



## 2019-2020 **Year in Review**



For more information, visit:  
[\*\*mi.mcmaster.ca\*\*](https://mi.mcmaster.ca)

## May 2019 marked a fresh start for the MacPherson Institute.

Beginning in 2018, the Provost's External Review on Teaching and Learning resulted in several important guiding documents that shaped the development of our bold, new 3-year Strategic Plan.

The results of the **Terms of Reference for the Review, the Self Study**, and the **Reviewer's Report** allowed us to reflect, reset and refocus our efforts at the MacPherson Institute. This set in motion our action plans to deliver on 30+ planned initiatives in our first year. It was ambitious. It was necessary.

It was a course correction that would help steer us down the right path. We looked deeply at our continuing work to ensure it supported the vision and mandate that we collaboratively developed with our campus community.

We saw early indications that we were heading in the right direction. We saw steady growth in the number of consultations with faculty, instructors and staff, continued interest and expanding diversity in applications for our Teaching and Learning Grants programs, and many more instances of positive reinforcement.

Additionally, remote teaching became a critical component of the University's response to the pandemic. As a result, we saw increased engagement around educational technologies use, digital pedagogy advice and virtual training supports.

It was a busy and rewarding year, made possible by our tremendous partners and staff. I continue to be inspired by our people at the MacPherson Institute and at McMaster University.

Again and again I have witnessed their dedication to enhancing the profile of teaching and learning at McMaster, particularly as we responded to the needs of our community during the final months of our fiscal year.

We begin 2020-2021 still in the midst of responding to the pandemic. We are embarking on a new frontier in remote teaching and learning. We will learn, test and evaluate new experiences together. The journey may not be easy, but we are ready to meet the new challenges together and alongside our partners in the McMaster community.



Lori Goff

Director, Paul R. MacPherson Institute  
for Leadership, Innovation and Excellence  
in Teaching

# What's in this report?

At the beginning of fiscal 2019-2020 it was clear that we would have dual objectives for the year: supporting ongoing operational initiatives and working towards implementing a number of new strategic initiatives. However, we did not anticipate the addition of another objective: responding to a global pandemic. This report is intended to provide an overview of the work we executed from May 2019 to April 2020 and highlights some of our key accomplishments.

The report is organized in four sections:

## 1. Operational Accomplishments

## 2. Pandemic Response

## 3. Strategic Plan Performance Report

## 4. Looking Ahead

Throughout the document we have contextualized how these initiatives and accomplishments align with our mandate and our strategic pillars.

## Mandate

We partner with, support, and connect diverse groups of educators by:

- Creating and delivering **professional development** that engages educators throughout their careers in teaching and learning in order to enhance the student learning experience.
- Facilitating **curriculum development** and revision that fosters continuous enhancement and engagement in learning.
- Supporting, conducting, and recognizing **teaching and learning scholarship** that has the capacity to develop, inform, and enhance educational initiatives and student learning.
- Encouraging and elevating the pedagogical use of **educational technologies** and creative solutions to enhance teaching and learning.

# 1. Operational Accomplishments

Over the last year the MacPherson Institute has realigned efforts to better support the McMaster teaching and learning community through four key areas of support within our mandate.

- Professional Development for Teaching
- Curriculum Development
- Teaching and Learning Scholarship
- Educational Technology

The MacPherson Institute offers opportunities to try new and innovative teaching approaches, to develop teaching knowledge and skills, to connect with colleagues who are engaged in teaching scholarship, and to provide support for effective pedagogical practices for tech-enabled environments. The following highlights our collective accomplishments in 2019-2020.

## 1. Operational Accomplishments

# Professional Development for Teaching

Teaching and learning programs, services and activities are designed to support educators at all stages of their academic careers—from first time teaching assistants (TAs) to experienced instructors.

This year we launched two new workshops for faculty, instructors and staff: the

“Assessment Development Workshop” and “Using Design Thinking to Spark Your Creative Confidence in the Classroom”.

These workshops, and several others, were co-facilitated with faculty members to provide an instructor perspective.

# 4000 STUDENTS

impacted by 45  
course (re)designs, refinements  
and observations

## Teaching & Learning Forum (TLF)

The TLF is an annual workshop event for new and returning TAs, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and sessional instructors.

# 360

participants  
89% were new attendees

We continue to offer consultations on a range of topics related to questions educators encounter in their teaching. Our most common consultation topics include assessment design, engaging and motivating students, teaching in large classes and course design.

It was a wonderful event and I think this is an accomplishment for a university to create a supportive atmosphere for graduate students in order for them to learn how to teach.

— Participant

# 45

New Faculty supported

# 180

Consultations

# 221

Faculty, Instructors & Staff engaged  
with Educator Enhancement Program

(total participants in seminars  
May 2019 - April 2020)

# 174

Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Fellows  
engaged with EDUCATN courses

(total students in courses  
May 2019 - April 2020)

## 1. Operational Accomplishments

# Curriculum Development

In September 2019, McMaster University was praised by external auditors for its “deep and genuine commitment to quality assurance” after receiving the audit report from the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance on the implementation of its Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP).

### **IQAP Recognized**

Each audit report generated by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance provides recommendations and suggestions for universities to ensure ongoing compliance with the provincial Quality Assurance Framework.

On some occasions, the auditors will also identify areas of “best practice” that set institutions apart from others in the province. This year McMaster University was praised for the following best practices:

- Centralizing the IQAP program within the MacPherson Institute
- Providing an 18-month period for self-study preparation
- Formation of program-specific committees to monitor continuous improvement
- Involvement of students in the review process through the Student Partners Program
- Providing templates to programs as part of the review process

A graphic featuring a large light blue circle. Overlapping the circle is the number '66' in a large, bold, black font. To the right of the '66', the words 'ACADEMIC PROGRAMS' are written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, stacked in two lines. Below the circle, the text 'engaged in different stages of the IQAP cyclical review this year' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font, also stacked in two lines.

**66** ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

engaged in different stages of  
the IQAP cyclical review  
this year

**12** Student Feedback Sessions

**11** Implementation Plans Supported

**8** University-wide Quality Assurance Events

## 1. Operational Accomplishments

# Teaching and Learning Scholarship

In 2019-2020 we saw increased interest and participation in the Student Partners Program and it continues to be central to our mandate to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at McMaster. This unique opportunity allows students to contribute to the design and development of courses and curricula, create resources and collaborate with faculty and staff partners on research projects related to teaching and learning. The partnership between students and McMaster faculty and staff continues to be an essential aspect of enhancing teaching and learning at the university.

**7**  
**LTL FELLOWS**  
2019-2020

## International Journal for Students as Partners

**48**

Manuscripts  
Published

**13000+**

Abstract Views

**8000+**

Downloads

## Student Partners Program

**171**

Student Participants  
from all 6 Faculties and  
Arts & Science

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This was a fantastic experience, mostly due to the personal qualities of my Student Partner. They were very professional, responsible, and full of initiative and ideas. They offered insights into what students might find interesting, how instructions should be rephrased, and how to motivate students to engage better with the course content.

- Faculty Partner

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**87**

Faculty & Staff  
Participants

## Teaching and Learning Grants Programs

**1300+**

Students Impacted by ELAP grant projects

## Experiential Learning in Academic Programming Grant

**39**

ELAP  
Applications  
Submitted

**19**

ELAP Grants  
Funded

**9**

Teaching and Learning  
Grants Funded

**59**

Discipline-Specific  
Project Applications

## Research on Teaching and Learning Conference

**90**

McMaster  
Attendees

**168**

Total Attendees  
(200% Increase)

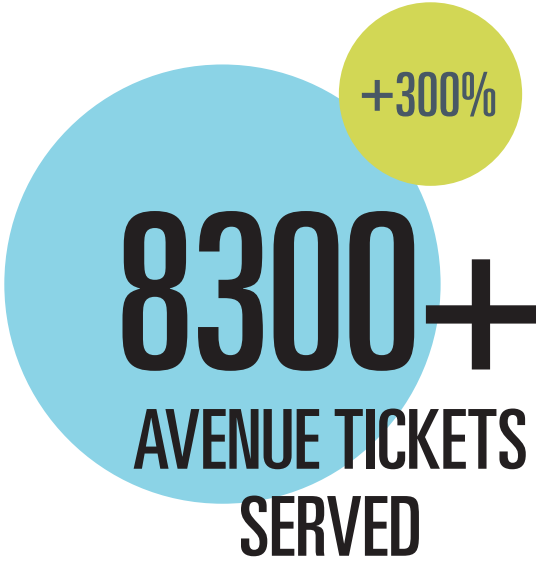
**71**

Different  
Sessions

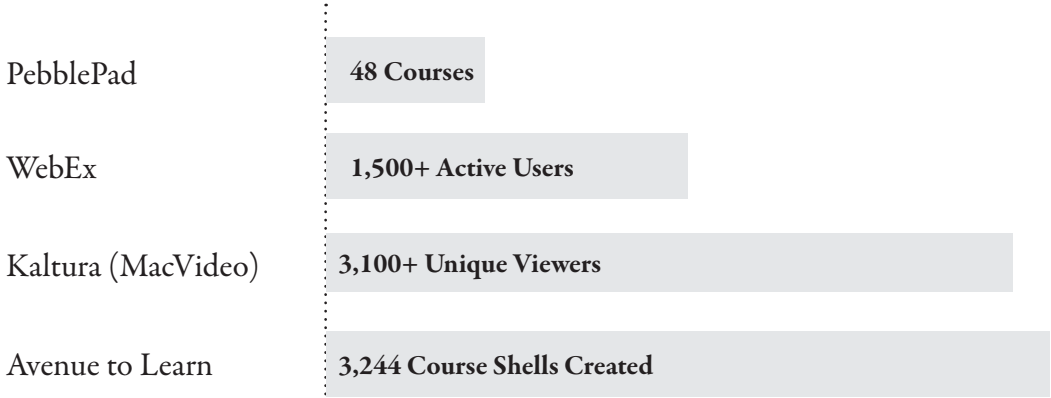
1. Operational Accomplishments

# Educational Technology

In 2019-2020 we launched new video and audio recording spaces at the MacPherson Institute to assist in simplified development of digital educational resources. The One Button Studio and Audio Studios offered new opportunities for faculty, instructors and staff to easily create and add media to their courses.



Institutionally Supported Tools



Blended and Online  
Course Development

**821** Students Enrolled  
in **9** Blended/Online Courses  
Designed in Collaboration  
with **12** Educators

Video Production





## 2. Pandemic Response

The outbreak of COVID-19 drastically affected us all—both personally and professionally.

On March 13, 2020 all in-person classes and exams were suspended and all non-essential personnel were asked to begin working from home. In the weeks that followed, we prioritized the immediate needs of the McMaster community to transition to remote teaching, while adapting to a completely remote working environment ourselves.

We rapidly developed a plan for Instructional Continuity that would support the surge of requests from faculty and instructors transitioning classes and exams to a remote format.

A webpage was created to aggregate remote teaching content, virtual training and several detailed resource guides.

Leveraging our Faculty Liaisons, we connected directly with instructors to provide virtual drop-in sessions and host consultations to recommend tools and strategies for transitioning to remote teaching. We also developed video resources on MacVideo to provide pedagogical and technical support.

The pandemic has emphasized our team's ongoing dedication and genuine desire to support McMaster's teaching and learning community. We continue to proactively respond to the increased requests during the transition to remote teaching.

How we supported the McMaster Community  
(March 13, 2020 - April 30, 2020)

**4,262**  
Page Views of Instructional  
Continuity Website

**1500+**  
Avenue Support  
Tickets Answered

**700+**  
Participants in 30  
Virtual Training  
Sessions

**70+**  
Consultations

**5**  
MacVideo  
Resource Guides  
Created with  
500+ views

### 3. Strategic Plan Performance Report

When we developed our three-year Strategic Plan we knew we would be in for a pivotal first year. We recognized that there would be changes that would help us re-align staff, re-envision our work, and re-engage with our campus partners. Year 1 of our Strategic Plan was ambitious, but it was important to build, or in some cases re-build, a strong foundation before we could proceed on our new path.

In all, we undertook 31 strategic initiatives within our 3 key pillars:

**Partnerships:** Connecting and collaborating with the McMaster communities.

**Programs and Services:** Supporting teaching through scholarship, supports and activities in order to foster student-centred learning.

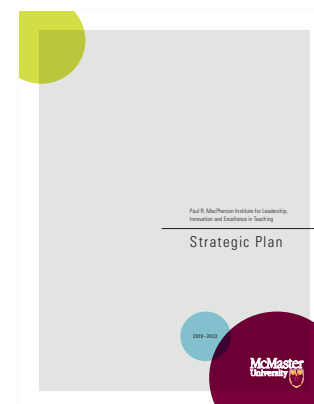
**Process:** Committing to procedures and policies that support the Strategic Plan and the culture of McMaster and the MacPherson Institute.

Each of these pillars is critical and each of the 31 initiatives plays an important role in contributing to the larger goal of aligning everything we do to our vision and mandate. While each initiative serves a distinct purpose, the results are intertwined in the successes of many intersecting activities.

Despite the unexpected shift in priorities due to the pandemic, we successfully delivered on 24 of our strategic initiatives with another 7 carrying forward into Year 2 and beyond.

In the following Performance Report we will review the various initiatives completed in Year 1.

MacPherson Institute  
Strategic Plan



### 3. Strategic Plan Performance Report

## Partnerships

One of the pillars of the MacPherson Institute's Strategic Plan is to develop robust relationships with our stakeholders at McMaster. In Year 1 we focused on establishing deep connections and partnerships through the launch of our Faculty Liaison model of service delivery, contributing to a broader strategic vision for teaching and learning at the university, and enhancing communications about our supports and services within the campus community.

We began our journey of building and rebuilding partnerships to ensure alignment between the MacPherson Institute mandate and the broader strategic goals of our teaching and learning partners within the McMaster community.

#### Communication

Consulting with staff and leadership, and using data from the self-study and review process, the newly hired Communications Officer developed a series of communications initiatives for Year 1 and identified priority areas for support including the Research on Teaching and Learning Conference.

**2X**

increase in attendance at Research on Teaching and Learning Conference (160+ participants)

**2,800+**

Memo Subscribers

**18,300+**

Website Users

**58,000+**

Page Views

**LAUNCHED A REDESIGNED WEBSITE**

#### Shared Understanding of the Value of Teaching and Learning Scholarship

Launched a SoTL Scholars Network for faculty and staff interested in sharing expertise and experiences in teaching and learning scholarship.

#### Contribution to Institutional Teaching and Learning Strategies

The McMaster Teaching and Learning Advisory Board was established in February 2019 and is chaired by Kim Dej. Lori Goff represents the MacPherson Institute and provides updates on ongoing implementation plans and strategic initiatives.

**700+ ENROLLED**

in Professor Hippo on Campus: Student Mental Health Education Program for educators and navigators

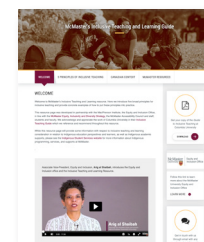


#### Strategic Partnerships

Deployed an outreach model of service delivery for each faculty to offer custom or individualized teaching and learning support.

**6**

Faculties and Arts & Science served by Faculty Liaisons or Faculty Partnership Committees



**Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guide developed**

### 3. Strategic Plan Performance Report

## Programs & Services

In Year 1 we reviewed and revised our past guidebooks, created new resources to support faculty and instructors in their transition to online learning, began a review of our learning management system and launched opportunities to build knowledge around Experiential Learning. Additionally, the launch of the Faculty Liaison model of service delivery helped us better understand the needs of each faculty more effectively.

We continue to take steps to ensure the programs, supports and services we offer through the MacPherson Institute align with the current and evolving needs of the McMaster community.

### Programs, Supports and Resources

In 2019-2020 we reviewed and updated our existing teaching and learning resource guides. We also launched several new programs, workshops and supports.

10

Resource Guides  
reviewed

8

Resource  
Guides updated

Launched  
Faculty Mentorship  
Program in  
Faculty of Science

Launched Experiential  
Learning Network and  
established Experiential  
Learning Grant (ELAP) Grant

#### Faculty Liaison

We have assigned a dedicated Faculty Liaison to each faculty, which ensures there is a deep and thorough understanding of individualized needs. This allows us to make connections to our central programming and develop custom supports where appropriate.

#### Strategy and Programming for Teaching and Learning Scholarship

A comprehensive review of existing SoTL programs led to the designation of 3 primary areas of focus: research generation, research support and research recognition.

### Educational Technologies

We developed a new project intake process to streamline project development, simplify project tracking and enhance understanding of the supports needed by the McMaster community.

**200+**  
**REQUESTS - NEW PROJECT**  
**INTAKE PROCESS**

(since January 2020)

## LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REVIEW COMPLETED

A review of McMaster's Learning Management System, Avenue to Learn, was conducted. The final report and recommendations will be shared once finalized in 2020-2021.

**71.6%**

of respondents satisfied  
with Avenue to Learn

### 3. Strategic Plan Performance Report

## Process

In Year 1 we also recognized that to be successful there would need to be shifts in how we do our work. This included the creation of working groups to help coordinate the execution of our strategic initiatives, looking inward at the development of our staff and leadership team, taking steps to help create a positive work culture, and identifying a methodology to continually review and assess our organizational design.

Robust processes, procedures and policies are being established so we can continually reassess and evaluate alignment between our strategic plan and our mandate with the evolving needs of our stakeholders at the University.

**24/31**  
**INITIATIVES IDENTIFIED**  
**COMPLETED IN FIRST YEAR**

#### Mission, Mandate and Strategic Plan

Key timeframes have been identified within the fiscal year to report on metrics and strategic plan progress.

Dean's Reports include interim metrics and highlights from faculty-specific teaching and learning plans are reviewed with each faculty in January/February.

Key highlights and major accomplishments achieved by the MacPherson Institute are shared in a Year in Review that is made publicly available and published once per year in the summer.

#### Organizational Design and Culture

A process to develop and implement a collaborative methodology for organizational design entered the final stage in January 2020. A snapshot of the changes that had taken place at the MacPherson Institute over the past year was gathered and applied to McKinsey's 7S framework (Strategy, Structure, Systems, Style, Staff, Skills and Shared Values). This offered insight into tensions that exist between areas of our work. Staff provided their ideas and helped to prioritize recommendations that would address these tensions moving forward.

#### Established MacPherson Institute Core Values

Collaboration

Respecting and Valuing Diverse  
Perspectives and Approaches

Trust and Transparency

Commitment to Equity

Scholarly and Creative  
Exploration

Caring Relationships





## 4. Looking Ahead

In only a few short months we have experienced a dramatic shift in the ways we teach and learn. Our classrooms have gone virtual, our discussions have moved online, and our traditional exam formats have been challenged.

We are reimagining the learning experience for our students and learning about it together in real-time.

While we will continue to provide support for the transition to remote teaching, our focus now shifts from short-term solutions to long-term strategies that will address the needs of our stakeholders within the McMaster community.

In addition to our ongoing pandemic response, we will continue to execute our operational mandate and implement strategic initiatives planned for Year 2.

As we move forward we will continue to strengthen and enhance our strategic partnerships with faculties and our other partners. We are excited to contribute to and align with a broader teaching and learning strategy through the Teaching & Learning Advisory and the new Provost as well as the new Vice-Provost (Faculty). Internally, we will continue to perform ongoing reviews of our programs and services to ensure we are delivering value to the teaching and learning community.

Now, more than ever, it is imperative that we sustain our commitment to our vision:

To cultivate an environment where learning deeply matters, and teaching is valued and recognized by the collective McMaster community.

We must not lose sight of this as our ways of teaching and learning evolve to meet the circumstances we now face. We must continue to use our vision, collaboratively developed with the campus community, to guide our direction into this new territory.

There is still much work to be done and new ways we can work to support our stakeholders. We look forward to engaging closely with our campus community to learn from, build upon and further enhance teaching and learning at McMaster in the years ahead.

**We collaborate to explore, enhance, support, and recognize  
teaching and learning experiences at McMaster.**

We offer a wide variety of programs, workshops, services and supports to all members of the McMaster community to cultivate an environment where learning deeply matters, and teaching is valued and recognized. Through these activities, educators have the opportunity to build teaching skills, develop and redesign courses, gain knowledge of educational technology tools and much more.

Teaching and learning are the heart of what we do. Together with you, we look forward to building on past successes and developing new initiatives to address the teaching and learning priorities that have been identified by our community. We will continue to ask, listen and respond to feedback as we continue to grow, adapt and change.



**PAUL R. MACPHERSON INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP,  
INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING**

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