

In March 2020, a global health crisis changed the world. Businesses were shuttered, travel was restricted and people across the globe were asked to stay at home to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Students at McMaster began learning online more than ever before. Faculty and staff abruptly transitioned to teaching and working completely remotely. This was a dramatic shift that had far-reaching impacts to both our personal and professional lives, the effects of which are still being felt more than a year later.

At the start of our 2020-2021 fiscal year, the MacPherson Institute, with the support of the Provost, was focused on developing short-term solutions to help instructors with the transition to remote teaching. As the longer-term impacts of the global pandemic became clear, it was critical to take a strategic approach to revising the supports and services we offered and to adapt to the changing needs of our teaching and learning community.

We connected with deans, directors, faculty and instructors to learn more about the supports they required. We assessed our central programming and reviewed our team structures to ensure we could provide support for an increased volume of requests. We also considered where we would need to enhance our resources and expand our expertise to better provide support for our teaching and learning community.

2020-2021 was a year of revised approaches for our work, our teams, and our priorities.

Much of our central programming continued in revised formats to support virtual learning. In-person seminars transitioned to virtual workshops, new guidebooks were developed to provide asynchronous self-serve options for support, and virtual consultations and drop-in sessions were organized to allow instructors to ask questions and receive answers in real-time. We also developed new programming and resources to address the enhanced focus on digital teaching and learning topics, technologies, and challenges. These revised supports helped to ensure our educators could continue to develop high-quality and engaging student experiences in new or revised learning formats.

We recognized that we would need to look beyond our central programming in order to provide comprehensive support to our teaching and learning community. As a result, we developed a proposal with a framework for longer-term pandemic supports and worked with the Provost's Office to secure temporary funding. The approval of this funding allowed us to hire contract staff to help with the additional needs from Faculties and other campus stakeholders, to broaden the scope of our Faculty liaison model of service, and to offer customized supports and resources, course design assistance, consultations and more.

While providing pandemic-related support was a major focus of our efforts in the 2020-2021 year, we continued to maintain our commitment to deliver on our Year 2 strategic initiatives from our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. Despite shifting our focus to prioritize pandemic support, in Year 2 we were able to successfully deliver on 14 strategic initiatives with three carrying forward into Year 3.

As the scope of our work and the size of our teams temporarily expanded, we revised our team structures to ensure our staff continued to be supported through the changes to our services and the uncertainty of the pandemic. We implemented supervisory changes with the goal of maintaining strong connections amongst our staff while they adapted to working remotely. Throughout the 2020-2021 fiscal year we reviewed these structures, gathered feedback from our staff and stakeholders and worked to implement a permanent revised structure in 2021 that would carry us forward through the pandemic and beyond.

We enter 2021-2022 hopeful that we will return safely to campus with more opportunities for in-person learning and experiences in the coming months. It has been a year of immense change, and I am heartened by the strength and resilience of our teaching and learning community at McMaster and our staff at the MacPherson Institute. We have deeply missed the opportunity to engage with colleagues in-person, but I look forward to continuing to evolve our approaches in new and flexible ways that enhance the student learning experience. There are great opportunities ahead to leverage technology and to build on the learnings we have accumulated over these past few years.

Lori Goff

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

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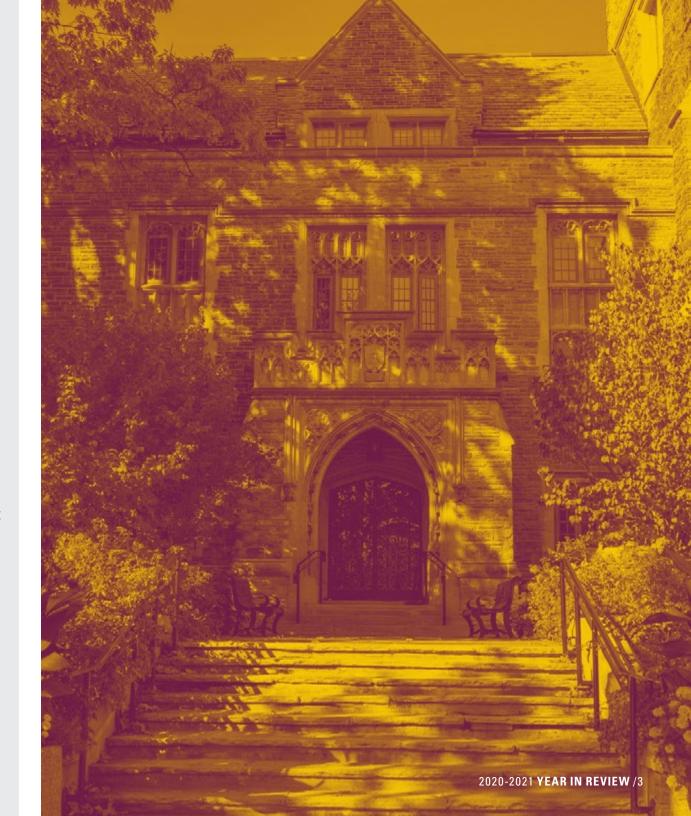
What's in this report? This report is organized in five sections: **Operational Accomplishments** Pandemic Response **Revised Team Structures** Strategic Plan Performance Report Looking Ahead Throughout the document we have contextualized how these initiatives and accomplishments align **Mandate** with our mandate and our strategic plan. 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. BRIGHTER WORLD | mi.mcmaster.ca 2020-2021 YEAR IN REVIEW /2

1. Operational Accomplishments

In 2020-2021 the MacPherson Institute continued to offer key programming and services from our four mandate areas. Various aspects of these supports were adjusted or adapted to allow for virtual participation.

- Professional Development in Teaching
- Curriculum Development
- Teaching and Learning Scholarship
- Pedagogical Use of Educational and Learning Technologies

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 from our ongoing operational work in 2020-2021. This includes details about the adjustments that were made to our programming to adapt to the pandemic.



1. Operational Accomplishments Professional Development in Teaching

To allow instructors and faculty to continue to participate in professional development programming offered by the MacPherson Institute, the "Professional Development for Teaching" Avenue course was developed and populated with 16 asynchronous, self-paced modules including topics for "Motivating and Engaging Students Online", "Active Learning in Face-to-Face and Online Courses", "Media Creation Skills: Video Made Easy" and more. These learning modules continue to be available to instructors at any time.

An additional course titled "Learning to Teach Online" was developed to provide the foundational building blocks of an engaging online learning experience.

Moving forward, the topics in both the "Learning to Teach Online" and the "Professional Development in Teaching" courses will be evaluated, updated, and new modules will be added as part of regular operations.

1,187

Consultations across all Faculties, Arts & Science and campus partners.

265

Faculty, Instructors & Staff engaged with "Professional Development for Teaching"

course. (total participants enrolled in self-directed Avenue course May 2020 – April 2021)

196

Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Fellows engaged with EDUCATN courses.

(total students in courses May 2020 – April 2021)

345

Faculty, Instructors & Staff engaged with "Learning to Teach Online" self-directed course.

(total participants enrolled in self-directed Avenue course

May 2020 - April 2021)

52

New Faculty Supported

This year, New Faculty Orientations took place online in an asynchronous Avenue to Learn course.

2,700+

Students impacted by 26 Course (re)Designs, Refinements, Observations and Assessment Development Workshops.



Teaching & Learning Forum (TLF)

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

Despite this event being transitioned to an entirely online format in 2020, there was increased participation across nearly all Faculties.

459Participants

83%

Had not attended a previous Teaching & Learning Forum



1. Operational Accomplishments Curriculum Development

Through the pandemic the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) supports continued with site visits, Lunchtime Information and Practice Sessions, student feedback sessions, curriculum development retreats and consultations all being offered virtually. Ongoing collaboration and communication with the School of Graduate Studies has allowed the IQAP Office to contact both undergraduate and graduate programs that have had a recent site visit to offer consultations on progress report preparations and supports for teaching and learning related to their implementation plans.

In 2020-2021 the IQAP Office supported the preparation of the Audit response to Quality Council. Additionally, McMaster's Program Review and Development Policy was approved internally and re-ratified by Quality Council.

37

Programs engaged in site visits in 2021 and are currently pending approval of Final Assessment Reports



19

Programs implementing feedback from reviews and are developing Progress Reports for 2021



Programs developing Self-Study Reports and have pending reviewer site visits in 2022 winter/spring terms

As part of McMaster University's work to support the Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA3) with the Province of Ontario and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, an internal Strategic Alignment Fund (SAF) competition was designed to create new interdisciplinary programs that would provide students with a comprehensive and integrated education across multiple disciplines. In 2020-2021 the MacPherson Institute helped to support this initiative by providing new program information sessions and consultations with the Strategic Alignment Fund (SAF) recipients. In addition, the MacPherson Institute helped support the development of two new undergraduate programs: Sustainability Chemistry and iArts.

1. Operational Accomplishments Teaching and Learning Scholarship

In 2020-2021 the MacPherson Institute continued to offer supports for Teaching and Learning Scholarship, including the administration of various grants to support the enhancement of teaching and learning at the University.

In response to the pandemic the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Sustainability (IDEAS) grant was launched and the Student Partners Program was temporarily suspended but resumed during the winter term.

Out of an abundance of caution for the health and safety of participants, the International Students as Partners Institute and the Research on Teaching and Learning Conference were cancelled in 2020. We are optimistic that in 2021-2022 we will be able to safely resume these activities and will be looking to combine the Research on Teaching and Learning Conference with the Learning Technologies Symposium to launch a new Teaching and Learning Conference.

Teaching and Learning Grants Programs

In partnership with the Equity and Inclusion Office, the MacPherson Institute launched the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Sustainability (IDEAS) Grant to provide small grants of up to \$4,000 to McMaster instructors seeking to make their online and virtual courses more accessible and equitable. The Priority Areas for Learning and Teaching and Small Teaching and Learning Exploration grants continued to be offered through the pandemic.

10 IDEAS Grant Projects

2,300+
Students Impacted

- 11 Priority Areas for Learning and Teaching Grants Funded
- **3** Small Teaching and Learning Exploration Grants Funded

Leadership in Teaching and Learning

The Leadership in Teaching and Learning Fellowship continued through the pandemic with some modifications to the program to allow for virtual connections and support.

7 Fellows 2020-2022

4 Fellows 2021-2023

11

"The LTL Fellowship really does offer so much support to faculty across campus who are interested in building a positive learning experience for students," says Chen. "It reinforces how teaching and learning is valued at McMaster."

Ruth Chen, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean, Academic Resources & Department Education Coordinator for the School of Nursing

Student Partners Program

In the past, the Student Partners Program issued a Call for Applications once per term; however, this past year, the fall Call for Applications was temporarily suspended and resumed again in the winter term.

53 Student Participants from all 6 Faculties

50 Faculty & Staff Participants

11

"Students provide a perspective that I just don't have. The learning needs of students change on a year-by-year basis and the things that worked four years ago, probably don't work as effectively in 2021. I deeply rely on them to help inform what it is we're teaching and how it is delivered."

Kyle Ansilo, Program Lead for MacChangers and staff participant in Student Partners Program

"I didn't expect it to be this awesome! At first, I was expecting to come in and learn about the research process, but then I realized I had a very welcoming environment where I could learn much more than that."

Nassim Terzout-Yettou, Level II Mechanical Engineering and Management student and student participant in the Student Partners Program

International Journal for Students as Partners



22,900+Abstract Views

17,500+

- 46 Faculty Reviewers
- 43 Manuscripts Published
- 24 Student Reviewers

1. Operational Accomplishments Pedagogical Use of Educational and Learning Technologies

In 2020-2021 the MacPherson Institute continued to support educators at McMaster University with pedagogical support for the use of institutionally supported teaching and learning tools. The transition to remote teaching brought increased requests for support for Avenue to Learn and other digital platforms to enable flexible teaching.

As a result of the pandemic, the One Button Studio and Audio Studio spaces were closed for safety reasons. A variety of alternative studio supports were provided to ensure instructors could develop high-quality video and audio content to deliver engaging learning experiences to students.

28,800+ unique users **135** engaged in MacVideo content Pressbook avenue to learn resources created 2.5 million 6.800 Avenue to Learn 22,000+ course requests supported Video plays on MacVideo Page views on Avenuehelp.mcmaster.ca 5.800 Avenue to Learn

support tickets answered

2. Pandemic Response

Entering the 2020-2021 academic year the University had started the enormous task of shifting to a remote teaching and learning format in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MacPherson Institute quickly pivoted to provide support with short-term initiatives to assist with the immediate transition, but soon determined the need for increased support through longer-term strategies that would expand on existing centralized offerings and enhance Faculty support.

In April 2020 the MacPherson Institute proposed a plan to offer a variety of supports to campus stakeholders in anticipation of virtual teaching and learning through fall 2020. This proposal included a request to fund eight contract Educational Developers, 11 part-time Educational Development Fellows and two temporary Learning Technologies staff. Additionally, these funds helped to support the development of the new Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Sustainability (IDEAS) grant and the creation of a new customized homepage template for Avenue to Learn.





Video views for Teaching Remotely Tutorial Videos

Virtual Training Courses

2,800+
Registered participants

156 Training sessions offered

64 Unique topics





Online Course Development Support

Course design support was offered to all Faculties for the fall and winter terms in 2020-2021 and included online learning design, consultations, optimization for student engagement, revisions of course content and assessments, and evaluation and creation of a plan for refinement in future course iterations.

Nearly **10,000**

students impacted by online course design

support for 49 priority courses across all Faculties.



3. Revised Team Structures

The pandemic presented unique challenges for working and learning environments. In addition to supporting educators in their transitions to remote teaching, the MacPherson Institute staff also learned new support tools and adjusted to their own remote working arrangements. A temporary revised team structure was piloted to both support staff through the pandemic and to continue the critical work of aligning our organizational design with the vision and mandate of our strategic plan.

The pandemic demonstrated the dual importance of our centralized supports and the growing need

to support individual Faculties with decentralized structures. Fortunately, our Faculty liaison model of service had already been operationalized, which allowed us to expand and build upon our existing model.

In our new organizational design, our teams work within a matrix model to deliver support for both our central programming and for Faculty partners. Our Educational Developers are assigned both a central programming area (based on mandate areas) and a Faculty-based team. A critical component of the revised team structure was the shift from three Associate Directors to two Associate Directors who oversee these connected areas of work:

- Erin Aspenlieder
 Associate Director, Central Programming
- Elliot Storm
 Associate Director, Academic Partnerships

The refined structure aligns our teams and our staff to best support instructors and the broader teaching and learning community while addressing the emerging importance of decentralized work and maintaining a focus on our central mandate areas.

4. Strategic Plan Performance Highlights

Despite the sudden shift to remote teaching and the many challenges faced by faculty, instructors and staff through 2020-2021, the MacPherson Institute remained simultaneously focused on our operational work and Year 2 implementation initiatives of our three-year Strategic Plan (2019-2022).

In Year 1, the MacPherson Institute successfully delivered on 24 of 31 planned strategic initiatives, with the remaining initiatives carrying forward into Year 2. At the end of Year 1, we abruptly shifted our focus to supporting a university-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued to support this throughout the 2020-2021 year. As a result, we re-prioritized our work and revised our team structures while continuing to make meaningful contributions to the implementation of our planned Year 2 strategic initiatives.

In all we undertook 17 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



Through 2020-2021 we successfully delivered on **14** initiatives with **3** carrying forward into Year 3.

For the full report and status updates on all Year 2 initiatives, please refer to the Year 2 Performance Report — MacPherson Institute Strategic Plan (2019-2022).

In the next section we outline a few of the key highlights from our completed Year 2 strategic initiatives

4. Strategic Performance Highlights

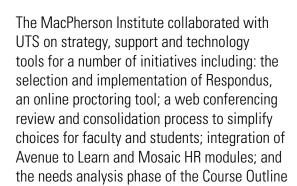
Partnerships

In Year 2 of our Strategic Plan, partnerships became increasingly important to our work. Prior to the pandemic the MacPherson Institute had established outreach models of service delivery for each Faculty. As demand for more hands-on and responsive support increased, these arrangements were revised and expanded into Faculty-based

teams—made up of one or two key contacts along with additional teaching and learning experts to provide consultations and support.

Over the course of the pandemic, partnerships with various campus partners played a critical role in helping to streamline supports for faculty, instructors and students.

University Technology Services



Campus Partnerships



McMaster Libraries

The MacPherson Institute collaborated with McMaster Libraries throughout the pandemic to promote and support Open Educational Resources (OER) and to build resources and training sessions on effective use of Echo360's lecture capture and video engagement platform.

Equity and Inclusion Office

The MacPherson Institute enhanced relationships with the Equity and Inclusion Office through shared training sessions, cross promotion of resources and the co-development of the IDEAS (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Sustainability) grant. The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion — Teaching and Learning Implementation team was also formed, including staff from the MacPherson Institute and the Equity and Inclusion Office, to advance the strategic priorities of the 2019-2022 EDI Action Plan.

Portal project.

Contribution to Institutional Teaching and Learning Strategies

Staff from the MacPherson Institute contributed at various points to the Teaching and Learning strategy project team.

With endorsement from the Steering Committee, Advisory, President, Provost, Deans and Associate Deans, an implementation plan was developed and an engagement site was launched in May 2021.

The Partnered in Teaching and Learning Strategy has since been incorporated into the Office of the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) website.

Consultations During Development

300 People at McMaster

8
INSTITUTIONS

MANY FOCUS GROUPS

Four Impact Areas

- Partnered and interdisciplinary learning
- Inclusive and scholarly teaching
- Active and flexible learning spaces
- Holistic and personalized learning experiences

Of those who responded to the Staff Engagement Survey in January 2021*





% Engaged is a key metric that is highly correlated with overall employee satisfaction, employee retention and future success.

felt their supervisor was available if they needed help or had questions

98%

felt their supervisor had a sincere interest in their well-being

*Statistics are based on 83% of MacPherson Institute staff who participated in the Staff Engagement Survey.

Process

In Year 2, the MacPherson Institute continued to assess and revise organizational design to reflect the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan mandate. This process was already underway but was accelerated as a result of the shift to remote work during the pandemic.

Organizational Design and Culture

Staff at the MacPherson Institute provided input and feedback about the organizational structures implemented in May 2020 and structures revised through the pandemic. Results showed high levels of staff engagement, strength in supervisory relationships and positive workplace satisfaction.

Results also identified the need to develop mechanisms for better feedback on work performance and recognition, refreshing core values, and enhancing communications. Short- and long-term plans were developed to improve organizational design and culture.

Programs & Services

In Year 2, we continued the work of reviewing programs, supports and services to ensure alignment with the current and evolving needs of McMaster's teaching and learning community.

Faculty Liaison Model

A report was completed outlining the strengths and challenges in the Faculty liaison model. Findings indicated a very positive impact on relationships with academic campus partners and the ability to support Faculties in remote teaching and learning conditions.

Programs, Supports and Resources

A comprehensive review of the Educator Development programming offered by the MacPherson Institute was conducted. The Program Review Advisory Committee reviewed and endorsed the recommendations, an <u>Executive Summary</u> was shared, and MacPherson Institute staff will begin implementing the recommendations in Year 3.





Educational Technologies

Virtual training and drop-in sessions were held throughout 2020-2021 to build instructor confidence and competency with online teaching. Topics covered accessibility, online teaching, facilitating online discussions and using educational technology tools.

A new Avenue to Learn homepage template was developed to provide enhanced organization and navigation for course instructors and students.

20+ video resources and guidebooks created to support online teaching

4. Looking Ahead

We enter the fall term optimistic that the experiences we've shared over the past year will help guide us through the exciting new opportunities we will face in developing more hybrid and flexible learning environments. At the MacPherson Institute we will remain committed to supporting educators through professional development, curriculum development, teaching and learning scholarship and the pedagogical use of educational and learning technologies. We will also work closely with our teaching and learning community to highlight the best elements of online and in-person teaching and learning, to share solutions to challenges, and to find ways to continue delivering positive student experiences this year.

Along with many of our colleagues in the teaching and learning community, I am eager to begin work on a university-wide Digital Learning Strategy. This initiative will bring together the unique experiences, the successes and challenges of the past year, and the expertise of our campus community as we work towards creating alignment on digital teaching and learning principles, approaches, processes and more.

I am delighted to see alignment already taking shape between the President's <u>Institutional Priorities and Strategic Framework 2021-2024</u>, the <u>Partnered in Teaching and Learning Strategy 2021-2026</u>, the forthcoming Digital Learning Strategy and, as we wrap up the final year of our <u>MacPherson Institute Strategic Plan 2019-2021</u>, the future possibilities of connecting strategic work that we will undertake at the MacPherson Institute.

While some educators are enthusiastic about returning to the classroom in some capacity, others are excited to continue leveraging some, or all, of the robust online experiences they have developed this past year. The 2021-2022 academic year will present more opportunities to consider what flexible teaching and learning experiences can look like at McMaster. Just as we did in the early days of the pandemic, our educators will demonstrate the courage to try new things and to explore outside their comfort zones. Through whatever outcome might result, they will learn, grow, make adjustments and have the opportunity to share their experiences with their colleagues along the way. They will take risks, some big and some small, and each endeavour will be meaningful in advancing learning experiences at McMaster. As they navigate these new challenges, they will continue to collectively embody our vision for cultivating an environment where learning deeply matters, and teaching is valued and recognized by the collective McMaster community.

Finally, I am enormously proud of all that we have accomplished this year. Our staff at the MacPherson Institute, our educators across all Faculties and Departments, and our McMaster University leadership team demonstrated a resilience and commitment to upholding the vision of strong teaching and learning through some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable. I am excited to build on the incredible work we've accomplished this past year. I look forward to engaging, learning and growing alongside our teaching and learning community and campus partners through this year and beyond.

Lori Goff

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

