

# Frank McKenna School

— of PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS, & ECONOMICS —

YEAR IN REVIEW 2025-2026



## ELLA GIBSON — McKENNA SCHOOL SCHOLAR

First-year student is also a Skeleton athlete

Ella Gibson was adamant — she did not want to go to Mount Allison.

Gibson, from New Germany, NS, did not want to be seen as following her older brother, who was already a student at the University. However, Gibson's plans changed after her dad told her about a unique program he'd read about — Mount Allison's Frank McKenna School of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE).

"I absolutely fell in love with the program," says Gibson. "I read some articles about it and thought it sounded amazing. Now, I couldn't be happier that I chose Mount Allison."

Gibson's past volunteer, community, and youth leadership work, including serving as president of her high school student council, encouraged her to study politics and explore ways she could help people and make a difference in the world. She believes the McKenna School will help her achieve her goals and, in the meantime, the first-year student is loving her PPE classes and life in Edwards House residence.

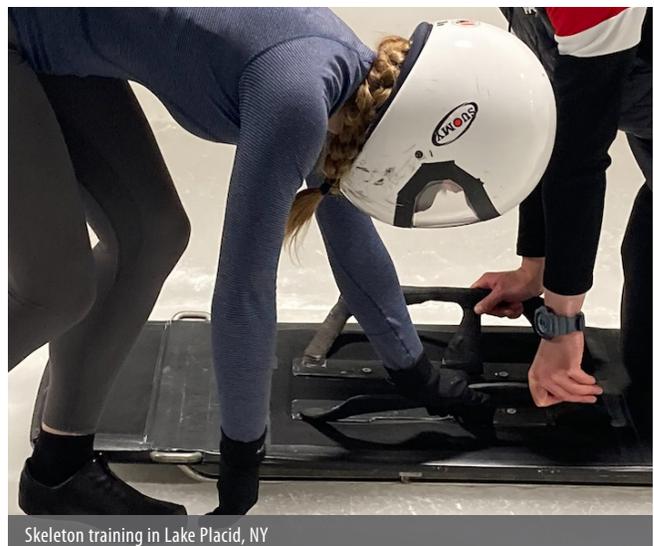
Gibson is also an active member of a national youth Skeleton team — a sport she is very passionate about. She is grateful to Mount Allison for its support as she trains and competes while pursuing her degree.

"I have had an abundance of support from my professors and everyone here at Mount Allison," says Gibson. "Obviously, it's my responsibility to keep up with my schoolwork, but the professors here are amazing — they are all super supportive and accommodating of me travelling for Skeleton."

**"My Mount Allison experience has been phenomenal."**

Gibson is the recipient of a McKenna School Scholarship. The scholarship awards \$10,000 to entering students and is renewable for three additional years (\$5,000/year).

"The day I got the email about the scholarship, I was at home with my parents and my two best friends, and I was so excited," says Gibson. "I had read online about other PPE students who had received the scholarship in the past. I thought they were such interesting people, and that was part of the reason I wanted to come to Mount Allison. To then to know I was being recognized as a similar calibre of person was just amazing."





## LAUREN GALLANT — LORAN SCHOLAR

Lauren Gallant, a first-year PPE student from La Crete, AB, was one of 36 young leaders in Canada selected to receive a Loran Award. Valued at more than \$100,000, the Loran Award is four-year leadership-enrichment program that combines financial support, mentorship, summer internships, and a lifelong community of peers. It is awarded by the Loran Scholars Foundation, which receives thousands of applicants each year.

Gallant was a two-term member of Alberta's Minister's Youth Council, where she championed rural education needs, from mental health support to extracurricular opportunities. She was also president of her high school's student council and chaired her school's first student-organized leadership conference, bringing together 200 students from across Northern Alberta.



## NEW PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

In 2025, Mount Allison conferred an honorary degree on the Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, recognizing his long dedication to public service. At that time, the **Jean Chrétien Scholarship** was also established, and it is being supported by a number of donors. This scholarship will support PPE students.



# AMAZING WORK EXPERIENCES ALL OVER THE WORLD

Donors make remarkable beyond-the-classroom learning opportunities available to students

Internships, community engagement, and academic and research experiences help students expand their networks and explore and launch careers. In the past year, funding from the **McKenna School Endowment**, **Fran and Edmund Clark Mobility Fund**, and **L.R. Wilson Internships** supported the following students:

### **Isabella Andrea, third-year, International Relations**

Travelled to South Africa where she spent three months as an intern with SOSNPO, a non-profit focused on water accessibility and sanitation. Andrea worked with communities and on research and development projects. "I want to express my deepest gratitude and thanks to everyone who made this opportunity possible. Being back on Sackville soil and on campus reminded me of how remarkable this university is and how many opportunities it grants students."

### **Chloe Duguay ('25), International Relations**

Attended a United Nations event in New York City. Duguay is currently at the London School of Economics, pursuing her master's degree in environmental development, and upon completion plans to move into a role as an international staffer at NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy. Duguay serves on the Environment and Climate Change Canada Youth Council, in 2025 served on the executive committee of the G7 Youth Summit, and she is the recipient of a King Charles III Coronation Medal.

### **Hinke Younger, third-year, PPE (Economics stream)**

Spent the summer as an intern in the Center for Energy, Climate, and Resources at the ifo Institute for Economic Research (a prominent economic think-tank in Munich, Germany). "This position aligned closely with my desire to pursue a career in environmental policy, driving change at all levels of government. This dream would not be possible without the support of donors, Mount Allison, and the incredible community of scholars within the McKenna School."

### **Oliver Batchilder ('25), PPE**

Attended a conference in Ottawa on democratic decay. "Beyond the panels and workshops, what stood out most was hearing firsthand about the proactive steps being taken at all levels of government to strengthen institutions and respond to early signs of democratic erosion." Batchilder is currently participating in Canada's Parliamentary Internship Programme, where he works with members of parliament and supports research, policy, and legislative work.

### **Nathan Lane, fourth-year, Economics**

Interned in the office of New Brunswick MLA David Hickey, meeting with and assisting constituents and supporting the MLA at key meetings. "I really appreciate the funding that made my summer internship possible. Because of it, I was able to have an experience that I enjoyed while learning about possible career paths that complemented my Mount Allison degree. I also felt that I was able to contribute to the community, which was very rewarding and gave me a great sense of purpose."

### **Liam Clark-Black, fourth-year, PPE (Economics stream)**

Business development intern with the Halifax Tides FC. "I've loved competitive sports since I was four years old, and I realized a couple years ago I wanted to turn that passion into my career. As a PPE student, I think I'm very well prepared to thrive in a variety of different work environments, and I was eager for the opportunity to help rally the community around the first ever professional women's soccer team in Atlantic Canada."

### **Lucas Orfanides, second-year, PPE**

Interned with the Canadian Bankers Association. "A huge thank you to the donors. This internship gave me invaluable exposure to public policy, helped refine my career goals, and provided real-world experience in an organization that plays a central role in Canada's financial system. Most importantly, it gave me the chance to contribute directly to meaningful work, from research that can guide policymakers on issues of financial stability to public initiatives that protect seniors and strengthen financial literacy."

### **Rebecca Wolf Gage, second-year, PPE**

Interned in the office of MP Elizabeth May. "My internship with MP May was foundational to my development as a PPE student. Throughout the summer, I contributed to a wide range of responsibilities, from engaging with constituents and drafting correspondence to assisting with research on policy issues. Every week brought new opportunities to learn and contribute, and I took pride in helping the office stay responsive and connected to the community. This experience not only deepened my appreciation for public service but also reaffirmed my commitment to pursuing a career where I can bridge policy, law, and community engagement."

### **Bridget Powning, fourth-year, PPE (Philosophy stream)**

Collaborated with Community Forests International, an environmental forestry group, on a project that combined Powning's research abilities as a PPE student and artistic talents as a sculptor. "I am so grateful that I have been able to access funding to do things that are closely tied to my interests and aspirations. There are not very many summer job opportunities that allow me to combine all three of my academic areas in PPE with environmentalism and art." Powning is interested in pursuing a career in environmental law.

### **Lucas Reynolds, third-year, PPE (Philosophy stream)**

Interned with NB Media Co-op, an independent media organization in New Brunswick, where Reynolds worked as a journalist. "The appreciation I now have for New Brunswick and journalism in general is something I will bring with me throughout my life. If my reporting played any part in helping New Brunswickers, it is only because of the opportunity this internship gave me."





## BROAD MINDS. BOLD FUTURES. LIFELONG CONNECTIONS.

Mount Allison's new strategic plan — *Broad Minds. Bold Futures. Lifelong Connections.* — will help ensure students are future-ready, equipped with the skills, curiosity, and adaptability to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

## NEW BOOK

*Environmental Governance in the Gulf of St. Lawrence* (UBC Press, 2025) is co-authored by McKenna School Professor Dr. Mario Levesque, Department of Politics and International Relations.

## DR. EVELYN FORGET AND THE UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME

Economist Dr. Evelyn Forget, considered Canada's leading authority on basic income and currently a professor at the University of Manitoba, was the McKenna School Distinguished Speaker. She gave a public talk and met with students in our PPE Reading Group.

The **Frank McKenna School of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE)** provides insight into government, citizenship, justice, and the outcomes of economic systems and policies. It is one of Canada's only PPE programs and is modelled after the renowned program at the University of Oxford in England. We are grateful to the donors and friends who support the McKenna School.

### UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

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# TOP UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY — IN CANADA —

Mount Allison is once again recognized by *Maclean's* annual University Rankings as the #1 university in Canada — 26 times in the last 35 years!

## FIRST-PLACE FINISH

PPE students took first place at this year's Atlantic Undergraduate Policy Case Competition. The winning team included Emily Pachell, Jack Pemberton, Mae Ward, and Hinke Younger. They impressed the judges with their pitch titled *An Atlantic Regional Transmission Organization: Fostering Canadian Self-Sufficiency Through Grid Regionalization*. The policy tackled the complicated challenge of regional energy collaboration in Atlantic Canada and was recognized for its depth of analysis, clarity, and professional delivery.



## MODEL UN

Twenty students were delegates to McMUN, Canada's largest Model United Nations conference. Funding from the McKenna School Endowment made the experience possible.

## RESEARCH GRANT

Dr. Casey Pender, McKenna School Postdoctoral Fellow, received a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for his project examining Indigenous economic institutions in pre-colonial North America, with a focus on the potlatch as a rational and sophisticated financial system comparable to Western monetary arrangements.