

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

MacEwan University announces the 2025 Teaching Award recipients

Edmonton - MacEwan University's [Teaching Awards](#) celebrate faculty members who provide exceptional learning environments for their students. This year, two faculty members will receive the Distinguished Teaching Award, and two will receive the Teaching Leadership Award. Also, two faculty members will receive the Early Career Teaching Excellence Award and three instructors will receive the Sessional Instructor Teaching Excellence Award.

"These exceptional teachers are wonderful examples of MacEwan's tradition of excellence," says Dr. Craig Monk, provost and vice-president, Academic. "We are all guided by the principles of [Teaching Greatness](#), and these faculty members and instructors consistently have a profound influence over our students and their academic success.

"We continue to grow as an institution and do so through the contributions of exemplary colleagues. Congratulations to this year's honorees!"

Meet the recipients

DISTINGUISHED TEACHING AWARD

The Distinguished Teaching Award recognizes faculty members who demonstrate outstanding teaching at the undergraduate level and a commitment to educational leadership and innovation. This year, the award is presented to two faculty members:



Dr. Amanda Nelund

Department of Sociology

[Dr. Amanda Nelund](#) guides her students through their studies with innovative course design, inclusive pedagogy and an ability to foster critical engagement and social responsibility. Her teaching exemplifies transformative learning that prepares students to address complex social issues with empathy and insight.

Nelund consistently explores possibilities for improving criminal and social justice, particularly for women who have been victimized by crime.



Christine Pope
Department of Child and Youth Care

A MacEwan graduate herself, **Christine Pope** employs deeply student-centred teaching that is grounded in trauma-informed and anti-oppressive pedagogy. Her work fosters community-engaged learning that supports student growth and well-being. Pope is a proponent of interactive learning and uses field experiences to inform students, believing that those experiences are as important as concepts learned in the classroom. She also mentors and supports sessional and new faculty as the lead instructor for several practicum courses.

TEACHING LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Teaching Leadership Award recognizes outstanding leadership and commitment to improving teaching and learning experiences at an institutional, disciplinary, community or societal level. This year, the award is presented to two faculty members:



Dr. Melissa Hills
Department of Biological Sciences

A recognized leader, [Dr. Melissa Hills](#) has helped shape policy, curriculum and faculty development at MacEwan and beyond. The recipient of a Distinguished Teaching Award (2024) and current Chancellor's Research Chair (2024-2026), Dr. Hills has been guiding students through their studies in molecular biology and genetics for almost two decades. She has presented scholarship on universal design for learning at national and international levels and acts as a mentor for undergraduate students – many of her peer-reviewed publications are co-authored by student researchers.



Dr. Robert Andruchow
Department of Design

[Dr. Robert Andruchow](#) continuously shows leadership in curriculum and program development. His work was key to establishing MacEwan's Bachelor of Design program – the largest undergraduate program of its kind between Vancouver and Toronto. Dr. Andruchow's research explores the philosophy of design and the role design theory plays in providing a strong foundation for design education and practice. In addition to his work as a professor and program coordinator at MacEwan, he has worked for the federal government and founded his own design company.

EARLY CAREER TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Early Career Teaching Excellence Award recognizes outstanding contributions to teaching undertaken by new instructional faculty members. This year, the award is presented to two faculty members:



Kealey Dube
Department of Social Work

At the heart of **Kealey Dube**'s teaching philosophy is her commitment to creating an inclusive environment where every student feels welcome regardless of background or ability. She incorporates a "students as partners" approach where collaboration is stressed from the beginning of the first class right through to evaluation. Dube has been an assistant professor at MacEwan since 2021, has received a number of research grants and is actively involved with many professional associations. Her students regularly describe her commitment to personalized support as a key to their academic success.



Soni Dasmohapatra
Department of Arts and Cultural Management

Soni Dasmohapatra integrates arts-based approaches into her teaching, empowering students to connect theory with practice. She is also committed to inclusive and experiential learning, drawing from her 20 years of experience in government, higher learning and non-profit sectors nationally and internationally. Dasmohapatra has a proven track record as a cultural administrator with Canadian Heritage, as well as in Alberta and Ontario. Her research interest is to build capacity for students to explore and obtain professionalization as arts and cultural administrators.

SESSIONAL INSTRUCTOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Sessional Instructor Teaching Excellence Award recognizes instructors who create an exceptional learning environment through engaging in pedagogical practices designed to maximize student learning. Three individuals received this award this year:



Cody Esih

Sessional Instructor, Department of Decision Sciences

Cody Esih is a MacEwan grad known for his engaging, inclusive and responsive teaching in statistics. By embracing a pedagogy of care and flexibility, he supports student success and makes a complex subject approachable and meaningful. Esih's ultimate goal is to cultivate a supportive learning community with a variety of grading techniques, while also ensuring students know that their own mental health is vital to academic success.



Colin Waugh

Sessional Instructor, Department of Design

Colin Waugh uses an industry-informed, inclusive approach to teaching, and fosters hands-on learning experiences encouraging students to bring their experiences into their work. Keenly aware that the media industry is in a constant state of technological transformation, Waugh ensures that his students learn about the latest trends and developments while promoting experimentation. His classes are supportive and inclusive environments where students bring their unique experiences and their individual personalities to the

assignments. He has written the Master Course Syllabus for new production courses that were approved after his students lobbied for the program to expand.



Dr. Lori Harper

Sessional Instructor, Department of Psychology

A MacEwan alum who has taught at the university for more than 20 years, Dr. Lori Harper is a model of student-centred teaching and consistent excellence in the classroom. Her innovative assignments and mentorship help students connect psychological theory with real-world application. Having benefited from the memorable support of a professor while a student herself, Dr. Harper consistently provides mentorship to students and encourages them to pursue their dreams. She has also developed a number of courses drawing from the vast experience she has working in the field of geriatric psychology.

For more information, please contact archerj24@macewan.ca

Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 90 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training, the university provides a transformative education in a creative, collaborative and supportive learning environment where creativity and innovation thrive. Located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, MacEwan University offers a unique student experience that opens up diverse pathways for achievement and growth.