

**History of the McGill Faculty of Education**  
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***Editor's Note:***

*The following document, believed to have been written by Professor Reginald Edwards in the 1980s, is thought to be a fairly accurate history of the Faculty of Education of McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Information contained in brackets are my own additions.*

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**Historical Information**

The McGill Normal School, situated on Belmont St., was founded in 1857 under an agreement between the Government of the province of Quebec (Lower Canada) and McGill University. In its fifty year existence it had only three Principals – J[ohn William] Dawson [1857-1870] (also Principal of McGill University), Professor [William H.] Hicks [1870-1884], and Professor S[ampson]. P. Robbins [1884-1907]. In 1907 the School for Teachers opened at Ste. Anne de Bellevue as a constituent part of Macdonald College. In 1908 Sir William Macdonald endowed Canada's first Chair of Education in the Faculty of Arts at McGill. The first holder, Prof. J.A. Dale, offered courses in Education to third and fourth year undergraduates. Such courses were also accepted as part of the theoretical preparation for candidates for the Academy (High School) Diploma. Lectures were given on the growth of mind, conscious and subconscious mind, the senses, intellect, interest, memory, will, suggestion and character formation. In the session 1909-1910 these were included in a special course labeled Experimental Psychology given by a specially appointed lecturer W.D. Tait, who later taught in the Department of Philosophy, and became the first Head of the Department of Psychology when it achieved independent status in 1924. Tait established the second psychological laboratory in Canada. Tait and Dale were responsible for the first post-graduate course in Education established in 1911, when the course in Experimental Psychology was renamed Educational Psychology. In the same year lectures were provided in Physical Education, and courses given in these two areas were recognized as theoretical preparation for the Academy (High School) Diploma. From the date of this arrival, Dale was a member of the Graduate School, and the first M.A. degrees awarded to students in Education were awarded in 1915. Four such degrees were awarded prior to Dale's departure in 1920.

The second appointment to the Macdonald Chair, made in 1929, was Fred Clarke – later in England to become Sir Fred Clarke. In 1930-31 the first moves were made to require all training for High School Teachers to be conducted in a one-year post-graduate session. The previous third and fourth year undergraduate courses were upgraded, and could be included as part of the course requirements for M.A. candidates. Clarke was a member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies constituted in 1922-23, and a Governor's Fellow of McGill – i.e. an elected member of Senate. He secured financial backing from the Carnegie Foundation for full time post-graduate study of Education, which under

Clarke changed the previous social, psychological bias towards a philosophical, historical bent. Some seventeen successful theses were started or completed during Clarke's tenure from 1929-1935.

Under the third holder of the Chair, new departures were made by the introduction of Courses in Comparative Education and Bi-Lingual Education, whilst under the fourth holder, Prof. D.C. Munroe (1954-1966) more substantial changes were made. First there was a fusion of the Department of Education and the School for Teachers, into an Institute of Education centered physically at Macdonald College. Physical Education, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate courses for the newly created degree of B.Ed., and a graduate course in Comparative Education remained at McGill. Summer Study for the M.A. degree was initiated in 1955. From 1961 Prof. Munroe was Vice Chairman of the Parent Commission on Education, and later Vice Chairman of the Superior Council of Education. During his tenure as Macdonald Professor the emphasis in the M.A. program shifted to Comparative Education and Educational Psychology, and new graduate programs commenced in the field of Guidance and Counselling, leading to the degree of M.Ed. (first awarded in 1966), with an emphasis on a well structured internship program, all administered in a newly created independent Department of Counselling and Guidance. Later, this Department was able to offer further work for the award of D.Ed. Meanwhile, under ad-hoc arrangements with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research candidates were accepted by the Institute of Education for work leading to the Ph.D. The Institute was enabled to leave the Faculty of Arts in 1965, and become the Faculty of Education, moving to new premises at McGill in 1970, at the same time merging with St. Joseph's Teacher's College.

Internal changes have seen the creation of separate departments within the Faculty, and one of the largest of these, has been formed by the incorporation first of Sociology, and then the former Department of Guidance and Counselling into an already existing Department of Educational Psychology (existing from 1961 onwards) to form the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling [now the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology]. The Department offers undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Education, and graduate courses in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research – leading to the degrees of M.Ed., M.A., D.Ed., and Ph.D.

*{Editor's note: the D.Ed. was discontinued in the 1990s in favour of a Ph.D. in Counselling Psychology}.*