OUR HISTORY

Founded in 1971, MacEwan University provides student-focused instruction in a warm and supportive atmosphere. We focus on teaching, so our students can focus on learning. It's been a cornerstone of who we are for almost 50 years.

The 1970s

Grant MacEwan Community College opens its first campus in Strathcona High School with nursing, social worker, child care and psychotechnician programs, and by 1972 has 625 students. Enrolment grows, and campuses open in Jasper Place (1973) and Mill Woods (1976).
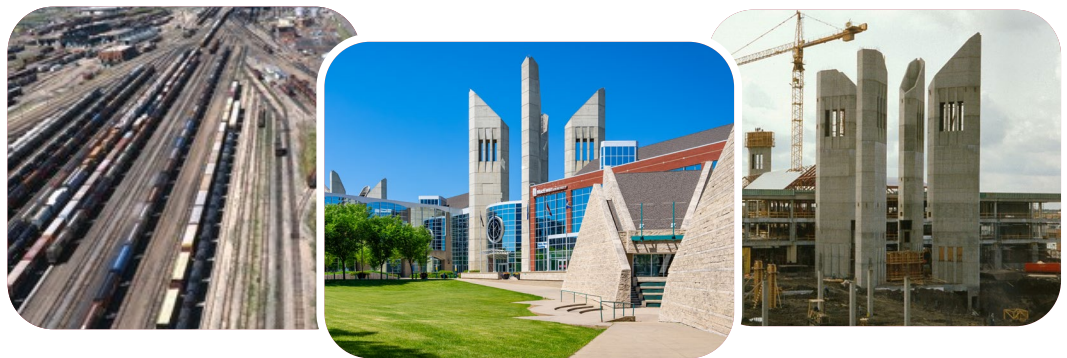

The 1980s

Fine, liberal and performing arts programs move to a new purpose-built facility on Stony Plain Road (1981). MacEwan offers university transfer programs (1988) and develops 40 science, arts and commerce courses. Between 1980 and 1989, student enrolment doubles, prompting the province to invest $100 million to build City Centre Campus.

The 1990s

City Centre Campus opens on the former CN rail yards. Teaching remains a key focus, university transfer program enrolment grows, and a Distinguished Teaching Award is first presented (1994). Grant MacEwan Community College becomes Grant MacEwan College (1999).

The 2000s

University transfer programs flourish, MacEwan becomes the number one transfer institution in Alberta and explores offering four-year degrees. The college introduces Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Child and Youth Care programs (2006) and continues offering diploma and certificate programs. Grant MacEwan College becomes Grant MacEwan University (2009).

The 2010s

Teaching remains a primary focus, and scholarly activity increases. The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) awards its first grant to MacEwan faculty (2010). The university creates a Distinguished Research Award (2015), followed by two Board of Governors Research Chairs (2018), and receives its first Canada Research Chair (2019).

South Campus (formerly Mill Woods) programs move downtown (2014), and when Allard Hall opens (2017), every MacEwan program is now in the city's core. Focus on community and social responsibility heightens with the opening of several new offices and institutes focused on social innovation; human rights, diversity, equity and inclusion; sexual violence prevention; sexual and gender diversity and Indigenous initiatives.

The 2020s

MacEwan has 68 programs across four faculties and two schools, and more than 18,000 students. Scholarly activity and teaching excellence continue to grow, and the first MacEwan faculty member receives the prestigious 3M National Teaching Fellowship.

The university installs its sixth president, Dr. Annette Trimbee. A strategic planning process begins, building on MacEwan's 50-year history, leveraging its position as Edmonton's downtown university and charting a path for the next 50 years.