

Minutes AUSU Council Meeting

APPROVED – October 8, 2014

AUSU Council Meeting
September 10, 2014
Teleconference

Councillors Present: Jason Nixon, Kim Newsome, Alexander Poulton, Bonita Arbeau, Christine Villeneuve, Shawna Wasylyshyn and Megan Daigneault
Staff Present: Tamra Ross, Karyna Hochachka and Sarah Maddock
Other Members: Karl Low, Barbra Lehtiniemi and Sheldon Fougere
Record of Minutes: Sarah Maddock
Absent:
Absent with regrets: Corrina Green, on AUSU business

Call to Order: 17:33 (MST)

Agenda and Minutes

1.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: BIRT council adopt the meeting agenda as presented.

B. Arbeau/S. Wasylyshyn - Carried 7/0 -

2.0 Adoption of Council Meeting Minutes

Motion: BIRT council approve the minutes of the August 13, 2014 council meeting, as presented.

M. Daigneault/A. Poulton - Carried 7/0 -

New Business:

3.0 Motion: BIRT AUSU approves a reserve draw for up to \$ 5,000 to be used for consultant fees in the development of a staff succession plan.

S. Wasylyshyn/K. Newsome - Carried 7/0 -

Reports

- 4.0 President's Report**
Report Accepted.
- 5.0 Vice President External's Report**
Report Accepted.
- 6.0 Vice President Finance's Report**
Report Accepted.
- 7.0 Executive Meeting Report**
Report Accepted.
- 8.0 Finance Committee Report**
Report Accepted.
- 9.0 Awards Committee Report**
Report Accepted.
- 10.0 MEC Committee Report**
Report Accepted.
- 11.0 Executive Director's Report**
Report Accepted.
- 12.0 Office Coordinator's Report**
Report Accepted.

Reports Accepted as Presented

K. Newsome/B. Arbeau

- Carried 7/0 -

Next meeting date and time

17:30 MST on October 8, 2014

Meeting adjourned at 18:26 MST

S. Wasylyshyn moved.

AUSU President Report

Jason Nixon, President



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Covers: August 2014

Prepared: September 3, 2014

Current Issues

Staff Reviews – The executive has updated and developed additions to AUSU's staff review process which was getting out dated and was not providing a lot of avenues for goal setting with staff as well as being focused a lot of outdated requirements of positions. The new process is lot easier to follow and communicate with staff and allows for goal setting which all involved thought was important. One review has been conducted since the development of this process and we have had good feedback from staff on the process.

AU BOG – AU BOG did not have any formal meeting in August. No major board issues have taken place since my last report in regards to AU BOG. Board members have been completing orientation paperwork, skills analysis, board evaluations, and other process met to help prepare for the upcoming strategic planning sessions. Board orientation in scheduled for the second week of September, in fact the first day of two days of meetings is scheduled to take place the day after our September council meeting. Both Corrina and I are planning to attend the orientation session just outside of Cochrane, Alberta for the full two days in person on behalf of AUSU.

BOG Sub Committees – Do not meet during the summer months but schedules have been prepared for the coming year. We have worked with the university to get Corrina on half of the sub committees going forward. Since the last exec's departure I have been on all the committees because the Board does not approve new committee members until September. We now have identified which committees I will stay on and which Corrina will take on this year. The changes will be made officially in September.

Hiring Committee – Committees that had activity this month were the Dean of Science and Technology and the Registrar. The process is confidential at this stage and all I can report is that we continue to work on it and I look forward to announcing the hiring of these positions in the coming months.

Executive Blog – As mentioned last month we implemented an executive blog on our website. This blog will be updated every month by a blog post by a different executive. This means that each exec will do one blog posting every 3 months going forward. I hope you all had a chance to read the VP External first blog post this past month. I will be in charge of writing the second blog post and I hope you all tune in to check that out as well.

ED Succession Plan – Completion of this is one of council's goals for this next term. It was a goal of previous councils that had not been completed as well. It is important for AUSU's future because of the unique abilities and variety of skills that our current Executive Director has that we have identified that AUSU would need to do to replace our Executive Director should she ever decided to move on to other things. To do this we need to identify firstly all the things are Executive Director handles and the needs AUSU has within this role. From there we need to determine if we can replace the variety of roles currently handled by our Executive Director with one position or if we need more than one position and then ultimately build a succession plan for this position. In order to that the Executive and staff have met with a consultant and received a proposal on building such a plan for AUSU. A motion requesting the funds for this succession plan and the consultant fees will be voted on in the September council meeting.

Health Care Plan – It was the original hope of this council and the past council to be able to launch the new health care plan in September of this year. As reported to council in past reports, AUSU has been at the mercy of AU to complete the needed process changes with in AU, particularly in the area of IT, in order for the launch to take place. These changes are still not complete but we are being told they will be completed soon. We are now hoping for an October start, and once AU is done do not anticipate any major delays to launch. Of note our health care plan supplier has in recent weeks become a bit frustrated with the delays and we have spent some time assuring them we still are planning to proceed and that we are simply dealing with a delay because of technology requirements that are outside of AUSU direct control.

GFC – There was a special meeting of GFC held on August 28. This meeting was forced by petition of membership in accordance with GFC rules requiring a special meeting date. The only agenda item that was discussed was in regards to the implementation of the SSC (Call Centre) model across the university and by consequence the removal of the tutor model. Specifically a motion to suspend the implementation of the SSC across the university, this motion was moved and seconded and a lengthily debate took place in regards to it. Both GFC and non GFC members were allowed to speak on their views on the topic. Much of the discussion centred on the history of the SSC decision, if the SSC is a change to the learning model or to a student service. Basically the core of the debate was who should have the authority in this area, AU BOG, GFC, individual faculties, or AU's management. There were also people who presented in support of the centre and many who spoke out about concerns about the centre including student service, tutor wages and many more topics. In the end several amendments were proposed to the original motion and side debates took place

but it was decided by GFC that there was the need for more time to discuss this issue and therefore no vote was called on the motion and a new meeting will be scheduled to continue the debate.

GFC Exec – Dealt with by e-mail the review and voting on off motion associated with more late student graduation applications. Met in regards to upcoming GFC agenda items and scheduling requirements. As well as met to review procedural and process issues for GFC meetings and issue in regards to special meeting of GFC.

Election Policy Project – The consultant has started to provide the executive with the recommendations for change in policy. They have not fully reviewed everything yet but will have all their recommendations into the executive soon. We as a group have started to review the recommendations and have begun to put together our recommendations and questions. This will then go to our lawyer for review and then to council for review and approval.

Social Media – Council has identified the need to see increased social media activity and more consistent communication utilizing these avenues. With that in mind the executive worked with staff this month to compile some guidelines and examples for staff use of social media. We have provided that to staff and Sarah had begun to try and utilize regular updates utilizing our social media platforms. We hope to continue to increase the use of these avenues to reach our membership and most importantly to build consistency with regularity of activity in this area.

Informational Document on AUSU for AU Executives – One of the goals identified this year for AUSU was to create an informational document that provided information on AUSU to be sent to AU executives and other stakeholders within the AU community. Over the last month the exec and staff created a document that including information on who AUSU is, what we do, how were governed, exec bios, goals and core concerns, and other information that is important for advancing our memberships needs. The idea behind this was to build a template that could easily be updated in future years and by future councils and executives to advance AUSU's agenda within AU. This document is now completed and we are compiling it to send out to AU new president and other key executives within the university.

SS Centre – We have worked this month to put together a list of questions that we feel need to be answered and or addressed by AU management in regards to the implementation of the SS Centre. This list was based on the results of AUSU's past Call Centre survey as well as feedback from members. This list has currently been sent out to council for discussion and after feedback from council

September, 2014 Council Meeting

is provided it will be sent to AU management and used as talking points in the SS Centre debate within the university.

Meetings

AUSU Executive Meeting – August 5

Bank Doc Meeting Olds – August 5

CAUS Meeting – August 6

Dean of Science and Technology Hiring Committee – August 11

AUSU Exec Meeting – August 12

AUSU Exec Meet with CUPE – August 12

AUSU Council Meeting – August 13

Registrar Hiring Committee – August 14

Succession Plan Consultant Meeting – August 15

CAUS Meeting – August 15

E-text Meeting – August 18

GFC Exec Meeting – August 21

AUSU Exec Meeting – August 26

AUGSA Meeting – August 26

CUPE Meeting – August 26

GFC Special Meeting Pre-call – August 27

GFC Exec Meeting – August 28

GFC Special Meeting – August 28

Hours

My weekly average: 35.19 hours

Week of:	Hours
August 3 – August 9	35
August 10 – August 16	35
August 17 – August 23	35
August 24 – August 30	35.75
4 Week Average	35.19

I have reviewed the timesheets of the other execs and found that their 4 week average for August was in compliance with policy.

AUSU Executive Report

Kim Newsome, VP External and Student Affairs

Prepared: September 3, 2014



Current Issues

GFC

Special meeting was held on August 28. There were a lot of people in attendance, including some from outside of GFC that were invited. A motion was put to the floor to suspend the implementation of the SSC at this time. The motion was moved, seconded and then was on the floor for discussion. Many people spoke on the motion and concerns/topics ranged from support of the SSC, tutor wages, history of SSC decision, whether the SSC is a change to the learning model or to a student service. Several amendments to the motion were proposed. The meeting concluded without a vote and the decision was made that this requires more discussion and a second meeting would be planned.

GFC – ALEC & LSWG

During the Exec meeting with CUPE, I found out that the LSWG (part 2) had already been having communication and had one meeting. I contacted the chair and am now on the list. Our next scheduled meeting is September 12. They have also set up a site on The Landing to post documents and discussions. I was invited to join this group (today) and will review all documents before the September 12 meeting. At this point, I believe the group is discussing a TOR, outcomes and approaches.

GFC – SAC

No meetings since last report.

AUSU Committees

After a quiet period in MECC, things are getting very busy again. Final revisions to content for The Voice are being completed. Also, the work on the planner has begun and should keep the committee very busy over the next month and a half.

Awards has been very busy with applications for Computer and Travel bursaries. We have also received a large amount of applications for the one time awards on September 1, and some early applications for the November 1 awards deadline. This has been very time consuming for Karyna and we appreciate all the work she has done to help us make this happen!

Social Media

The Exec put together some guidelines and examples for staff use of social media. Sarah has taken on a greater role in this area and has been posting regular updates and content to our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Exec Blog

August was the first month for posting our new Exec Blog. Exec plan to post a new update on the 3rd week of each month. The Exec members will take turns writing the blog. This is a great way to promote more communication with members and give some short updates on what AUSU is working on.

Election Project

Proposed changes to the policy and bylaws are being reviewed by Exec. This is now a very detailed policy and I am finding that the process of reviewing and ensuring it is orderly and is clear is quite time consuming. A first round of revisions have been made and will be discussed. Once Exec are happy with revisions it will be sent to our lawyer for review before being recommended to council.

Exec Meetings

The exec continues to meet weekly with the exception of one week in August where our schedules conflicted. This month some of the main focus has been on the process and format of staff reviews, putting together a package for Mr. MacKinnon and other AU execs, concerns about SSC. The package for AU execs has been completed and by the time you read this it may have been sent to Mr. MacKinnon. The work on a document for SSC concerns is priority and will be put forward to council soon.

AUSU Goals & Planning

Now that September is here, the exec will begin reviewing our planning goals and the timelines on a weekly basis. Work on some goals was started over the summer and at this point I believe we are in a good position. Although I believe our list is achievable, we will have to remain focused and committed to staying on track. It's sometimes hard when other issues come up that are unexpected and time consuming.

Meetings

AUSU Exec Meeting – August 5
AUSU Finance Meeting – August 6
AUSU Exec Meeting – August 12
AUSU Exec Meet with CUPE – August 12

September 2014 Council Meeting

AUSU Council Meeting – August 13
AUSU Exec Meeting – August 26
GFC – Special Meeting Pre-call – August 27
GFC – Special Meeting – August 28

Hours

Weekly Breakdown

Week of:	Hours
August 3-9	30.75
August 10-16	31.5
August 17-23	30.5
August 24-30	30.5
4 Week Average	30.81

Timesheets and Compliance

I have reviewed the timesheets of the other execs and found that their 4 week average for August was in compliance with policy.

News Roundup

Lots of interesting stuff this month related to AU and Alberta. Opinions on proctoring exams, CASA proposes change to student financial assistance, CAUS speaks out on market based tuition increases, Wildrose promises tuition caps and loan relief and AB signs agreement to recognize apprenticeship from NS.

A collection of optional readings related to post-secondary education:

Essay says proctoring is costly; unfairly assumes student guilt: An article published in *University Business* argues that proctoring student exams is a costly and unnecessary process that punishes the majority of students for the actions of a few. Frederick says that approaches to academic dishonesty should focus on plagiarism and falsification rather than cheating on exams, and that rather than devoting resources to proctoring, universities and colleges should be developing better means of assessment. “The bottom line,” he says, “is that if we expect to remain in business, we need to start treating students as customers as opposed to potential criminals.” [University Business](#)

CASA submits pre-budget recommendations to federal government: The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) has submitted its pre-budget recommendations to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance. CASA’s submission emphasizes its view that the high cost of education is delaying young people from achieving [financial independence](#). It calls for changes to Canadian student financial assistance programs

including the removal of employment penalties for working students and the cessation of the Canada Student Loans Program parental contributions policy. . [CASA News Release](#) | [CASA Pre-Budget Submission](#)

AB students upset at proposed market-based tuition increases: Student leaders in Alberta are concerned about proposed plans for market-based tuition hikes for select programs. Students at the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary say there have been mixed messages and a lack of consultation and transparency regarding tuition increases. Navneet Khinda, Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students, said they were “blind-sided” by the news, and that while there had been discussion of “a whole bunch of issues,” market modifiers were never addressed. [Edmonton Journal](#) | [Calgary Herald](#)

AB’s opposition party promises tuition caps and loan relief for students who work in high-demand areas: Alberta’s official opposition leader has said that a government led by the Wildrose party would forgive up to 50% of student loans for PSE graduates who stay to work in AB in areas struggling to find skilled workers. Student leaders in AB recently expressed concern about proposed market-based [tuition hikes](#) for certain programs. [Edmonton Journal](#)

Provinces sign apprenticeship mobility agreements: 4 provinces have signed 2 separate agreements that will enhance labour mobility for apprentices. Alberta and Nova Scotia announced that their agreement will improve the recognition of in-province training, and enable recognition of apprenticeship work experience hours, making it easier for apprentices to achieve certification. Apprentices taking pre-apprenticeship training at Nova Scotia Community College will have their training recognized in AB, saving them from repeating courses and exams. [strategy](#). [AB News Release](#) | [NB News Release](#)

AUSU Executive Report

Corrina Green, VP Finance and Administration

Prepared: September 2, 2014

Current Issues



Policy

As previously noted, policy revision has been on hiatus for the summer months so that the office staff can get caught up on other things as well as wrap up loose ends before we start heavy into the new fiscal year with our new goals list.

Health Plan

The health plan is coming along as expected. Tamra is still meeting with AU and Gallivan on a regular basis and as things come up. We are hopeful, but not guaranteed that this is going to be available to our members for October. This is a very exciting time for our members that have been asking for this plan!

Elections Policy

We are starting the second stage of the Election Project. There have been a number of recommendations made by the consultant to be made to the policy. Exec. has just started their review of the policy and will be taking some time to make sure that we get it right. The policy is quite long and complicated, and our review needs to be thorough. After Exec. is satisfied, it will go to the lawyer for her review, then finally it will be presented to council for approval.

Exec. Blog

This is something new that we have decided to start on the website. Our VPEX, Kim Newsome agreed to be the first to post. I think it is a direct reflection on how we want to be able to communicate more to all of our members. The plan is to update this once a month with each member of Exec. taking a turn at writing.

Staff Reviews

We completed an employee review this month for a member of our office staff. This took considerable time as we have gone to an updated format for conducting the review. Our new format is a great tool for being able to assess how someone is performing as well as an updated goals section.

E-Text Survey

Compiling all of the results into a formal document has started. We are in the early stages of review, but expect that the results will be made public in the very near future.

Succession Planning

We are in the very early stages of looking for some input onto succession planning in particular for our ED, but other office staff as well. These are very important positions to this organization as they are the only ones that are permanent. We feel strongly that there needs to be some planning in place in case anything were to change with our current situation.

Website Updates

There were a number of updates to the website over the past month. Sarah now has a bio. up which completes everyone having posted! There were some changes to the Awards sections that resulted from the one time awards as well as the policy revision. Lastly, there were a number of areas that just needed to be cleaned up and these have been completed. Thanks to Tamra for all of her hard work with this.

AUSU Goals and Planning

Now that the summer “break” is behind us, we are going to start delving into our goals list for the next fiscal year. Each of us on Exec. is championing specific goals and we have laid out timelines. We have all started the very early stages of this planning over the summer on our specific goals but it is now time to get right to them! I am excited about our list for the next year. It is a doable list but with a heavy workload as well.

Committees

AU – BOG has had no meeting this month. We have however been doing some Skills Analysis and Board Assessments. These are normal items that boards undertake on a regular basis. I have also been sent a full Board Orientation package which I have been taking the time to thoroughly review. I will be attending the Board Retreat in September where I have an in-person Orientation planned before the Retreat begins.

GFC –SAAC met one time in August to render decisions on 2 academic cases. Nothing to report out of the ordinary. The committee's regular bi-weekly schedule starts back up next week.

AUSU – Awards committee has been very busy with many computer applications and just recently applications for the travel bursary. I think this is a great testament to how our new communications are working (ie. More frequent newsletter). We have a one-time awards deadline that has just passed and we will be busy working on reviewing the applications in the next week or so.

AUSU – MEC Committee has been quiet for most of August but is starting to gear back up again with work for creation of the 2015 planner.

AUSU – Finance met once over August. Nothing new to note, just a regular review of our financials.

Meetings

AUSU Executive Meeting – August 5th

Finance Committee Meeting – August 6th

AUSU Executive Meeting – August 12th

AUSU Executive Meeting with CUPE– August 12th

AUSU Council Meeting – August 13th

GFC – SAAC Meeting – August 26th

AUSU Executive Meeting – August 26th

Employee Review – August 27th

GFC – Special Meeting Pre-call – August 27th

Hours

Timesheet and Compliance

Week Ending	Hours
August 3 rd - 2014	31.50
August 10 th - 2014	30.00
August 17 th - 2014	30.00
August 24 th - 2014	28.75
TOTAL	120.25
AVERAGE PER WEEK	30.06

Note that August has 5 weeks – the week ending August 31st, I have logged 30.25 hours. I have reviewed Exec.'s hours for the entire month of August and everyone is in compliance as per policy.