

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

## **Three MacEwan University faculty members awarded 2024 research chair positions, one to receive Distinguished Research Award**

**Edmonton** – MacEwan University is pleased to announce the recipients of its internal research chair positions – the Board of Governors Research Chair and Chancellor’s Research Chairs.

MacEwan launched its internal research chair program in 2018 to recognize exceptional scholarship. With today's announcement, a total of 16 faculty members have been awarded two-year research chair positions, allowing them to expand their scholarship and its impact on their classrooms and the community.

### **Board of Governors Research Chair recipient**

The 2024 [Board of Governors Research Chair](#) recipient is [Dr. Joshua Toth](#), a professor in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts and Science whose research is advancing knowledge in his field and demonstrating significant global impact.

"Congratulations to Dr. Toth," says Carolyn Graham, board chair. "Strengthening the value MacEwan adds to our community through scholarship is a key part of our strategic vision, Teaching Greatness, and Dr. Toth's research accomplishments exemplify the trendsetting – and trendbreaking – thought leadership among MacEwan's faculty."

The Board of Governors Research Chair program contributes to building the university's culture of scholarship and supports faculty who have demonstrated or shown potential for exceptional scholarly distinction. Faculty members in these roles contribute to advancing [MacEwan University's strategic vision](#) and developing a strong scholarly culture within the institution and in the larger community.

Dr. Toth will serve a two-year term as research chair alongside current Board of Governors Research chair Dr. Benjamin Gardstad (Classics), whose terms run from 2023 to 2025.

### **Chancellor's Research Chair recipients**

The 2024 [Chancellor's Research Chairs](#) are [Dr. Trevor Hamilton](#), associate professor in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts and Science, and [Dr. Melissa Hills](#), associate professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Science.

"Recognizing Dr. Hamilton and Dr. Hills with this award reflects both their exceptional scholarly work and the leadership they show in their fields of expertise," says Dr. Tony Fields. "I am honoured, as chancellor, to offer congratulations to them both as MacEwan's newest Chancellor's Research Chairs."

Drs. Hamilton and Hills will serve two-year terms as research chairs alongside current Chancellor's Research Chairs Dr. Michael MacDonald and Dr. Nicolae Strungaru, whose terms run from 2023 to 2025.

Dr. Hamilton is also the recipient of [MacEwan's 2024 Dr. Sherill Brown Distinguished Research Award](#).

### **Meet the Board of Governors Research Chair**



**DR. JOSHUA TOTH**

**PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Dr. Toth's research interests include literary theory, the "ethical turn," racial ambiguity, American literature and film and postmodernism. The bulk of his publications concern the "end" of postmodernism and the way in which the development of new narrative strategies in America parallel certain notable shifts in continental theory. However, and while he continues to explore issues related to postmodernism's apparent "passing" (particularly the persistence of metafiction), his more recent work also focuses on representations of intrusively "strange" characters in American literature and film, and the way in which these representations expose a democratic order that both rejects and paradoxically requires the violence of exclusion. He has begun to approach both "problems" – the persistence of metafiction and the role of the stranger in American literature – via a distinctly Hegelian conception of plasticity.

[Listen](#) to Dr. Toth on the *Research Recast(ed)* podcast

**Meet the Chancellor's Research Chairs**



**DR. TREVOR HAMILTON**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

Dr. Hamilton actively researches a variety of topics both in the zebrafish laboratory at MacEwan and in collaboration with other institutes. At the zebrafish laboratory, he heavily involves MacEwan students in his research. This happens through supervising honours and independent study students examining the effect of elevated carbon dioxide (projected for the future) on zebrafish movement, memory and anxiety. His research program, which has garnered significant external funding, also includes establishing novel and reliable tests of learning and memory in fish, namely the novel object recognition test and episodic-like memory tests. He is also interested in the effect of pharmacological substances on fish behaviour and has worked with students to examine patterns of drug administration and the nature of addiction.

[Listen](#) to Dr. Hamilton on the *Research Recast(ed)* podcast



**DR. MELISSA HILLS**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**

Dr. Hills is committed to interdisciplinary work and collaborates extensively with other faculty members as she engages in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) relating to her own teaching practices to improve student learning. She is also interested in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in higher education, particularly in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), as an approach to creating more inclusive learning environments for students. Her current research projects explore how implementing flexibility and choice in course design can impact student learning.

In addition, Dr. Hills supports student-driven research and mentors undergraduate research projects in molecular biology using the model plant *Arabidopsis*. Her previous research has included biosafety of genetically modified crops, invasive plant biology and molecular regulation of plant development.

[Listen](#) to Dr. Hills on the *Research Recast(ed)* podcast



# NEWS RELEASE

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For more information, please contact [archerj24@macewan.ca](mailto: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.*