

Maple League of Universities Monthly Report

June 30, 2022



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Executive Director's Note:

This month has made it hard to talk about hope.

In the past six weeks we have seen children gunned while going to school in Texas, a white supremacist murder 10 black people in Buffalo *while he live-streamed it*, supreme court justices majority overturn Roe v. Wade and rescind access to abortion as a human right, the uncovering of hundreds more unmarked graves at residential schools, an uptick of violence against Muslims during Ramadan, the assassination of Al Jazeera journalist, Shireen Abu Akleh as she reported on Israel's occupation of the West Bank, and countless atrocities that come across our news feeds daily.

The horror is writ large against the backdrop of hatred – taking the forms of anti-black racism, islamophobia, colonization, sexual and gendered violence, transphobia.

As a Shakespearean by both training and disposition, I feel ill-equipped to navigate the world, much less help students, colleagues, and friends handle the immensity of unprocessed grief, unfettered rage, and deep despair.

But the Maple League – and the countless communities of practice, committees, and conversation partners, helps us find hope in communion with one another.

Together we howl into the abyss. We find space to honor hopelessness without rushing from grieving into healing.

We can ask, without the need for an immediate response,

“Why is this so hard?”

“Why does this hurt so much?”

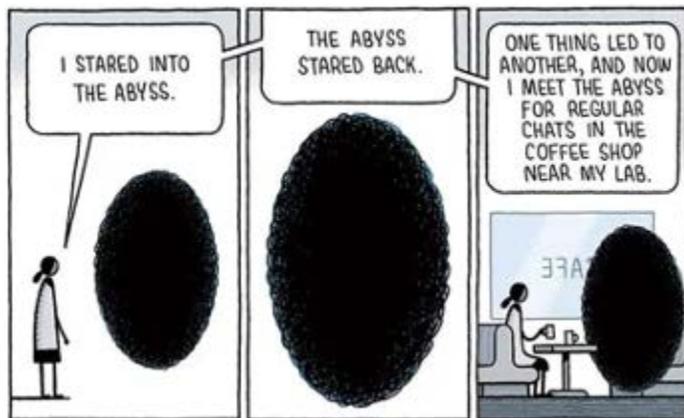
“Why am I so tired?”

Unprocessed grief, unfettered rage, un-locatable despair are not the antitheses of hope. They are part of a hope circuit.

To deny our deep discomfort is to succumb to toxic positivity, which effaces conflict and doesn't create room for disagreement or discontent. Unchecked, toxic positivity threatens to break us apart because it denies the fact of our transformation.

The communities and conversations we have within the consortium help us find ways to be broken open.

Even as we scream into the abyss, we often might find something we don't expect: HOPE



In the hundreds of conversations I have had with Maple League colleagues, some of the most productive encounters were animated by unprocessed grief, rage, and despair.

And yet, these thought partners worked through the discomfort because the thing that kept them up at night was also the thing that got them out of bed in the morning.

Author Iona Sharma, building on the work of prison abolitionist Miriam Kaba, exclaims, “hope and community are a goddamn discipline.”

This notion of hope as a discipline – as a verb, anchored in practice – is reflected in the conversations we have had within the Maple League over the past few months as we engage in strategic visioning: a recurring theme has been the value of interconnected communities of practice; almost all interviewees frame hope in the relational work that fosters collaboration and critical reflection. Maple League conversation partners talk about community being crucial for the well-being of individuals *and* institutions.

Taking a page from bell hook's *All About Love* (1999) she wrote “rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion.”

The Maple League has been a beacon in dark times for so many, and continues to build meaningful spaces for people to engage – and together to tackle some of our most pressing wicked problems.

In *Shakespeare's Guide to Hope, Life, and Learning*, my co-authors and I expand on hope in the context of the university classroom:

“Learning is embodied hope.

It happens in time.

It happens in bodies.

Each act of learning is unique and can never be reproduced on a factory line.

It cannot be abstracted from the bodies and the lives of learners who embody it, any more than a verb can function grammatically without an agent.

Hope is a verb.”

Hope is a verb, and the Maple League is an agent of hope.

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

I. Extraordinary Student Experiences



2021 3M Student Fellow Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon is (finally) celebrated at the STLHE Awards Gala

Maple League 3M National Student Fellows Gather at the STLHE Conference

The STLHE (Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education) Annual Conference in Ottawa offered a unique opportunity to bring together multiple cohorts of 3M Student Fellows, four 2022 Fellows were celebrated (one from each ML campus) and 2021 Fellow Georges-Philippe got a long-awaited opportunity to connect with his cohort.



The 2022 3M Student Fellows planning their closing plenary (not pictured here, Oorja Gonepavaram)



Mount Allison 3M Fellow Oorja Gonepavaram speaks at the STLHE closing plenary



The 2022 3M Student Fellows (including four from the Maple League) at the STLHE Awards Gala



3M Student Fellow Theo Soucy (2018) with her mentor Jessica Riddell

Maple League Supports the Edu-Portal Project Launched by Dr. Lana Radloff

The Maple League and the Jarislowsky Foundation provided grants to EduPortal, a digital educational teaching tool and public education cultural portal that creates community engagement and discourse about the diversity of cultural heritage. It connects past and present, by examining the notion of the Greco-Roman world as the "foundation of Western civilizations" and pairing these narratives with non-Western epistemologies.



An interdisciplinary and multicultural group of students worked collaboratively to produce a multilingual, educational cultural portal and public-facing course website that examines the intersection of new and old word identities and nation building, and the implications of our shared culture and memory for understanding and incorporating the diverse modern identities that characterize Canada and the world today.

Initiating generativity and mobilizing the knowledge of undergraduate students, EduPortal uses a balance of Western and non-Western approaches to education to offer well-informed materials and resources for educators, parents, communities, and regions across the globe that may otherwise not have access to such materials. It aims to encourage reflection on the past and present and the examination of the origins of accepted epistemologies within the Western world, by interrogating their origins and transformation within contemporary society.

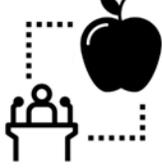
The EduPortal platform demonstrates the strengths of non-traditional experiential learning and the benefits of a liberal education model that emphasizes multi- and interdisciplinary frameworks and local and global citizenship.

Through independent research and collaboration, the students involved in the project develop numerous skills, such as cultural sensitivity, research, public outreach, project management, lesson plan development, marketing, and critical thinking.

The courses within EduPortal are meant to start larger conversations and illuminate cross-cultural connections throughout the world. EduPortal draws parallels between the past and the present and invites a critical analysis of the interplay between these influences. Our materials confront traditional notions of the ancient world and reflect the diversity of cultures and communities that characterized it.

The Maple League is a proud supporter of this innovative knowledge mobilization and will continue to share these student opportunities for undergraduate research across the four campuses.

Shared Courses Launch Across the Maple League

 Sustainable Food Systems and Diets	 Social Determinants of Health	 Marvel Mentors and Metaphor	 Nutrition in Metabolic Diseases	 Geographic Information Systems
 Cultural Memory in Post-1945 Germany	 Statistical Learning	 Qualitative Methods in Food & Nutrition	 Human Nutrition Policy	 Aesthetics of Sport and Dance

As course calendars have been published and registration opened across the Maple League, a new crop of Maple League Shared courses were opened to new students. This next step in our new timeline for shared courses is the earliest that courses have ever been opened to visiting Maple League students. While this has brought forward new challenges, this earlier timeline promises to enable more students to take advantage of these innovative courses. The Faculty Excellence Lead, working with the Registrars, Deans, and Maple League Academic Commi=.

ee have continued to build out systems to support the complex process of sharing courses.

II. Faculty and Staff Engagement

Week-Long Intensive Wraps a Successful Pilot of the Micro-Certificate in Teaching & Learning



From May 30th to June 3rd, the members of the MLTLC, as well as the 21/22 cohort of the Maple League Micro-Certificate in Teaching & Learning came together on Zoom for five days of focussed work and conversation on teaching and learning.

Sessions included Crafting a Teaching Narrative, Teaching with Sensitivity, Universal Design for Learning, EDID², Dossier Polishing, and Ungrading.

Building on the learning that the group did together over the past nine months, through Better Together sessions, in the Maple League Book Club, and through our regular Virtual Ateliers, the conversations had during this week were able to go far deeper than is often possible to unpack some of our most difficult dilemmas, and work toward answers to our most complex issues.

While the intensive marks the end of the formal meetings of this cohort of Micro-Certificate participants, there was a universal desire to arrange for future meetings of the group—a powerful testimonial to the strong sense of community that was crafted since the beginning of this academic year.

III. External Engagement

Award Winning OLTC Program Featured at STLHE Conference

The Maple League was represented in multiple platforms on a national stage June 7-11 in Ottawa at the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Annual Conference. This is the largest national organization for teaching and learning in higher education and attracts 400 - 700 delegates (both hybrid and in-person) to the conference.

A Research Presentation on the OLTC

Matthew Dunleavy, Dr. Jessica Riddell, and Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon presented “Pandemic Pedagogy in Practice: Emergency Remote Teaching with Students as Co-designers.” in a bilingual paper panel.



OLTC’s D2L Award Win Celebrated

Concurrently with “Pandemic Pedagogy in Practice,” Cécilia Alain, Toni Roberts, and Scott Stoddard accepted the D2L Award on behalf of the OLTC, and shared details of the program with their fellow award-winners and delivered a presentation on the innovation of the project to a large audience.

OLTC Poster Presentation

The OLTC team also shared research findings through an STLHE poster presentation. Their poster “Working with Students to Co-Design 21st-Century Classrooms: The Online Learning & Technology Consultants (OLTC) Program” enabled face-to-face, one-on-one knowledge mobilization with Educational Developers and Faculty from across the country.



Maple League Executive Director Gives Keynote Speech at National Conferences

Dr. Jessica Riddell gave two keynote speeches this month at both the STLHE conference in Ottawa and EuroSoTL in Manchester, UK. Her keynotes were centered around Hope University and showcasing how Hope University is a concept without borders, built around fostering community locally, nationally, and internationally. The Maple League featured heavily in both international talks as a model of what Hope University looks like in rewiring and renewing systems and structures in higher education.



OLTC Program Awarded Top Innovation Prize at STLHE Gala Banquet

The Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education awarded Matthew Dunleavy, Georges-Philippe Gadoury-Sansfaçon, Dr. Jessica Riddell, Toni Roberts, and Scott Stoddard the prestigious D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning for the creation and expansion on the OLTC program from 2020-22.

The D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning recognizes and celebrates excellence in collaborative teaching and learning in post-secondary education.



While educators are encouraged to cultivate collaborative approaches to student learning, they must also be encouraged and supported to engage in collaborative teaching.

On June 7th 2022, Cécilia Alain, Matthew Dunleavy, and Toni Roberts represented the team with other winners at a full-day retreat in Ottawa to share innovative practices.

OLTC Champions Meet In-Person for the First Time at Rideau Street Luncheon



After the multiple successes of the OLTC were recognized and celebrated at the STLHE conference, the principle architects and executors of the program met to celebrate their success and imagine what the next steps may be for the OLTC. On the agenda: how to foster more spaces of belonging and flourishing for both faculty and students as we move into a post-pandemic world.

Maple League Executive Director Meets with External Funders in Ottawa in June

Jessica had a chance to meet with leads at Business Higher Education Round Table (BHER), a federally-funded higher education and business sector think tank based in Ottawa. Steve Higham and Maria Giammarco, research leads at BHER, attended the keynote Jessica delivered June 8, and then they met for lunch at the famous Darcy McGees on Parliament Hill to discuss the future of higher education and the partnerships with business sectors, particularly in relation to upskilling and re-skilling.



Dr. Riddell Meets with CEWIL Partners in Ottawa at STLHE

CEWIL Director Charlene Marion and Atlantic Canada lead Krista Steeves were at STLHE in Ottawa and hosted the opening reception for delegates. Jessica met with them and highlighted the importance of external funding and partnerships that enable innovation at universities that experience funding challenges. CEWIL (Cooperative Experiential and Work Integrated Learning) has been a key partner for projects across the Maple League, and Jessica explored future projects with the CEWIL leaders.



Byward Market Reception Brings Together Dozens of Maple League Faculty, Staff, and Students

Following the first day of the conference, a cinq-à-sept was hosted by the Maple League at the



Heart & Crown in the Byward Market. A beautiful June evening facilitated hours of old friends catching up, online collaborators meeting face-to-face for the first time, and new colleagues connecting.