



Teaching and Learning Plan

developed by

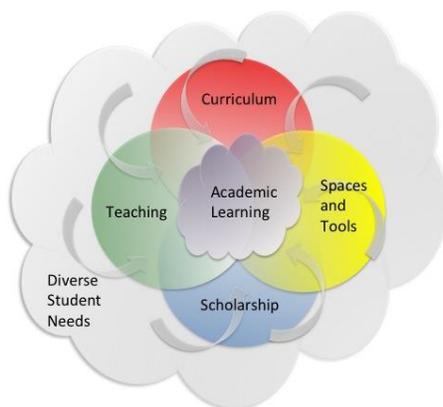
The Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning

March 31, 2014

INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher learning worldwide have become increasingly focused on the student experience in all contexts that contribute to academic and personal growth as learners pursue their education. Since 2010, the Mount has been engaged in a process of consultation and enquiry regarding the kind of culture of teaching and learning we want at our university. That fall, the Senate, on the recommendation of the Committee on Academic Policy and Planning (CAPP), directed the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning (SCOTL) to develop an “institutional learning plan”. SCOTL organized into working groups, with membership from across the University, to write discussion papers on six areas related to teaching and learning. As part of this process, a survey on teaching and learning was distributed to all faculty in May 2011. SCOTL drew on the wealth of information provided by the discussion papers to inform the development of a draft Teaching and Learning Plan. In May 2012, the draft was posted on the intranet, and three roundtables were held with faculty and academic staff to discuss the Plan. SCOTL then developed a second draft to address the comments raised at the roundtables. Feedback on the second draft was invited online over the summer. In the fall of 2012, SCOTL formed a small working group to prepare a third draft taking this feedback into consideration. This draft was received by SCOTL, and revisions were made by the committee. The document was then forwarded to CAPP, which provided suggestions to SCOTL in February, 2013. SCOTL subsequently prepared another draft, dated June 7, which was distributed to faculty with a request for feedback by October 15. Having considered the comments received at that time, and at Senate in February 2014, SCOTL prepared the present document.

The Teaching and Learning Plan rests on six commitments to: Put Learning at the Centre, Support Student Learning Needs, Promote Excellence in Teaching, Foster Rich and Relevant Curriculum, Create Dynamic Environments for Learning, and Connect Scholarship, Teaching and Learning. Together, they affirm the contributions and interconnections of our academic values, recognition of student needs, teaching practices, curricular development, learning environments and resources, and scholarly research, in shaping our institutional learning culture today and into the future.



As the diagram illustrates, each of the Plan's commitments contributes a vital part of our overall commitment to creating a rich learning experience for all of our students, and asserts the centrality of learning in all aspects of our educational enterprise.

The Plan is intended to stimulate and support conversations about teaching and learning across the University, and to serve as a guide for exploration of our present institutional culture and future potential through a process that fits with the mission, values and goals of the Mount, as articulated in our new Strategic Plan, *Mount 2017: Making a Difference*.

SCOTL looks forward to the Plan's approval at Senate so that the committee can undertake the next step of developing plans to actualize the vision it presents.

COMMITMENT ONE: PUT LEARNING AT THE CENTRE

Mount Saint Vincent University is committed to challenging students to gain knowledge that grounds ethical and effective action as family members, workers and citizens; develop skills for critical thought, sound judgment, effective communication, moral reasoning, and problem solving; and become better prepared to contribute to their world in meaningful and productive ways.

We recognize this when:

- University policies, practices, and guidelines reflect and affirm the centrality and value of learning at our institution.
- Faculty, staff and students actively engage in exploring the nature and value of learning at the University.
- The University provides an array of learning opportunities that nurture creativity, critical thinking, analytical reasoning, collaboration, intellectual rigor and risk taking.
- Students have opportunities to learn a range of academic skills appropriate to the different disciplines.
- Students receive timely and relevant feedback that provides information which enhances their learning.
- Students enjoy opportunities for experiential learning, both inside and outside the classroom, such as co-op, internships, practica, co-curricular and service learning, and research projects.
- Students access and use resources that enrich their learning.

COMMITMENT TWO: SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING NEEDS

At Mount Saint Vincent University we recognize that our students have diverse experiences, life styles, cultures, and global connections, all of which we support and celebrate insofar as they are consistent with the social justice values of our civil society. A commitment to supporting student learning means acknowledging the uniqueness of our students and providing effective ways for them to learn and develop to their potential.

We recognize this when:

- Faculty and staff value the different backgrounds, experiences, skills, concerns, aspirations, and cultural values of students.
- Faculty and staff use teaching and academic support strategies and resources that address the varied and changing learning needs of students.
- The University identifies and supports students with unique learning needs.
- The University recognizes and addresses the learning challenges that students may experience in their transition to university.
- Students are proactive in identifying, understanding and pursuing support for their learning.

COMMITMENT THREE: PROMOTE EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

Mount Saint Vincent University is committed to valuing and supporting the development of teaching practices that promote student academic success and that address student learning needs.

We recognize this when:

- Faculty engage in teaching practices that are grounded in education research and self-reflection.
- Teaching and research are equally valued.
- The Teaching and Learning Centre provides a strong program of professional development.
- The University encourages and celebrates faculty who strive to demonstrate excellence in teaching.

COMMITMENT FOUR: FOSTER RICH AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM

Mount Saint Vincent University is committed to the development and strengthening of curricula in the humanities, professions, sciences and social sciences that are appropriate for the requirements of the disciplines and that connect with and meet the needs of diverse learners.

We recognize this when:

- The curricula reflect the University's mission and values and individual program goals.
- The University fosters inter-departmental and inter-program collaboration for developing and strengthening curricula.
- Regular program reviews are conducted to ensure the ongoing quality and relevance of academic programming.
- Students are engaged in curriculum development.
- Administrators, faculty and staff learn together about curriculum development.
- Academic freedom is respected in course and curriculum development.

COMMITMENT FIVE: CREATE DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENTS FOR LEARNING

Mount Saint Vincent University is committed to providing spaces, resources and technologies that support diverse approaches to teaching and learning. We affirm the ongoing value of on-campus learning and embrace the many ways that information and communication tools can enhance the learning of students both on- and off-campus.

We recognize this when:

- Teaching and learning spaces are designed to enhance learning.
- Faculty, administrators and staff have opportunities to learn how new technologies and environments can enhance teaching and learning.
- Innovative ideas about teaching spaces and tools are shared across the Mount community.

COMMITMENT SIX: CONNECT SCHOLARSHIP, TEACHING AND LEARNING

Mount Saint Vincent University is committed to strengthening the connections among research, scholarship, teaching and learning. It also recognizes that a strong scholarship of teaching can enhance our institutional capacities for research, scholarship and teaching, and can further enrich the academic learning of students.

We recognize this when:

- Faculty have opportunities to learn about and engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Students have opportunities to engage as student researchers and model academic integrity, for example, through class assignments, capstone projects, theses, and research assistantships.
- Undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff are connected through shared research enterprises.

About SCOTL

Learn more about SCOTL from its [website](http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/Teaching_and_Learning/SCOTL/default.aspx) (http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/Teaching_and_Learning/SCOTL/default.aspx).

Members of SCOTL for the 2013/14

academic year:

Elizabeth Church, Vice-President (Academic)
Beverlie Dietze, Child and Youth Study
Peter Mombourquette, Business and Tourism,
SCOTL Chair
Donovan Plumb, Education
Zach Gallant, Students' Union
Juliette Valcke, Modern Languages
Peggy Watts, DLCE

Members of SCOTL for the 2012/13

academic year:

Elizabeth Church, Vice-President (Academic)
Tanya Crawford, Teaching and Learning Centre
(to December)
Beverlie Dietze, Child and Youth Study
Wade Kenny, Communication Studies (fall
term)
Peter Mombourquette, Business and Tourism,
SCOTL Chair
Donovan Plumb, Education
Zach Gallant, Students' Union
Juliette Valcke, Modern Languages
Peggy Watts, DLCE
Bev Williams, Education

Members of SCOTL for the 2011/12

academic year:

Elizabeth Church, Vice-President (Academic)
Tanya Crawford, Teaching and Learning Centre
Beverlie Dietze, Child and Youth Study
Daniel McKenna, Students' Union
Donovan Plumb, Education (January-June)
Suzanne Seager, Mathematics, SCOTL Chair
Anna Smol, English (July-December)
Peggy Watts, DLCE
Bev Williams, Faculty of Education

Members of SCOTL for the 2010/11

academic year:

Elizabeth Church, Vice-President (Academic)
Tanya Crawford, Teaching and Learning Centre
Max Moulton, Education
Lindsay Herrington, Students' Union Students'
Union
Patricia Parsons, Public Relations
Donovan Plumb, Education, SCOTL Chair
Suzanne Seager, Mathematics
Peggy Watts, DLCE
Jeff Young, Business and Tourism