



POLICY 7.02

SCHOLARSHIPS, AWARDS & BURSARIES

Scholarships, Awards & Bursaries Program

POLICY INTENT

The intent of the AUSU Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries Program is to promote and acknowledge academic achievement and community spirit in the student population, as well as to provide aid to those members who encounter financial hardships.

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Council

POLICY

Administration of Awards

- 7.02.01 Applications and nominations should be made to the Athabasca University Students' Union, when required, by the deadline stipulated in each award. Incomplete applications will be rejected unless all supporting documents are received by the deadline stipulated. It is the student's responsibility to contact the office to ensure their application has been received and is complete.
- 7.02.02 The AUSU Awards Committee shall be the selection committee for all AUSU awards, with the exception of the Emergency Bursary.
- 7.02.03 Emergency Bursaries shall be disbursed to qualifying applicants by the Executive Director with confirmation from the Awards Committee Chair.
- 7.02.04 The Office Coordinator must forward all completed applications to the Awards Committee within 5 business days of the application deadline. Award recipients will be notified within six weeks of the application deadline.
- 7.02.05 For each fiscal year, any awards that are not given out subsequent to a regularly scheduled awards deadline will be available for the following awards deadline within the same fiscal year. No awards will be carried over into the following fiscal year.
- 7.02.06 There shall be four application deadlines per fiscal year for AUSU awards, to ensure the maximum availability of awards to all members. These deadlines shall be November 1, February 1, May 1, and August 1, and shall apply to all AUSU Scholarships, Bursaries, and Awards, with the exception of the Computer, Travel, and Emergency bursaries.

7.02.06.01 Applications for Computer, Travel, and AUSU Bursaries shall be accepted year-round and decisions shall be made on the applications within two weeks of the committee receiving all necessary information.

Eligibility Criteria

- 7.02.07 AUSU Councillors and staff are ineligible for all AUSU awards.
- 7.02.08 When the number of completed credits is calculated to determine eligibility, all transfer and challenge credits will be included in this number.
- 7.02.09 Eligibility Criteria will vary by award and will be outlined in detail in each award description.
- 7.02.10 Where award descriptions refer to a GPA calculation based on the most recent courses completed, the courses used for this calculation shall be those with the most recent completion dates. When a choice must be made between two or more courses with the same completion date, the course(s) with the highest marks shall be used.
- 7.02.11 Any applicant that is denied a Travel Bursary, Computer Bursary, or Emergency Bursary is encouraged to wait 12 months before reapplying for that or other need based bursaries. If the applicant chooses to replay before 12 months have passed, they must demonstrate a significant change in their financial situation as it relates to the award criteria.

Application Privacy

- 7.02.12 Information and applications submitted for consideration for AUSU scholarships, awards, and bursaries will be used only for the purpose for which it was provided.
- 7.02.13 Applications will be viewed only by AUSU staff, Awards Committee, and Executive members, as necessary.
- 7.02.14 Applications for all AUSU scholarships, bursaries, and awards will be retained by AUSU for one calendar year from the date of original application, and may be reviewed in conjunction with any subsequent applications by the student within that year.
- 7.02.15 All student applications for AUSU scholarships, bursaries, and awards will be destroyed by AUSU one year after the completion of their consideration by the Awards Committee.
- 7.02.16 AUSU may, at its discretion, publish the names of students who are recipients of merit-based scholarships and awards, and may contact some recipients to seek permission to release further information.
- 7.02.17 AUSU will never publish the names of recipients of need-related bursaries, or those who have been declined for AUSU scholarships, awards, or bursaries.

Award Descriptions

- 7.02.18 **AUSU Awards are divided into the following categories:**
1. Academic Achievement Scholarships - (4 awards of \$1000 each totalling \$4000).
 2. Overcoming Adversity Bursaries - (12 awards of \$1000 each totalling \$12,000)

3. Computer Bursaries – (8 awards of one computer valued up to \$900 totaling \$7,200)
4. Travel Bursaries – (\$1000 maximum each; \$2,000 initially budgeted)
5. Emergency Bursaries – (\$500 maximum each for a total of \$6,000)
6. Student Service Awards - (4 awards of \$1000 each totaling \$4,000)
7. Returning Student Awards – (6 awards of one-three credit undergraduate AU course)
8. Balanced Student Awards – (4 awards of one three-credit undergraduate AU course)

1. Academic Achievement Scholarships

Academic Achievement Scholarships are intended to reward excellence in scholarship to Athabasca University students. Applicants will be required to submit a copy of their transcript to be eligible. The applicants with the highest GPA over the last thirty credits will be selected as the recipients of this award.

The number of A+ grades (tallying A+ grades in 6 credit courses as two) will be used to break ties, followed by the number of AU credits completed, followed by the number of A grades (also tallying A grades in 6 credit courses as two).

One scholarship, worth \$1000 and payable to the recipient by cheque will be awarded at each quarterly awards application deadline for a total of four awards per fiscal year for members currently enrolled in AU programs. Members may only receive this award once.

Students must have completed at least thirty credits by the applicable deadline to be considered for this scholarship.

2. Overcoming Adversity Bursaries

Overcoming Adversity Bursaries are intended to aid members in financial need and/or with exceptional life circumstances. Members must demonstrate financial need, have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits and have maintained a GPA of 2.00 (C grade) over the most recent 12 AU Credits. Additional circumstances such as disabilities, single parent/caregiver status, etc., will be taken into consideration. Three awards of \$1,000 each are awarded at each quarterly awards application deadline, and are payable to the recipient by cheque. No member may receive the Overcoming Adversity Bursary more than once per 12 month period. The award deadline will be used for making this determination.

3. Computer Bursaries

Computer bursaries are available to members who demonstrate financial need to provide them with a computer for their course work. Members must have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits and have a GPA of 2.00 (C grade) over the most recent 12 AU credits. A total of 8 Computer Bursaries will be awarded per fiscal year. Computers will be purchased by the Executive Director and shipped directly to the recipient. The total cost of each computer will not exceed \$900 dollars, and AUSU assumes no liability for usage of the computer or computer maintenance once the equipment is received by the member. Members may only receive this award once. Applications are accepted at any time of year.

4. Travel Bursaries

Travel Bursaries are intended to aid members in travelling to attend AU convocation, labs, practicums, on-site courses, or related conferences. Members must demonstrate financial need,

have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits, and have a GPA of at least 2.00 (C grade) over the most recent 12 AU credits. Members must also include one of the following pieces of information with their application form: 1) course or conference description and registration information, 2) lab/practicum confirmation, or 3) confirmation of graduation. A maximum of \$1000 will be provided per successful applicant to pay for travel and/or accommodation. Applications are accepted any time of year; however, they must be submitted a minimum of 30 days prior to the date of travel. AUSU will arrange and pay directly all travel bookings.

A maximum of \$2,000 dollars is allocated for this bursary per fiscal year. Should other awards (ie: Computer Bursary, Returning Student Award, Balanced Student Award) be disbursed at a lesser amount than their originally allocated maximum dollar amount, the excess funds shall be made available within the Travel Bursaries. Should all the funds in the bursary be used prior to the end of the fiscal year, AUSU will announce this on the website and remove application forms until the beginning of the next fiscal year. Members may only receive this award once per year.

5. Emergency Bursaries

Emergency Bursaries are provided to help members pay for AU fees such as course extensions, exam fees, and late exam request fees during times of urgent financial need. Members must demonstrate financial need, have completed a minimum of 9 AU credits and have a GPA of at least 1.70 (C- grade) over the most recent 9 AU credits. Members are allowed to apply for this bursary more than once per fiscal year but may not be awarded assistance greater than \$700 dollars. Fees will be paid directly to AU on behalf of the member. Applications are accepted at any time of the year.

6. Student Service Awards

Student Service Awards are intended to recognize members who have made outstanding contributions to their community. This includes members who volunteer their time to AUSU, AU or to any other community or organization. Members may be nominated by a volunteer supervisor, or may self-nominate as long as an appropriate volunteer reference is provided. Applicants must have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits and have a minimum GPA of 2.00 (C grade) over the last 12 AU credits. One \$1000 award, payable to the recipient by cheque is available at each quarterly awards application deadline. Members may only receive this award once.

7. Returning Student Awards

Returning Student Awards are intended to recognize the challenges faced by students who return to university after two or more years away from any type of formal education. Preference is given to students who have been away for longer periods of time, are AU program students, and those who have overcome or are in the process of overcoming significant hardship in the pursuit of their education. These hardships should preferably be other than financial as AUSU bursaries are devoted to addressing those needs. Applicants must have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits and have a minimum GPA of 2.00 (C grade) over the last 12 AU credits. One award is available at each quarterly awards application deadline totalling four awards per fiscal year.

Each award consists of one three-credit undergraduate AU course. AUSU will directly pay AU

for a new course registration on behalf of the member at the rate applicable in the student's place of residence. Members may only receive this award once. In the case of a re-registration, challenge registration, or any other discounted registration, no remaining funds will be credited to the student.

8. Balanced Student Awards

Balanced Student Awards are intended to recognize and reward the scholastic effort of students who balance multiple commitments, including but not limited to, school, work, volunteerism, and family.

Applicants must have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits and have a minimum GPA of 2.00 (C grade) over the last 12 AU credits, though preference will be given to those applicants with higher GPA. Applicants must write a short essay outlining how they balance their commitments, as well as submit a minimum of two reference letters, one of which may be of a personal nature.

Each award consists of tuition payment for one three-credit AU undergraduate course. AUSU will directly pay AU the respective fee based on the winning student's place of residence, for one three-credit AU undergraduate course on the winning student's behalf. One award is available at each quarterly awards application deadline totalling four awards per fiscal year. Members may only receive this award once.

- 7.02.19 AUSU may, at the discretion of Council, create and distribute one time awards other than and in addition to those discussed in this policy.

POLICY REVIEW

- 7.02.20 The Athabasca University Students' Union - Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries Program will be reviewed annually to ensure fair criteria and maximum availability to all Athabasca University Students' Union members.

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date: August 15, 2004

Updated Date: October 6, 2011

Mandatory Review by Date: October 6, 2012