



NEWS RELEASE

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AU Students buoyed by \$30 million grant Enhanced student services and course offerings anticipated

Athabasca University Students' Union – Doug Horner's Friday announcement of a \$30 million grant for Athabasca University's much needed expansion of the main campus buildings and a new research center is a boon to all Alberta students.

AU currently serves nearly 40,000 undergraduates, many of whom are also taking courses at other Alberta schools. The new funding will address office and teaching space shortages and house the support staff needed to provide quality services to a student population growing at a rate of nearly 10% annually.

AU Students' Union President Lisa Priebe is encouraged by this development toward ensuring that AU continues to provide the highest quality services, but notes that "students are wondering how the new funding will impact them and if additional funding is forthcoming for enhancements to AU's vital electronic infrastructure.

"AU students are really dedicated to the university, but have been worried about how AU will keep pace with rapid increases in educational technology when AU gets less infrastructure funding than other schools. It's true that we do not need the classroom space of other universities, but as a virtual university we absolutely cannot operate without sufficient funding for up-to-date communication technologies."

AUSU thanks the Alberta government for this grant and looks forward to a continuing commitment to increasing affordability, accessibility and quality of education for all Alberta students.

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