

The Pollinator Garden was a true community project and anchored several significant Grebel events, while demonstrating Grebel's commitment to environmental sustainability, supported by the generosity of donors.



CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE 2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

TODAY'S ACTIONS, TOMORROW'S IMPACT

Paul Penner retired last year after 35 years of dedicated service, first as Business Manager and then Director of Operations. As he was cleaning out his filing cabinets, he came across an internal memo from the early 1990s which described a dire set of financial conditions at Conrad Grebel.

The memo cited unexpected losses of funding, rising expenses, lowered enrolments, and so on. All of this amounted to an unprecedented and existential 'budgetary crisis' at Grebel. The crisis was eventually resolved through years of painful workforce reductions, successful new fundraising efforts, and ultimately changes in government policy that improved core funding for Ontario universities.

As students at Grebel in the 1990s, we were happily unaware of the hard financial realities our college was facing. To the credit of the faculty, staff and administrators who served at the time, the student experience remained excellent, and fiscal problems were mostly kept behind the scenes.

Over thirty years later, Ontario universities face a similar set of dire financial realities. Domestic tuition rates are frozen by law; operating grants have not kept pace with inflation, and international student enrolments have fallen dramatically due to caps on visas. Grebel, along with all Ontario universities, faces a 'budgetary crisis' once again.

Thanks to the lessons learned in the 1990s, Grebel is in better shape to weather a financial crisis. Endowments, reserves, and generous annual giving have partially mitigated the worst impacts of this crisis. But we have also begun reviewing expenses and trimming costs, and we will need to continue doing so unless and until revenues improve.

In 2023-24, we celebrated Grebel's 60th anniversary. For us, one of the lessons of our history is that hard work and good decisions today will ensure that Grebel thrives tomorrow. We are grateful for those who wisely led the College through past challenges, and we are committed to doing the same.

On behalf of the Board,

Marcus Shantz | Andrew Roth
President | Chair, Board of Governors



At Paul-a-Palooza, the College celebrated the career of Paul Penner, pictured here with Nelson Scheifele, Paul's predecessor.



Elder Myeengun Henry, Indigenous Knowledge Keeper for the Faculty of Health, was a guest in Chapel and Community Supper, speaking on living together in peace, friendship, and respect.



It is Grebel's tradition to welcome new students and their families on Move-In Day. Marcus Shantz explained the value of a diverse and welcoming community.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Grebel professors taught engaging courses and connected with thousands of students at UWaterloo. Among other guest speakers and lecturers, Ray Aldred asked “Is Reconciliation Possible?” and John Eicher spoke on “Mennonite Narratives in the Age of Nationalism.” With the UW Research Institute for Aging, Jane Kuepfer hosted an International Conference on Ageing and Spirituality. Grebel also participated in “Russlaender 100” activities surrounding the 100th anniversary of the migration of Mennonites from the former Soviet Union. The Milton Good Library experienced high remote research requests, increased demand for group study space, and more in-class library instruction sessions than previous years. Professors encouraged students to think deeply about equity, diversity, belonging, and inclusion.

In addition to hosting 15 Noon Hour Concerts, the Music Department organized 21 ensemble concerts (drawing almost 5000 attendees) with 537 UWaterloo musicians. Concert highlights included the Three Choir Concert that celebrated Grebel’s 60th anniversary with two alumni compositions commissioned for the occasion, and a 10th anniversary concert of the Gamelan. Professor Maisie Sum gave the Eby Lecture on “A Story of Morocco’s Iconic Lute.” The Department created three new specializations in the Music program.

As the undergraduate PACS program grew 8% from the previous year’s enrolments, the new Restorative Justice diploma and specialization was launched. It foregrounds the experiences of racialized and marginalized communities and historical harms. A total of 19 PACS and MPACS students participated in internships across the globe. PACS partnered with other UWaterloo departments and clubs to organize and host the Urgency of Social Justice Event, with department members serving as designated dialoguers and speakers. Kalkidan Ararso won first place in the C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest.

Eleven Master of Theological Studies students participated in Supervised Experience in Ministry placements in seven Mennonite churches or related agencies, and as well as other experiential learning opportunities. As a way of creating new relationships sharing resources, TS cross-registered a course with MPACS, “Womanist Theologies,” and continued a partnership with Canadian Mennonite University to share enrolment in two online courses. “Theology from the Margins” highlighted theology developed by 2SLGBTQIA+ Christians. Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre ceased operations and held a virtual closing ceremony to mark the end of its 33-year existence.

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

Grebel had 4175 individual undergraduate course enrolments from students across all faculties at UWaterloo. This is a 7.5% increase over five years, and a 20% increase over ten years.

GRADUATE STUDIES

Peace and Conflict Studies and Theological Studies admitted 13 and 9 new master’s students, respectively. Course enrolments fell 27% from the previous five-year average, with a total of 35 MPACS and 29 MTS students in the program in the fall.

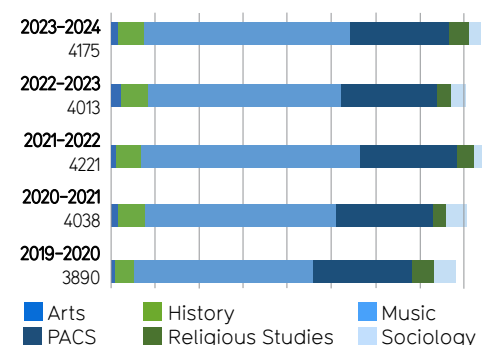
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE

Continuing education workshop demands were unpredictable, but registrations improved mid-year. Supported by a generous donor, the program hosted a hybrid day of conversation on “Leading the Church in a Post-Christian, Postmodern World,” with Grebel faculty and alumni as keynote speakers, and national participation across church denominations.

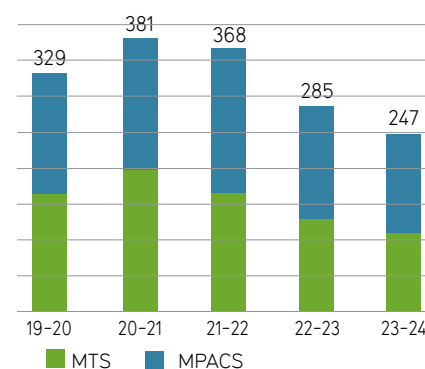
SCHOLARSHIP, SERVICE, AND OUTREACH

Grebel faculty demonstrated diverse scholarly expertise through public lectures, panels, concerts, book launches, faculty forums, and conferences. They published books, chapters, compositions, articles, and delivered workshops and presentations. UWATERLOO.CA/GREBEL/PUBLICATIONS

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE ENROLMENTS



GRADUATE COURSE ENROLMENTS



KINDRED CREDIT UNION CENTRE FOR PEACE ADVANCEMENT (CPA)

The CPA strengthened relationships with various organizations and initiated 10 new partnerships. They welcomed 39 new participants and 29 continuing peace practitioners, entrepreneurs, and researchers. Five organizations are affiliated with the CPA, two new start-ups joined the Grebel Peace Incubator as four moved on, and 23 students connected with the CPA. \$178,500 in external funding was leveraged for participants. The Grebel Gallery hosted three exhibits.

RESIDENCE AND ASSOCIATE STUDENTS

The 2023-24 year in Student Services saw high student engagement, reimagined traditions, and a strong sense of community. With enthusiastic support from students, staff, and faculty, creating and tending the new Pollinator Garden served as a focal point for the spring 2023 Chapel series and the College's fall 2023 Opening Celebration, symbolizing a commitment to environmental stewardship and spiritual reflection.

A largely new Student Services team found its stride and walked alongside students in navigating university life and young adulthood. The team took a close look at long-standing traditions, such as Move-In Day, the All-College Retreat, and the fall family open house, and reimagined them to be more cost-effective and time-efficient in planning while still building a sense of community. In that same spirit, the Living-Learning program were suspended this year, due to limited student interest.

Student engagement was strong, with many applications for various roles, including Dons, Ambassadors, Orientation Week Leaders, Student Council, and Larger Leadership Team. 95 residents and associates were involved in formal leadership roles. In total, 87 residents and associates were awarded \$157,555 in scholarships and awards, which recognize leadership, achievements, needs, and contributions to Grebel and the wider community.

With a full residence and apartment building, Grebel residents and associates totalled 272 unique students, in all years of study, in programs across all UWaterloo faculties.

Students enjoyed a vibrant social calendar, as Student Council and Leadership Team organized many events, including mocktails, upper suppers, laser tag, salsa dance night, and a glow-in-the-dark ABBA dance. The "turn out the lights" challenge, initiated by the Environment reps, prompted sustainable actions. The Chapel program collaborated with the Master of Theological Studies program to host a PIE (Public, Intentional, Explicit) Day that celebrated Grebel's 2SLGBTQIA+ community members.

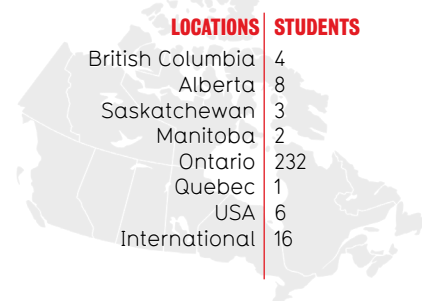
The student body's faith composition included 24% Mennonite, 21% Protestant, 20% Evangelical, 7% Catholic, and 7% other religions. 31% indicated no faith tradition, reflecting larger demographic changes underway in Canada. International students comprised 6% of the student body, including a refugee sponsored by Grebel students.

The year culminated in the annual Convocation service, where 80 undergraduates were celebrated—a lower number than in the past due to the smaller pandemic cohort. At the University of Waterloo's Convocation service, at least seven Grebel students received high honours for outstanding achievements and top marks in their respective programs and faculties. Reflections from graduating students during the last Chapel and Community Supper highlighted resilience, connections, and achievements, demonstrating personal emergence and inviting future possibilities after graduation.

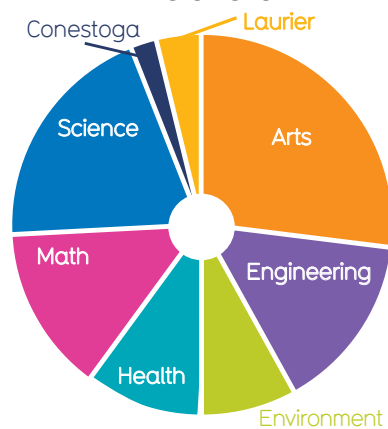
A memorable service trip with Mennonite Disaster Service saw ten students travel to Crisfield, Maryland, where they helped to rebuild homes in a place of need.



REGIONS



AREAS OF STUDY



UNDERGRADUATES OF 2024





PHYSICAL PLANT

Under the supervision of a new Director of Operations and a new Building Operator, the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system servicing the academic wing was replaced for the first time since it was originally installed in 1976, at a cost of \$1.6 million. Work began in late January 2024, with the system changeover in April. The new equipment is modeled to significantly reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. This project is part of a longer-term plan to replace aging infrastructure and equipment at Grebel. Donations to the Green Fund supported this project.

Grebel commissioned WalterFedy engineers to evaluate costs and options for the residence renewal project. Proposed updates included window replacement, washroom renovations, heating and cooling upgrades, and improved insulation. The project aims to replace outdated components, enhance resident comfort, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Efforts are focused on prioritizing these updates and creating a cost-effective, minimally disruptive implementation plan. Improvements will help reach the goal of 35% reduction in emissions by 2030, which was approved by the Board.



FINANCE

The College finished the year with a sizeable operating deficit that was largely (but not entirely) due to the installation of a new heating and ventilation system servicing the academic wing—the first time this equipment was replaced in 50 years. This was part of a longer-term effort to replace aging building systems and reinvest in our physical plant.

Grebel’s largest source of funding is for undergraduate teaching, which is based on a fixed percentage of undergraduate enrolments in the Faculty of Arts. Last year, all Arts enrolments decreased slightly, resulting in a revenue shortfall.

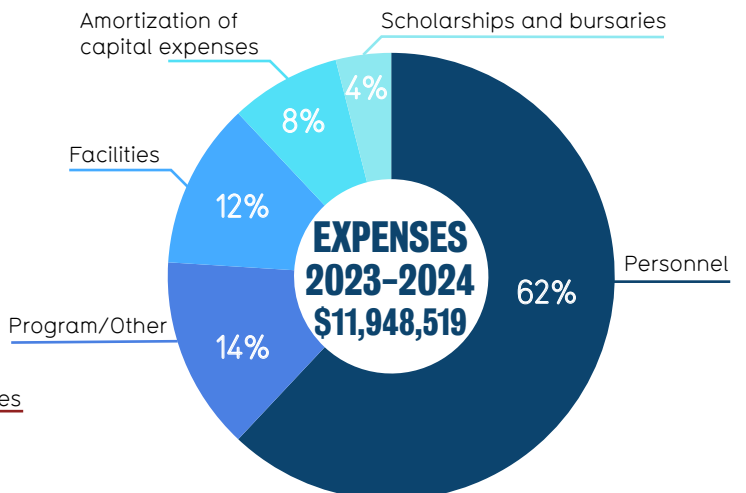
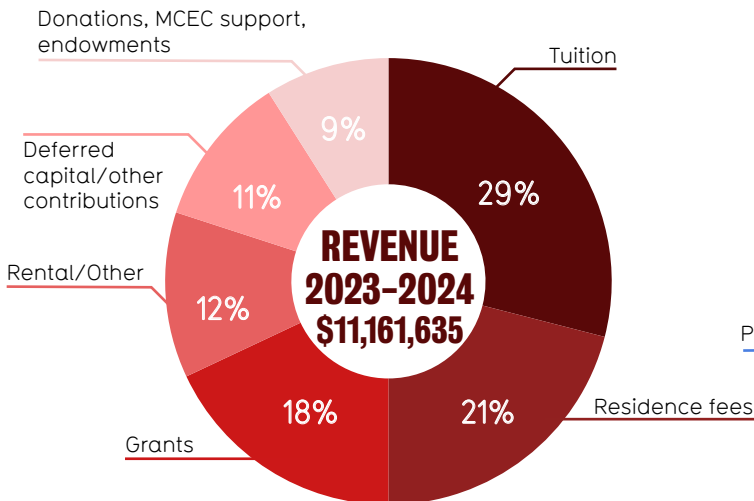
As noted earlier, Ontario universities continued to struggle with flat revenues and rising costs in 2023-24. Grebel is not immune to these challenges. The College trimmed expenses, reduced activity levels in certain programs, and in some cases, declined to fill vacant positions.

In these tough financial times, we are grateful for our endowment portfolio, which generated \$673,884 to supplement program revenue and provide student assistance. We are also very thankful for our generous donors who enabled us to meet our annual fund target of \$375,000.



The annual Scholarship and Bursary Reception connected 26 donors with 90 student recipients, with visiting and a short program.

184 Grebel students received a total of
\$505,228 in awards and bursaries in 2023-24.
\$110,070 came from external sources
\$118,103 came from internal sources, and
\$277,055 came from endowment earnings.



ADVANCEMENT

In 2023-24, the Advancement office focused on engaging with the broader community through fundraising, alumni and church relations, and communications. These relationships are built through personal experiences, storytelling, sharing news, providing resources, and strengthening connections. The College once again received strong support from a loyal extended community. Combined with Grebel Fund donations totalling \$375,034, overall donations and pledges for the year reached \$1,951,873 (4.4% of the total amount raised at UWaterloo last year).

The capital campaign, Windows to the Future, gained momentum, raising money for urgent improvements to the air handling systems, washrooms, and plumbing infrastructure. These essential upgrades will enhance the building's overall functionality and efficiency, and contribute significantly to environmental goals, as well as student satisfaction and comfort. Supported by a Campaign Advisory of alumni and Board members, as of April 30, 2024, Grebel raised \$2,434,751 in donations and pledges toward a \$4 million goal.

With a 10.2% return on investment last year, Grebel's endowments are critical for long-term stability. Two new awards were established: the Marshall Perseverance Award and the E. Paul Penner & Dolores Harms Penner Leadership Award. The Penners also established a new endowment for Student Council to fund residence capital projects and furnishing upgrades. Other gifts to existing endowments honouring friends and family members resulted in donations of \$104,816 for scholarship endowments and \$216,944 for program endowments. Eight estate gifts totalling \$161,446 were received.

54.46% of Grebel donors are alumni, and 364 alumni households donated last fiscal year. Donor retention was strong, and 73% of donors returned to support Grebel students, programs, and projects again this year. Donations are essential for maintaining core programs in a time of funding constraints. Thank you to our donors for your steadfast support as you make a lasting impact at the College.

DONATIONS RECEIVED: \$1,951,873

Scholarships & Bursaries	\$123,600
Operating Restricted	\$474,625
Endowment—Scholarships	\$104,816
Endowment—Program	\$216,944
Capital Fund	\$92,602
Annual Grebel Fund	\$375,035
Windows to the Future (Residence Renewal)	\$564,251

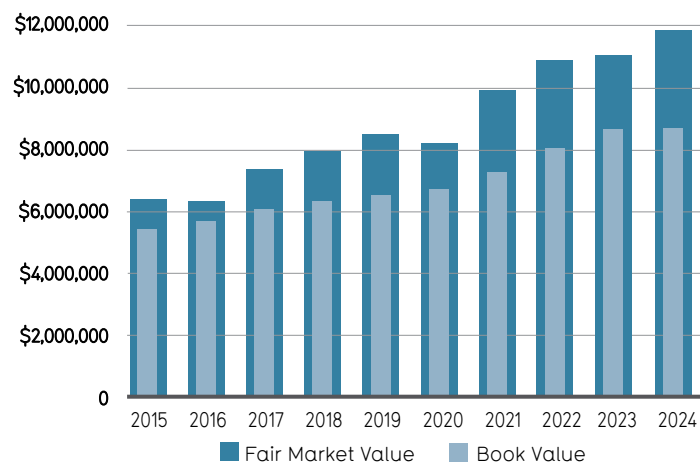


President's Circle donors were invited for a thank you reception before the Three Choirs Concert that celebrated Grebel's 60th Anniversary.



The 60 Alumni Stories project connected with Grebel alumni living around the world to share and celebrate interesting and inspiring life paths and accomplishments, representing six decades of alumni.

ENDOWMENTS: GROWTH OVER 10 YEARS



Angie Koch (BA 1999) received the 2023 Grebel Distinguished Alumni Service Award at an event called "Planting the Seeds of Community," which also included a panel discussion about food production, sustainability, and prioritizing wholesome food as consumers. Panelists were Alleluia Buist (student), Leena Miller Cressman (BA 2010) and Angie.

THANK YOU TO GREBEL'S GENEROUS DONORS

704 DONORS SUPPORTED OUR STUDENTS AND MISSION THIS YEAR!

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Teresa and Chester Keller
Karen and David Kendel
Richard Kennel
Sidra Khan



The Alumni Committee planned 12 alumni events, including a late 80s reunion, an anniversary picnic, a gala, a Blue Jays game, gatherings in regional areas, and a talent show retirement party for Paul Penner. These events drew more than 1000 people in total.

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Nathaniel Kim
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Ann Schultz and
Steve Pfisterer
Susan Schultz
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 Susan Schwartzentruber
Murray Schwartzentruber
and Mary Wright
Lorna Schwartzentruber
Sharon Schwartzentruber



Faculty regularly spoke at MCEC churches and resourced the wider Mennonite church through the Grebel-to-Go program and personal invitations, visiting 20 different congregations in 2023-24. Kate Steiner taught a Worship Practicum course and visited churches with her class and the Chapel Choir.

Jennifer Park
 Fanny Patterson and Peter Rozee
 Nancy Pauls
 Carolyn Pawelko
 PeaceWorks Technology Solutions
 Kate Pearce
Allen Pengelly and
Jenna Paikowsky
 Carol and Eugene Penner
 Marie Penner
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E. Paul Penner and
Dolores Harms Penner
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51 Anonymous Donors
 * We are saddened by the loss of
 these friends.
 Bold = Alumni Households



Nuhu Abdulmalik received a 2023-2024 Rotary Peace Scholarship. The Rotarians of District 7080 worked toward their three-year commitment to sponsor three students each year as part of this scholarship.



STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



CENTRING ON STUDENTS | belonging, vocation, faith formation, programming, alumni

Departments prioritized creating an inclusive community through events and policy improvement, and offered financial aid to historically under-represented students. Students attended presentations and activities that focused on community service and vocation, like the Map the System contest. The Archives worked with students exploring the heritage field, and CPA provided 23 paid co-op jobs or internships. Alumni events connected like-minded students and alumni, while the 60 alumni stories project showed a wide variety of career paths possible after graduation.



ENGAGING OUR PARTNERS | UWaterloo, Mennonites, community

University College (AFIW) leaders regularly met to define their partnership with the University of Waterloo. PACS cross-listed more courses and collaborated on events, while Conflict Management expanded community partnerships. CPA programs supported Waterloo's social impact goals and inspired student involvement, and Student Services strengthened ties with Waterloo's Indigenous Knowledge Keeper. Grebel faculty spoke at MCEC churches, MTS students had placements in Mennonite organizations, and the Library and Archives served as a resource for MCEC and beyond.



EXPLORING NEW PATHWAYS FOR LEARNING | enrolment, scholarship, community, EDI

Theological Studies collaborated with Canadian Mennonite University on shared online courses. With careful course content and diverse guest speakers, TS fostered a student body that values EDI. Music's three new specializations make the curriculum more accessible and decolonizes the curriculum. Both Conflict Management and Spirituality and Aging built on remote learning options with a wider audience. With the inclusion of the Centre for Community Based Research as a Core Collaborator, the CPA expanded opportunities for research activities for faculty and students.



BUILDING RESILIENCE | environment, sustainability, resources, potential

Advancement raised nearly \$2m for operations, scholarships, and capital projects, grew the endowment portfolio by 6.6%, and increased planned giving gifts. The Green Team encouraged environmental stewardship, set the 35% greenhouse gas reduction goal, and initiated the Pollinator Garden. The HVAC upgrade, reducing emissions, was a vital infrastructure upgrade. Student Services scaled down traditions, and other departments examined their programs for efficiencies. To enable employees to realize potential, HR oversaw new staff policies and a salary adjustment.