

Maple League of Universities Monthly Report

October 31, 2022



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Executive Director's Note:

“i have learned some things about abundance.

it is self-perpetuating. each moment in which i have claimed abundance has simply increased my comfort with claiming abundance, and has made scarcity then more unbearable, as a personal mindset or a worldview.”
~ Adrienne Maree Brown

How do we live in abundance when we are addicted to scarcity?

We perpetuate narratives of scarcity, of lack, of crisis.

As a society. As universities. As individuals.

Even the phrase “I’m so busy” gestures towards lack – lack of time, lack of support, lack of resources.

And yet we live, as American author Adrienne Maree Brown reminds us, in a time of abundance. When we talk about funding universities, the conceptual and practical definitions of “what is enough” tests the limits of our imaginative capacities. In this sphere, more so than anywhere else, we must sit with negative capability, which is “the willingness to embrace uncertainty, live with mystery, and make peace with ambiguity.”

Yes, the current funding models are broken.

Yes, universities are chronically underfunded.

Yes, financial exigency is a real and increasingly urgent threat.

These issues require extreme upstream thinking – at all levels of government, from policymakers to the public sphere – first to acknowledge that the financial models are irreparably broken and then commit to re-imagining [soul] sustaining, equitable systems.

For those of us downstream, the “dams” – flawed federal and provincial funding formulas, shrinking government grants, gatekeeping with performance-based funding, and government overreach – seem insurmountable, intractable, and monolithic.

When crisis is chronic, the result is individual and corporate brokenness. Indeed, the systems – the funding models and how we respond to them – are broken. This is not a controversial statement. But it is often the conclusion of a conversation – an indictment – rather than an invitation to start a conversation.

Where do we even begin?

With us.

Now is the time to reach out to our colleagues across the Maple League to build robust hope circuits.

This academic consortium is, at its heart, a place where we ask questions, an exercise in radical hope. Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke urges us to live in the questions for which we do not have the answers:

“I would like to beg you, dear Sir, as well as I can, to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don’t search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer” - Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters To A Young Poet*.

So, what questions do you want to “live into” when we talk about funding (supporting, resourcing, sustaining) our universities?

The communities of practice and committees across the Maple League consistently ask, “can we see abundance where others see scarcity?” And moreover, “Can we see the reality of both scarcity and abundance without missing one or the other?”

As we move into a new phase of the Maple League, we will “live our way into the answers” in ways we cannot yet foresee if we are willing to ask, what does abundance look like?

I hope this report captures some of the abundance – the curiosity, the generosity, and the imaginative capacity – that are hallmarks of our communities.

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

I. Extraordinary Student Experiences

Global Skills Opportunity Program Prepares for 2nd Student Cohort to Attend Belize Field School in May 2023

The [Maple League-supported initiative](#) “Nation to Nation: Building Indigenous Knowledge Across International Borders” is now preparing for the 2nd cohort of Indigenous students to travel to Belize from May 6-21, 2023, with a cohort of twelve students from across the Maple League schools.

The lead organizers from each of the four Maple League universities are:

- Acadia - Michael Holmes (Director of International)
- Bishop’s - Annick Corbeil (Manager of International, Indigenous and Intercultural Relations)
- Mount Allison - Robin Walker (International Affairs Coordinator)
- StFX - Larissa Strong (Internationalization Director) & Nate Taylor (Education Abroad Advisor)

Meetings are held weekly on Wednesday mornings, and colleagues have recently met with Galen University staff and faculty to plan and prepare for next spring’s program to make adjustments and improvements for 2023.



October Brings New opportunities for The Path and Maple League Student Entrepreneurs

113 students are participating this semester in The Path across Bishop's, Mt. A, and Acadia. 70 of these students have received \$1,000 in funding for working on their startup, many as part of a CEWIL funded Innovative Work-Integrated Learning experience.

The Path brought distinguished figures such as Ash Maurya, creator of the Lean Startup; Matt George and Dan Doiron, co-founders of Axis Incubator at UNBSJ; and startup coaches from PropellICT, Atlantic Canada's virtual tech accelerator to work with our student startups.

At St. FX the Path has partnered with the Discoverbox at St. FX to bring its programming and incubator program to St. FX students. Starting in November, St. FX students can access The Path programming and begin applying to receive \$2,500 in funding to work on their startup over winter semester with The Path.

At Acadia the Path will now manage the Launchbox at Acadia, part of the Nova Scotia provincial sandbox program. Launchbox will provide space and programming for all students to experiment with entrepreneurship at Acadia.

The OLTC Program Builds Capacities at Bishop's and Beyond

The third cohort of Online Learning & Technology Consultants is currently wrapping up their training at Bishop's University and will be ready to help faculty members with their courses on November 15th. The OLTCs are faced with a unique challenge as we move into a post-Covid reality: now that modalities are increasingly moving to in-person, how do they deploy their tools and training to help faculty harness the power of technology and design to enhance learning in multiple, hybrid, and in-person settings. The "first principles" of the OLTC program from the outset (in May 2020) were to help reimagine a 21st-century classroom with students as key collaborators, regardless of the method of delivery.

In the past few weeks, the OLTC program has introduced new, improved training modules to ensure the OLTCs can help design courses with EDID lenses.

The OLTC program is thrilled to collaborate with Oorja Gonepavaram, an



alumna of Mount Allison University and a 3M National Student Fellow. Oorja spent two weeks training the OLTCs in Equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (EDID), running modules on intersectionality and how to support international students in the classroom.

The OLTCs met with accessibility specialist Amanda Manning for a session called “Best Practices in Accessible Course Design.” Ghislain Demers, Bishop’s Experiential Learning Manager, also worked with the OLTCs on client-consultant relationships — the first workshop of its kind for the program.

We are excited for the final weeks of training, during which the OLTCs will finish designing courses for their Faculty Mentors.

These capstone projects will be presented during the week of November 13th via Zoom. Keep an eye on our socials for more information on how to attend this presentation, or reach out to us at oltc@ubishops.ca.



II. Faculty and Staff Engagement

New Members of the MLTLC Add Fresh Perspectives to Teaching and Learning

The membership of the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee (MLTLC) is shifting in exciting ways. We're very grateful to long-serving members who have stepped down in the past months, including Mary Sweatman, Angie Kolen, Estelle Chamoux, and Jeff Banks. Stepping in to bring their wisdom and guidance to the MLTLC include:

- **Andrew Webster** - Vice-President Academic & Research (Bishop's)
- **Laura Robinson** - Interim Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning Excellence (Acadia)
- **Jack Rice** - Director of Continuing and Distance Education (StFX)
- **Lace Marie Brogden** - Dean of Education (StFX)
- **Jamie Sedgewick** - Assistant Professor of History (Acadia)
- **Andrea Morash** - Assistant Professor Biology (Mount Allison)
- **Jason Vietri** - Manager of IT Client Services (Bishop's)
- **Eva Bures** - Full Professor & Chair of Education (Bishop's)

Call for ML Shared Courses for 2023/2024 is Now Underway

Application for Maple League Shared
Courses - F23 & W24

Expressions of interest from faculty to teach Maple League Shared Courses are now open. Last year we dedicated staff resources to systematize the process for Maple League shared courses, and this year we are reaping the benefits of that systematization.

October saw us preparing the Call for Shared Courses for Fall '23 and Winter '24 Maple League Shared Courses, which will go out on November 1st. The process for this year will be aligned with the processes we piloted in 22/23, ensuring better clarity for faculty, students, and staff.

Maple League Research Committee Has Active Fall

The Research Committee welcomed Dr Kerry Hull, Dean of Science and Interim Director of Research Services at Bishop's University, to the Fall 2022 meetings. The members continue to

share research-related policy documents and practices (including supports for visiting scholars, post-doctoral fellows and CRCs) and opportunities across the four universities.

Of particular note this month are the Maple League virtual training sessions for students and faculty, organized and delivered by Dr David Bruce (StFX):

- Instructions and advice on the Canadian Common CV (CCV), an online tool used for all Tri-Council applications and for faculty applications to Research Nova Scotia. Numerous sessions are offered throughout the year. Particular attention is paid to how individuals can best maximize each part of the CCV in support of their grant application.
- Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGS-M for SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR) application information sessions for senior undergraduate students planning to graduate in 2023, and current Master's students who are interested in or planning to apply. Two sessions were held in October and 1 is planned for early November.
- Planning is underway for a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant (PEG) information session, to be held on Nov 8 for SSHRC-eligible faculty members (and their partner reps, if applicable).

The Committee is currently focused on its planning for the 2022-23 year and the hiring of an intern to assist with planned and budgeted activities. Recent discussions have highlighted the need, across the Maple League, to offer research supports to under-represented groups, including Indigenous faculty and students. Other suggestions for joint activity include a Maple League Open Access Journal for student research papers not submitted to national/ international journals for publication. This would require discussion and coordination with the Libraries across the Maple League.

Research Impact Canada membership and associated annual costs for services continue to be discussed in light of the increased (or new) membership costs of many other organizations (e.g., ACCRU, Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch). Members will seek feedback from their faculty on the added value that RIC membership brings to their knowledge mobilization efforts given that many KMB tools are currently freely available. The RIC will be contacted for greater clarity on their fees and services.

Opportunities for Maple League faculty to supervise PhD students enrolled elsewhere, under jointly-funded arrangements, are growing! StFX renewed its 5-year agreement with Memorial University in mid-2022, followed by the recent signing of a similar MOU with Acadia. The MOU between MUN and Acadia also includes supervising graduate students at the Master's

level where comparable Master’s programs are not available at Acadia. MtA is currently considering this graduate research opportunity with Memorial University.

3M Mentoring Networks Mobilized

The call for 3M National Teaching and Student Fellowships is now officially out, and we are collaborating with our Student Mentors in each institution to provide students who want to apply with as much support as they need:

- We are currently keeping track of all the potential nominees at each institution and setting up connections with mentors to offer feedback and guidance as students start building their dossier.
- Our Student Mentors (Katie Bibbs at BU, Erin Austen at St. FX, Shelly Colette at Mt. A, and Matt Lukeman and James Sanford at Acadia) recently met and established the best plan to distribute resources to potential nominees and help mobilize the network.
- A one-hour info session will be hosted online on November 16th, 2022, to help potential nominees learn more about the submission process and to connect them with mentors.
- Resources have been circulated to our Student Mentors in each institution. Resources include a handbook and a Q&A guide to prepare students’ dossiers for submission, as well as a link to a recording of a previous info session explaining the application process to students.

Our list of potential nominees is still growing as students are starting to voice their interest in embarking on this experiential process. We will keep you posted!

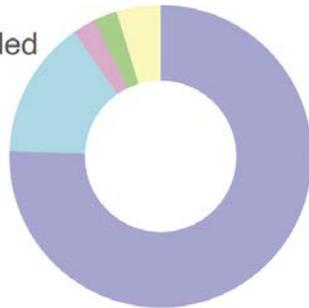


Better Together celebrates 1000 Unique Participants

October saw two terrific Better Together sessions: one on Open Educational Resources with StFX’s Dr. Erin Mazerolle and one on Trauma-Informed Teaching with Acadia’s Dr. Birdie Bezanson. Dr. Bezanson’s session boasts the highest registration numbers of any Better Together session, with over 190 unique registrants.

Better Together participants attended

- One Session - 75%
- Two... - 15%
- Three.. - 3%
- Four... - 3%
- Five + - 5%



We have increasingly endeavoured to broaden our reach with Better Together, and we’re happy to announce that in October, we welcomed our 1000th unique participant. Our reach is not just broad but also deep, with over ¼ of participants last year taking part in more than one session and one in 20 participants taking part in 5 or more Better Together sessions.

We’re excited about what the *next* 1000 participants will bring to the table. Videos of this month’s Better Together sessions, as well as 45 others, are available on [our YouTube page](#).

Maple League Micro-Certificate in Teaching and Learning Tackles Year-Long Projects

The latest Cohort in the Maple League Micro-Certificate in Teaching and Learning has been reflecting and meeting since early September, and this month they each set the Capstone projects they will undertake between now and June.

These projects aim not only to help develop the skills and competencies of this group of educators but will also seek to add to the ongoing conversations about Teaching and Learning that are happening across the country and around the world. Capstone projects include: dossiers and applications for teaching awards & fellowships, a scholarly paper on Universal Design for Learning, rebuilding a course with a focus on inclusion and equity, creating a simulated patient lab for nutrition, and workshops for faculty and for the community on subjects of Trauma-Informed Teaching, library literacy, and English as a Second Language,

While engagement, connection, and reflection are at the heart of the Micro-Certificate program, the Capstone projects reflect our dedication to creating future leaders in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

III. External Engagement

The Maple League of Universities Ranked Nationally as the Top Schools for Top Students

The Maple League of Universities proves once again that excellence is achieved through collaboration as all four Maple League universities ranked in the top six spots for primarily undergraduate universities in Canada in Maclean’s 2023 University rankings.

Also included in the fall issue is a full-page feature highlighting the extraordinary achievement of this year’s Maple League 3M National Student Fellowship recipients. Four of the ten fellowships awarded across Canada went to students attending a Maple League university. The students were recognized for their visionary leadership and impact on higher education and their broader communities.

EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT

We are proud to celebrate our 2022 3M Student Fellows. Of the ten fellowships awarded across Canada, four went to students attending a Maple League university. 3M recognized them for their visionary leadership and innovation in implementing change in higher education and society. *Congratulations!*



Ben Boudreau
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia



Oorja Gonepavaram
Mount Allison University
Sackville, New Brunswick



Sufia Langevin
Bishop's University
Sherbrooke, Québec



Olivia Stevenson
Acadia University
Wolfville, Nova Scotia

EXTRAORDINARY OPPORTUNITY

University is a big decision. Think small. Think the Maple League.

We are four small-scale universities with a common purpose. Each Maple League university offers students access to unparalleled mentorship, collaboration, and experiential learning opportunities.

Our campuses are close-knit communities that encourage you to do big things. And, we help you lead while you learn.

MAPLE LEAGUE
of UNIVERSITIES

AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY OF LEARNING

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