



ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ATLANTIQUE

Award for Excellence in Teaching
2024
Distinguished Teaching Award

DR. ANDREA MORASH

Dr. Andrea Morash is a professor in the Department of Biology at Mount Allison University. A Mount Allison graduate, Dr. Morash returned to Mount Allison as a Faculty member in 2016. Dr. Morash brings her love of research into the classroom and far beyond since. Over the past three years, she has supervised 15 students at the Galápagos Islands Field School. She developed and secured \$500,000 of funding from the Global Skills Opportunity Fund for this course, prioritizing students with learning disabilities and those requiring financial support to participate.

In Dr. Morash's words, "The freedom to learn is at the heart of my teaching philosophy. Focusing my teaching practices around freedom means that everyone is free to make mistakes, learn in their own way, and to reach for their own goals as they transform from passive students to active learners. My inspiration stems mainly from my time at Mount Allison as a first-generation student." Dr. Morash embodies this philosophy in her courses through ungrading, allowing students to make mistakes and to focus on learning, exploration and change, rather than on grades. She employs entirely open assessments and iterative labs with in-depth feedback. She also gives students choice in their assignments such as public engagement activities, media writing, myth busting exercises and infographics which are then collected into a learning portfolio. This approach empowers students to achieve their goals at their own pace. Dr. Morash also sees this as the opportunity for self transform, continuously evolving her teaching practice as she learns. As Dr. Morash says, I want to "create an environment that is accessible, safe, exciting, and is a pleasurable place to learn."

As one of her colleagues, Lisa Dawn Hamilton, writes, "Dr. Morash's freedom-oriented educational practice is creating a dramatically more welcoming educational landscape across our campus. She is indeed a wonderful, innovative, and thoughtful educator of the highest order." A former student adds, "The passion and commitment Dr. Morash demonstrates is truly contagious in the classroom, and when finished taking one of her courses you leave not only with an understanding greater than you could have imagined, but a curiosity that motivates to pursue further education in the field."

As part of the Galápagos Islands Field School, Dr. Morash initiated a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) pilot where students from Mount Allison can interact with students from Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) prior to working with them in person. This innovative program has been an inspiration to many colleagues, both nationally and internationally.

Because of her consistently high level of teaching excellence and innovation that the Association of Atlantic Universities has named Dr. Andrea Morash a worthy recipient of the 2024 Distinguished Teaching Award.