

Maple League Executive Director Monthly Report

November 30, 2020



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Executive Director's Note:

The Maple League universities are increasingly visible as leaders in conversations around quality undergraduate education in Canada and around the world. The global pandemic has demonstrated that the goal of influencing undergraduate education is even more important than it was when the consortium was first created, first as the U4 in 2012 and then as the Maple League in 2016.

COVID-19 has generated conditions for a social experiment that has turned our classrooms into live laboratories: we are able to pilot new and innovative uses of educational technology to enhance critical thinking, mentorship, and civic engagement – values that are at the core of our four university missions. COVID has taught us that in-person learning matters, perhaps more now than ever. Humans thrive through direct personal contact – and the central role that relationship-rich experiences (cf. Felten and Lambert, 2020) contribute to quality undergraduate education has never been more apparent. Technology will never replace these face-to-face, transformative learning journeys. However, as we start to see the glimmers of hope for vaccines and a light at the end of this very dark tunnel, there are opportunities for us to reflect on what we've learned and start to articulate what works - and frankly, what does not work - as we imagine a post-COVID world.

Perhaps surprising to many of us is that technology - deployed in particular contexts - can improve some of the ways that we teach and learn: in fact, technology has helped many of our faculty deliver content in new modalities that provide professors with more time for individualized support and mentorship. Virtual platforms enable instructors to share foundational concepts and principles that students can access “on-demand”, which has the potential to enhance the quality of engagement during face-to-face interactions. While there are many challenges with remote, online, and hybrid learning, there are emerging testimonials from faculty who report that these new modalities free up their time to help students develop their capacities for critical thinking, focus on problem-based learning, and increase creative engagement with the material.

The Maple League is now more important than ever as a key leader and influencer of high-quality undergraduate education in Canada and internationally as we respond to the growing demands on teaching and learning support, research, EDI - so that together we can tackle a multitude of “wicked problems” that the global pandemic has exposed. We truly are better together.

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

I. Inter-Institutional Collaboration

Virtual Maple League Teaching and Learning Centre (V_MLTLC)

Throughout November, the V_MLTLC continued to engage members of the four universities and beyond in programming related to equity, pedagogy, and educational leadership. Throughout November, we focused on three pillars to support teaching, learning, and community building across the Maple League:

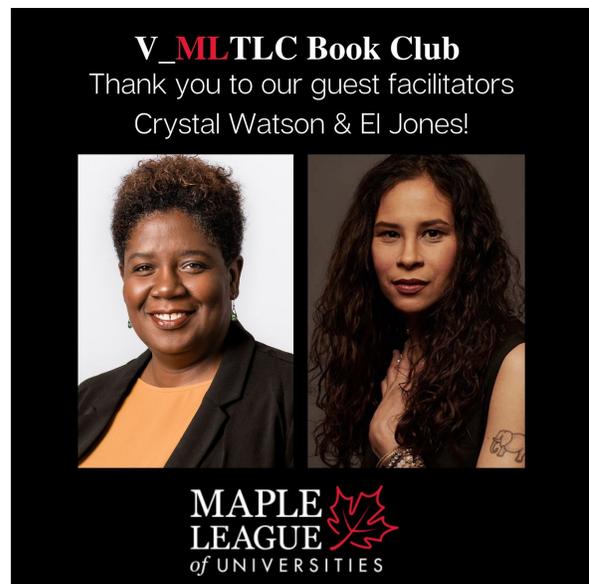
1. MLTLC Book Club: *So you want to talk about race*
2. 'Welcome to my Online Classroom' Series
3. 3M National Student and Teaching Fellowship Mentoring Networks

MLTLC Book Club: *So you want to talk about race*

Throughout November we have continued to host the inter-institutional book club focusing on anti-racist teaching and learning, with participants joining from across the four campuses and beyond. The book we are reading this Fall semester is *So you want to talk about race* by Ijeoma Oluo. Over 40 participants, across three sittings, met three times in November to discuss questions such as:

- Is police brutality really about race?
- What is the school-to-prison pipeline?
- Why can't I say the "N" word?
- What is cultural appropriation?
- Why can't I touch your hair?
- What are microaggressions?
- Why are our students so angry?

During the meetings on the week of November 2-6, Book Club participants were joined by guest facilitators Crystal Watson and El Jones. Crystal and El facilitated discussions surrounding police brutality and the school-to-prison pipeline.



Crystal Watson is a doctoral candidate in the Ph.D. in Health program at Dalhousie University. Her research focuses on the lived experiences of African Nova Scotian girls in the context of recreation, leisure and play. She also works full-time for Recreation Nova Scotia as Executive

Director working to advance the importance of accessible recreation in the lives of Nova Scotians.

El Jones is a poet, educator, journalist and advocate. She was the fifth Poet Laureate of Halifax and the 15th Nancy's Chair in Women's Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University. El is a 2016 recipient of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission Burnley "Rocky" Jones award. El is a co-founder of the Black Power Hour, a radio show developed collectively with prisoners. Her advocacy and work fight anti-Black racism in Canada, walking in the path of our great-grandmothers who resisted relentlessly. Her book of poetry and essays on state violence, *Canada is So Polite* will be released in the winter from Gaspereau Press. El teaches in the Social Justice and Community Studies Department at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, in Sociology at Mount Saint Vincent University and in the School of Journalism at King's College.

"I'm really enjoying the guest facilitators. Having experts join us to talk about specific issues is so valuable and I think makes a more meaningful experience overall. I'm learning a lot."

~ Book Club Participant

"Thank you so much for joining us! I really appreciate you taking the time to share your knowledge and passion. It was very thought-provoking and I learned a lot in a short time."

~ Book Club Participant

Welcome to my Online Classroom

This new series featured speakers who addressed the steps and missteps of teaching in the midst of a global pandemic. Professors took participants on a tour of their virtual classroom and shared about what works (and what doesn't) in an online platform from their experience this Fall.

Thursday, November 5: **"Stop, Drop, and Roll": Trouble-shooting Hybrid Teaching, hosted by Dr. Lana Radloff (Bishop's)**. Join us to learn about the structure of *The Ancient World* in Film and Television and various tech, including what works and what hasn't been successful (Teams, PollEverywhere, Moodle, Moodle quizzes, hybrid debates, OBS/Ensemble Anthem). The course is hybrid, asynchronous once/week and synchronous the other weeks.

Thursday, November 12: **Teaching through the Looking Glass: A brief glimpse into teaching about visual processes online, taught by Dr. Jasmeen Sidhu (Bishop’s).** Perception is a course about how our senses, mostly vision, and audition, allow us to know and understand the world. A large focus on the visual system is observed across Sensation and Perception courses, as seeing is one of the most complex and well-understood tasks a human being does. How does one teach the complex physiology of sensory systems and its functional manifestations in an online setting? How does one get high engagement levels in a STEM-oriented course, where the material is often technical and specific? How does one foster a sense of community and collaboration in a prerequisite STEM-oriented course?

V_MLTLC Welcome to My Online Classroom

November 12th: 'Teaching through the Looking Glass'



V_MLTLC Welcome to My Online Classroom

November 19th: 'Climate and People'



Thursday, November 19: **Climate and People, taught by Dr. Corrine Cash (StFX).** Dr. Cash’s work focuses on environment, climate change, urban issues, and social equity (including how women are impacted in these settings). She is currently conducting research on how people who live in informal settlements in coastal cities are adapting to the impacts of climate change. Join to hear about teaching this cross-listed course between climate and environment and development.

Thursday, November 26: **“This is fine.”: Finding fun in the fury of managing a large hybrid course in “these challenging times” hosted by Dr. Angela Pratt (Bishop’s).** Join to hear about teaching a course about Social Media & Sport in a hybrid format to over 100 students.

3M National Student and Teaching Fellowship Mentoring Networks

As the deadlines for the 3M National Student Fellowship and the 3M National Teaching Fellowship approach in early 2021, we are continuing to strengthen our resources and mentoring networks to bolster the quality and quantity of applications for both Fellowships from across our four institutions.



This month, we hosted two webinars (one for each award) and connected with nominees, nominators, and potential applicants. These webinars provided a chance for nominees and interested members of the four universities to ask questions and meet recipients of the Fellowships from across the Maple League. We garnered significant interest in the Fellowships from these webinars, and are looking forward to submitting applications from all universities for both the 3M National Student Fellowship and the 3M National Teaching Fellowship.

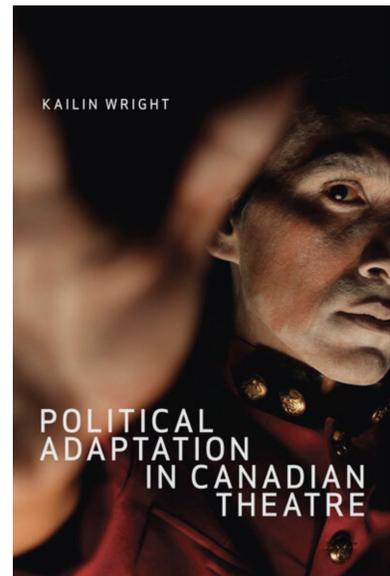
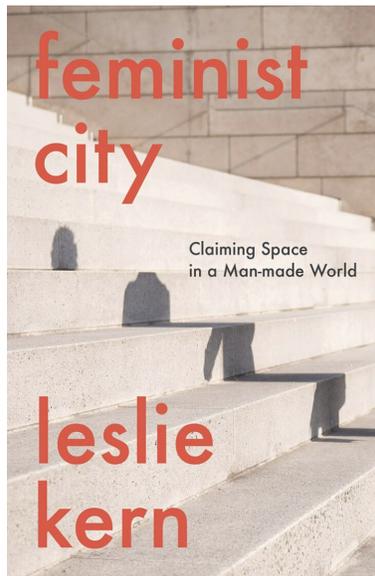
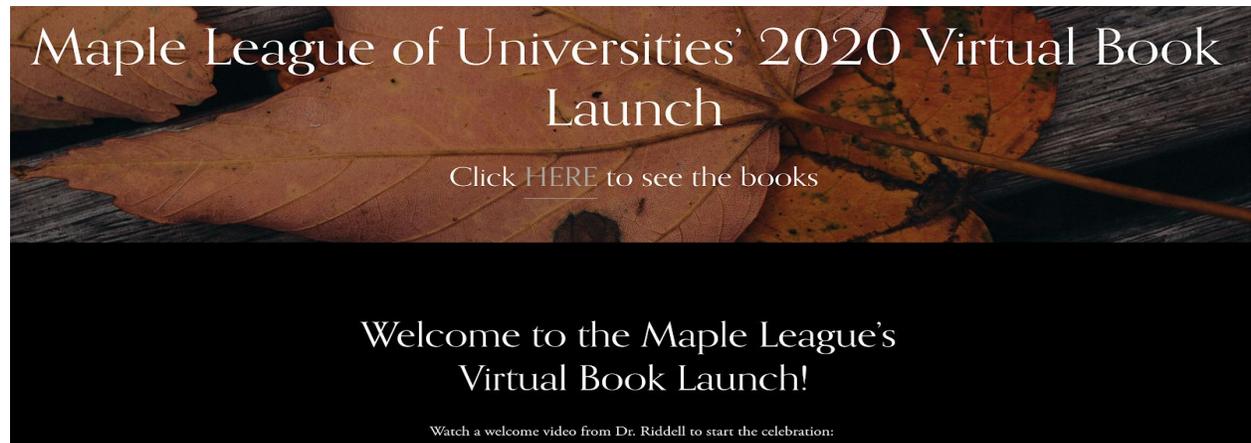
In addition to these webinars, we have embedded institutional champions working across universities for both students and faculty, and we have prepared resource guides for students and faculty with tips and timelines to support their nomination. As such, nominees have begun to work with embedded champions on their own campus, as well as 3M recipients from across the Maple League, in order to submit high-quality and competitive dossiers.

We would like to thank the Fellows from across the Maple League who shared their experience with applicants at these Webinars. Thank you to Teaching Fellows Dr. Robert Lapp (Mount Allison), Dr. Christl Verduyn (Mount Allison), Dr. Rosemary Polegato (Mount Allison), Dr. Jessica Riddell (Bishop’s), Dr. Angie Kolen (StFX) and Student Fellow Addy Strickland (StFX).



Maple League Book Launch & Research Reception

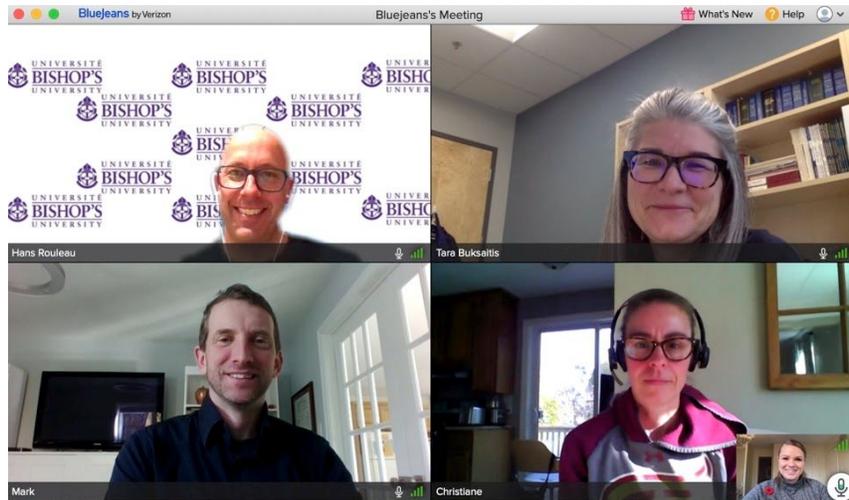
The Maple League Book Launch celebrates the scholarship and contributions of faculty. Virtual spaces provide us with an opportunity to come together in new ways to celebrate research achievements. The multimedia book launch showcases author interviews and links to their books while offering a toast to their accomplishments. The event will take place on December 1st, and is hosted by the Maple League and the Centre for Early Modern Visual Culture at Mount Allison University. We hope to make this an annual and include publications in addition to books. Please send comments or requests to Dr. Lauren Beck (lbeck@mta.ca).



Maple League Registrar Retreat

The Maple League Registrars undertook a half-day retreat on November 9. They discussed the goals and values of their role within and amongst the four institutions. As a group, they are well-equipped to deal with the logistics of course sharing and therefore focused the retreat on making the logistics smoother for students and faculty. One of the overarching themes of the retreat discussion included managing expectations as they try to balance flexibility within the established pathways and systems within which the Student Information Systems (SIS) and other systems are set up. In order to make this a reliable process for students and faculty, a series of recommendations emerged, including introducing common deadlines and firm submission dates for Maple League courses for faculty, and a clearly communicated last day for students to register for a Maple League course in the Fall/Winter Semesters. For the Spring/Summer semester they suggested that the Maple League continue offering those courses via LOP.

The Registrars have a Teams channel dedicated to them that will be in more frequent use as they organize organic meetings/subgroups and develop a WikiHow for sharing information and clearly outline processes. Dr. Jessica Riddell (Maple League Executive Director) and Lauren Boulton (Maple League Post-Graduate Fellow in Advancement and Communications) will also put together a handbook of all the resources curated thus far. This handbook will include (but is not limited to) FAQ documents, forms for course sharing, and a one-pager explaining the approval process for Maple League that can be taken to respective Senates. Dr. Jessica Riddell will also attend Senate meetings, including one scheduled for December 2nd at St. FX to speak to current and future Maple League activities.



Winter 2021 Shared Courses

Over the past two years, an agreement in principle has existed between the four Maple League universities to facilitate students taking courses across the four institutions within the consortium. There has been a history of shared Maple League academic programming, such as joint courses taught across all four universities, and over the past two years, we have identified and addressed many of the challenges of collaborating across campuses. The Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) signed April 20, 2020, is a high-level agreement that formalizes past practice; we've consulted union/faculty association presidents, academic deans, and VPs (Academic) to ensure that policies and collective agreements were aligned. All Senate related issues – including residency – are governed by the individual institution where the student is enrolled. For the Winter 2021 semester, 8 Maple League online/remote shared courses have been approved.

The Maple League Course Approval Process

1. The Maple League Courses Call for Expressions of Interest is issued by the Maple League Academic Committee via the VP Academic Offices to all faculty
2. Faculty interested in opening their courses to students from Maple League universities fill out Maple League Course Proposals (in PDF form) and submit to the Maple League Academic Committee c/o Executive Director
3. Courses are sent to the Academic Deans who work with departmental chairs to assess and assign course equivalencies/codes.
4. Maple League Academic Committee meets to review submitted Maple League Course Proposals and makes decisions to approve, reject, or send complicated collective agreement cases to the four Union Presidents for consultation. Faculty are then notified that their courses are approved. Complicated cases are sent to the four union Presidents to ensure compliance with the four Collective Agreements. The Union Presidents provide guidance, which goes back to the Maple League Academic Committee to communicate to the faculty members.
5. The chair of the Academic Committee sends the registrars a list of Maple League approved courses into their respective student information systems (SIS) and timetable
6. The registrars have the list of approved Maple League courses and course equivalencies and input them into their SIS for students to register.

ONLINE AND REMOTE SHARED COURSE
WINTER 2021

Course: MUSC 4181: Analytical Techniques

Hosted by: Mount Allison University

Enrolment Capped at: 18 students

Delivery: Hybrid, Thursdays 10:00 am AST/9:00 am EST



MUSC 4181: Analytical Techniques provides an introduction to Schenkerian analysis. The prerequisite is Materials of Music IV (MUSC 2111) or equivalent.

Heinrich Schenker's theory of structural levels seeks to account for the coherence of tonal "masterworks" from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe in a manner that emphasizes linear motion, hierarchical relationships, and the interrelationship of harmony and melody. Other music theorists have more recently expanded the purview of Schenkerian analysis to encompass earlier and later styles of Western art music as well as jazz, popular music, and non-Western music.

Although analysis exercises are the main focus of this course, we will also study some readings on the contexts and aims of Schenkerian analysis, including a recent controversy over Schenker's anti-Black racism.

LATI 4001: Directed Readings in Latin is an advanced course for students with a good foundation in the language, who are now ready to read extensive and un-adapted prose texts. This semester we will have a close reading of Tacitus' Germaniaco introduce students to Latin prose and the literary and historical background of the work. As a Latin course, we will continue to work on grammar, syntax and vocabulary, although closer attention will be paid to the morphological and syntactical characteristics of Tacitus' prose. Moreover, students will be introduced to the basics of textual analysis. Additional passages from other works by Tacitus (Agricola, Histories) will be provided with interlinear translation to be carefully studied at home and later discussed in class. Interlinear translations will help students improve their reading and translation skills and solidify their understanding of Latin syntax and vocabulary.

ONLINE AND REMOTE SHARED COURSE
WINTER 2021

Course: LATI 4001: Directed Readings in Latin

Hosted by: Mount Allison University

Enrolment Capped at: 10 students

Delivery: Online (synchronous), Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30 - 9:20 am AST/ 7:20 - 8:20 am EST



**ONLINE AND REMOTE SHARED COURSE
WINTER 2021**

Course: ECON 2991: Freakonomics

Hosted by: Mount Allison University



Enrolment Capped at: 40 students

Delivery: Online (synchronous), Tuesday, Thursday 2:30 - 3:50 pm AST/1:30 am -2:50 pm EST



AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY OF LEARNING

ECON 2991: Freakonomics will consider how the economic approach can be used to analyze social issues that are beyond the usual scope considered by economists. To achieve this, we will develop a systematic approach to describing how people make decisions in an environment of scarcity. We will look at specific cases in which people face and respond to incentives in non-traditional economic environments. This will involve studying practical applications of empirical tools with occasional deviations to examine underlying theoretical issues. Topics to be discussed include why schoolteachers and sumo wrestlers cheat, why drug dealers live with their mothers, where all the criminals have

gone, how prostitutes respond to market pressures, and why people are generous. This course will be primarily based on readings from the books *Freakonomics* and *Super Freakonomics*.

BSAD 474: International Human Resource Management will explore the challenges of managing human resources in an increasingly international business context. The course covers a range of topics relevant for IRHM practitioners including the role of culture, international business strategies and IHRM models, international recruitment, expatriation and repatriation, international compensation, and performance management. A comparative approach to selected topics like employment governance and industrial relations is included. Key international employment regulators and regulative frameworks are also covered. Methods: lectures, cases, simulation, presentations.

**ONLINE AND REMOTE SHARED COURSE
WINTER 2021**

Course: BSAD 474: International Human Resource Management

Hosted by: St. FX University



Enrolment Capped at: 15-20 students

Delivery: Online (synchronous), Mondays 11:15am-12:30 pm AST/10:15 - 11:30 am EST
Thursdays 12:45-2:00pm AST/
11:45am - 1:00pm EST



AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY OF LEARNING

**ONLINE AND REMOTE SHARED COURSE
WINTER 2021**

Course: HIST 3303: Genocide & Justice

Hosted by: St. FX University

Enrolment Capped at: 30 students

Delivery: Online (asynchronous)



HIST 3303: Genocide and Justice explores atrocity and accountability in the modern world. Using first-hand accounts and academic analyses, students will review historical cases of genocide through two lenses: 1) the lived experiences of mass violence, and 2) international responses to atrocity. The tragic link between genocide and justice will be traced throughout as we confront history's darkest deeds.

ESCI 376: Environmental Earth Science Field Course is a field and lab course which introduces field techniques in environmental Earth sciences, including sampling, collection, analysis, and interpretation of climatological, geo-chemical, biogeochemical, hydrological, geophysical, and surficial geological data. Topics include spatial variability in natural physical and chemical processes; field sampling techniques and tools; lab and computer-aided analysis of data. A 10-day course held in May. Prerequisites: ESCI 172 or CLEN 102; ESCI 272/CLEN202.

**ONLINE AND REMOTE SHARED COURSE
WINTER 2021**

Course: ESCI 376: Environmental Earth Science Field Course

Hosted by: St. FX University

Enrolment Capped at: 15-18 students

Delivery: In person field course, TBA



ONLINE AND REMOTE SHARED COURSE
WINTER 2021

Course: HIST 3693: “This is Sparta’: Ancient City & Modern Identity”

Hosted by: Acadia University

Enrolment Capped at: 15-18 students

Delivery: Online (synchronous)
Wednesdays 9:00am-12:00pm AST/8:00-11:00am EST



AN EXTRAORDINARY
WAY OF LEARNING

HIST 3693: “This is Sparta’: Ancient City & Modern Identity” is a special topics course. The first portion of the course comprises a close examination of the history and archaeology of Sparta from prehistory through the Roman period, using ancient texts in translation and exploring the material culture and archaeology of the ancient city. The second half of the course involves a post-antique study of the reception of Sparta, from the western European infatuation with Neoclassicism and philhellenism from the 16th century onward, to the misappropriation of ancient Spartan idealism fascist and neofascist politics, both in Europe and North America. The delivery of this

course will be seminar-style, wherein students are responsible for weekly readings and subsequent in-class discussions on various themes, including: Spartan art, culture, religious sanctuaries, philosophy, gender roles, political & athletic institutions, and death & commemoration; Sparta at war; the Spartan “mirage”; Sparta in 20th& 21stcentury popular culture with a focus on television, film, & graphic novels; historical travel to and writings about Sparta; Sparta in international relations; and the legacy of Sparta in modern politics. No textbook is required, and readings will be provided by the instructor.

A number of key partners have dedicated a tremendous amount of time, effort, and resources to help consult and co-design this process. From the registrars to the Academic Deans, the VP Academics and Union/Faculty Association Presidents, and the Maple League Academic Committee and courageous faculty members, these people have been key collaborators who have been generous and creative around this complex project.

For more information about any of the Maple League online/remote course offerings for Winter 2021, please visit: <http://mapleleague.ca/student/online-and-remote-shared-courses/>

II. External Engagement

Maple League Hosts: Daring to Hope

On November 18, the monthly Maple League Hosts series welcomed Dr. Claire Hamshire (Manchester Metropolitan University), Dr. Rachel Forsyth (Manchester Metropolitan University), Dr. Paul Taylor (University of Leeds), Dr. Heather Smith (University of Northern British Columbia) and Dr. Jessica Riddell (Bishop’s University) to share International Perspectives on the Audacity of Hope in the time of COVID.



This session had attendees who joined from Acadia University, Bishop’s University, Mount Allison University, St. Francis Xavier University, University of British Columbia, Dalhousie University, University of Manitoba, University of Leeds, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Exeter, Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University, Indiana University, and Amherst College.

Panellists explored theoretical and practical implications of social change in the post-secondary landscape and challenged dominant narratives around resilience, authenticity, and hope as a way forward to help others

make change in the space where they are.

“This was the medicine I needed at a very difficult moment in the term. To see others abroad struggling with similar challenges, and to see ways they are responding with critical hope to these challenges, was deeply inspiring.”

~ Participant

“As a newcomer - thank you for making me feel so welcome. Somehow you managed to all create an inclusive space (despite the audience having their cameras off). Was a great way to end the day.”

~ Participant

Maple League Student OpEd on the Return to Campus

The start of the 2020 academic year has been unlike any other in our collective memory. The four Maple League of Universities institutions - Acadia, Bishop's, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier - welcomed some students back to campus due to their unique contexts. Four Maple League students co-wrote an OpEd that shares their perspectives about Fall 2020 and explored the complex and evolving environments within which they are learning and living. The OpEd can be found [on our website](#) or in [Appendix A](#) of this report.

CBC Quebec AM

On November 24th, Dr. Riddell was joined by her co-leads, Scott Stoddard (Manager of IT Client Services), and Georges-Phillipe Gadoury-Sansfaçon (Students' Representative Council Vice President of Academic Affairs), on the Online Learning and Technology Consultants (OLTC) project, to discuss the value of students as partners and empathetic design on CBC Quebec AM. It is critical for students to be at the heart of designing COVID-19 classrooms and post-pandemic post-secondary education. During the interview, Jessica, Scott, and Georges-Phillipe emphasize the importance of relationship-rich experiences (in-person and virtually) where relationships are reciprocal and transformative rather than one-way and transactional. When students are true partners and collaborators, transformation happens; learning has changed and universities must adapt and transform to meet students where they are. The OLTC project doubles down on collaboration in the time of COVID-19 and takes these lessons into a post-pandemic world. Listen to the segment [here](#).



Featured here are the OLTCs preparing to help faculty with the Winter 2021 semester.

Visiting Speaker: University of New Brunswick

Jessica Riddell
Professor of English
Bishop's University
3M National Teaching Fellow
Executive Director, The Maple League of Universities

**Do we really have to fail better to fare better?
A critical and pedagogical approach
to resilience**

Monday, Nov. 30
12:00 -1:00 pm

Join us for Brown Bag Series Conversations
@Zoom, Meeting ID: 975 7802 9826
Passcode: 746467

Dr. Jessica Riddell was a keynote speaker at UNB on November 30th from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Eastern/12:00-1:00 pm Atlantic. The COVID-19 pandemic has been tough on university students. Extremely long lockdowns and current social distancing practices have shaken up students' university experiences and created well-being challenges. Dr. Riddell's session was on **“Do we really have to fail better to fare better? A critical and pedagogical approach to resilience”**.

Federal Funding Announcement: Canada Summer Jobs (\$15,000)

The Maple League was awarded \$15,000 in federal funding through the Canada Summer Jobs Program through St. FX for a social issues researcher, an educational researcher, and a social innovation lead. We've identified three projects and hired two of the three positions: 1. High Impact Practices and Accessibility; 2. A Design Incubator for Maple League Student Fellows; and 3. A Retention Project that follows up on the recommendations coming out of the Retention Summit (October 2019). These three new positions are in addition to the three CSJ positions at Acadia and Bishop's awarded in July.

SSHRC Partnerships and Connection Grants

The Maple League has been approached by a number of universities and principal investigators interested in partnering with the four universities on large SSHRC Connection Grants. Projects under development include the value of the liberal arts, and another on student retention, equity and student success. This comes on the heels of the successful SSHRC Connections Grant for Knowledge Mobilization, led by Drs. Suzanne Hood and Heather Lawford at BU, and the recent submission for an SSHRC Connections Grant proposal led by Dr. Mary Sweatman (Acadia University) “Seizing the moment: Exploring just and sustainable pandemic recovery through community-campus partnerships.” This uptick in research collaborations is evidence of this consortium's reputation as a leader in research around quality undergraduate education in Canada and around the world.

III. The Maple League Team

Maple League Student Fellows

The Maple League Student Fellows meet weekly for team meetings. In these meetings, Student Fellows engage in strategic visioning, professional development (including how to design an agenda, chair a meeting, and take meeting notes), and have worked on co-creating a video about the impact of the Maple League on student leadership. The weekly meetings feature an agile agenda, rotating chair, short professional development sessions, and strategic thinking about some of the challenges and opportunities Maple League Student Fellows encounter in their own projects, related to management, implementation, and reporting.

The Student Fellows continue to work both individually and as a team on a number of projects. In November, our Fellows worked on advancing EDI in online learning environments, created asynchronous resources to support teaching and learning, worked with faculty and students on 3M Fellowship applications, collaborated to advance decolonization across the consortium, and expanded our social media reach to connect with new groups of students.



Canada Summer Jobs

As mentioned above, this month the Maple League received \$15,000 funding for three opportunities that will help accelerate thinking in a few key pillars:

Rebecca Mesay: Social Innovation/Business/Future Skills

- Organize leadership opportunities (including recruiting cohorts, planning activities, and facilitating cross-institutional learning opportunities) for Maple League Student Fellows.
- Develop, in consultation with Student Fellows, programming and leadership opportunities that engage BIPOC and other students who are under-represented in leadership opportunities, with the goal of developing solutions to the under-representation of equity-deserving groups of students in such opportunities.
- Create a design lab for Maple League Student Fellows that investigates “wicked problems” by centring the expertise of those on the margins. Specifically, Rebecca will engage ML Student Fellows with the question “*How can the four Maple League universities improve the design of future skills and competencies-based initiatives that are a. Better designed with students in mind and b. more inclusive of students from historically excluded groups?*” This design lab will help glean insights into barriers to experiential learning and other high impact practices and help to address some of the challenges to student success and retention. This work will reinforce our commitment to bringing together multiple perspectives and stakeholders around quality undergraduate education in Canada.

Tiffany MacLennan: Educational Researcher

- Conduct research on High Impact Educational Practices (HIPs) (cf. Kuh, 2008) across the four Maple League Universities through surveys and interviews with students, staff, and faculty.
- Use collected data to develop a set of institution recommendations on making HIPs more accessible for students, staff, and faculty.

TBA: Social Issues Researcher, Retention and Student Success

Appendix A: Maple League Student OpEd on the Return to Campus

Student Perspectives on the Return to Campus:

A Maple League Students OpEd

November 5, 2020

Jessica Riddell, Addy Strickland, Sally Cunningham, Corey Ashe, and Lara Hartman

The start of the 2020 academic year has been unlike any other in our collective memory. Institutions across Canada made difficult decisions about the Fall 2020 term in constantly evolving conditions and with incomplete or contradictory information. While the trend in Canadian post-secondary education saw large, urban institutions move courses online for Fall 2020, the four Maple League institutions - Acadia, Bishop's, Mount Allison, and St. Francis Xavier - were able to welcome some students back to campus due to their unique contexts. The health and safety of the communities was the guiding principle in every decision and were made in consultation with diverse partners over a sustained period of time and in consideration of a number of complex factors.

The decision to re-open campuses was based on the following conditions:

1. *All four institutions are located in rural or regional areas with a low population density*
2. *These universities all have small class sizes, so physical distancing in classrooms and on campus was logistically possible*
3. *Three of the four universities are located in Atlantic Canada, deemed the “safest place in North America” during the global pandemic ([National Post](#), September 11, 2020; [NYT](#) October 29, 2020)*
4. *All four universities met and exceeded the local and provincial public health guidelines, with mandatory masks on campus, sanitizing stations and cleaning between classes, delayed starts to term, asymptomatic COVID testing, and quarantining*
5. *Strong relationships with the “citizen towns” - Antigonish, Lennoxville, Sackville, and Wolfville - ensured that for the most part community members were part of the decisions, design, and implementation of campus re-openings*

Most importantly, a fundamental value shared by the four universities is that students are key partners in the learning process. In a 21st-century liberal education, students are co-creators of knowledge. Students and professors - and all members of the community - learn from one another through candid and respectful dialogue. In the national conversations about Fall 2020, student voices are essential to the decision-making process. Four students from each of the Maple League universities share their perspectives about Fall 2020 and explore the complex and evolving environments within which they are learning and living:

Addy Strickland, Student at St. Francis Xavier University:

The return to campus, more than anything, has been an exercise in trust. Stepping back into the classroom means trusting that everyone else has also isolated, has kept to their bubble, has worn a mask. It means trusting that classrooms have been cleaned, tests have been taken, and distancing maintained. It also means trusting institutions that frequently put image and finances over student well-being. That's a lot to ask six months into a prolonged, collective trauma when everyone is presumably well-versed in just how dangerous and pervasive this virus can be. It's a lot to ask, and something that I struggle with often—as I'm sure many others do. That doesn't mean, however, that opening campus was the wrong decision. At a time when nearly everyone is struggling, the community has come to be all the more important. I won't glorify the university campus as a community in anything more than proximity, but the smaller communities that piece it together are something magical. Since returning to campus, I've found solace in weekly meetings with the student paper; in creating content for Social Justice Radio; in running into friends and professors in the halls; in studying near other people. All of these things play just as much of a role in education as classes do because they make it matter. They make learning real, instead of trapping it on a page or behind a screen. So even though we're all struggling and burnt out, and trust is hard, and the world is on fire—it's good to be back.



Sally Cunningham, Student at Bishop’s University:

I’m living in Lennoxville again. The world has spun off its axis more than once this year, bringing the now-infamous “unprecedented times” into the light, and forcing new habits, new coping mechanisms, new tragedy every day. I have read signs warning of the coronavirus in English, Dutch, German, and French. Quarantined three times. Spent the summer trying to remember what productivity looks like. Failed a lot. I have learned that looking forward can be dangerous, and I try to not get attached to plans the same way. When I first heard that school was moving online for the foreseeable future, I was inconsolable for days. It was a new robbery: late nights with friends, ordering pizza to the library, knocking snow off my boots onto squeaky vinyl flooring. All gone. Yet, here we are in November, and I am here. Classes are for the most part online—which is a whole new learning curve to deal with alongside academic learning—but there is some sense of normalcy. I look for the little joys that come from being on-campus even in these



unchartered waters: we buy happy little plants for the window, I get to meet my professors face-to-six-feet-away-face and talk about nerdy things, we do a mask fashion show in the quad and laugh until it hurts. It may look a little quieter, maybe more fearful, but still tentatively hopeful: I am living in Lennoxville again and I am grateful.

Corey Ashe, Student at Mount Allison University

With all the uncertainty of the fall 2020 Semester, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the thought that Mount Allison would implement a fully online semester worried me. I’m the type of student who enjoys face-to-face interaction with my classmates and my professors. It provides a much better learning experience when compared to learning behind a computer screen. To my excitement, Mount Allison University announced a hybrid approach, offering both in-person and on-campus courses. This shows the commitment of the university to cater to the needs of all its students, those who could return in a safe manner and those who could learn from home. I have

enjoyed my time back on campus thus far. Starting with the quarantine process that Mount Allison had implemented for students entering Atlantic Canada, this was designed to ensure that the risk of spreading COVID-19 remained low and contained. All protocols, such as the mandatory wearing of face masks, restricting all campus buildings to students, faculty and staff, installation of hand sanitizer stations across campus, were designed to keep students safe and free of COVID-19. With all these protocols implemented across the Mount Allison University campus, I feel extremely safe and glad that I was able to return to campus in order to pursue my studies in a safe and comfortable manner.



I would like to extend my appreciation to all the faculty, students, staff and other members of the Mount Allison community, who continue to work day in and out to ensure that the semester is running as smoothly as possible.

Lara Hartman, Student at Acadia University

After only a month of being back at school, I am so thankful that Acadia found a way for people to safely return to campus. It is surely a different type of education experience now but students are resilient and we are finding a way through. By living through this experience we are definitely more appreciative of the educational experiences we had before. I know I am missing the time when I was not on my computer all day long. I miss going into class in-person and seeing people’s faces. Now I find myself going to Teams meetings and getting headaches because of the screen time, and wishing I could see other people. In the Maple League, we pride ourselves on the extraordinary type of learning and this year is showing us again that we can handle the extraordinary and come out stronger



because of it. COVID-19 is changing the world, but we in the Maple League are going to change the world no matter what obstacles stand in the way, even a global pandemic. As this school year continues we will see what other new opportunities present themselves because of it.

We are all living and learning in the midst of a global pandemic. Universities must be on the forefront of the recovery and renewal efforts, taking charge towards a post-COVID world that is more inclusive, equitable, and just, than it was before the global shutdown. A student-centred approach strengthens our role as leaders in quality undergraduate education in Canada. Students are key partners who help us imagine and achieve hopeful and resilient institutions post-COVID. In a world with accelerated news cycles, competing information, and socio-political uncertainty, students are the moral compasses of our institutions. As we prepare for Winter 2021, the four universities are hosting town halls, convening focus groups, and surveying faculty and students. In these discussions across the Maple League, we are trying to hold space for the messiness of this journey and make visible the tremendous challenges while also sharing what we've learned so that we may get through and learn together.

Appendix B: Funding Spotlights

Maple League Mid-Term Progress Report

Interactive Online Concussion Education Tool

Principal Investigator: Dr. Colin King (Acadia),

Co-Principal Investigator: Dr. Loriann Hynes (York University),

Co-Investigators: Tara Sutherland (St. FX), Jocelyn Dowling (Mount Allison), Katrina Lambert (Bishop's), Curtis Arsenault (Acadia)

The Maple League funded nine projects in 2019/2020 to promote and facilitate collaborative research, innovative teaching, spring and international field study programs, and travel amongst the four campuses. We are delighted to share, in a series called the Maple League Funding Spotlight, progress reports from these projects. We are particularly interested in the insights and impact these funded projects have had on their communities in the time of COVID.

We had a chance to sit down with Dr. Colin King from Acadia University to talk about their project and learn more about collaboration across the four universities.

JESSICA RIDDELL (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MAPLE LEAGUE): *The guiding question that animates all our Maple League collaborations is: "what can we do together that we cannot do on our own?" How does this resonate with the project you've undertaken?*

COLIN KING, PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (ACADIA UNIVERSITY): Our project has helped to build a community of practice of athletic therapists throughout the Maple League, by sharing expertise, experiences, and challenges of assessing and managing concussions. This approach has been beneficial as we were able to then take these experiences and build authentic scenarios to further educate future students. Concussions are such an individualized injury that it is important to get students to think about the many different layers/factors that should be considered when assessing or managing a potential concussive injury. There are so many situational examples that can happen (and often do when dealing with this injury), and we are designing our tool to help better prepare students for such situations. This collaborative approach allows us to create realistic scenarios that can provide students from across the Maple League with more diverse learning experiences than they would traditionally receive at their own institution.

JR: How does your project benefit from working and learning in relationship-rich environments?

CK: Everyone involved in this project has unique backgrounds and experiences, especially when it comes to assessing and managing concussions. Each member brings unique examples, challenges, and experiences that future students can learn from. Our main goal from this project is to develop an educational tool that students can engage in, to stimulate further critical thinking about what they would do if faced with similar situations on the sidelines. It is not a simple “review the content and pick the correct answer” type of tool. These types of realistic situational questions are not often covered in traditional concussion education lectures/resources as so much focus is placed on providing assessment and management knowledge, and assuming that students are acquiring that knowledge. And although this tool includes components of assessment and management knowledge, it goes far beyond that by using effective pedagogical strategies to enhance theoretical knowledge acquisition and skill/competence development, while engaging students in critical thinking and reflection.

JR: What kind of impact has your project had -- on your own work, on institutional cultures, or beyond the academy -- with your project?

CK: Personally, working through this project has made me think about how we educate our own students about concussion assessment and management. The purposeful reflection that has come from this process has led to updating the concussion assessment/management policies and procedures at our institution. It has also made me think about how I currently teach students about this topic and has changed my individual pedagogical approach. Moving forward, once we finish this tool, we will be able to explore the effectiveness of this pedagogical approach in diverse groups of health professional students.

JR: Has the global pandemic affected your project and/or your understanding of collaboration? If so, why? If not, why?

CK: The biggest impact that the pandemic had on this project was the timing. All of the collaboration and planning was going to happen virtually anyways, regardless of the current state of COVID or provincial health guidelines. But everyone involved had their own unique circumstances that led to a delay in starting the project. Some individuals (me included) had the new challenges of finding a work/life balance with young kids who were now at home all the

time, as three- and four-year old's have a completely different concept of what "research" means. Others stepped into new roles at their institution to assist in COVID response planning. So, the pandemic did not have an impact on our plan for the project, just the timing in getting it started.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Here is a brief description of the project:

The purpose of this project is to design an interactive online educational tool that engages aspiring health professional students in realistic concussion assessment and management scenarios. These scenarios integrate the knowledge and practical skills required to effectively recognize, assess, and manage concussions in diverse sport settings. All scenarios are created by experts in the field to ensure that they are representative of the many challenges that can occur when trying to assess and manage a concussion during real-life situations. Many educational tools and text-based scenarios neglect this important aspect, which forces students to miss out on important learning opportunities. Additionally, there are many events that can arise during a concussion assessment, and this tool will engage students to think about how they would respond to these various situations.

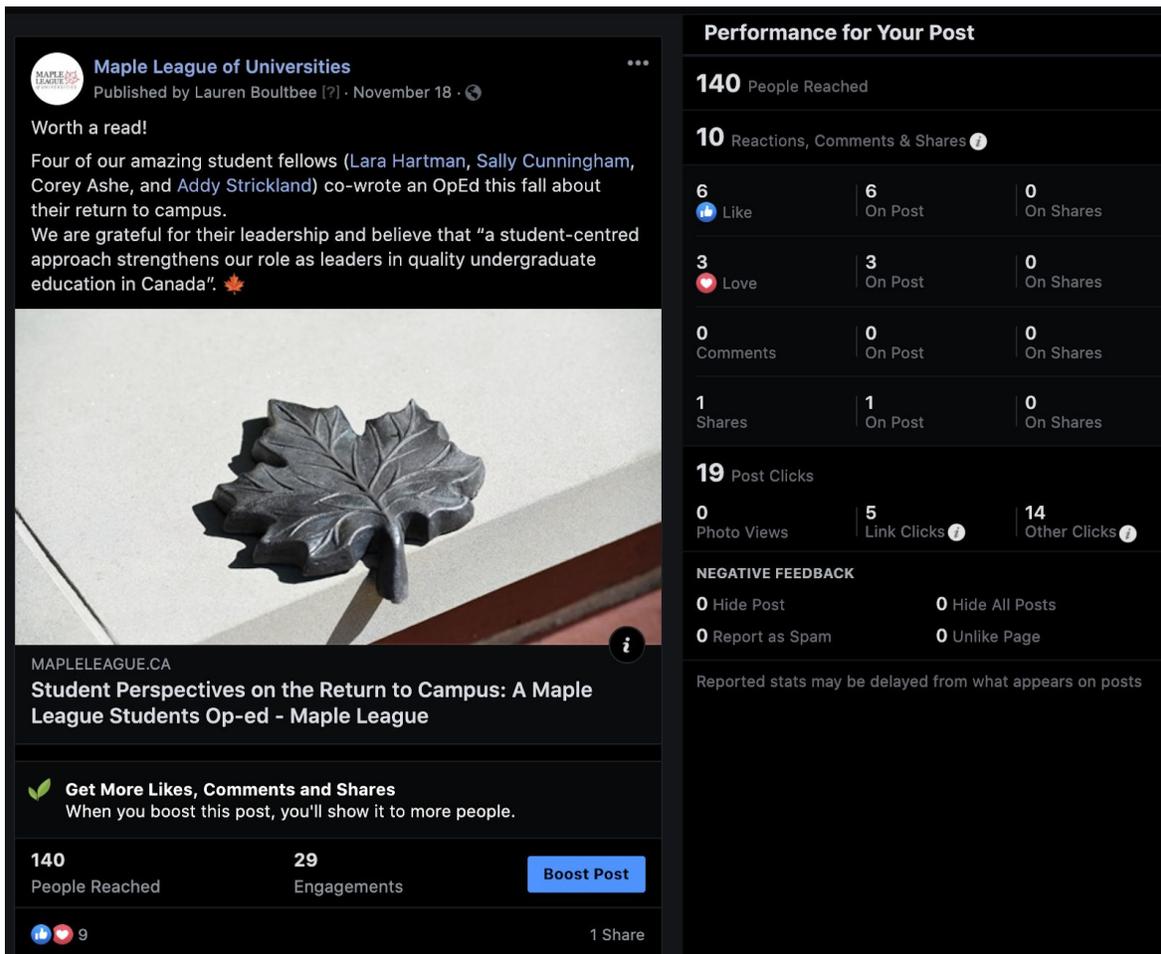
Appendix D: Communications

Social Media Insights

Facebook

Over the month of November our best performing post was our Student Fellow OpEd. This is great as it shows our followers are interested in the voice of students which is a critical part of the Maple League’s educational model.

Below is a graphic of the post’s performance.



Twitter

The Maple League Twitter is a platform where there is consistently continued growth. Not only is our following a very **loyal and engaged** one, but we organically gained **30 new followers** this month. We had **68K impressions** (times our tweets are seen) this month which translates to great exposure for the Maple League. We also had **124 link clicks** this month. This not only means again an increase in exposure but confirms the loyalty and engagement of our followers.



Top Tweet earned 5,383 impressions

Don't miss this month's Maple League Hosts on Wednesday, November 18!

Daring to Hope: International Perspectives on the Audacity of Hope in the time of COVID with panelists from [@ManMetUni](#) [@UniversityLeeds](#) [@UBishops](#) & [@UNBC](#).

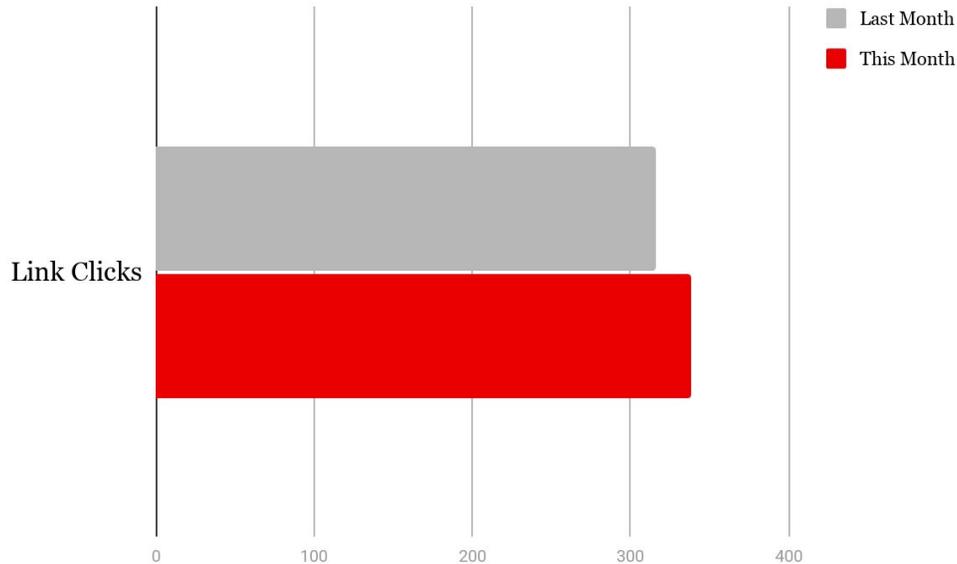
Have a question for the panelists? Leave it below! pic.twitter.com/hLOVqBTASk



↻ 4 ❤️ 15

Instagram

Instagram has been a consistent channel with an **average reach per post of 400 people**. Followers often repost content to their story (which allows it to be seen by all of their friends for 24 hours). During these occurrences more traffic is driven to the Maple League account, increasing the number of followers.



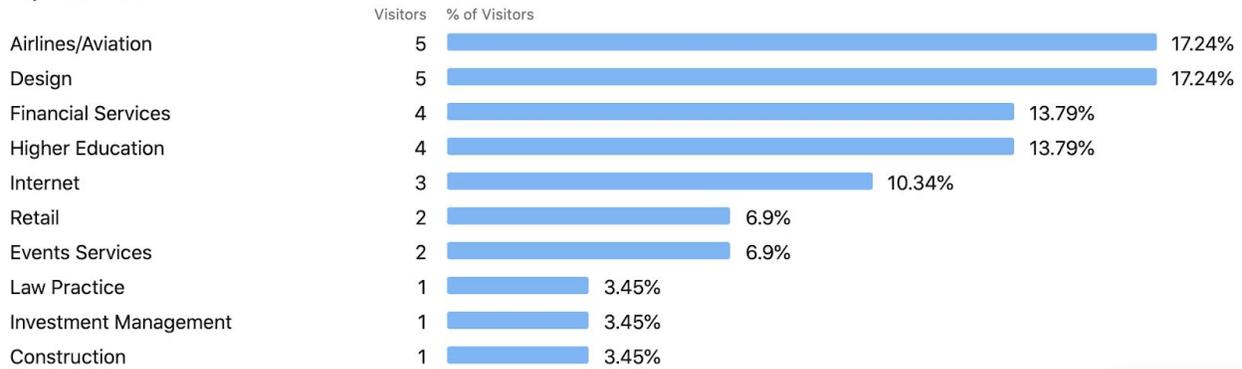
We are seeing consistent growth across this social media platform, which is notable because it is usually difficult for organizations to see **continual growth across all platforms**. One of the most significant data points is the growth in link clicks (shown above). Link views have grown significantly this month from **316 to 338**. This is significant because it confirms that we have a very loyal and engaged following; **followers are taking an interest** in Maple League content and making the effort to visit our profile, click on the link, and engage with our story.

LinkedIn

Since focusing efforts on this platform (**April 24th, 2020 - present**) we have seen significant follower growth, engagements and impressions. LinkedIn is a channel that can often be very difficult to see organic (unpaid) growth. Not only have we accomplished significant organic growth, our **engagement rate average for November is 3.57%**, which is **promising**, as anything over 2% for LinkedIn is considered very good. Another noteworthy metric this month is the increase in **8 new followers for a total of 199**.

Visitor demographics ⓘ | Time range: Nov 15, 2020 - Nov 29, 2020 ▼ | Data for: Industry ▼

Top industries



Interestingly, we were viewed most this month by aviation and design professionals which indicates the **Maple League is doing innovative work that is drawing the attention of professionals who specialize in design thinking**.

Visitor demographics ⓘ | Time range: Nov 15, 2020 - Nov 29, 2020 ▼ | Data for: Job function ▼

Top job functions

