

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

## **MacEwan University announces the 2024 Distinguished Teaching Award and Sessional Instructor Teaching Excellence Award recipients**

**Edmonton** - MacEwan University's [Teaching Awards](#) celebrate faculty members who go above and beyond. This year, three continuing faculty members are set to receive the Distinguished Teaching Award, and three sessional faculty members will receive the Sessional Instructor Teaching Excellence Award.

"We are thrilled to recognize these exceptional teachers and researchers," says Dr. Craig Monk, provost and vice-president, Academic. "Whether they are tenured or sessional faculty, these individuals exemplify [Teaching Greatness](#) by bringing their best to the classroom every day. Their passion and dedication engage and inspire our students – and set them up for success during their time at MacEwan and beyond."

The awards will be presented as part of the [Spring Convocation](#) ceremonies from June 18 to 20 at the Winspear Centre.

### **About the recipients**

#### **Distinguished Teaching Awards**

The Distinguished Teaching Award is presented to faculty who demonstrate outstanding teaching at MacEwan University.



**Dr. Melissa Hills****Associate professor, biological sciences**

Since starting her MacEwan career in 2006, [Dr. Melissa Hills](#) has been dedicated to helping her students excel in molecular biology and genetics. Her involvement with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning demonstrates her passion for ensuring her students get the most out of their time in her classrooms. Beyond MacEwan, Dr. Hills has presented scholarship on Universal Design for Learning at a national and international level. She also acts as a mentor with undergraduate students in their research, and multiple of her peer-reviewed publications were co-authored by student researchers.

**Dr. Alissa Overend****Associate professor, sociology**

[Dr. Alissa Overend](#) has spent her 15 years as a MacEwan faculty member teaching sociology at all levels and modalities. Along with designing several of those courses, she also served as the coordinator of the Gender Studies minor. In addition to her work with Universal Design for Learning, Dr. Overend researches in the areas of food insecurity and inequality, currently looking at urban food sustainability. She offers students opportunities to engage in creative, community-engaged course projects that encourage them to explore their social worlds.



**Wayne Williams**  
**Assistant professor, design**

[Wayne Williams](#) takes a pedagogical approach to his teaching, focusing on curriculum and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. He's designed more than 20 courses in the Department of Design, and has spearheaded many interdisciplinary projects with his students. In his time at MacEwan, he has not only worked to improve the Design diploma, but also helped to develop and implement the curriculum for the Bachelor of Design program – which is celebrating its first graduates at Spring Convocation.

**Sessional Instructor Teaching Excellence Awards**

The Sessional Instructor Teaching Excellence Award recognizes sessional faculty who demonstrate excellent teaching.



**Marlene Wurfel**  
**Sessional instructor, communication**

Marlene Wurfel brings her experience from across sectors – including corporate tech, not-for-profit, the arts and academia – into her communications classrooms. In her teaching for both the professional communication and journalism programs, she believes in growth and empowerment for her students. She is a passionate storyteller who also implements practical elements into her coursework that help her students succeed after graduation, including developing professional relationships and connections.



**Dr. Regan Lipes**  
**Sessional instructor, English**

Since becoming a sessional instructor in Fall 2017, Dr. Regan Lipes has implemented a personal teaching philosophy that motivates students along their scholarly journeys in her class and supports their professional adventures beyond. She remains dedicated to cultivating and facilitating a universally inclusive learning environment that aspires to inspire students as they meaningfully engage with diverse course material. She has been fortunate to empower students to apply for graduate programs and career positions. Dr. Lipes values continuous professional growth for herself as an educator to better contribute to a scholarly culture of excellence for her students and colleagues.



**Ashley Stasiewich**  
**Sessional instructor, paralegal studies and office assistant program**

Drawing from her personal experience working in law offices, Ashley Stasiewich caters her coursework to prepare students for their future careers. She believes in ongoing education, both in her training and accreditations as a paralegal and as an educator. Stasiewich supervises student research projects and develops authentic learning materials to ensure that her students are always getting practical experience.

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*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*



# NEWS RELEASE

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*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.*