

Minutes AUSU Council Meeting

APPROVED – September 9, 2015

AUSU Council Meeting
June 10, 2015
Teleconference

Meeting Called by: Shawna Wasylyshyn, President
Councillors Present: Shawna Wasylyshyn, Corrina Green, Kim Newsome, Megan Daigneault, Christine Villeneuve, and Bonita Arbeau
Other Members: Sandra Livingston and Barbara Lehtiniemi.
Staff Present: Karyna Hochachka, Donette Kingyens (*non-voting*), and Karl Low (*non-voting*)
Record of Minutes: Donette Kingyens
Absent:

Call to Order: 17:32 (MST)

Agenda and Minutes

1.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: BIRT council adopt the meeting agenda as presented.

20150610.01 Friendly amendment to agenda item 2.0 to state “May 13, 2015” instead of March 11, 2015”.

17:34 MST K. Low joins the meeting.

B. Arbeau/K. Newsome - Carried 6/0 -

2.0 Adoption of Council Meeting Minutes

Motion: BIRT council approved the minutes of the May 13, 2015 council meeting, as presented.

20150610.02 **Friendly amendment** to note that Jason Nixon was a non-member at the time of the meeting.

18:00 MST K. Low leaves the meeting.

C. Villeneuve / B. Arbeau - Carried 6/0 -

Old Business

- 3.0 Motion** BIRT AUSU accept the presented updated copy of Policy 2.01 Conflict of Interest and Bias for inclusion in our policy manual.

20150610.03 **Motion** to table the motion to July meeting.

M. Daigneault / B. Arbeau - Carried 6/0 -

Action and Discussion Items

- 4.0 Email Vote Ratification:** BIRT AUSU Council call a By-Election to fill 3 vacant seats on Council. C. Villeneuve moved, B. Arbeau seconded. Defeated 3/3 (per policy 5.5.4.2)

K. Newsome/M. Daigneault - Carried 6/0 -

- 5.0 Motion:** BIRT AUSU accept the project of redesigning the AUSU website. AUSU further approves a reserve draw for \$15,000 to cover the cost.

K. Newsome/B. Arbeau - Carried 6/0 -

- 6.0 Motion:** BIRT AUSU accept the project of offering Mental Health Services to AUSU members. AUSU further approves a reserve draw for \$ 24,817.85 plus applicable taxes for the cost of services to Ceridian.

C. Villeneuve/M. Daigneault - Carried 6/0 -

- 7.0 Motion:** BIRT AUSU supports becoming a member of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA). AUSU further approves a reserve draw for \$19,468.72 to cover the membership fee for one year.

B. Arbeau / C. Green - Carried 6/0 -

Reports

- 8.0 President's Report**

Report Accepted.

9.0 Vice President External's Report
Report Accepted.

10.0 Vice President Finance's Report
Report Accepted.

11.0 Executive Meeting Report
Report Accepted.

12.0 Finance Committee Report
Report Accepted.

13.0 Awards Committee Report
Report Accepted.

14.0 MEC Committee Report
Report Accepted.

15.0 Executive Director's Report
Report Accepted.

16.0 Office Administrator Report
Report Accepted.

Reports Accepted as Presented

M. Daigneault/K. Newsome

- Carried 6/0 -

Meeting adjourned at 19:08 MST

C. Green moved.

Next meeting date and time

19:07 MST on July 8, 2015

AUSU Executive Report

Shawna Wasylyshyn, President

Prepared: May 28 , 2015

Current Issues



Committees:

General Faculties Council – May 11 GFC Meeting – This was my first time attending a GFC meeting. The major topics at the meeting were the new budget that was passed that morning by the Board of Governors and the Presidential task force on sustainability. There is concern that the budget may change again due to change in government. There is some pushback on the Presidential task force because not all departments were invited to participate in the task force and because of that they don't feel it should continue. President McKinnon reminded everyone that he has the authority over any and all affairs of the University, including the task force. There is an employee recognition event at AU in October. I'm hoping that I am able to attend, it promises to be a great evening.

Sub Committees:

Academic Learning Environment Committee: May 12 ALEC Meeting – This was my first meeting as part of the ALEC committee. The highlight of this meeting was the presentation of the LSWG report. The learning services working group was formed with stakeholders from many different areas among the ALEC Committee, and Kim Newsome sat on the committee to represent AUSU. Kim was thanked a number of times during the meeting for her contribution to the report. The report highlighted many viewpoints of students on topics such as e-text, student success centre and more. Executive has now agreed that VPEX, Bonita Arbeau will take the position on this committee going forward.

Student Awards Committee: May 19 SAC Meeting – I missed this meeting due to other AUSU business at CASA foundations.

SRM Project – Student Advisory Group: No meetings this month.

Registrar Hiring Committee: May 29 – Shortlisting Meeting. These meetings are confidential.

AUSU MECC: No meetings this month, but plenty of work via email/online collaboration. I was chairing this committee, but with the election of Bonita Arbeau, the new VPEX I am no longer chair as of June 1, but will sit on the committee as President of AUSU. In May, MECC launched a survey on member services and a newsletter and is working on a social media strategy.

AUSU Awards: May 25 – AUSU Awards committee meeting – Committee voted to award 13 needs or merit based awards to exceptional members of AUSU.

Dean, Faculty of Business Hiring Committee: Attended the shortlisting meeting, interviews will take place in person in early June. These meetings are confidential.

Meeting with Dr. Margaret Edwards, Dean of Health Sciences: She is interested in testing SSC but AU is holding back for now. We discussed her opinions about sustainability at AU, she acknowledges that changes must occur but is confident that Health Sciences is sustainable due to the large number of program students. I asked about lack of engagement from Health Sciences students at AUSU, and she pointed out that it could be due to the demographic. However, she praised us for doing what we can to engage the students in Health Sciences.

AUSU Business

Changes to Council – Jason Nixon was elected as an MLA in the Alberta Provincial Election on May 5, 2015. Consequently, he resigned from council and per bylaws, I took over as President immediately. On May 13, an executive election revealed Bonita Arbeau as the new VPEX at AUSU. We are thrilled to have a full executive once again.

Social Media - I had been making an effort to Tweet and post to Facebook numerous times each week. Response was positive, with continued “likes” and “retweets”. We also implemented a procedure in which any motion passed through an email or working meeting vote would be tweeted. Doing this immediately publishes the information on our website and to any of our followers. Hopefully this will continue to reinforce transparency. For now, the VPEX will be responsible for tweeting any motion passed in this manner. VPEX and Staff will work together to create a social media strategy which staff will execute in the future.

Legal Update – I was contacted by the Legislation Manager, Strategic Policy and Legislation Branch at Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education. It was brought to my attention that an anonymous complaint had been brought forward regarding suspected bylaw infractions at AUSU. I am happy to report that after this agency had done a thorough investigation of AUSU – which included our bylaws, policies, meeting minutes, press releases, website, blogs and social media accounts – we were advised that they had no further concerns at this time and a report would be provided to the Minister of Education to that effect. We have made plans to communicate regularly with this branch and as always, are committed to upholding the bylaws of AUSU.

Mobile App – The developers are working on the app, we will meet with AUGSA in June to discuss further.

Lobbying – Executive council has been investigating the opportunities presented by CASA – The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations. They are a national lobby group representing 22 student associations from across Canada. Corrina and I attended the CASA Foundations 2015 annual conference as observers in Ottawa from May 18 – 21. We are currently researching all options available to us before we approach Council with a recommendation or motion.

Mental Health – Executive is working with Kim who is preparing to approach Council with a recommendation and motion to introduce a mental health plan for AUSU members.

Website Updates –AUSU received a proposal for a new website. Council will be voting on it soon. A new website will have many great features such as online award applications and course evaluation surveys. With the new site, AUSU staff will have the capability of updating the website to include meeting notices, blogs and any other information. This will be much more cost effective for AUSU and interactive for members.

AUSU AGM – The AUSU AGM was held on May 27, 2015. The meeting had a fairly low turnout, with only 14 voting members, 7 of which were Councillors or staff. Unfortunately, a motion was brought forward and passed stating that I had violated AUSU Bylaws 7.2, 7.3 and 5.3.1 b). I abstained in the vote, and it was carried 7/5/2. Obviously, I find this very disappointing.

In reference to Bylaw 7.2 and 7.3 - In April, just days after taking office as VPEX I was thrust almost immediately into the position of Acting President, Acting Executive Director and Acting Editor in Chief of The Voice. It was during that time, that a legal threat in reference to an article in “The Voice” was presented. Being aware of my responsibilities and their conflicts, I contacted legal counsel, who advised me of the actions to take that would best protect AUSU & The Voice. I would never have done so in any capacity other than Acting Executive Director and was forced to act in that role. I was not acting as a councillor, VPEX or President when I executed the power over The Voice. Only as Editor in Chief.

In reference to Bylaw 5.3.1 b) – This Bylaw specifically reads that an email must be sent to all members on the subscribed email list. I confirmed both during and after the meeting, there is absolutely no way to become part of such a list. There is no list of subscribed members to email. Of course we do have access to our entire list of members, but not a list of subscribers as the bylaw states.

Finally, AUSU Bylaw 2.2.4 states: Liberal Interpretation: these Bylaws must be interpreted broadly and generously, subject, where required, to the laws of Alberta and Canada. If proper consideration is given, it is clear that I did not violate AUSU Bylaws. I would encourage anyone with questions or comments regarding this to contact me directly at president@ausu.org.

For now, council has suspended all non-essential activities pending the results of an inquiry with our lawyer. We want to ensure that our Council is legitimate, and that any motions passed are binding. Once we have that clarification, we can get back to the implementing all of the fantastic new services as described above!

Meetings

- May 4 – Meeting with Dr. Margaret Edwards
- May 6 – Health Plan Presentations
- May 7 – AUSU Executive Meeting
- May 7 – AUSU website proposal
- May 8 – Faculty of Business Dean Hiring Committee meeting
- May 11 – GFC meeting
- May 12 – ALEC meeting
- May 13 – AUSU General Council Meeting
- May 14 – AUSU Executive Meeting
- May 19 – CASA Foundations Conference
- May 20 – CASA Foundations Conference
- May 21 – CASA Foundations Conference
- May 21 – Meeting with Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education
- May 25 – Awards Committee Meeting
- May 26 – AUSU Executive Meeting
- May 27 – AUSU Annual General Meeting
- May 29 – Registrar Shortlisting Meeting

Hours

Weekly Breakdown

Week of:	Hours
May 4 – May 10	38.5
May 11 – May 17	32.0
May 18 – May 24	51
May 25 – May 31	39.5
4 Week Average	40.25

Timesheets and Compliance

I have reviewed Corrina's and Bonita's timesheets and found that their weekly averages for May were in compliance with policy.

AUSU Executive Report

Bonita Arbeau, VP External and Student Affairs

Prepared: June 1st, 2015

Current Issues



Committees

I have been added to the list for the following AU committees:

- Academic Learning Environment Committee (ALEC)
- General Faculties Council (GFC)
- Academic Excellence Awards Committee (AEAC)

The first meeting that I will be attending of any of these AU committees will be on June 17th. In the meantime, I have been spending time reviewing GFC by-laws, committee TORs, and past agendas and minutes.

AUSU MECC: There were no meetings held this month, but MECC has several projects on the go by e-mail. We worked on the content for May's newsletter (which was sent to members on May 22nd), edited section 2 of the orientation manual, worked on the survey questions for the course evaluations, and started working on June's newsletter.

AUSU Awards: Awards met on May 25th and selected the recipients of the May awards draw. We also reviewed 2 computer applications (1 approved, 1 declined) and 1 travel bursary (declined).

Social Media

	Followers / "Likes"
Facebook	567 (+16)
Twitter	500 (+13)

I have been continuing to post to AUSU's Facebook and Twitter accounts every 2-3 days. I have also been busy responding to inquiries/concerns posted on AUSU's Facebook page.

Each Executive has a new twitter handle: AUSU_president, AUSU_VPEX, and

AUSU_VPFA. These twitter accounts are currently customized with each of our names and profile pictures, but will be handed along to new Execs during a changeover period. This will allow each Exec to communicate with students as themselves but within the capacity of their Exec role and post things related to their role and/or PSE in general. Staff will also have a copy of the account passwords. I am also working on a social media plan that staff will be able to carry out (and build upon) for the official AUSU Twitter and Facebook accounts. Once completed, staff will be responsible for posting to the official accounts.

AUSU Business

Changes to Council – On May 13th, I was elected as AUSU's new VPEx. There were also changes to committee structures to accommodate this change that will be further detailed in each committee report.

Mobile App – Nothing new to report with mobile app. Exec will be meeting with AUGSA Exec on June 9th so hopefully we will have some progress on this project soon.

Lobbying – Following the May 13th Council meeting, Council was given a great presentation by CASA's Executive Director. Shawna and Corrina then attended CASA's Foundations Conference in Ottawa and reported that they were impressed with what they heard and saw. Exec agrees that CASA is a good fit for AUSU.

Mental Health – Exec has reviewed the proposals and agreed that Ceridian provides the greatest benefit to AUSU members. Kim has notified both companies, and sent out information to Council for them to review.

Website Updates – I forwarded the final proposal for AUSU's new website to Council on May 29th, where it is now under review.

AGM – AUSU's AGM was held on May 27th. Shawna chaired the meeting and engaged the services of a parliamentarian to help keep the meeting on track and in accordance with by-laws and Robert's Rules of Order. The AGM lasted a little over 4 hours and there were many questions from the 7 non-councillor, non-staff members who were in attendance. In short, motions were put forward and passed to recognize that Shawna, Corrina, and Jason had each broken various AUSU by-laws. Exec is consulting legal counsel on how we must move forward. In the meantime, until it is confirmed that Shawna and Corrina can remain on Council, all projects (mentioned above) and policy reviews have been put on hold.

Exec Blog – I have written an Exec Blog, which will be posted to the website in early June. The blog is forward-looking and talks about various projects that AUSU has on the go.

June, 2015 Council Meeting

Survey – The survey has generated a fair amount of interest already, and there are still 2 weeks remaining before the draw on June 15th. It has over 700 respondents, and the preliminary results have been very informative! After the survey is closed, staff and I will be working together to create a summary of the survey results. My plan is to provide a brief summary to AUSU members in July's newsletter, and then to provide a more comprehensive review to Council.

Newsletter – Along with the MEC committee, I have started working on June's newsletter. I would like to get the newsletter out in early June so we can promote convocation along with our survey again.

Awards – I will be working with staff to promote the recipients of the May 1st deadline awards. Staff will obtain a photo and very short bio from each award recipient so that can be incorporated into AUSU's newsletter and promoted through social media. I believe it is really important to recognize outstanding AU students, and this will also give us a way to promote AUSU awards at the same time!

Meetings

May 14 – Exec Meeting
May 25 – Awards committee meeting
May 26 – Exec Meeting
May 27 – AGM

Hours

Weekly Breakdown

Week of:	Hours
May 18 - 24	30.25
May 25 - 31	30.75
2 Week Average	30.50

Timesheets and Compliance

I reviewed Shawna's and Corrina's timesheets and found that their weekly averages for May were in compliance with policy.

News Roundup

Articles about AUSU:

<https://landing.athabasca.ca/blog/view/1069240/taxation-without-representation-ausu>

<http://www.voicemagazine.org/articles/featuredisplay.php?ART=10508>

<http://www.voicemagazine.org/articles/articledisplay.php?ART=10517>

<http://daveberta.ca/2015/05/jason-nixon-athabasca-university-students-union/>

<http://metronews.ca/news/edmonton/1384301/athabasca-university-student-leaders-violate-bylaws-could-face-expulsion/>

PSE Articles:

Students leave \$5 M in scholarships on the table each year

A new study has found that more than \$5 M in scholarship funding went unclaimed by Canadian college and university students, most often because nobody applied for the money or because nobody fit the award criteria. Western University Financial Services Manager Valerie Sarkany said that at her institution, 98% of scholarships are claimed; what is left over sits in the scholarship account until the next year. Sarkany said that most scholarships are awarded automatically to make sure that the funding reaches students who need it. One problem is a lack of information; many students across the country are unaware that there are scholarships offered year-round.

[London Free Press](#)

MRU budget tackles budget shortfall with tuition increase, program amalgamation

Mount Royal University's board of governors has approved an interim fiscal plan that introduces voluntary retirement offers, department amalgamations, and tuition fee increases to help address a \$7.4 M budget shortfall. Tuition will increase by 2.2%, student services fees will increase by 65%, and the international student tuition multiplier will increase from 2.25% to 3.25%. Two faculties and as many as eight departments will be amalgamated under the plan. MRU President David Docherty emphasized that no programs have been eliminated, and said that the amalgamations should not affect the day-to-day lives of students. He added that the terms of the budget

could be adjusted if MRU receives additional funding from the province.

[Calgary Herald](#)

Uncertainty around tuition increases in Alberta

With the recent change in Alberta's government, students and PSE institutions are wondering whether certain tuition increases will go ahead as planned. The newly elected NDP government promised during its election campaign that it would freeze tuition and cancel upcoming [market modifier tuition increases](#); however, the NDP has not yet issued its 2015–16 budget. Some students are hoping that the market-modifier approvals will be reversed and that new legislation will close up other tuition-related loopholes, such as mandatory non-instructional fees. PSE leaders have noted that any caps or changes to tuition should be offset by increases to operating grants and more stable funding. Opposition critic Mark Smith stated that the Wildrose party supports capping tuition increases to the rate of inflation but would not back a tuition freeze.

[Calgary Herald](#)

MacEwan raises tuition, application fees amid budget uncertainty

Students at MacEwan University will pay a bit more in tuition and application fees next year as the institution looks to find \$5 M in savings to achieve a balanced budget. MacEwan plans to increase tuition by 2.2%, and will also eliminate 41 positions, 34 of which are already vacant. Application fees for Canadian students will increase from \$70 to \$110, while application fees paid by international students will drop from \$140 to \$110. President David Atkinson said that the institution has been forced to make the cuts due to a combined grant decrease of 4.5% over the next two years; he noted that it is difficult to plan ahead given that Alberta does not currently have a provincial budget in place.

[Edmonton Journal](#)

AUSU Executive Report

Corrina Green, VP Finance and Administration

Prepared: June 2nd, 2015

Current Issues



May has been a very busy month with sadly no real progress. There have been many changes and as a result, it has just been keeping our heads above water. I am not at this meeting in person as I will be travelling to Athabasca for Convocation to celebrate the successes of all the members that have earned their degrees. It is an incredible experience to witness and hear the stories of those that have finally made it and one that I am grateful to be a part of!

President

With the Alberta election came the resignation of our President, Mr. Jason Nixon who won his seat as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Wildrose party. We wish Jason all the best in his future endeavors and thank him for the almost 4 years of service to AUSU.

As per policy, our former Vice President of External Affairs (VPEX), Shawna Wasylyshyn became our new President after being in her VPEX role for just barely a month. Welcome to Shawna. We held Executive elections, and I am happy to announce our new VPEX for the remainder of this council's term is Bonita Arbeau.

With all the roles filled permanently again, we can get down to work!

AGM

The Annual General Meeting took place on May 27th at 5:30pm MST, with 17 people in attendance. 6 were current councillors, 3 staff (1 member, 2 are not), 1 parliamentarian and 7 AUSU members. I would encourage all the members that are interested in hearing about AUSU to make a point of coming to the next AGM as 7 members really is not a representation of the membership at all.

There were a couple of motions brought forward by the membership that may have a significant impact on our current council. We are currently awaiting a legal ruling to ensure that we are acting in the most correct manner going forward. Sadly as a result, we have decided that we will not be moving forward on any projects at this time, while we wait for an informed decision on council's next steps.

Policy

We have not reviewed any policies for this month. The policy schedule has been created for the year and requires much less policy work this year in comparison to last. Policy review will move forward as soon as it becomes clear what the direction for Council will be.

CASA – Foundations Conference

Shawna Wasylyshyn and I had the pleasure of attending the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Foundations conference as observers in Ottawa this month. For us, it was a chance to both see exactly what CASA brings to the table and to develop a better understanding of the organization. It was a great few days spent with some incredible guest speakers with topics such as student financial aid, mental health initiatives, policy development, media and governance training and so much more. This is my second trip to a CASA conference and after this visit, I firmly believe that this is an organizations that AUSU needs to become a part of.

Committees

GFC –SAAC met twice in May. This committee operated under a strict confidentiality agreement, but I can report that nothing out of the ordinary course of Academic Appeals has been heard.

AUSU – Awards Committee had its spring deadline for awards and decisions have been finalized. Congratulations to all those that applied! The decisions were difficult.

AUSU – Finance Committee did not meet in May.

ERP Service Advisory Group – This is a monthly meeting as part of the new ICT Governance framework at AU. Requests for change have been slow coming into this group – acknowledged that people were likely not aware of the new processes as there are many changes that are likely needed.

Pedagogy and Research Service Advisory Group – This is a monthly meeting as part of the new ICT Governance framework also. We discussed and voted on a number of Requests for Change that fall under the umbrella of this SAG.

Senior Executives within AU – This month we met with Dr. Margie Edwards, the Dean for the Faculty of Health Disciplines. These meetings are a great way to informally keep up with what is going on within AU and build relationships with people that we can then go to when needed.

AU – Board of Governors – Finance and Property – This month the committee met twice. Once was to approve the audited financial statements. Nothing out of the ordinary here. The second meeting was to approve the Comprehensive Institutional Plan as well as the Sustainability Taskforce Report to be submitted to the Alberta government. Both items were approved and directed to the BoG for further approval.

AU – Board of Governors – The Board met 2 times this month, and along with the motions to approve the above notes items from Finance, we also heard a number of reports for information referring to AU Risk Management, as well as quarterly updates from Finance, etc. There is nothing out of the ordinary here to report. AU continues to focus on its sustainability issue, which if not worked out makes AU insolvent inside of 2 years. This of course, is the main focus moving forward.

Meetings

Meeting with Dr. Edwards – FHD Dean – May 4th

Aspiria Presentation – May 6th

Ceridian Presentation – May 6th

Meeting with Jason Nixon – May 6th

AUSU Executive Meeting – May 7th

Meeting with Web Developers – May 7th

GFC – SAAC – May 7th

Student Success Group – May 8th

AU – BoG – Finance and Property Committee – May 11th

AU – BoG Meeting – May 11th

Meeting with Karyna and Shawna – May 13th

AUSU Council Meeting – May 13th

AUSU Executive Meeting – May 14th

Meeting with Karyna – May 14th

CASA Foundations Conference – May 18th-May 21st

GFC – SAAC – May 21st

AUSU Awards Committee Meeting – May 25th

AUSU Executive Meeting – May 26th

Pedagogy and Research SAG Meeting – May 26th

ERP SAG Meeting – May 27th

June 2015 Council Meeting

AUSU AGM – May 27th

AU – BoG Property and Finance Committee – May 29th

AU – BoG Meeting – May 29th

Hours

Timesheet and Compliance

Week Ending	Hours
May 3 rd – 2015	27.25
May 10 th – 2015	31.00
May 17 th – 2015	25.00
May 24 th – 2015	55.50
May 31 st – 2015	39.75
TOTAL	178.50
AVERAGE PER WEEK	35.70

At the time of writing this report, I have reviewed the other Executive's hours and they are within the guidelines.