

External Review of the MacPherson Institute, McMaster University
Review Team Report: October 10, 2018

Reviewers:

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The review team is appreciative of a comprehensive and critically reflective self-study that revealed the current experiences of developing teaching and learning practice, leadership and scholarship at the MacPherson Institute (MI) and at McMaster University more broadly, and the culture that both enables and constrains that work. Over the course of our three-day visit, we benefitted from rich conversations and discussions with a wide variety of stakeholder groups and we are grateful to all of those who made time to participate in these discussions. The participants in the review were deeply committed to the quality of teaching and learning experiences at McMaster and their insights and suggestions inform many of the recommendations of the review team.

The review team appreciates the complexity of supporting excellence and innovation in teaching and learning across diverse disciplinary cultures, and how those efforts are influenced by institutional context. In many ways, this complexity is driving the evolution of how institutions support, assess and value the work necessary to enhance teaching and learning experiences (Debowski, 2014; Gibbs, 2013). It also requires that universities take a contextualized approach in creating collaborative professional learning experiences that are evidence-based, but also situated in the teaching practice of the participants (Debowski, 2014; Webster-Wright, 2009). The learning value of collaborating with colleagues to share, apply, and create knowledge about teaching and learning is a critical shift that is reflected in the feedback of many of participants in the review process, and in the observations and recommendations offered by the review team. Our recommendations are made in the spirit of helping the University support the development of teaching and learning in its own context (Ellis et al., 2018).

The structure of our review report is to provide a summary of our observations with respect to each of the questions posed to guide the review process. These observations emerged from the self-study document and our conversations with a broad range of McMaster staff and students, and were integrated to inform the cross-cutting recommendations that are made at the end of the report (pp. 14-15). The recommendations are intended to clearly identify actions that would help the MI and McMaster University strengthen its support for teaching and learning practice, leadership and scholarship, while respecting the autonomy of McMaster to implement these recommendations in ways that will be most effective in its own context.

Purpose

As indicated in the terms of reference, the purpose of the review was “To review and evaluate supports for teaching and learning at McMaster University, with an emphasis on organizational structure, governance, and the delivery of effective services/programs. To advise on strengths and opportunities the University should consider to ensure the teaching and learning unit meets the needs of the McMaster community and supports the strategic plans of the University” (Review Terms of Reference, McMaster University, 2018).

Terms of Reference:

1. Review the mission and mandate of the MacPherson Institute.

Our observations with respect to the mission and mandate of the MI are set in the context of an overarching observation noted by diverse stakeholders and the review team that the University would benefit from an institutional-level articulation of a teaching and learning strategy to guide decision-making across the institution. At present, considerable efforts are being made at many levels, but they are fragmented, miss opportunities for synergies, and result in confusion among community members. Well-articulated institutional strategic documents can shape teaching and learning culture (Ginsberg & Bernstein, 2011), and guide policy and funding decisions.

Across stakeholder groups (including its own staff), the primary concern with the mission and mandate of the MI is that it is not clear. Although the mandate originally proposed for the McMaster Institute for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (MIETL) is clearly articulated for this type of document, there appears to have been a change in mandate, reflected in the examples from the self-study (pp.13-15). A large number of issues that surfaced in the review are linked to a lack of understanding about the resources available through the MI, and how the MI relates to other units providing teaching and learning support.

The perception of the MI as a traditional academic institute with limited community membership may contribute to misconceptions about the MI. The MI is a different kind of institute: one that engages widely in the community and would benefit from broad community engagement with it. Given academic understandings of “institutes,” it may be important to make explicit that the MacPherson Institute belongs to the whole teaching and learning community.

a. Is MacPherson’s mandate aligned with McMaster’s teaching and learning priorities in our Strategic Mandate Agreements?

Our review of the SMA letter suggests that the work of the MacPherson Institute is aligned, in particular, with three of the “shared objectives and priorities for differentiation” identified: student experience, innovation in teaching and learning and to a lesser extent, access and equity. Less transparent (but in some cases emerging) is the alignment with more specific goals related to learning opportunities with regard to experiential learning, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommendations and student mental health.

b. Is the mission appropriate to other current institutional priorities?

The work of the MacPherson Institute aligns quite strongly with the principles underpinning the “Forward with Integrity” document (p. 5) referenced throughout the self-study. This document identified experiential learning, self-directed learning and interdisciplinarity as priorities for the student experience (pp. 7-8) and, in an internationalization context, the “education in and understanding Canadian aboriginal issues’ (p. 11). These priorities are not as

clearly demonstrated in the initiatives of the MacPherson Institute to date, but experiential learning and more attention to the TRC recommendations are identified as emerging priorities.

c. Is the mandate comparable to or distinctive from other centers of teaching and learning, and is that appropriate?

On closer examination with comparator institutions presented in Appendix H and other institutions in Ontario (Grabove et al., 2012), the self-study conclusions about the alignment of the mandate to the MacPherson Institute with other centres for teaching and learning raise some questions. The review provided evidence of areas of strong alignment that include teaching as scholarly, intellectual work; support for integrating educational technologies; and the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). Less strongly aligned was evidence with respect to influencing institutional teaching culture, and making connections broadly across the institution. The MacPherson Institute is distinct in its focus on and success in engaging students as partners, and building an international reputation.

2. Review the structure, organization, governance and leadership of the MacPherson Institute.

a. Does the current leadership, structure and operation of MacPherson meet the needs of the McMaster community?

Governance:

The perceptions of the leadership and governance of the MI constituted a major thread throughout the observations of review participants and the review team, and included:

There is some perceived overlap between the roles and mandates of the Vice-Provost (teaching and learning) and the Vice-Provost (faculty) that needs to be clarified.

A number of stakeholders suggested that the MI would benefit from the integration of a regularly convened internal advisory board in its governance structure to ensure that the needs of the university community were better communicated and the contributions of the MI were better understood.

Less often articulated, but worth considering, is a suggestion for an external advisory network (perhaps involving some of the existing distinguished scholars) that would bring a national and international perspective to discussions of emerging trends in postsecondary education. This network would be convened/consulted less often, possibly annually.

Organizational Structure:

Although the organizational structure of the MI reflects its major areas of work, the review revealed areas of tension and lost opportunities for synergies across teams. MI staff identified collaboration between its own teams as an area for development. This is particularly true for the educational technology team.

The Org Chart (p. 19) reflects a high proportion of contract positions. During the site visit, MI staff and others spoke strongly about the negative impacts of this staffing practice – for the staff members and the work of the MI. A number of stakeholders refer to “staff turnover” as a challenge in collaborating with the MacPherson Institute, resulting in “not knowing who to call” and gaps in “follow-through”. Institutional memory was lost in some cases as contract staff left positions, taking access to digital materials and resources with them.

The MI has multiple reporting lines (self-study, p. 32-33). The role of the Director in these reports and in performance appraisal of all staff should be clarified.

Perhaps least understood by the McMaster community is the work of the strategic initiatives team. “Special projects” are perceived as drawing resources away from the McMaster community, and need to be better explained in the context of the mandate of the MI.

Operational practices:

Individual teachers and academic administrators reported that the MI was not accessible to people who did not have an established personal contact. It is not easy to discern who to contact for specific areas of expertise.

There was a widely perceived disconnect between the priorities of the MI and the more practical teaching development needs of the broader university community.

The work of the MI seems to be strongly “educational development” driven. The self-study and discussions during the site visit identified strategies for a stronger collaborative approach to setting priorities.

There are relatively small number of faculty who are involved in sharing their expertise through the MI. The MI has potential to enhance opportunities for accomplished teachers to share their knowledge with colleagues more broadly.

Communication strategies – within, from and with the MacPherson Institute – are frequently cited as a challenge by diverse stakeholders (including MacPherson Institute staff).

b. Does the structure and operation support an outstanding teaching and learning environment at McMaster?

The structure and operational practices of the MI can be improved, building on existing strengths and bridging gaps identified. The review identified a number of possible changes, many of which are noted in our observation summary and some of which have already begun. Specific examples include: improving access to MI expertise through the MI webpage and/or administrative support that would facilitate connecting callers with an appropriate staff member; more systematic outreach to and in-reach from academic units; and strengthening collaborations within the MI and network building across the McMaster community.

“[A]n outstanding teaching and learning environment” is a shared responsibility, requiring intentional, coordinated efforts at many levels. Increased coordination across units that provide support for teaching and learning, and particularly with respect to educational technology, would create synergies and leverage the expertise of the MI to collaborate more widely to support an even stronger teaching and learning environment. The MI is well positioned to lead or co-lead some of these coordination initiatives.

3. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of the services, supports and programs offered by the MacPherson Institute.

The transition from the CLL model to the model for the MI has not been well understood or easy. Earlier observations speak to some areas that need to be addressed. At the heart of the concerns expressed during the review by faculty and others in teaching and learning roles is that they want to feel supported in developing teaching practice, the student learning experience, educational leadership, and scholarship that has a direct impact on the learning of students at McMaster.

What are the strengths and the balance between strategic initiatives, services and programs currently offered to support:

- a) the development of faculty in their capacities as teachers across a variety of contexts, e.g. community engaged, experiential, research embedded, inclusive and other forms of pedagogical innovation.

The MI offers a broad scope of programs and services that cross disciplines and the career span (graduate students, post-docs, new faculty and established faculty) and that are highly rated by participants. They support teaching development, course development and refinement, educational leadership and teaching and refinement. The MI is distinct in how it engages students as partners in appropriate areas including IQAP, course design and redesign, and SoTL.

As it is reported in the self-study, programming seems fragmented, and MI staff acknowledge that this contributes to missed opportunities for synergies. This perceived fragmentation may also be a factor in the barriers experienced by those trying to access MI resources.

Throughout the review, there was a persistent tension between the deep and sophisticated engagement of a minority of faculty and other people in teaching roles with the MI and the lack of engagement by a broader cross section of educators in developing more effective teaching practices. Programs for deeply engaged educators are strong and impactful, but the perceived need for more attention to programming to address broader “faculty needs” (self-study, p. 38) is pervasive. Stakeholders also expressed concerns about a perceived imbalance between the responsiveness to the needs of individual faculty members and resources devoted to MI-led

research and some MI strategic initiatives. Balancing deep and broad engagement in teaching development is a complex task, and one that is an enduring challenge across our institutions. The expertise of the MI is recognized, and there is a strong desire to increase teaching and learning support for educators not already involved in the MI.

As identified throughout the review, one strategy to engage a broader base of teachers in meaningful conversations about teaching and learning is to work with them in their local contexts. Acknowledging that learning to become a more effective teacher is a complex and iterative learning task and takes place over time (Kenny et al., 2017), partnering with academic units to create opportunities for stronger connections and facilitating teaching development initiatives that emerge in local contexts will be an important avenue to explore. In addition, communicating the value of this work in academic careers is part of the cultural context that mediates broad participation.

Another established strategy is embedded in the plans for supporting experiential learning. The MI has identified experiential learning as a priority for a Teaching and Learning Network (p. 45) leveraging the new ELAP grants program – a good example of integrating initiatives to create synergies for building and sharing expertise, fostering peer-to-peer learning, and creating scaffolding for knowledge flow.

b) the evaluation and improvement of faculty in their capacities as teachers.

This issue is broadly shared across institutions. The assessment of teaching – and the evidence of teaching effectiveness brought to that process – is a concern for many at McMaster (e.g., Business, Humanities, Science, Graduate Studies, Social Sciences). The need for changes in how teaching is evaluated is clearly articulated, but there seems to be some uncertainty about which portfolio has the responsibility for this issue (self-study, p. 33).

One component of a comprehensive system for evaluating teaching is student feedback. While actual response rates were not provided to the reviewers, it was noted in the self-study (p. 162) that student response rates are a concern (as is true with most online evaluation systems) and developing a culture where students believe their feedback has value and participate in higher numbers is an ongoing challenge.

While the student perspective is essential to a robust approach to assessing teaching, so too is evidence provided by individual teachers and their peers. Wright et al. (2014) provide guidance on effective practices for assessing teaching effectiveness, and more recently, Kenny et al. (2018) elaborate on the kinds of evidence that demonstrate teaching effectiveness.

The administrator of the online course evaluation system suggested that the MI was not engaged in issues related to the online evaluation of courses by students, but Science commented on the valuable expertise MI staff provided to their teaching evaluation committee. While most

teaching and learning centres do not administer teaching evaluations, they are a source of valuable expertise on effective practices in this area (e.g., Wright et al., 2014).

- c) the institutional quality assurance processes and the use of those processes to improve programs and curriculum

The IQAP is consistently recognized by all participants in the review as an outstanding program for its collaborative approach and its impact. Like most successful ventures, participants see even further opportunities for this program to extend its influence to include more support on supporting academic units in implementing the recommendations of their reviews.

In addition, the MI's formative feedback program focusing on course observation and course refinements, is having a positive impact at the course level and demand is growing.

- d) technology-enhanced teaching and learning

Educational technology support is distributed widely across the University. Although this rich network of support is a good thing, a lack of clarity about "who does what" contributes to wide-spread confusion about where to seek assistance. There does not appear to be an "ed tech" network where representatives from different groups meet regularly and collaborate to solve problems and strengthen the overall support to the community. There is a pressing need (expressed by a diverse cross-section of stakeholders) to clarify roles, provide access pathways, and create avenues for collaboration between educational technology support providers and users (faculty and students).

It should be emphasized that an initiative to clarify and make more explicit the rich resources available to enhance learning through educational technology is not intended to be a rationalization exercise. There were consistent concerns expressed across service providers about this threat. Educational technologies are ubiquitous in top universities, and resources need to be distributed in ways that support broad access and knowledge of teaching contexts if technology tools are to be adopted, adapted and sustained. To make the most of these resources, both service providers and technology users need to be clear about the kinds of support that are available and where to find them, and that is the focus of this observation.

There were several references to the substantial costs associated with developing online courses. Our review conversations suggest that this perception seems to originate with now discontinued provincial funding programs for online course development. Opportunities for support for online course development and any associated costs are not clear to most constituencies in the University and need to be first, clarified among units providing these supports and then, communicated effectively to the academic community. Also needed is University-level guidance on the development of MOOCs, which were widely perceived as drawing finite resources away from innovation in academic programs.

e) the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Given the original mandate for the MI, and its organizational structure, it was not entirely clear to the reviewers (or to the MI Research Team itself) how the discourse about the MI as a “research” enterprise came to be so dominant. Nevertheless, many of our conversations with faculty and administrators during the site visit (including faculty members who were highly engaged with the MI) highlighted tensions related to the perceived dominance of MI-led research over building capacity for others to conduct the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). There was a strong endorsement of the value of MI advocacy and support for the development SoTL – inquiry conducted for the purpose of better understanding and enhancing learning in particular contexts that has a direct impact on those learning experiences. Both MI and academic staff expressed the need to shift the research focus of the MI to stronger support for SoTL led by others.

Furthermore, faculty members expressed frustration with how the SoTL is recognized, valued and rewarded in faculty career progression, and particularly (but not exclusively) for individuals holding teaching stream appointments. Transparent criteria for how SoTL is assessed in faculty careers is critical to becoming a leader in this form of scholarship.

What are the opportunities for improvements?

Suggestions for improvements were made throughout the self-study and in conversations with the review team. The MI, and also the teaching and learning support units consulted in Section 7 of the self-study, were clear in their reflections on how their work could be have a greater impact in the McMaster community. They are already aware of actions they can take, and are well positioned to work together to make a comprehensive and integrated action plan that sets priorities for addressing, as individual units and in collaboration, the issues identified during the review. To place some of these suggestions and others that surfaced during our review in context, the review team has integrated the major opportunities identified in our observations in response to the terms of reference and in the recommendations that emerged from our review. Consequently, these opportunities are distributed throughout our report.

Are there mechanisms for reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of services and programs on a regular basis?

While a comprehensive approach to evaluating all MI programs has not been adopted (self-report, p. 30), the MI’s Program and Educational Development Team and Research Team have an established practice of assessing the impact of their programs and using the evidence to make these programs as effective as they can be (Stefani, 2011). The design of these assessments is strong, as program assessment is an important area of scholarship for educational development specialists.

As noted in the self-study, the Educational Technologies Team is largely constituted of experts who come from a different work culture than other MI teams. Their practices to not include

similar assessment approaches, and instead assess the effectiveness of their work in terms of satisfaction expressed by clients and sustained interactions with the team. This is an area where more collaboration across teams could strengthen evidence-based planning and priority setting.

The Strategic Initiatives team leads internal, University-wide and external special projects, drawing on the collective expertise of the MI as required, including the expertise of the research group to assess the impact of initiatives.

Reflecting on the diverse assessment approaches across the MacPherson Institute, the associate directors identify building on these efforts to develop “systemic, integrated and comparable assessment activities [...] while contributing to inter-Team consistency and collaboration” (self-study, p. 30) as a priority.

The assessment of programs offered by non-MI units (to the extent described in Section 7 of the self-study) was less consistently conducted (although staff recognized the value of program assessment). Staff in these areas often cited resource constraints as the reason for this situation. A number of these units expressed confidence in the assessment expertise of the MI, citing a desire to partner with MI staff in developing and/or implementing assessment plans.

4. Review the way in which MacPherson partners with Faculties, departments and other service units across McMaster.

a. How effective are the outreach models employed by the Institute in establishing working relationships with other units?

From the perspective of the MI, collaboration is central to their mandate (e.g., self-study, pp. 18, 41) and they describe their practice as more collaborative (e.g., p 21, and throughout this section) than it is perceived to be by most academic and administrative units (Section 7 and Appendix D). While a number of strong collaborations have emerged (especially more recently (e.g., Engineering), MI staff acknowledge this gap and identified a number of strategies to strengthen collaboration on a broader scale (e.g., self-study, p. 42).

Different MI teams have developed effective collaborations and have examples to work from. Rather than viewing these examples as idiosyncratic, it will be important to acknowledge the critical importance of context in effective educational development practice and leadership (e.g., Gibbs, Knapper & Piccinin, 2008; Taylor & Rege-Colet, 2010). This may be a good time to return to the Kezar (2014) framework, integrating social networks and organizational change to create a coherent framework for not only assessing the work of the MI, but also guiding its practice.

Participation of MI staff in the University committee system (except in one instance) seems low. Yet, when they do participate, other units comment on the value they add. One way to use existing structures to enhance MI integration in the university community and to promote communication is to encourage active engagement in well-selected committee work.

b. Are partnerships encouraged, appropriate and effective in supporting teaching and learning?

The MI aspires to strong partnerships, and in specific cases, demonstrates what those high-impact partnerships can look like. There is a strong appetite to rebalance the external/internal efforts of the MI to forge new and strengthen exiting partnerships. Many stakeholders see this as an area for development, and the MI is well positioned to review its practices and strengthen its collaborations to provide leadership and practical support for building networks of teaching and learning practice, leadership and scholarship (Roxå, Mårtensson, & Alveteg, 2011).

Partnerships are not only based on what the MI can bring to other units, but also on how other units or individuals can contribute to the work of the MI.

5. Review the alignment of MacPherson services and programs with other educational services offered across McMaster.

a. Are there functions currently in MacPherson or in other units (e.g. writing center and other initiatives within Student Services, University Library services including technical classroom support of teaching) that could or should be aligned or coordinated in a more effective manner?

The self-study and discussions during the site visit point to a number of areas where similar services could be 1) more clearly defined and 2) engage in a network to foster collaboration to enhance support for teaching and learning.

There were concerns expressed by non-MI units that their contributions continue to be valued and maintained. Distributed support makes a stronger support net, but that net only will be stronger if there is clear communication and collaboration across units. Support needs to be provided across units and levels, but must be more effectively coordinated. The degree of coordination will depend on how closely another unit is allied with the mandate of the MI. For instance, the student success unit may collaborate on an *ad hoc* basis, whereas educational technology units may have more formal coordination structures to achieve a more coherent range of supports for users.

6. Review and evaluate how McMaster engages, motivates, and supports students in the context of McMaster's teaching and learning enterprise (including post-docs, graduate students, undergraduate and graduate teaching assistants).

a. Is there a strategy based on best practices?

The MI provides strong programming to support graduate students in their roles as educators while they are student employees at McMaster and to prepare both graduate students and postdoctoral scholars for future careers that will involve a diverse range of teaching roles, and the communication skills inherent in teaching, more broadly. These programs focus on developing knowledge and skills in teaching and learning, as appropriate to the MI scope of

responsibility, and reflect effective, evidence-based practice in the field. These programs have been accredited through a peer review process and are well subscribed; both program assessment and discussions during our site visit demonstrates satisfaction and learning impact.

The MI engages both undergraduate and graduate students in leading-edge “students as partners” initiatives that cross a number of programs. In this respect, McMaster is a leader in the field. The students add unique value to educational development and research programs that provide “high impact” learning experiences, and the students the review team met reported strong learning outcomes.

b. Are the needs of these communities well understood?

The MI understands well the challenges and needs of students and postdoctoral scholars. Their challenge resides mainly in being able to provide enough resources to meet their learning needs.

c. What are the opportunities for improvements?

While the structured programs for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows are well received, there is a need to provide more contextualized and short-term professional learning opportunities that will be best met through partnerships with colleagues in specific Faculties. There is already some collaboration in this space that can be built upon. A second consideration is shared across research intensive universities: how to provide enough flexibility so that graduate students and postdoctoral scholars working in laboratory settings, in particular, have access to these valuable professional learning experiences.

7. Suggest opportunities for future development and enhancement.

a. What should be prioritized moving forward?

In terms of responding to the review process, clarifying the mandate and mission of the MI and developing an action plan for addressing the review recommendations would seem to be a reasonable place to begin. A number of aspects of this work will involve consultations and collaborations with senior administrators and members of the university community and will require leadership, time, and good will to achieve success.

Given the specific teaching and learning priorities of the University, moving forward on identified needs to collaborate with academic units (and in some cases student services) on experiential learning and addressing the TRC recommendations are also priority areas.

Although the self-study was silent on how mental health issues can be addressed in students’ academic experiences to reduce stigma, build resiliency and mental wellness, develop empathy, and help teachers work with students living with mental health concerns, the University may consider this priority.

b. What are the best opportunities for enhancement?

McMaster University and the MI do many things well. The review team recognizes that the challenge of a fragmented network of support for teaching and learning identified by participants in this review is actually an indicator of the broad support for teaching and learning across the University. One of the best opportunities for enhancement is to focus on creating strategies for sustained collaborations between the MI, the Faculties, and other units that contribute to providing teaching and learning infrastructure and support across the University to achieve a more integrated support network for teaching and learning.

Commendations

1. The leadership provided by interim MI Director, Lori Goff, has been greatly appreciated by her colleagues within the MI and also by stakeholders across McMaster, with a number highlighting recent positive improvements through contact and engagement. This leadership is already building the trust necessary to begin the process of implementing recommendations from this review.
2. There was strong positive feedback from faculty on the support received from individuals across the MI. Their expertise is acknowledged and appreciated and they have developed valuable connections into the Faculties and units.
3. The approach taken to the self-study – in a relatively short space of time – was comprehensive and reflective. It is already being used to guide and inform how to make positive changes to better support McMaster's teaching and learning community.
4. More broadly, through both the self-study and the numerous conversations we had during the site visit, it is clear that there is a deep and genuine commitment to teaching and learning enhancement and providing an outstanding student experience right across McMaster.

Recommendations

Our recommendations can be summarized as the overall need for a ‘course correction’ for the MI, based on the values and aspirations expressed by the McMaster community during the review processes, which align closely with Paul MacPherson’s original vision for enabling this work through the MI:

- to develop a strong program of professional learning for individual teachers that will inspire broad engagement across disciplines and the academic career span;
 - to support curriculum development and revision that foster deep student engagement in learning;
 - to build capacity for research into teaching and learning in the disciplines that has a direct impact on the learning experiences of McMaster students; and
 - to enable the use of contemporary technology tools to enhance learning.
1. To decouple the Vice Provost Teaching and Learning position from the MI Directorship. A VPTL is a key member of the Provost’s team, leading strategic conversations about teaching and learning priorities that cross the institution and developing collaborative and coordinated approaches to teaching and learning operations, planning and governance. Pressing areas identified during the review include i) strategic issues such as the development of an integrated teaching and learning strategy¹ and a review of how teaching is assessed and recognized in faculty careers, and ii) operational issues that involve support for teaching and learning that span multiple campus units, such as learning spaces and learning technologies. The MI Director should assume the distinct, yet complementary, operational and advisory responsibilities to align MI priorities and activities to support the teaching and learning goals and needs of the institution, and its students and faculty members.
 2. An internal Advisory Board/Network should be constituted to provide ongoing input and feedback to the leadership of the MI on their priorities and activities within McMaster, and provide a forum for discussion around external drivers and trends impacting the wider postsecondary teaching and learning landscape and McMaster’s responses to these influences.
 3. There is an urgent need for the MI to engage in a community consultation process to clarify the mission and mandate of the MI in a way that more closely aligns with the aspirations and needs of the McMaster community and captures the spirit of Paul MacPherson’s original vision for a gift that would enable that work. This renewed mission and mandate needs to be

1. An opportunity emerging from these recommendations is that University would benefit from an integrated, institutional-level teaching and learning strategy to guide decision making across the institution, to bring coherence to the considerable efforts are being made at many levels and to optimize synergies. The MI is well-positioned to be able to contribute to and shape the conversation that could lead to development of such a strategy, but the responsibility for developing an integrated teaching and learning strategy is one that the whole University needs to own.

communicated clearly and discussed widely, and transparently reflected in the work of the MI. As part of this renewed mandate, it would benefit the MI to articulate the overarching educational leadership/educational development philosophy that guides its work.

4. Subsequently, the Director of the MI should assess the institute's current leadership and organizational structure, to determine how best to deploy existing personnel and resources to fulfil this renewed mandate.
5. The MI should then evaluate the current broad (but currently fragmented) range of program offerings to ensure that they (i) provide broad spectrum of support to a wide range of faculty members in flexible formats that lower barriers to engagement, and (ii) form a coherent and connected suite of activities, events, initiatives and programs.
6. The MI should develop effective ways to enhance collaboration and specifically, to provide 'on the ground' support to Faculties and the Arts and Science Program through an integrated-distributed (or 'liaison') approach that positions MI staff directly into Faculties, while maintaining their connections with the MI. Such a model can provide embedded, collaborative support in diverse ways that are sensitive to varied Faculty contexts, and also enhance access to MI resources.
7. Similarly, there is a need for increased coordination across units that provide support for teaching and learning, and particularly with respect to educational technology. More effective collaborations would create synergies and leverage the expertise of the MI to collaborate more widely to support an even stronger teaching and learning environment.
8. Collectively, McMaster needs to articulate why research in teaching and learning / the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is important for the institution and how findings from these activities can be used to better understand and enhance the learning experiences of McMaster students. Additionally, there is the need to consider how such scholarship activity is recognized in the career development of faculty in the teaching stream, in particular, for permanence, promotion and merit awards.
9. The MI should develop a strategy for communicating what they do, and assign adequate resources to support this, as part of wider and more integrated cluster of administrative activities within MI. There are several particular communication functions we recommend focusing on: (i) internal communications within and between MI teams; (ii) external communications to and from partners and stakeholders; (iii) championing and celebrating teaching and learning innovation, enhancement and achievement, in partnership with McMaster communications and public affairs teams.
10. The MI leadership should review the balance of continuing and contractual positions, within the constraints of their budget, with consideration for a broadly equitable and consistent approach across MI teams.

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