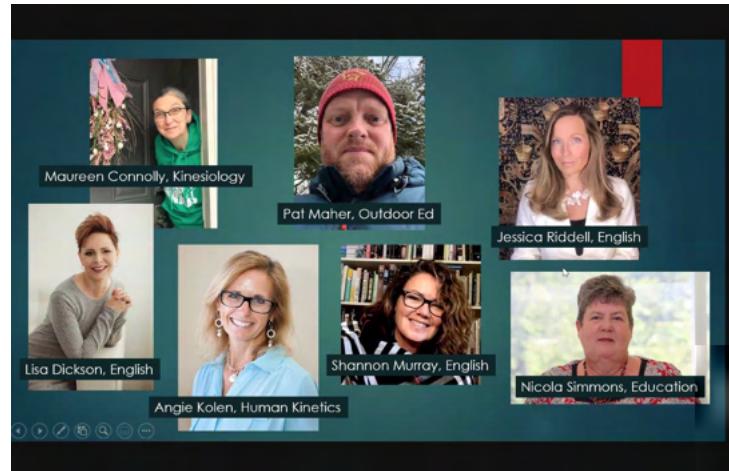
## Maple League International Teams Collaborate on Outbound Student Mobility

Representatives from the international departments of the Maple League universities have been meeting to discuss submitting a joint proposal to the Universities Canada Global Skills Opportunity. Funded by the Federal Government of Canada, the project seeks to support low-income students, students with disabilities, and Indigenous students to participate in study and work abroad programming. By working together through the Maple League, it is anticipated that not only will we be able to support each other's capacity development in education abroad but also create an innovative and transformative experience for our students to learn together. The committee members are Anthony Adey (Director of Student Recruitment at Acadia University), Michael Holmes (International Admissions and Exchange Program Officer at Acadia University), Annick Corbeil (Manager of Student Life at Bishop's University), Robin Walker (International Programs Coordinator at Mount Allison University), and Larissa Strong (Director of Internationalization at StFX University).



## STLHE Features Seven 3M Faculty as Mentors - Including Two Maple League 3Ms

ON June 9, the STLHE Unconference, held virtually this year, featured a panel of seven inspiring and engaged 3M Faculty who have mentored, supported, and amplified educational leaders across Canada. Two members of the Maple League - Dr. Jessica Riddell (Bishop's) and Dr. Angie Kolen (St. FX) - were featured on the panel. Two new 3M Faculty Fellows and three new 3M Student Fellows were welcomed to the Fellowship at the STLHE Conference Friday, June 11.



## Conference Board of Canada Engages with the Maple League on Social & Emotional Skills

Michael Burt (Vice President at Conference Board of Canada) connected with Dr. Jessica Riddell on a study they are conducting that explores the impact of systemic discrimination on the development and assessment of social and emotional skills, also referred to as “soft skills” or human skills, for Black Canadians. This project aims to develop recommendations and inform anti-racist and inclusive employment standards that support diverse Canadians. Michael and his colleague Michelle Gorea identified key thought leaders and managers to interview in order to understand how inclusive and equity-focused leaders are tackling calls for more inclusive, anti-racist work environments. After the initial interviews, the Conference Board of Canada invited Dr. Riddell to sit on their Social and Emotional Skills Research Advisory Council to help guide national conversations about social and emotional skills and practice inclusivity in higher education and beyond.

## Jessica Riddell Wins National Magazine Award recognition with *University Affairs Magazine*

On May 27, 2021, the National Magazine Awards were announced and Dr. Jessica Riddell was given Honourable Mention in the category 2021 NMA: BEST COLUMN OR REGULARLY FEATURED DEPARTMENT. Read more about the award [here](#) and follow her award-winning column three years running, [“Adventures in Academe,” in University Affairs Magazine](#).

## Bader International Study Centre (Queen's University) Offers the Maple League a Castle

Jenny Corlett Director, Bader International Study Centre (BISC), Queen's University, has been cultivating conversations about possible collaborations with the Maple League. The team at BISC has been impressed with the work of the Maple League, and in a recent email noted "I have been so impressed with the work that you and your colleagues have done around the pivot to online learning and teaching, EDII, sharing best practices and supporting each other." The BISC and the Maple League are in the early stages of exploring possibilities for collaboration in the UK campus (which is an actual castle). BISC offered the Maple League custom programs for faculty and/or institutions to develop a customized mobility program, using the UK campus facilities as a base, with support from the BISC experiential learning team to integrate field studies or other activities into the curriculum.



## HESA Engages the Maple League as Thought Partners on Student Assessment

[Higher Education Strategy Associates \(HESA\)](#) is conducting a review of student feedback in evaluations across the Canadian higher education landscape. Through this review, they seek to better understand how student feedback is collected through student course evaluations, its formative and summative uses, and its role in cyclical program reviews. As a part of this review, they identified Bishop's OLTC Pilot Program and the new Maple League expansion as an alternative and meaningful way to incorporate student feedback. The Maple League is supporting this study.

## Maple League Invited to Toronto Recruitment Event in Fall 2021

In 2020 - 2021 the Maple League was identified by academic advisors and guidance counsellors across Canada and around the world as leaders in quality undergraduate education. Recruitment teams from each of the four universities worked together to travel (virtually) to campuses from Ontario to India. This trend continues with new invitations for collaborative recruitment events. Most recently, Michelle Douglas, the Associate Director of University Advising at Toronto French School, reached out to Jessica Riddell (Maple League Executive Director) to request a recruitment representative from each of our four institutions participate in a virtual event to present on the Maple League schools and the value of our model of education. The Maple League recruitment teams are eager to collaborate in virtual spaces to recruit a new cohort of students and share our model of an extraordinary 21st-century liberal education.

## The Maple League Applies to CEWIL

On Thursday, May 27, the Maple League hosted the Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada team: strategic leads at CEWIL created a Maple League focussed session about their new call for proposals for its Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Innovation Hub (iHub). The CEWIL iHub is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Innovative Work-Integrated Learning Initiative (I-WIL). CEWIL's mission is to build the capacity to develop future-ready students through quality work-integrated learning. The CEWIL iHub will operate as a centre of expertise that provides grant-based funding to enable and promote curricular work-integrated learning (WIL).



The session was very well attended and has already had a significant impact, identifying and supporting several applications across the four universities. A significant number of proposals were submitted by the June 15th funding deadline. The projects submitted came from each of the four schools and are a great example of the outstanding teaching and innovation that happens at Maple League universities.

A few of the projects submitted to CEWIL from Maple League partners include:

- Matthew Dunleavy (OLTC Program Director) and Lauren Boulbee (Maple League Strategy and Advancement Lead), with the support of Jessica Riddell (Maple League Executive Director) and Rebecca Leaman (Interim Director of Experiential Learning & Career Development), submitted an application to Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada for \$180,000. The funding application aims to reduce barriers to student participation. This project will benefit specifically first-generation and BIPOC students, focussing on direct student benefit and dismantling a number of WIL barriers for historically excluded groups.
- Dr. Cynthia Alexander (Politics Professor at Acadia) submitted a proposal for an Arctic Studies course, focused on Nunavut as a case study.

- Dr. Michael Sheppard (Entrepreneurship & Innovation at Acadia) and Brendan MacNeil (Acadia) submitted a proposal for \$197,000 to support The Path: students enrolled in entrepreneurship and innovation courses at the post-secondary institutions from the Maple League of Universities will engage in an entrepreneurial work-integrated learning experience offered through The Path.
- Dr. Angie Kolen (Human Kinetics Professor at StFX) submitted a proposal titled “Service Learning: Connecting Classroom Learning with the ‘Real’ World” for \$27,500. This application primarily supports the student-volunteers who contribute 30 hours to either Fit 4 Life or Fit 4 Tots and 2 students (150 hours each) to assist with the prescribed data collection and questionnaires and interviews related to knowledge, attitudes, and confidence related to physical activity promotion.
- Dr. Erin Austen (Associate Professor of Psychology at StFX) submitted a proposal titled “Gauging Campus Accessibility” for \$18,000. With the support of campus Facilities Management, students in a 300-level Applied Health course will conduct a two-stage partial accessibility audit of campus. In the first stage, students will audit the campus using a checklist tool created by Dalhousie University. In the second stage, students will re-audit each location from a user perspective by working alongside individuals with disabilities. By comparing the data from the two audits, students will gain insight into whether accessibility means something more than compliance with accessibility standards.

### Maple League Campus Spotlights

***Two of the Three newly-elected members of the Canadian Historical Association are Maple League Faculty***

Dr. Claudine Bonner (Associate Professor in Sociology at Acadia University) and Dr. David Webster (Associate History Professor at Bishop’s University) have been elected to the Council of the Canadian Historical Association. The Canadian Historical Association is the largest bilingual not-for-profit and charitable association in Canada devoted to fostering the scholarly study and communication of history in Canada. Congratulations Drs. Bonner and Webster!



### *Acadia Engages Alumni with “Walk Home for Homecoming” Event*

In an effort to engage alumni, Acadia University has organized a virtual event titled ‘Walk Home For Homecoming’ as a way for Acadia Alumni to participate in socially distant, safe exercise outside during the pandemic. Alumni are encouraged to set distance goals for the lead-up to Homecoming Weekend with the idea that each person determines how many kilometres there are between their home and Acadia, and aims to complete that distance. Of course, those who live close by are encouraged to keep going! Every time a participant travels 20 kilometres and documents it on the Facebook page dedicated to the event, their name will be entered in a draw for an Apple Watch. The prize winner will be selected randomly on Homecoming Weekend in October. Decals and stickers will be sent out to all those who participate in this initiative, proudly showcasing the Acadia brand and declaring, “I Walked Home For Homecoming”. All are encouraged to participate, and share stories, photos and kilometres travelled throughout their journey!



**I WALKED HOME  
for HOMECOMING**



## IV. ML Team

### Maple League Student Fellows Finish Their 2020-2021 Term

The Maple League Student Fellows finished their term on April 30th and wrapped up their fellowships for the year. For the Fellows, this included finishing or writing transition documents for their projects, along with the submission of a year-end impact report, as well as an exit interview. The fellows contributed in many ways to both their campus communities as well as the Maple League throughout the academic year. Below are a snapshot of the testimonials:

Working with the Maple League has been an absolutely wonderful experience! The opportunity to make connections and collaborate with like-minded individuals across four institutions is so valuable, and an experience entirely unique to this organization.

~ *Addy Strickland, St. FX University*

This has been one of the most unique, and exciting job opportunities I have had to date. .... I recommend anyone who has the chance to work for the Maple League to do so, you will not regret your decision and you will learn valuable life lessons along the way to making the student experience a better one at post-secondary institutions.

~ *Nathaniel Benjamin, Mount Allison University*

The opportunities I've had through my fellowship and the Maple League were central to my development as a leader, which ultimately led to the honour of being awarded the 3M National Student Fellowship in my last year. Being involved with the Maple League was most certainly one of the highlights of my undergraduate education!

~ *Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon,  
Bishop's University*



## The Maple League Builds a Dynamic Team

### ***Lauren Boultbee***

From her position as a student fellow, to her post-graduate fellowship, to her current roles, Lauren has signed with the Maple League for the third year in a row. Lauren Boultbee is a 2020 graduate of Bishop's University with a BBA in Marketing and Entrepreneurship, with a minor in Communications and Digital Culture. Currently, Lauren is the Strategy and Advancement Lead for the Maple League, and the Project Manager for the Online Learning and Technology Consultants (OLTC) Program.



As the Strategy and Advancement Lead, her strong interpersonal skills, combined with her competencies in strategic and design thinking, ensure she is able to confidently steward the Maple League brand and key initiatives. In this position, she identifies potential funding opportunities and designs a strategic plan to execute successful partnerships. As an active member of the Maple League strategic planning team, Lauren is also responsible for supporting Maple League communications by ensuring that all plans are aligned with the Maple League focus statement and key messaging. She is a strong brand ambassador for the Maple League and supports networking initiatives with students, alumni and donors. Lauren's role as Strategy and Advancement Lead also includes talent development with Maple League consultants, relationship management with all active committees and communities of practice within the Maple League, and the preparation of all executive review materials such as the monthly, quarterly and year-end reports, which also include regular financial reporting to ensure prioritization of programs and budget.

In her role as OLTC Project Manager, Lauren maintains a high-level overview of the progress of the program and its potential future growth. This includes institutional planning, building governance and structures for the program and helping with the administration of hiring and job performance assessment. Lauren is also responsible for communications, grant/funding applications, as well as reporting and data analytics. Additionally, as the OLTC Project Manager, she manages a detailed schedule to keep the program on track, identify early warning indicators, and provides direction for early resolution of risks, issues and a clear escalation path for program participants to ensure the program is a success that can be scaled across Canada.

### **Matthew Dunleavy**

Matthew Dunleavy is joining the Maple League as the OLTC Program Director. Matthew has most recently spent time as a SSHRC Doctoral Fellow in Victorian Literature and Course Director with the Department of English at York University, has worked with the Teaching Commons at the same institution, and is currently the President of the Board of Directors of Learning Essentials for Adults in Durham Region (LEADR)—a charitable non-profit organization dedicated to providing tutoring for adults in basic literacy, numeracy, and digital skills. After the success of the OLTC pilot program at Bishop’s University in 2020-21, Matthew is responsible for overseeing the expansion of the program across the four Maple League Universities during the 2021-22 academic year. Using the Bishop’s pilot as a template, Matthew will ensure that students and faculty at all Maple League Universities enrolled in the program have a consistent, engaging and essential experience in their work-integrated learning (WIL) or micro-WIL experiences. As the OLTC Program Director, Matthew will create and support avenues for transformative experiences for students, faculty, and other stakeholders to be living proof of the radical potential in Canadian Universities when we embrace new models of learning and mentorship. Reporting to the Executive Director, Dr. Jessica Riddell, and working alongside Project Manager, Lauren Boultbee, Matthew aims to further place the Maple League of Universities at the centre of transforming undergraduate education in Canada (and beyond), envisioning a new liberal education with students engaged as key-collaborators in their own education and university experience.



### ***Neil Silcox***

Taking on the role of Faculty Excellence Lead, Neil Silcox is excited to be a part of the Maple League. Neil is a theatre educator, as well as an actor and director, and also specializes in facilitating meaningful, actionable conversations about teaching and learning. His company, the [Canadian Theatre Educators' Conference](#), has brought together hundreds of post-secondary theatre teachers from across Canada and around the world (both in-person and IRL) to envision new theatre pedagogies which prioritize student wellbeing. As Faculty Excellence Lead, Neil will be spearheading the Teaching & Learning Micro-Certificate Program, where teachers can come together to elevate one another's practice, and collaborate to create new pedagogies for 21st-century liberal education. Neil will also be working on Maple League Courses; both to smooth out the navigation of administrative hurdles, and to increase uptake from both faculty and students. Finally, Neil will work to build strong reciprocal relationships between campuses on an individual, program, and faculty level. He will be organizing and leading the Maple League Book Club and Better Together series, as well as other opportunities to nurture scintillating conversations between teachers. Reporting to Executive Director Dr. Jessica Riddell, and working alongside Project Manager Lauren Boultbee, Neil is thrilled to be strengthening inter-institutional relationships and supporting and empowering faculty.

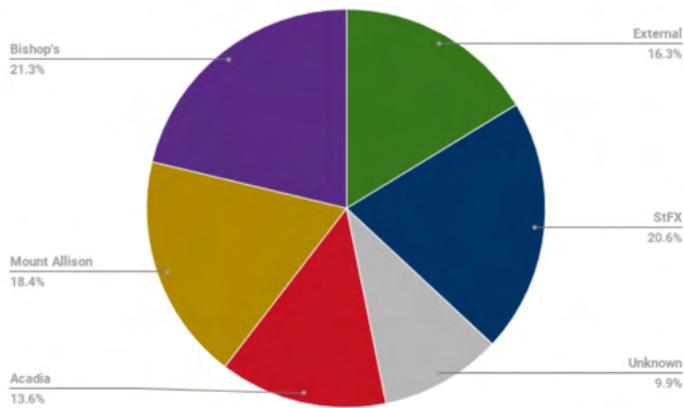


## Appendix A: V\_MLTC Impact at a Glance

### VIRTUAL MAPLE LEAGUE TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTRE

June 2020 - March 2021 accomplishments at a glance

Engaging faculty, staff and students from:



External participants  
joining from  
**46** Colleges &  
Universities

- Amherst College
- Arizona State University
- British Columbia Institute of Technology
- Brock University
- Cape Breton University
- Carleton University
- Concordia University
- Dalhousie University
- Dawson College
- Fanshawe College
- Harvard University
- Indiana University
- Laurentian University
- Loyola University Chicago
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- McGill University
- Mount Saint Vincent University
- Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Nipissing University
- Northern Illinois University
- Northern Ontario School of Medicine
- Nova Scotia Community College
- OCAD University

**588**  
unique participants

**48**  
book club meetings with  
over 120 registrants

**75**  
teaching and learning webinars

**2,000+**  
asynchronous views

**4**

**3M National Student  
Fellowship recipients in 2020\***

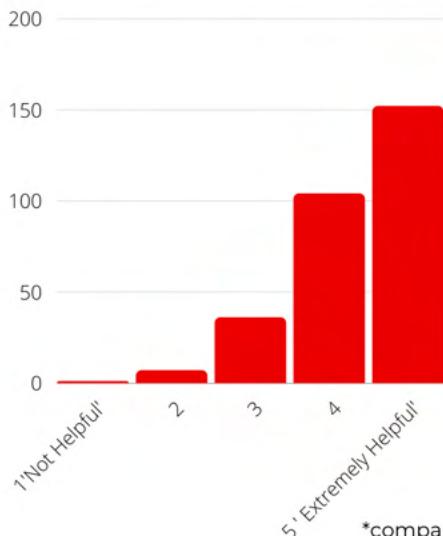
**3**

**3M National Student  
Fellowship recipients in 2021\***

**2**

**3M National Teaching  
Fellowship recipients in 2021\*\***

When asked in a post-session survey,  
85.3% of respondents said our  
pedagogical support webinar series  
session was 'very' or 'extremely' helpful.



\*compared to 4 recipients from the Maple League from 2012-2019

\*\*compared to 11 recipients from the Maple League from 1986-2020

Queen's University

Red Deer College

Red River College

Saint Mary's University

Thompson Rivers University

Université Laval

University of Alberta

University of British Columbia

University of Exeter

University of King's College

University of Leeds

University of Lethbridge

University of Manitoba

University of Maryland

University of Northern British Columbia

University of Prince Edward Island

University of Toronto

University of Vermont

University of Waterloo

University of Windsor

Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University

Yale University

York University



## Appendix B: Maple League Canadian Research Chairs (CRC) Profiles

### *Dr. Lesley Frank, Acadia University*

#### *Tier 2 – CRC in Food, Health and Social Justice*

An estimated 821 million people in the world today suffer from hunger. In Canada, an estimated one in eight households - more than four million Canadians - is food insecure. Seventy years after the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and despite Canada being a wealthy nation, 4 million people are food insecure, of which 1.1 million are children. This negatively affects their physical, mental, and social health, and costs our health care system considerably. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the magnitude of food insecurity in families with children. Yet there is little research on the experiences of food insecurity in childhood throughout developmental stages, or on varying geographic and socially specific family dynamics. Dr. Lesley Frank is working to address key knowledge and measurement gaps on the global problem of family and childhood food insecurity while advancing food justice and health equity in Canada. They are developing an innovative survey tool to address measurement gaps in food insecurity surveillance on early childhood, and analyzing the causes and social impacts of food insecurity on vulnerable families with children of various ages. They are also collaborating with other academics and community stakeholders in the hopes of tracking, and making publicly available, the evidence to support policies that will strengthen the well-being of all Canadians.



### *Dr. Mark Mallory, Acadia University*

#### *Tier 1 - Coastal Ecosystem Resilience and Connectivity*

Coastal habitats provide a link between terrestrial and marine environments. Increasingly, we are recognizing the connectivity between land and sea, which is mediated by wildlife moving between these habitats, particularly marine birds. But changes caused by humans to all these habitats could alter this balance, with potentially harmful environmental effects. What are the greatest threats to coastal environments? Can we predict the indirect effects humans could have on these habitats and the wildlife they support? Dr. Mark Mallory is trying to answer these and



other questions—and help protect and preserve coastal areas in the process. Mallory, his students, and many collaborators are using avian tracking technology, trace element and pollutant analyses, wetland sediment archives, and modern ecological approaches to determine how the health of coastal ecosystems varies naturally and is affected by environmental changes. The focal areas of his lab's studies lie in the beaches, cliffs, and rocky shorelines of Atlantic and Arctic Canada. Mallory's research will provide better tools to assess the health of coastal ecosystems and identify the factors that influence their long-term sustainability. His findings will ultimately be used to conserve and restore healthy, sustainable coastal regions, as well as wildlife populations. They will also provide guidelines for future human activities in these habitats.

***Dr. Heather Lawford, Bishop's University******Tier 2 – CRC in Youth Development***

What steers one young person to a life of beneficiary service to a community and another to engage in terrorism, presumably to defend a set of beliefs? Societally, we know very little about the developmental course of generativity before midlife. Dr. Heather Lawford examines the developmental roots of generativity in the first youth-centered study of its kind. Her research will contribute to an overall knowledge base of how youth express and deepen their commitment to generativity, enhance our capacity to understand generativity across the lifespan, and inform our efforts to facilitate generative development. Dr. Lawford's research to date suggests that generativity plays a significant role in the development of youth purpose and overall thriving. As a community, we benefit by supporting youth in their generative development. Thus, implications of this research range from improving individual well-being to informing local and national organizations in terms of program and policy recommendations.



***Dr. Matthew Peros, Bishop's University***

***Tier 2 – CRC in Climate and Environmental Change***

Heat waves, droughts and hurricanes all seem to be occurring with increasing frequency. These events disproportionately affect the world's most vulnerable people. But are these events really occurring more often than they did in the past? And if so, are human activities to blame or are these changes just part of a natural cycle? Dr.

Matthew Peros is studying natural climate variability and its causes using such geological evidence as lake sediments. Peros is learning much about the past from clues contained in fossils and physical and chemical indicators from the archives of past climates and environments. By doing so, he can place the changes seen over the last half century into a long-term context.



***Dr. Jason F. Rowe, Bishop's University***

***Tier 2 - Exoplanet Astrophysics***

When it comes to the study of space, one of the big remaining questions is whether we are alone in the Universe. Dr. Jason Rowe's research will take us one step closer to answering that question by discovering and characterizing extrasolar planets to learn if there may be other planets similar to Earth. Rowe and his research team use observations from advanced astronomical observatories - such as JWST, the Canadian NEOSSat Mission, and NASA's TESS mission - to obtain and interpret measurements of mass, radius, atmosphere, incident flux, composition and evolution for a large sample of planets spanning the Earth to Neptune regime. This work is advancing



Canada's knowledge in the field of exoplanets—planets outside our solar system. His team is spearheading development of a new Canadian space telescope dedicated to the characterization and discovery of exoplanets with a targeted launch date of early 2026. Determining how exoplanets are similar to or different from planets within our solar system, such as Earth, is critical for understanding the evolution of our solar system. It will also provide direction that will support future Canada-led missions and technologies towards understanding extrasolar planets and life in the Universe.

***Dr. Lauren Beck, Mount Allison University***

***Tier 2 - Intercultural Encounter***

Much scholarship about the early centuries of contact between the Americas and Europe fails to include Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and experiences, and also those of women and other marginalized groups. Dr. Lauren Beck's approach to this problem lies in identifying new points of access (and old ones that have been ignored) to the experiences and perspectives of Indigenous people, women, and other marginalized groups during the early modern period. She examines their presence found in settler-European written accounts, Indigenous and European cartography and place histories, the visual culture of the early modern period, languages from both sides of the Atlantic, as well as the place names that emerged during this time. Her research will also lead scholars toward a paradigm shift in their work through which European knowledge and experiences will no longer frame the way they do early modern scholarship. She is leading an interdisciplinary group of scholars, The Canon and Its Discontents, seeking to challenge the normativity of the western literary and visual canons and to find ways of better including marginalized voices, particularly from Indigenous groups. Her next book, Canada's Place Names and How to Change Them, offers the first critical study of this country's place nomenclature through the lens of race, gender, and marginalization while bathing light on the richness and complexity of Indigenous names and providing pathways along which our toponyms can be revised. She also explores how early modern and contemporary metadata functions as a powerful instrument that furthers imperializing and colonial discourses, including racism and sexism, and attempts to find ways of addressing structural issues with our visual culture today.

***Dr. Douglas A. Campbell, Mount Allison University***

***Tier 1 – Phytoplankton Ecophysiology***

D.A. Campbell is a Canada Research Chair in Phytoplankton Ecophysiology at Mount Allison University, currently funded by the Leverhulme Trust, German DFG, NSERC Discovery and the European Union. Campbell collaborates with AgriSera AB and Environmental Proteomics to develop and validate protein quantitation systems widely used for field and laboratory studies of phytoplankton. Phytoplankton are the tiny, invisible plants of the



ocean. As they float, they capture light, which drives their ability to assimilate nutrients. As they use light energy, they take up carbon dioxide, support marine productivity and release oxygen. Every second breath you take consumes oxygen released by phytoplankton. But too much light, or light for the wrong amount of time, can inhibit this photosynthesis of phytoplankton. There are thousands of phytoplankton species. Some are good food for humans, others are toxic, and some are too small to be captured by consumers. The Campbell lab hosts advanced systems for high-throughput analyses of phytoplankton physiology, with a particular emphasis on biooptics. The lab collaborates to study phytoplankton and algae around the world, and trains many students to apply data science approaches to environmental issues.

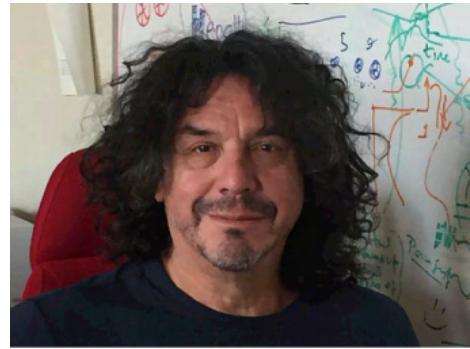
***Dr. Stephen A. Westcott, Mount Allison University******Tier 1 - Green Boron Chemistry***

Steve Westcott was born in the sixties somewhere around Tecumseh and received his PhD from the University of Waterloo under the joint supervision of Drs Todd B. Marder (now at Universität Würzburg) and R. Tom Baker (now at the University of Ottawa) working on metal-catalyzed hydroborations. He was an NSERC PDF, where he spent one year at Emory University in Atlanta with Dr. Lanny Liebeskind, and more than one year working with Dr. Maurice Brookhart at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC. He has been at Mount Allison University since August 1995 and is currently a Canada Research Chair in Boron Chemistry. He is also a Fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada and the Royal Society of Chemistry (UK). His research interests include boron chemistry, catalysis, and the synthesis and development of biologically active small molecules. His research group is called the ‘Wild Toads’ and it is best not to ask why. With his group, Westcott has published 167 papers with 167 different undergraduate authors as of March 2020 and helped send 123 students to graduate school in chemistry and biochemistry.



**Dr. Hugo Beltrami, St. Francis Xavier University****Tier 1 – CRC in Climate Dynamics**

Dr. Hugo Beltrami is a Professor and Canada Research Chair in Climate Dynamics at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia. He holds a BSc in Physics from the University of Winnipeg, a MSc in Theoretical Astrophysics from Queen's University in Kingston, and a PhD in Environmental Sciences from the Université du Québec à Montréal. Dr. Hugo Beltrami research is focused on fundamental scientific challenges related to the overall characterization of the energy exchange between the atmosphere and the shallow part of the Earth's continental crust, a region extremely important for life on our planet. Through theoretical and field-based projects, Beltrami and his interdisciplinary research team attempt to improve the land-surface model components (tools that represent energy and water flux exchanges between land and the atmosphere) of Earth System Models. The research has potential implications on areas as varied as permafrost stability, soil biogeochemical processes, extreme events and public health, and food security planning. Beltrami is also interested in enhancing the communications among scientists, the public, and policy-makers for identifying pathways for guiding the building of resilient communities in response to future climate change.

**Dr. Jacob Levman, St. Francis Xavier University****Tier 2 – CRC in Bioinformatics**

Dr. Levman's research involves the intersection of computational technologies, statistical learning technologies, medical imaging technologies (MRI) and neuroscience. This includes large-scale studies that examine neuroimaging of large clinical populations and developing new technologies to assist in diagnosis and characterization of pathological conditions to improve patient care and to help elucidate understanding of a variety of neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism.



***Dr. Laura Estill, St. Francis Xavier University***

**Tier 2 – Digital Humanities**

Laura Estill is a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Digital Humanities and Associate Professor of English at St. Francis Xavier University, where she leads the [Digital Humanities Centre](#). Her areas of expertise are digital humanities, book history, and early modern English drama. Estill's research investigates how we read and understand early modern drama from its initial manuscript circulation to digital representations today. Her monograph, *Watching, Reading, Changing Plays* explores what early readers took from plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, literally and figuratively; the complementary digital project, [DEx: A Database of Dramatic Extracts](#) offers transcriptions of the parts from plays that early readers copied, offering important evidence for reception studies. Her recent open-access publications include articles in [Digital Humanities Quarterly](#), [Humanities](#), and [The Seventeenth Century](#), as well as a chapter in [Shakespeare's Theatrical Documents](#).



As part of her CRC, Estill is spearheading [Digital Humanities Summer Institute – East](#) (DHSI-East), which, in April 2021, will be offering a four-day workshop for non-experts to learn how to create databases. Estill is also co-organizing an online DHSI-aligned conference in June on [Open/Social/Digital Humanities Pedagogy, Training, and Mentorship](#) (registration is free). She is co-editor of [Early Modern Digital Review](#). Estill currently serves on the Researcher Council for NDRIO (the New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization); the Research Directorate of ACENET; the Maple League Research Committee; and on the Canadian Society for Digital Humanities executive.

**Dr. Katie Aubrecht, St. Francis Xavier University**

**Tier 2 – Health Equity and Social Justice**

Dr. Katie Aubrecht is Canada Research Chair Tier II Health Equity and Social Justice and Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, where she supervises students and teaches courses in the areas of mental health and society, disability and culture, race and identity, social theory, and social policy.

Dr. Aubrecht's CRC research program uses an intersectional approach informed by sociological, disability studies, gerontological, and participatory, decolonizing and arts-informed theories and qualitative research methods to map and analyze marginality, mental health, and resilience across the life span. The overall purpose of this research is to generate new knowledge to enhance the quality of mental health care, and the self-perceived mental health and wellness, of diverse populations living in rural communities, with a focus on Atlantic Canada. This program is supported by the Spatializing Care: Intersectional Disability Studies Lab. As Scientific Director of the Spatializing Care Lab, Dr. Aubrecht has developed a participatory arts-informed health research infrastructure to promote and enhance meaningful and ethical community engaged research that bridges medical, social, and cultural approaches to mental health care. The lab models accessible and inclusive research practice, training, and mentorship.

Dr. Aubrecht is a Women in Media Fellow, Brian Mulroney Institute of Government Resident Fellow, and an alumnus of the inaugural cohort of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Institute of Health Services and Policy Research (IHSPR) Health System Impact (HSI) Fellows. She is Chair of the Policy Domain Area Committee of the Canadian Accessibility Network, and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Science Lead and Associate Scientist with the Maritime Strategy for Patient Oriented Research (SPOR) SUPPORT Unit. Dr. Aubrecht is also a CIHR IHSPR Institute Advisory Board Member and has served as Board Director with Mental Health Research Canada, President and Executive Board Member of the Canadian Disability Studies Association, and Board Director with Eviance: Canadian Centre on Disability Studies. She is co-editor of the book The Aging-Disability Nexus (2020) and has published in journals such as International Journal of Health Policy & Management, Healthcare Policy: Health Services, Management and Policy, Review of Disability Studies: An International Journal,



Intersectionalities: A Global Journal of Social Work Analysis, Research, Polity and Practice, and Studies in Social Justice. Additional information: [www.katieaubrecht.ca](http://www.katieaubrecht.ca)

***Dr. Jonathan Langdon, St. Francis Xavier University***  
***Tier 2 - Sustainability and Social Change Leadership***

Translocal learning is an approach to solving complex global challenges, such as climate change or poverty. It takes place when social movements and groups at the local level learn from each other and share their knowledge with other like-minded groups. Dr. Langdon is looking at how translocal learning spaces are effecting change as people around the globe work to tackle the sustainability challenges that confront them. Langdon and his research team hope that documenting this ongoing horizontal learning will help them understand how social movements learn from one another without losing sight of the particularities of their own struggles. Their findings will also help us understand how sustainability efforts at the local level can confront climate change and other complex challenges.



The Translocal learning network that has emerged from Dr. Langdon's work has had several impacts that are already emerging. First, effective new strategies to contend with challenges have been documented through the engagement of this network. For instance, during the ongoing COVID crisis, movements in different parts of Africa, as well as in North America brought their experiences of organizing during lockdowns and social distancing together and inspired each other with new ways to keep their movement momentum. Second, the increase in solidarity where members have deepened their understanding of how complex challenges like climate change and COVID are affecting others, has been well documented. Finally, the use of online technology in this chair has further helped this network to weather these challenges through mutual support.