

Annual Report 2018

For the fiscal year spanning October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017



Serving the needs of Athabasca University undergraduate students **around the world** since 1992.



Athabasca University
Students' Union

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The data in this report refers to the 2016/2017 fiscal year spanning October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017. For verification and explanation of all financial data, contact the AUSU VP Finance and Administration at vpfa@ausu.org.

The 'year ahead' section refers to the 2017/2018 fiscal year spanning October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018.

Email ausu@ausu.org if you have any questions pertaining to this report.

AUSU Values and Guiding Principles

Students First: AUSU will keep students at the heart of the organization, understanding that its primary objective is to enhance the overall undergraduate student experience at Athabasca University. AUSU is proud to be a student organization and celebrates its members successes, while enhancing the recognition of AUSU members and their interests.

Relevance: AUSU programs and services are developed based on the needs of AU undergraduate students and must be relevant to those ever-changing needs.

Accountability: AUSU will strive to be transparent and accountable in all aspects of the organization, while always respecting student dollars. AUSU will be aware that all actions set precedent.

Excellence: AUSU will continually strive for a high level of integrity, quality, professionalism, and respect, while holding AU to the same level of excellence at all levels of the University.

Community: AUSU will promote and participate in developing awareness and recognition of open, online, and distance education.

Advocacy: AUSU will advocate to all levels of the university and government to ensure that undergraduate students are represented, and their voices are heard. AUSU will advocate for the individual but never to the detriment of the whole.

AUSU Council will strive to uphold the values and principles of the organization and constantly measure themselves against them.

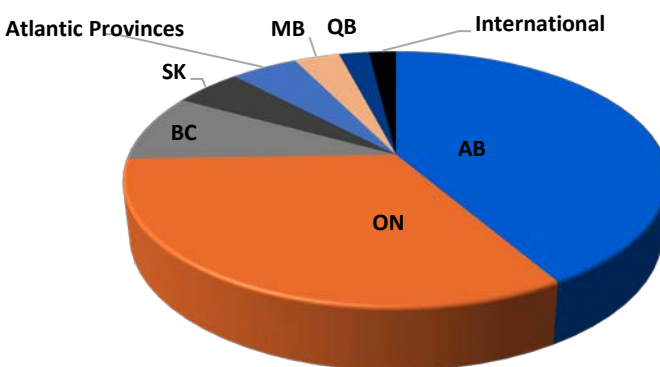
Demographics

AUSU represents a unique demographic of students. Since Athabasca University is an open, online institution, AUSU's membership is spread all across Canada, and increasingly across the world.

Undergraduate Student Enrollment

AU students come from every Canadian province and territory and 87 countries worldwide. *

Location	Percent
Alberta	40.9%
Ontario	32.4%
British Columbia	8.4%
Saskatchewan	4.8%
Atlantic Provinces	4.7%
Manitoba	3.2%
Quebec	2.1%
International	1.9%



* Data from <http://www.athabascau.ca/aboutau/glance/>. January 27, 2017.

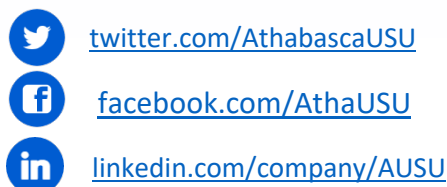
Organization Info

Athabasca University Students' Union

301 Energy Square
10109 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB T5J 3L7

Direct Line: 780.497.7000
Toll free: 1.855.497.7003
Office hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 – 4:30

Social Media



AUSU Staff

Executive Director

Jodi Campbell executivedirector@ausu.org

Communications and Member Services Coordinator

Donette Kingyens services@ausu.org

Governance and Advocacy Coordinator

Emmanuel Barker governance@ausu.org

Administrative Assistant

Jamie Mulder admin@ausu.org

The Voice Magazine Editor

Karl Low karl@voicemagazine.org

AUSU Council

President

Shawna Wasylyshyn president@ausu.org
twitter.com/AUSU_president

VP External and Student Affairs (VPEx)

Julian Teterenko vpex@ausu.org
twitter.com/AUSU_VPEX

VP Finance and Administration (VPFA)

Brandon Simmons vpfa@ausu.org
twitter.com/AUSU_VPFA
As of January 1, 2018

Councillors

Robin Bleich *As of October 13, 2016*

Andrew Gray

Amanda Lipinski *As of October 13, 2016*

Kim Newsome

Brandon Simmons

Previous Council & Executives

Scott Jacobsen *Until November 6, 2017*
VPFA from Apr 2016 – Nov 2017

Dixie Toliver *Until January 10, 2017*

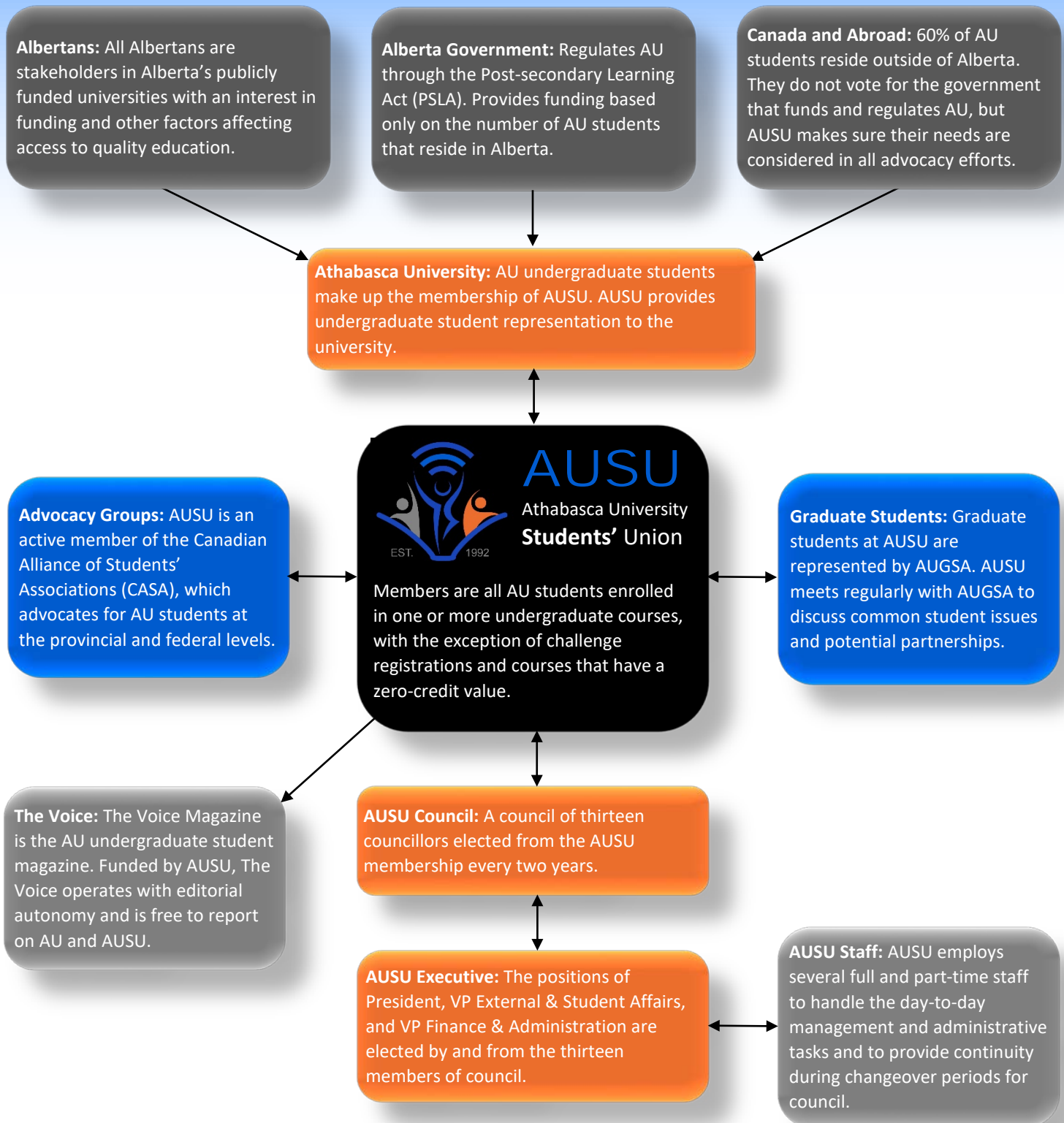
www.ausu.org

DID YOU KNOW?

AUSU was the first students' union in the world devoted to serving the needs of distance education students. Since our inception in 1992, we have developed programs and practices that have been adopted by other burgeoning students' unions serving distance education populations worldwide.



Organization Structure



President Report

The AUSU fiscal year ending September 30, 2017 represented a period of growth, planning, re-alignment, increased community representation, and a celebration of our history.

Financially AUSU had a stable year, boasting a small increase in net assets and an almost perfectly balanced budget, largely due to funds spent on equipment assets and the performance of our investments. AUSU remains in a strong position financially and is experiencing stability as a result of accurate budgeting and careful spending.

This year, AUSU created the full-time staff position of AUSU governance and advocacy coordinator, in hopes of creating long term stability in our internal and external efforts. Providing support to existing staff and executive while assisting in the maintenance and development of AUSU documents will strengthen our processes and ensure longevity in our institutional knowledge. This grew our staff to a new height of 4 full time staff and 1 part-time staff.

AUSU council held an in-person retreat in Athabasca in June of 2017, which included participation of 7 councillors and 2 staff members.



Pictured above: Executive Director Jodi Campbell, (former) VP Finance and Administration Scott Jacobsen, Councillor Robin Bleich, Councillor Kim Newsome, AU President Neil Fassina, AUSU President Shawna Wasylshyn, VP External and Student Affairs Julian Teterenko, Councillor Amanda Lipinski, Councillor Brandon Simmons

The retreat was held on the AU campus, and we were able to schedule many face to face meetings with our stakeholders, while observing the excitement and celebration of convocation. Funding for a 2018 event was included in the 2017/2018 budget and we hope that this is something that future councils will continue to prioritize.

During our retreat, council laid the foundations of what would become our 2017-2020 strategic plan. We shared ideas, created priorities, and identified areas where growth and increased funding would be most impactful to the long-term health of our organization. We finalized our guiding principles and approved a document to guide the immediate and near future of AUSU.

In our role as representatives of all undergraduate students at Athabasca University, AUSU council was busy this year. We continue to hold seats as members of AU's governing bodies, the Board of Governors and General Faculties Council; as well as standing committees of each. We also participate on each AU Faculty Council and meet regularly with each member of the AU executive team, as well as each Dean.

On behalf of our fellow students, we advocated to AU on topics such as response times for academic questions and assignment grades, as well as etext/course material cost savings and choice. We launched fun engagement campaigns called #igo2AU and #augoals to hear from our members and utilize crowd sourcing to improve our work. In addition, we successfully advocated for tuition and fee increases for international students to be grandfathered at a reasonable rate of increase as opposed to the significant increase that was originally proposed.

As members of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, we participated in all 4 annual conferences with CASA, including sending all 3 executives to the CASA advocacy week conference in Ottawa in November 2016, as well as 1 to the CASA AGM at Acadia University in March. We had two executives attend CASA Foundations in Ottawa in May and AUSU was proud to host the policy and strategy conference in Kananaskis, AB in July 2017. CASA

President Report continued...

remains a valuable link to our community and an important avenue through which we can advocate.

A significant amount of planning and consultation culminated with the approval of our newly approved 2017 bylaws. This project began in 2015 and involved hundreds of hours of research, consultation, review and discussion. We are proud of the results and are confident that the new, strengthened bylaws will put AUSU in a strong position to weather any future decisions it may come to face. As part of the bylaw review, a realignment of the relationship between AUSU and The Voice Magazine took place. This realignment ensures a separation between the financial and editorial oversight of the publication and will ensure a long, healthy, and sustainable future for AUSU's student publication.

In 2017, AUSU celebrated its 25th birthday, with a rebranding and recognition of our history. We celebrated among members, alumni, AU Faculty and Board representatives in Athabasca with a cake and party in June at convocation. I have no doubt that our organization will continue to serve the diverse and unique student body of Athabasca University for many years to come.

On a personal note, serving AUSU council in the role of president from 2015 to 2018 has been an incredibly rewarding and enriching experience. I am proud to depart from the organization while it reaches new heights, achieves new milestones and is poised to represent the members of AUSU in the most impactful way possible.



Shawna Wasylyshyn
AUSU President

AUSU continues to provide lynda.com membership for free to all members.



The banner features a dark, geometric background with a Lynda.com logo on the left. The text "New Skills. Improved skills. Now." is prominently displayed in the center. Below the text, there are ten colored squares, each representing a different skill category with an icon and text label.

3D Printing	3D Modeling	Design	Photography	Developer
Web	Animation	Video	Audio + Music	

VP External and Student Affairs Report

Over the last fiscal year, a lot has been accomplished at AUSU. We have improved our advocacy efforts and relations with the university, made sure that our unique student voice was heard on the provincial side, and have continued to give a voice to AU students to the federal government. As in all things, AUSU always makes sure that the students are at the forefront of all of our discussions and decisions.

We regularly meet with AU executives, which allows us to bring forward any new ideas or concerns that we think will improve the student experience at AU. The AUSU executive have seats on the different faculty councils, General Faculty Council, the Board of Governors, and other work and IT related committees. It is at these meetings of the Board or committees, which we are able to bring forward our ideas and hear those of university staff and executive, on how being a student can be affected by the different work done.

On the Board of Governors, we help with the management and operation of the institution in accordance to its mandate. Over this year, we have seen the addition of several new public members to the Board, as well as a new Board Chair chosen.

In addition, we have been involved with several search committees for the university over this time. These were for different executive positions at the university, and we were proud to be a part of choosing the leaders and executive of AU.

Provincially, we have met with several members of the Alberta government and their staff to discuss the future for students at Athabasca University, and the unique perspective that we have. We were pleased to be invited to the student leader orientation that was hosted by the government. Here we were able to bring forward some important topics of discussion to the Minister of Advanced Education on how our students felt, and were supported by several other student associations.

Federally, we have played an active role with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) and have participated in the conferences and committees over the duration of the year. We had a seat on the CASA Board, as the VPEX was elected as one of their directors. This has ensured that we give the students at AU a voice on the national level. This year was also the first year that CASA was partnered with the Quebec Students Union (QSU). This

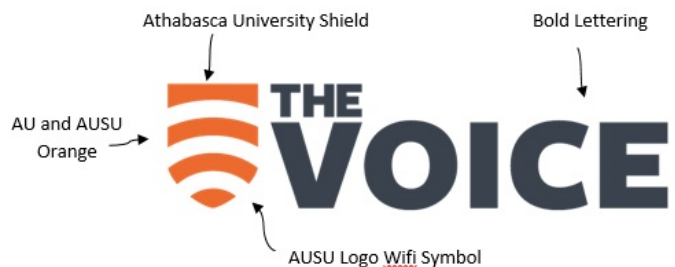
meant that we expanded our national voice and represented many more students. As a board member, much work has been done regarding this partnership that included attending one of the QSU conferences in Montreal.

Over the course of this year, we were able to attend four different CASA conferences. In November 2016, we attended the Advocacy week conference in Ottawa where we advocated for students to members of the federal government. In March 2017, we attended the AGM which was hosted in Wolfville, NS. In May 2017, the foundations conference to start the new terms for delegates, learn more about CASA, and select CASA Board seats was in Ottawa. In July 2017, AUSU hosted the CASA Policy and Strategy conference in Kananaskis, AB, which was a great success.

We continue to grow our engagement with members by keeping active in our mobile app, on social media, and in person. We have hosted several meet and greets throughout the year in Athabasca, Edmonton, and Ottawa. These all help foster student engagement, which we plan to keep increasing.

We continue to engage and work with our members through different methods. One of those is the putting out surveys to see how the students feel about certain services and issues. These results are then compiled and shared with the relevant and key personnel at AU. Any ideas like this are made by the Member Engagement and Communication Committee. This committee continues to meet and brainstorm new ideas that we can implement to drive member engagement.

One of the things that we also started was a complete overhaul and update of The Voice Magazine website. To bring it to look and feel modern, a firm was chosen to plan out the new Voice website and logo.



VP External and Student Affairs Report continued...

This year we also saw the hiring of a new Executive Director for AUSU. We were able to find the right person for this position and will be continuing to grow in the long term.

In June, council met in person for a retreat in Athabasca. This was held over the course of a few days and resulted in us planning out the year, meeting with several personnel at the university, attending convocation, and brainstorming many new and great ideas. This was invaluable to us as being a distance council, we do not get to meet in person. This will continue to be held to the success and steadiness of the council.

Over the year, we have been working on and completing a new draft of our bylaws. This work has taken

some time, but we were happy to bring forward to the membership a new and updated version. It clears up many inconsistencies and puts us in line with the Post-secondary Learning Act.

AUSU will continue to represent its members to AU, and the provincial and federal governments. The unique situation of the students that attend a distance university is always at the forefront of our minds, and we will continue doing our best to advocate on behalf of AU students with our guiding principles in mind.



Julian Tetrenko

Vice President External & Student Affairs

VP Finance & Administration Report

We have completed our 2016/2017 financial audit by the firm Kingston Ross Pasnak (KRP). This is the 11th audit with this firm, and we continue to be satisfied with the dedicated and detailed work of the audit staff. We are pleased to note KRP's testing of AUSU's financial records did not reveal any illegal or possibly illegal acts.

Throughout the auditing process, we included AUSU's bookkeeper in the communications and meetings. Throughout the year we were able to delegate more financial responsibilities to our bookkeeper, such as payroll, which has helped to improve the efficiency of AUSU's financial processes. There have been changes to how expense information is being compiled which has assisted in not only the expense review and approval processes but also in data entry. Each expense now is physically signed by the executive director in addition to the general ledger account number being recorded on the expense backup. This has helped to reduce the need to correct bookkeeping transactions throughout the year.

KRP noted during the audit process that this was the smoothest audit to date for AUSU. This was also the first

year that KRP has shown revenue and expenses broken out between AUSU's operating activities and The Voice Magazine. This breakdown is something that AUSU has been working towards over the past couple of years. This split helps to be able to see a more detailed breakdown of revenue and expenses. For example, this breakdown shows that AUSU's operating activities incurred a deficit of \$5,810 while The Voice Magazine had a surplus of \$1,927.

The following report is a summary of the annual financial statements for the fiscal year ending September 30th, 2017. Complete statements and notes are included at the end of this report.

The main source of income for AUSU continues to be student fees. AUSU budgeted for a deficit of \$151, 507 during the 2016/2017 fiscal year. However, AUSU ended the fiscal year with a deficit of \$3,883.

Actual student fees were approximately 4% higher than budgeted resulting in an additional \$23,106. Staff wages and council honoraria were both lower than budgeted with staff wages being \$24,368 and council

VP Finance and Administration Report continued...

honoraria \$11,529 lower than budgeted. This is a result of various vacancies both in staff and council due to resignations. In March of 2017, Sarah Cornett resigned as Executive Director and was replaced in May 2017 by Jodi Campbell.

An additional \$15,724 in awards were able to be given out compared to the 2015/2016 year. Though this account is \$20,557 under budget this is primarily due to the new health care bursary that was created by council

Professional fees were over budget \$6,554, this overage was approved by council in order for executive to engage a recruiter to assist in the executive director hiring process.

Rental fees were \$4,944 under budget and \$9,659 lower than the previous year. This is a result of AUSU changing offices. Council reviewed different locations in Edmonton and decided to remain in the same building but in a smaller more appropriate office space. This has decreased the rental costs significantly and the lease term has been set to coincide with AU's Edmonton leases. AU is looking to consolidate its Edmonton offices at the end of the current leases and it is the intent of council to try and relocate within AU's new building at the end of our lease.

Dividend and interest income remain consistent, however unrealized gains and losses went from a gain of \$39,174 in 2016 to a loss of \$5,874 in 2017. In speaking with our investment advisor at CWB (formerly named Adroit), this was primarily due to financial hardships in America. The firm struggled to make gains in the American market this year, however the investment strategy that CWB uses focuses on long term growth which will not be impacted by unrealized losses in a single year.



On the balance sheet, equipment increased by \$17,473 which was due to the capitalization of the expenses for the redesigned website for The Voice Magazine. During the year council also passed a motion to increase the capitalization threshold for computer to \$1,000. This was a recommendation by the auditors and will help to make it easier to track capital assets. If a computer does surpass the \$1,000 mark it would then be subject to the normal three-year amortization period.

During 2016 changes were made to policy 1.01 which changed the way that policies were to be reviewed. These changes have helped to streamline the policy review scheduling and allowed for far greater flexibility when it comes to policy review. It has allowed timelines to be adjusted so that council had time to discuss important topics as they arose during the year.

During 2017 council was able to host its annual retreat in Athabasca during convocation. This was a great opportunity for councilors to see other AUSU members as well as the physical AU campus. It also was a great opportunity for council to work with each other and the new executive director to discuss the future of AUSU. During this retreat it was decided that AUSU would forgo its usual annual goals and replace it with a multi-year strategic plan. This shift in planning will help the organization to move past looking one year ahead and will allow for greater financial and strategic planning. In addition, council discussed the financial needs of the organization during the retreat. Though AUSU has significant reserves AUSU is now annually budgeting significant deficits. The idea of a potential fee increase was discussed, and it was agreed that a fee increase would be needed but that there was more work to be done to decide on timing. Council wants to ensure that AUSU is on solid financial ground and able to meet the needs of AUSU members. At the same time council wants to continue work to costs as low as possible for AUSU members.

Handwritten signature of Brandon Simmons.

Brandon Simmons
VP Finance and Administration

AUSU Goals and Progress Report for 2016/2017

Updated by council November 14, 2017.

Advocacy

- Investigate opportunities for provincial advocacy, including, but not limited to:
 1. Having a minimum of one AUSU executive attend the Alberta Government Student Leadership Conference in person. **Complete**
- Continue a high level of participation and visibility as members of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) by:
 1. Participating as elected and voting members of CASA committees as possible.
 2. Ensuring a minimum of 1 AUSU executive attends each CASA conference in person. **Complete & Ongoing**
- Attend regular meetings with AUSU stakeholders as identified in the AUSU Stakeholders spreadsheet at a frequency determined by AUSU Executive and each stakeholder. Use these meetings to advance AUSU advocacy priorities and to strengthen relationships with our stakeholders. **Complete & Ongoing**

Services

- Successfully introduce and implement new AUSU awards, including, but not limited to, the AUSU Health and Dental Plan Bursary and the AUSU Single Parents Bursary; and evaluate their success by July 31, 2017 and make any necessary improvements/changes. **Complete & Ongoing**
- Review utilization reports and feedback from membership for AUSU services twice annually, in order to ensure consideration of member value when investigating contract renewal and effectiveness of promotion; for services including, but not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Lifeline. ○ AU Students' Mobile App. ○ AUSU Awards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lynda.com. ○ The Voice Magazine.
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Complete & Ongoing
- Contribute staff and council time resources to the AUSU Joint Voice/Council Action Plan Committee, and work collaboratively with The Voice Magazine to develop a procedure to review and reassess the agreed upon action plan in ways that include, but are not limited to:
 - Inviting The Voice Magazine to meet with Council to discuss the successes and challenges at regular intervals.
 - Making recommendations to The Voice Magazine on potential ideas where AUSU can help with the identified challenges. **Complete and Ongoing**

Communications

- Continue proactive communication with new members through the maintenance and distribution of a welcome message highlighting AUSU services. **On Track & Ongoing**

- Implement the Council approved AUSU Social Media Strategy. **Complete**
- Facilitate consistent communication from AUSU to our membership through newsletters sent at least once a month. **Complete & Ongoing**
- Conduct a minimum of one membership survey annually, and incorporate results into Council goals, advocacy and internal management as applicable. **Complete**
- Utilize our communication channels to relay AUSU Council work, AUSU Member services, and AU news to our membership. These channels include, but are not limited to, the AUSU website, AU Students' App, Social Media and The Voice Magazine. **Complete & Ongoing**

Governance

- Undergo and successfully adopt a comprehensive Bylaw review and amendment prior to March 31, 2017. **Complete**
- Conduct a successful by-election to replenish seats on AUSU council, followed by a full orientation of new councillors. **Complete**
- Complete all policy review and revision as prescribed in policy 1.01 and as otherwise deemed necessary by council. **On Track & Ongoing**
- Implement a permanent, consistent method of performing executive compensation review by following the recommendation of the executive compensation review committee for a compensation review process as adopted by AUSU Council on March 10, 2016. **Complete**
- Provide consistent opportunities for AUSU council to have informal discussions, where brainstorming and idea sharing are encouraged. **On Track and Ongoing**

Internal Management

- Facilitate the relocation of AUSU office, with an aim of significant financial savings and minimal disruption to the regular AUSU operations; prior to the end of our current lease agreement, which terminates on March 31, 2017. **Complete**
- Investigate an increase in AUSU membership fees, determine the impact this would have on the AUSU annual budget and on enrollment at AU. Perform member consultation on the topic and investigate with AU the necessary steps to implement an increase. Provide a recommendation for the 2017/2018 AUSU Goals list on how to perform an increase if it is determined one is needed. **In Progress**

2017 Council Retreat

The 2nd annual AUSU Council Retreat was held in June 2017, and we are proud to say it was another great success for the association. With council members arriving in Athabasca from across the country, the retreat facilitated an opportunity for the AUSU team to meet face to face, collaborate on AUSU topics during group workshops and sessions, meet with AU stakeholders, as well as attend the AU convocation. Hosted at the Athabasca University campus, for many the retreat was an opportunity to connect with the institution and walk the campus for the first time!

In an online university environment where creating community can be a challenge, the retreat offered the benefit of building on the team culture at AUSU. Council and staff brainstormed and planned for the upcoming year, including developing a strategic and organizational plan, reviewed the 2017 AUSU services survey results, advocacy priorities, budgeting, and bylaw revisions.

Following the successful AUSU retreat, council and staff have been hard at work executing the ideas, initiating action items, and following through with the vision that was set by the students' council. AUSU is in a great place, and with a strong foundation to rely on, is seeing the benefits of all the hard work put into making sure the association will thrive long into the future.



Committee Representation

Athabasca University Committees	
AU Board of Governors	Julian Teterenko and Shawna Wasylyshyn
Finance and Property	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Governance	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Honorary Awards	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Institutional Advancement	Julian Teterenko
Academic Affairs	Julian Teterenko
AU General Faculties Council	Brandon Simmons and Shawna Wasylyshyn
Academic Excellence Awards Committee	Brandon Simmons
Academic Learning Environment Committee	Brandon Simmons
Executive Committee	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Governance Review (ad-hoc)	Julian Teterenko
Student Academic Appeals Committee	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Student Awards Committee	Brandon Simmons
ERP Service Advisory Group	Julian Teterenko
Faculty of Business Faculty Council	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Faculty of Business Undergraduate Program Council	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Faculty of Health Disciplines Faculty Council	Shawna Wasylyshyn
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty Council	Brandon Simmons and Julian Teterenko
Faculty of Science and Technology Faculty Council	Julian Teterenko
ICT Governance Committee	Julian Teterenko
Pedagogy and Research Service Advisory Group	Julian Teterenko
VPA/Provost Search Committee (ad-hoc)	Julian Teterenko

AUSU Standing Committees		
AUSU Awards Committee	AUSU Finance Committee	AUSU Member Engagement and Communications Committee
Robin Bleich (Chair)	Brandon Simmons (Chair)	Julian Teterenko (Chair)
Kim Newsome	Robin Bleich	Amanda Lipinski
Amanda Lipinski	Andrew Gray	Brandon Simmons
Julian Teterenko	Scott Jacobsen	Benjamin McDonald (member at large)
Jodi Campbell (staff)	Julian Teterenko	Jodi Campbell (staff)
	Jodi Campbell (staff)	Donette Kingyens (staff, voting)

AUSU Ad-Hoc Committees			
Executive Compensation Review Committee	Joint Council / Voice Action Planning Committee		The Voice Website Working Group
Robin Bleich (Chair)	Sarah Cornett (staff, chair)	Lisa Sinclair	Jodi Campbell (staff)
Kim Newsome	Karl Low (staff)	Lyle Harvey	Karl Low (staff)
Brandon Simmons	Scott Jacobsen	Bonita Arbeau	Julian Teterenko
Jodi Campbell (staff)	Carla Knipe	Alex Pappas	

Advocacy

Advocacy is AUSU's number one priority. AUSU councillors dedicate a lot of time each year on advocacy efforts to benefit the undergraduate students of AU and to improve post-secondary education in Canada.

During 2016/2017, AUSU executives attended over 30 meetings with AU faculty and executives, including the President, Vice Presidents, the Registrar, and the Deans of all four undergraduate Faculties. AUSU executives also attended over 50 meetings of various AU committees, including Board of Governors, General Faculties Council, and various Faculty Associations. See page 14 for a complete list of AU committees that AUSU sits on.

Some of the important topics AUSU discussed with the University include adherence to service standards, student choice for e-texts or physical textbooks, e-text cost savings sharing, improved communications and service standards, and reversal of the retroactive changes that were implemented in the LPN to BN program. You can read more about AUSU's individual advocacy efforts on our website [here](#).

AUSU executives also attended over 35 meetings with the Canadian Alliance of Students' Association (CASA), travelled to various CASA conferences across Canada, and hosted the CASA Policy and Strategy conference in Kananaskis. Executives participated in CASA's Advocacy Week during which they met with various MP's and Senators on Parliament Hill to advocate for affordable and accessible post-secondary education in Canada. You can read more about the 2016 advocacy week [here](#).



Pictured Above: (former) AUSU VPFA Kim Newsome, President Shawna Wasylyshyn, and VPEX Julian Teterenko at CASA Advocacy Week in Ottawa.



Pictured Above: AUSU VPEX Julian Teterenko, Minister of Advanced Education Marlin Schmidt, and President Shawna Wasylyshyn.

In addition, AUSU met with Marlin Schmidt, the Minister of Advanced Education to advocate on behalf of AU students and the Athabasca University. Topics of discussion in 2017 included the value of out of province students to AU, access to student loans for part time students and the ongoing third-party review regarding the sustainability of Athabasca University.

In March 2017, AUSU launched an #AUGoals campaign to collect feedback from our membership about their advocacy priorities, which AUSU used to help form AUSU's advocacy goals for the upcoming year. Top concerns from students included choice for e-texts versus physical textbooks, improved communications from AU, audio or video course content, and course content and delivery options.

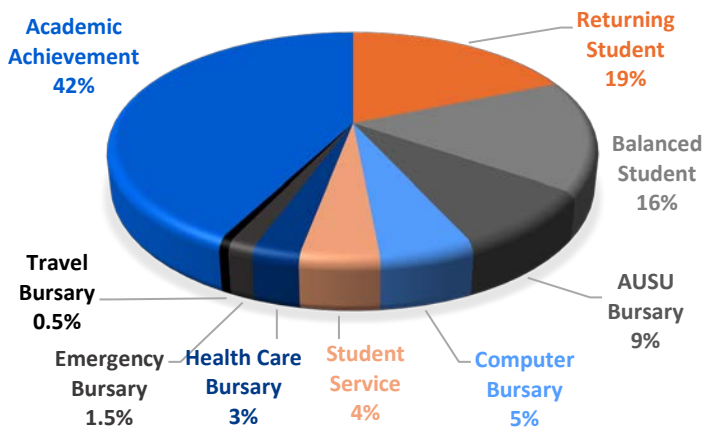
AUSU continues to devote significant efforts to advocating on behalf of its members in an effort to make the student experience as positive as possible. If you have any ideas for advocacy topics, please contact ausu@ausu.org.

Awards Report

AUSU's awards committee (AC) is designed to serve the needs of its students and recognizes that the demographics are as unique as Athabasca University (AU). The membership of this committee is comprised of students who appreciate the financial strain of education and is committed to do what it takes to reach the furthest student and assist wherever they can. Award applications are intricate, and we appreciate each applicant taking time from their busy schedule to share their stories.

336 Applications Received for 2016/2017 Fiscal Year

The awards committee had an exceptional year. We received 336 qualified award applications for the 2016/2017 fiscal year and awarded recipients with \$48,859.44. That's an increase of 68% from 2015/2016's financial sum.



AUSU's awards and bursaries fall into two (2) categories: financial-based bursaries and merit-based awards. Financial based bursaries are designed to help students in financial need and the merit-based awards are there to award merit and competencies. Competencies include community service, balancing responsibilities, and academic achievement. These awards are distributed twice annually: May and November.

For the merit-based awards, AUSU awarded \$23,000 (Academic Achievement Award, Balanced Student Award, Returning Student Award, and Student Services Award). For the financial based bursaries, AUSU awarded:

- \$10,000.00 - AUSU Bursary;
- \$8,921.34 - Computer Bursary;
- \$501.00 - Emergency Bursary;
- \$5,516.60 – Health Care Bursary;
- \$920.50 - Travel Bursary.

An increase of 68% from 2015/2016 is a demonstration of demand – you asked for more and AUSU provided more; reallocating funds and generating new awards to ensure we are maximizing your dollar and reinvesting back into your education.

New Award

To meet the needs of AU students, AUSU designed a new award in late 2017 called the #Igo2AU award. This award is designed to embrace diversity and allow students to express their passion for their pursuit of knowledge in the form of an open award. The #Igo2AU Award is intended to celebrate the concept of open enrolment and the flexibility of learning at AU. In addition to AUSU award decisions, the AC Chairperson was also engaged in various AU award selection committees.

Thank you for a very successful year. Good luck to each of you on your professional journey. Remember, check out our website on up-to-date news, surveys, and events happening; let us know if you have an idea for an award! ausu@ausu.org.

Robin Bleich
Awards Committee Chair

AUSU Services

Since Athabasca University is an online institution and our members are spread out all over Canada and the world, AUSU's services are all designed to meet the needs of distance learners. AUSU listens carefully to the members needs, including sending out an annual services survey to determine what services to prioritize. To address the preferences of the membership, AUSU has started offering additional awards, and we have made significant strides in our advocacy efforts. We started offering additional promotions, including pharmacy savings and Shaw cable student discounts during September 2017. We also launched a new website and logo for The Voice Magazine to help increase member engagement with the publication. Our current services are outlined below and can be accessed online [here](#).

Awards and Bursaries - *NEW AND INCREASED AWARDS!



AUSU continues to bring a variety of awards and bursaries to our membership, with over \$50,000 in available funds. Recognizing that our members indicated a preference for their membership dollars to go towards more awards and bursaries, we increased the number of Balanced Student and Returning Student Awards to eight per year instead of four. We also launched a new #lgo2AU Award to celebrate the diversity of all AU students, which is an open award that all of our members can apply for. In 2016/2017, AUSU received 336 applications, and gave out over \$48,000 in awards and bursaries.

Mobile App

AUSU's mobile app continues to be a very popular service with a thriving campus community! The free app, which launched in late 2015, allows students to stay on top of their studies, get quick access to services and resources available to them, track events and deadlines, and connect with other students on the campus wall. There are currently over 5,500 registered users, and during 2016/2017, there were over 27,000 and responses, and over 1,000 social connections made.



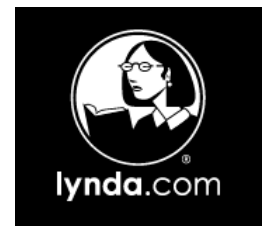
Student Lifeline Health & Wellness Program



AUSU's Student Lifeline is a comprehensive student assistance and wellness resource provided free for AUSU members. Members can access it anytime they need confidential support maintaining a healthy balance between school, work, and everyday life. It provides 24/7 support, private consultations, counselling (*up to 3 sessions, by video, phone, or in person across Canada*), community research and referrals, virtual group therapy, as well as hundreds of online resources. In addition, it features a 16-week depression program, stop smoking center, free legal advice, and much more.

lynda.com

AUSU continues to provide our members with free membership to Lynda.com, which is a \$375 value per member. Lynda.com offers premium on-line video training on a wide variety of skills useful to AU students, including Microsoft Office and Adobe software, business and career skills, digital editing programs, programming languages, design skills, and much more. Lynda.com features over 190,000 training videos. In 2016/2017, AUSU members viewed over 22,000 videos and logged over 1,500 hours of viewing time!



Pharmacy Savings - *NEW SERVICE!

AUSU just teamed up with Alliance Pharmacy to bring some great pharmacy savings to our members. The promotion includes free, next-business day delivery of prescriptions across Canada, as well as lower dispensing fees and prescription costs and a 10% discount on all health and wellness purchases on the Alliance online store. Switching over to Direct2U prescriptions is quick and easy, and subscribers can get refill reminders and free pharmacist consultations.



Advocacy



The most important service AUSU provides its membership is advocacy. AUSU represents members individually to the university itself, and has seats on over 20 AU Boards and Committees to ensure great representation and advocate for a quality education for all AUSU members. AUSU also represents AUSU members externally, at both a provincial and federal levels, including meetings with the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education and travelling to Ottawa for Advocacy Week with the Canadian Alliance of Students' Associations to advocate for post-secondary education on parliament Hill.

Eyewear Discounts

AUSU is teamed up with FYiDoctors to provide eyewear discounts to our members. FYiDoctors has over 300 locations across Canada, which makes it a good fit for our membership since it is spread out all over the country. The discounts provide brand name frames starting at \$200 (single vision, retail value \$350) or \$300 for progressives (retail value \$475), as well as 20% off other glasses and upgrades including non-prescription sunglasses and 10% off all contacts.



Career Resources



Finding a job can be a struggle for students especially if they are not sure where to start. AUSU has a careers resources page on the AUSU website. This page offers links to online resources such as resume building, preparing for interviews, and information about careers according to educational programs. It links to various job fair organizations across Canada, as well as provides links to provincial and national job search engines.

Shaw Cable Discounts

In September 2017, AUSU teamed up with Shaw Cable to offer students discounts for signing up for Shaw Cable. The promotion included 50% off cable for the first year for three different cable speeds. It also offered up to 50% off three different cable television packages and discounts for bundling up services. AUSU will continue to seek out opportunities for student savings such as this in the future as well.



Online Course Evaluations



AUSU has online course evaluations for all AU undergraduate courses (over 650 courses!). The evaluations can be easily accessed on our website, and although they are completely anonymous, they allow students to see all the feedback submitted for each course to help them make informed decisions about the courses they choose. They can be filled out anytime, even after the course is completed.

AUSU Communications and Engagement

AUSU has worked hard over the past 2 years to ramp up our communications and member engagement. With such a widespread membership, virtual communications are AUSU's only real means of connecting with our membership. With this in mind, AUSU greatly improved our social media communications and newsletters, sent welcome emails to all new students, engaged with members on our mobile app, held contests to encourage more member engagement, developed a forum on our website, and continually researched other means of connecting with our members.

Social Media



AUSU continues to regularly post to social media to ensure transparency and member awareness of resources available to them and AUSU initiatives. An improved social media communication strategy was approved in January 2017, and significant efforts to increase posts to AUSU Twitter, Facebook, as well as the campus feed in the Mobile App and AU Facebook forum. We also started an AUSU LinkedIn page and regularly post there as well. During the 2016/2017 year, we saw a significant increase in our post reach and member engagement.

The Voice Magazine – NEW WEBSITE AND LOGO!

The Voice Magazine is the official publication of the students of Athabasca University, and is full of articles created by students and guest writers to share news, ideas, opinions, and valuable insights. In 2017 The Voice got a complete overhaul with a fantastic new website and new logo, which can be viewed at www.voicemagazine.org. The new site along with a new site launch contest has worked to greatly improve The Voice readership.



AUSU Website



Since our members access our services primarily online, AUSU's website is the most important platform to provide information about AUSU. AUSU has a mobile-friendly website that is always kept up to date on our services, events, meetings, finances, news, council members, and more. We recently added in social media sharing buttons for our news stories and executive blog, and added the ability to comment on articles we post, which AUSU ensures are addressed promptly. The website includes online awards applications, instant chat to message AUSU staff during business hours, plus AUSU's latest tweets, and polls to engage our members.

Welcome Email

AUSU recognizes that one of the biggest challenges for AU students is finding out about all of the services and resources available to them. To help address this challenge, AUSU sends welcome emails to all new members twice a month. This welcome email outlines who AUSU is, what services and resources we offer, our social media sites, methods for connecting with other students. In 2016/2017, AUSU sent out almost 8,000 welcome emails to new AU students. We always see a sharp increase in traffic to our website when a new welcome email is sent, so we know the email is useful for getting word out about AUSU!



Grad Cards

AUSU loves to celebrate our members' successes, and we appreciate that graduating from university is an extraordinary accomplishment. To recognize the efforts of undergraduate students at AU, AUSU mails out cards to the graduates of every AU undergraduate program and certificate to offer our congratulations. In 2016/2017, AUSU mailed out over 1,000 cards to graduates and gave away even more during the June 2017 convocation.



Executive Blog



AUSU's executives write a monthly executive blog to keep our membership up to date on what is currently going on with AU and AUSU. Topics in 2016/2017 included updates on AUSU's advocacy efforts with AU and the government, the Fort McMurray fires, the Alberta tuition review, bylaws, elections, the AU financial situation, and more!

E-Newsletters

We understand how important it is for our members to stay informed about AUSU's initiatives, meetings, services, and events! In 2016/2017, AUSU sent out 26 e-newsletters to an average of 24,880 students per newsletter. The newsletters had an average open rate of 34.3% and almost 12,000 clicks on links we provided to ensure our members are aware of current events and the resources available to them.



Forum



In an effort to engage with our membership and get feedback on important topics, AUSU set up an online forum on our website. In 2017, AUSU did an extensive bylaw review and revision, and thus set up a "bylaw review" forum as a means to get feedback from our members on the new bylaws. The forum will be used for other important topics as well, such as AUSU elections, fee increases, and any other topics that AUSU wants member feedback regarding.

Services Survey

AUSU sent a survey to all AUSU members in May 2017 to get valuable input about the memberships priorities. The survey covered services, advocacy efforts, communications and ways to connect with other students. The survey received over 1000 responses and was carefully reviewed by council when developing the goals and strategic plan for the upcoming year.



Texting



AUSU values and encourages member feedback, so members can reach out to AUSU by text message. (780-900-0908). We have started posting questions to our membership to get feedback by text on various important topics, such as whether or not members would travel for AUSU Meet & Greet. Stay tuned for many more opportunities to text AUSU in the future!

AUSU is always looking for ways to engage with our membership, so stay tuned for new opportunities in the coming year!

Donette Kingyens
Communications and Member Services Coordinator

Important to Know

We've experienced an amazing year of growth at AUSU in 2017. The following pages will provide our student members with a financial overview of the organization. Fiscal responsibility is an essential aspect of the executive director role and I'm proud to say that AUSU is financially healthy and will continue to be for the foreseeable future.

The following information provides a summary of the investment portfolio and a breakdown of the expenses incurred for the fiscal year from October 1st, 2016 through to September 31st, 2017. Also provided are the final audit report and audited financial statements that were prepared by the firm, Kingston Ross Pasnak (KRP).

Throughout the year we have streamlined many of our financial control processes, established strong financial stakeholder relations, and reviewed the organization's revenue and expenses history to ensure AUSU is sustainable into the future. Be sure to check out the report by your Vice President of Finance and Administration, Brandon Simmons, for more information.

Monthly financial reports are posted at www.ausu.org and any questions can be directed to vpfa@ausu.org or executivedirector@auau.org.



Jodi Campbell
Executive Director

Investment Summary

2015/2016 Year End

SHORT TERM AND FIXED INCOME

\$20,380 2.52% Short Term Notes/Cash

\$425,380 52.61% Fixed Income Mutual Funds

EQUITY

\$186,567 23.07% Canadian Equity

\$176,295 21.80% Non-Canadian Equity

\$808,622

2016/2017 Fiscal Year End

SHORT TERM AND FIXED INCOME

\$26,939 3.27% Short Term Notes/Cash

\$424,010 51.53% Fixed Income Mutual Funds

EQUITY

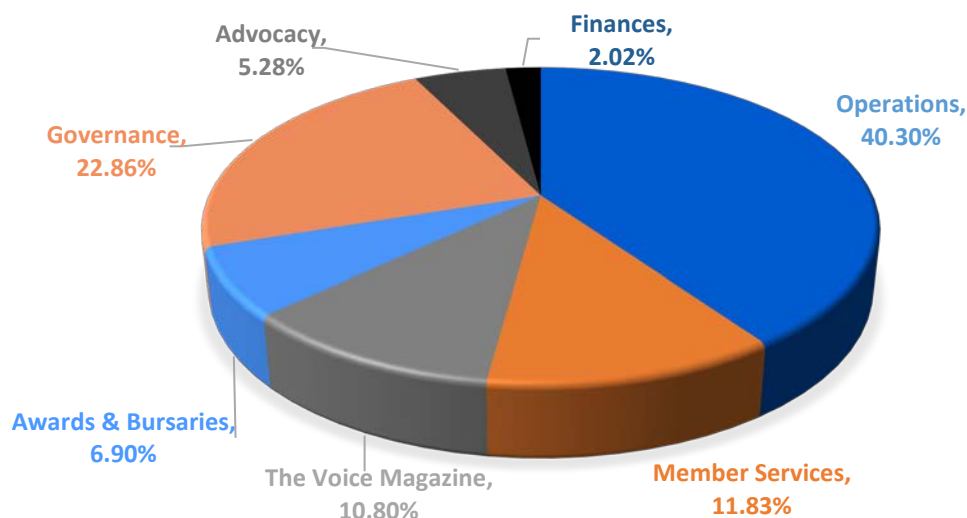
\$191,286 23.25% Canadian Equity

\$180,536 21.94% Non-Canadian Equity

\$822,771

Breakdown of Expenses

(2016/2017 Fiscal Year)



Audited Financial Reports 2016/2017



Suite 1500, 9888 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5C6
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February 1, 2017
Edmonton, Alberta

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Athabasca University Students' Union

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Athabasca University Students' Union, which comprise the statement of financial position as at September 30, 2016 and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flow for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Athabasca University Students' Union as at September 30, 2016 and the results of its operations and its cash flow for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Kingston Ross Pasnak
Kingston Ross Pasnak LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION
Statement of Financial Position
September 30, 2017

	Operating 2017	The Voice Magazine 2017	Total 2017	Total 2016
ASSETS				
CURRENT				
Cash	\$ 132,037	\$ 104,864	\$ 236,901	\$ 243,097
Restricted cash	-	-	-	5,003
Marketable securities (Note 4)	820,734	-	820,734	806,221
Accounts receivable	58,401	-	58,401	57,446
Prepaid expenses	10,052	-	10,052	9,832
	1,021,224	104,864	1,126,088	1,121,599
EQUIPMENT (Note 5)	6,086	16,345	22,431	4,958
	\$ 1,027,310	\$ 121,209	\$ 1,148,519	\$ 1,126,557
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS				
CURRENT				
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 44,925	\$ 3,151	\$ 48,076	\$ 27,855
Employee deductions payable	5,854	-	5,854	-
Deferred student fees	93,999	-	93,999	89,226
Student health care benefits payable	-	-	-	5,003
	144,778	3,151	147,929	122,084
LEASE COMMITMENT (Note 6)				
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted	860,774	101,713	962,487	974,730
Internally restricted (Note 7)	15,672	-	15,672	24,785
Invested in equipment	6,086	16,345	22,431	4,958
	882,532	118,058	1,000,590	1,004,473
	\$ 1,027,310	\$ 121,209	\$ 1,148,519	\$ 1,126,557

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD



Director



Director

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended September 30, 2017

	Unrestricted	Internally restricted	Invested in equipment	2017	2016
NET ASSETS -					
BEGINNING OF					
YEAR	\$ 974,730	\$ 24,785	\$ 4,958	\$ 1,004,473	\$ 966,342
(Deficiency) excess of					
revenue over					
expenses	3,419	-	(7,302)	(3,883)	38,131
Acquisition of					
equipment	(24,775)	-	24,775	-	-
Approved use of					
restricted					
funds (Note 7)	9,113	(9,113)	-	-	-
NET ASSETS -					
END OF YEAR	\$ 962,487	\$ 15,672	\$ 22,431	\$ 1,000,590	\$ 1,004,473

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

Statement of Operations

For the Year Ended September 30, 2017

	(Unaudited) Combined Budget 2017	Operating 2017	The Voice Magazine 2017	Total 2017	Total 2016
REVENUE					
Student fees	\$ 600,000	\$ 544,621	\$ 78,485	\$ 623,106	\$ 624,114
Merchandise	300	290	-	290	359
Student Health Care Benefits	-	29	-	29	18,794
	600,300	544,940	78,485	623,425	643,267
EXPENSES					
Staff wages and benefits	236,150	146,585	65,197	211,782	218,087
Council wages and benefits	140,060	128,131	400	128,531	151,178
Awards	70,700	50,143	-	50,143	34,422
Online and technology services	87,064	47,150	978	48,128	54,423
Rental	49,000	44,056	-	44,056	53,715
Representation	50,393	36,627	1,758	38,385	32,581
Professional fees	31,010	35,481	2,083	37,564	30,813
Events and programs	34,400	33,338	-	33,338	26,064
Teleconference meetings	16,500	12,237	-	12,237	8,736
Administration	15,250	11,936	-	11,936	4,830
Office	11,818	10,037	1,818	11,855	11,316
Amortization of tangible assets	5,088	3,011	4,292	7,303	2,194
Investment fees	11,500	8,473	-	6,473	6,357
Advertising and promotion	5,600	4,446	-	4,446	3,102
Interest and bank charges	774	889	32	921	1,036
Insurance	1,500	840	-	840	1,281
Newsletter	-	-	-	-	1,737
Student handbook	-	-	-	-	4,326
Amortization of intangible assets	-	-	-	-	8,167
	766,807	571,380	76,558	647,938	654,365
(DEFICIENCY) EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	(166,507)	(26,440)	1,927	(24,513)	(11,098)
OTHER INCOME (EXPENSES)					
Dividend income	-	13,437	-	13,437	15,655
Interest income	-	13,067	-	13,067	11,280
Loss on disposal of equipment	-	-	-	-	(7,210)
Loss on disposal of investments	-	-	-	-	(9,670)
Unrealized (losses) gains on investments	15,000	(5,874)	-	(5,874)	39,174
	15,000	20,630	-	20,630	49,229
(DEFICIENCY) EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ (151,507)	\$ (5,810)	\$ 1,927	\$ (3,883)	\$ 38,131

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION
Statement of Cash Flow
Year Ended September 30, 2017

	2017	2016
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash receipts	\$ 627,243	\$ 674,554
Cash paid to suppliers, employees and awards	(618,862)	(810,300)
Interest paid	(921)	(1,038)
Cash flow from (used by) operating activities	7,460	(136,784)
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of equipment	(24,775)	(788)
Dividend income	13,437	15,655
Interest income	13,067	11,280
Purchase of marketable securities	(407,475)	(717,145)
Proceeds of disposal of marketable securities	387,087	756,103
Cash flow (used by) from investing activities	(18,659)	65,105
DECREASE IN CASH	(11,199)	(71,679)
CASH - BEGINNING OF YEAR	248,100	319,779
CASH - END OF YEAR	236,901	248,100
CASH CONSISTS OF:		
Cash	\$ 236,901	\$ 243,097
Restricted cash	-	5,003
	\$ 236,901	\$ 248,100

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended September 30, 2017

1. AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

On March 18, 2004, Athabasca University Students' Union ("AUSU") was incorporated under the Post Secondary Learning Act. AUSU is administered by a board of directors and its principal purpose is to provide for the administration of the affairs of the Athabasca University undergraduate students, including the development and management of student institutions, the development and implementation of a system of student governing principles, the promotion of the general welfare of Athabasca University undergraduate students and the furtherance of the values inherent in an open University as well as of life-long learning. AUSU is a non-profit organization under the Income Tax Act (Canada) and, as such, is not liable for payment of income taxes.

2. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

AUSU receives substantially all of its revenue from Athabasca University as legislated under the Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Act section 95(2)e that provides for the "maintenance of the association by the levy of membership fees on its members." Should Athabasca University substantially change its dealings with AUSU subsequent to legislative changes permitting such, management is of the opinion that continued viable operations would be doubtful.

3. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of presentation

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNFO). Significant accounting policies observed in the preparation of the financial statements are summarized below.

Marketable Securities

Marketable securities are recorded at fair value. AUSU's marketable securities consist of treasury bills, fixed income investments and equities.

Equipment

Equipment is amortized on a straight line basis over its estimated useful life at the following rates:

Website	Five years
Furniture and equipment	Ten years
Computer equipment	Three years

In the year of acquisition, amortization is taken at one-half the normal rate.

Deferred student fees

The AUSU records student fees at the beginning of a course's progression. Some of the fees received prior to year end relate to courses which commence in the next fiscal year. These fees are classified as deferred and recognized as revenue one month subsequent to the start of the course to which the fees relate.

(continues)

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION
Notes to Financial Statements
Year Ended September 30, 2017

3. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES *(continued)*

Revenue recognition

Student fee revenue is recognized one month subsequent to the start of the course to which the fees relate once funds from the students have been received by Athabasca University and collection by AUSU is reasonably assured.

Investment earnings are recognized as revenue when earned and collection is reasonably assured.

Merchandise sales are recognized when the goods are transferred to the customer at which time collection is reasonably assured.

The Voice income is recognized when the goods or services are performed or transferred to the customer at which time collection is reasonably assured.

Contributed goods and services

The fair value of donated materials and services cannot be reasonably determined and are therefore not reflected in these financial statements.

Financial instruments

All financial instruments are initially measured at fair value, and, unless otherwise noted, the AUSU subsequently measures its financial instruments at amortized cost.

Not-for-Profit Financial Statement Presentation

The AUSU presents net assets invested in equipment as a separate category of internally restricted net assets.

Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Such estimates include the collectibility of accounts receivable, estimated useful lives of equipment, deferral of student fees and student health care benefits payable. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION
Notes to Financial Statements
Year Ended September 30, 2017

4. MARKETABLE SECURITIES

	2017	2016
Canada Government Bonds (bearing interest at 1.50% to 5.65%)	\$ 269,247	\$ 251,310
Canadian Common Stock	191,286	186,567
Canadian Corporate Bonds & Debentures (bearing interest at 2.43% to 11.77%)	154,762	174,069
US Common Stock	164,803	160,761
Canada Treasury Bills (bearing interest at 1.09%)	24,903	17,979
American Depository Receipts	15,733	15,535
	\$ 820,734	\$ 806,221

Foreign marketable securities are presented in Canadian dollars.

5. EQUIPMENT

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2017 Net book value	2016 Net book value
Website	\$ 19,404	\$ 3,881	\$ 15,523	\$ -
Furniture and equipment	16,813	12,719	4,094	4,144
Computer equipment	15,180	12,366	2,814	814
	\$ 51,397	\$ 28,966	\$ 22,431	\$ 4,958

6. LEASE COMMITMENT

AUSU leases premises under a long term lease that expires on March 31, 2020. Under the lease, AUSU is required to pay base rent and a proportionate share of utilities, property taxes, maintenance and other related costs for the leased premises. Future minimum lease payments are as follows:

2018	\$ 17,672
2019	17,672
2020	8,836
	\$ 44,180

7. RESTRICTIONS ON NET ASSETS

AUSU internally restricts net assets for the purpose of student development, special projects, infrastructure and research. These internally restricted amounts are not available for other purposes without approval of the Council.

During the year, expenditures approved by Council totaled \$9,113 (2016 - \$27,914).

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION
Notes to Financial Statements
Year Ended September 30, 2017

8. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year, AUSU received \$623,106 (2016 - \$624,114) related to student fees and \$nil (2016 - \$41,310) related to student health care benefits from Athabasca University. Recorded in accounts receivable is \$58,401 (2016 - \$56,913) for student fees due from Athabasca University for the month of September 2017. The parties are related through their connection to the Athabasca University students. There was no requirement for an allowance as at September 30, 2017 (2016 - nil).

AUSU provided \$2,857 (2016 - \$3,589) in tuition payments to cover up to two undergraduate Athabasca University courses per executive officer as per the AUSU compensation guidelines.

9. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

AUSU is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments. The following analysis provides information about AUSU's risk exposure and concentration as of September 30, 2017. Unless otherwise noted, AUSU's risk exposure has not changed from the prior year.

Credit risk

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The AUSU is exposed to credit risk from the Athabasca University as effectively all of the AUSU accounts receivable are from the Athabasca University. AUSU is economically dependant upon the Athabasca University (Note 2) for the majority of its revenues and is protected by provincial legislation which mitigates this risk.

Currency risk

Currency risk is the risk to AUSU's earnings that arise from fluctuations of foreign exchange rates and the degree of volatility of these rates. AUSU is exposed to foreign currency exchange risk on marketable securities denominated in U.S. dollars. AUSU does not use derivative instruments to reduce its exposure to foreign currency risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument might be adversely affected by a change in the interest rates. In seeking to minimize the risks from interest rate fluctuations, the AUSU manages exposure through its normal operating and financing activities. The AUSU is exposed to interest rate risk primarily through its investment in marketable securities.

Other price risk

Other price risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices (other than those arising from interest rate risk or currency risk), whether those changes are caused by factors specific to the individual financial instrument or its issuer, or factors affecting all similar financial instruments traded in the market. AUSU is exposed to other price risk through its investment in marketable securities.

Budget 2016/2017

REVENUE	
Student Fees	\$600,000
Net Investment Gain (loss)	\$15,000
Other	\$300
Sales	\$0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$615,300

EXPENSES	
Service Fees	
Bank Fees	\$750
Investment Fees	\$11,500.00
Payroll Processing Fees	\$950
Total Service Fees Expense	\$13,200

Admin Expenses	
Elections Expenses	\$5,500
Insurance Expenses	\$1,500
Postage and Courier	\$2,000
Telephone and Internet	\$4,830
Other Admin.	\$500
Total Admin Expenses	\$ 14,330

Meeting Expenses	
Executive and Staff Meetings	\$1,000
Teleconference Meetings	\$1,500
Council Retreat	\$12,000
Other Meetings	\$ 2,000
Total Meeting Expenses	\$16,500

Office Expenses	
Office Supplies and Furniture	\$2,000
Rent and Office Parking	\$49,000
Total Office Expenses	\$51,000

Computer Expenses	
Computer Maintenance	\$1,500
Councillors Software	\$500
Office Software	\$3,800
Office Hardware	\$1,000
Councillor Hardware	\$2,000
Total Computer Expenses	\$8,800

Professional Development	
Staff Professional Development	\$4,000
Council Professional Development	\$1,000
Reference Materials	\$500
Total Professional Development	\$5,500

Staff Salaries and Benefits

Staff Salaries	\$144,000
Staff EI	\$3,803
Staff CPP	\$6,610
Temporary Staff Fees	\$0
Staff Benefits	\$9,402
Staff Appreciation	\$1,500

Total Councillor Salaries & Benefits	\$169,800.00
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Councillor Honoraria and Benefits

Executive Honoraria	\$103,744
Councillor Honoraria	\$18,000
Committee Honoraria	\$2,000
Councillor CPP	\$5,600
Executive Benefits	\$8,216

Total Salaries and Benefits	\$137,560
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Professional Fees

Accountant	\$18,500
Bookkeeper	\$2,805
Lawyer and other Para-legal fees	\$8,000
Staffing Fees	\$0

Total Professional Fees	\$29,305
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Promotional

Gifts and Donations	\$1,000
Website (Maintenance and Upgrades)	\$5,500
Convocation	\$7000
Contests (Incl Postage)	\$1,500

Informational/Promotional Publications

Grad Letters (Incl Postage)

Merchandise (Incl Postage)

Newsletter (Incl E-postage)

Planner/Calendar (Incl Postage)

Sub-Total Merch/Info & Promo Publications	\$7,000
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Total Promotional	\$22,000
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Voice

Voice Funding Transfer	\$75,000
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Total Voice	\$75,000
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Representation Expenses

Retrospective Changes Advocacy	\$10,000
Internal Advocacy (AU)	\$1,000
External Advocacy (Non-AU)	\$2,000
Membership Fees (CASA)	\$16,320
Delegate Travel (CASA)	\$18,000
Delegate Fees (CASA)	\$0

Total Representation Expenses	\$40,000.00
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Budget 2016/2017 continued...

Awards and Bursaries

Emergency Bursary	\$6,000
Computer Bursary	\$4,800
Travel Bursary	\$4,000

Sub-Total Year-Round Bursaries \$14,800

AUSU Bursary	\$10,000
Returning Student Award	\$4,000
Student Services Award	\$4,000
Academic Achievement Award	\$4,000
Balanced Student Award	\$4,000

Sub-Total Bi-Annual Awards & Bursaries \$26,000

Health Bursary (incl. expenses)	\$18,800
Other Awards and Bursaries	\$9,200

Sub-Total Other Awards and Bursaries \$28,000

Total Awards \$68,800

Member Programs

Smart Draw	\$0
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Lynda.com (see intangible amortization)	\$30,769
Mobile App	\$9,975
Student Lifeline	\$25,000
Other Member Programs	\$0

Total Member Programs \$65,744

TOTAL EXPENSE \$720,373

TOTAL INCOME \$615,300

REVENUE OVER EXPENSES -\$105,073

AMORTIZATION

Amortization – Tangible (computers, etc.)	\$4,500
Amortization – Intangible (lynda license)	\$0

Total Amortization \$4,500

REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

Incl. Amortization -\$123,573

Budget Revisions as per Council or Executive Council Motion

08/18/2016 Email Vote: BIRT AUSU Council approve and implement the Health Care Bursary, as attached and as recommended by the AUSU Awards Committee.

09/13/2016 BIRT AUSU approve up to \$10,000 in internally restricted funds to use toward legal fees and administrative costs related to FHD advocacy.

11/28/2016 BIRT AUSU Executive increase the budget line for bookkeeping by \$605 and decrease the budget line for payroll processing by \$550.

03/14/2017 Email Vote: BIRT AUSU council approve a budget overage of up to \$14000 in the category of Professional Fees: Staffing fees; for staffing fees in the search for an Executive Director.



DID YOU KNOW?

AUSU's budget, monthly financial statements and balance sheets are posted online.

Check them out at AUSU.org under "Governance".

What's Ahead for AUSU?

This annual report provides a good sense of AUSU's mandate and the work that goes on from year to year. AUSU accomplished a great deal in 2016/2017, and there is much more to do.

Advocacy in its many forms will always be one of AUSU's top priorities. This includes advocacy for individual members with Athabasca University, and advocacy on behalf of the membership as a whole, both with the university and beyond to external stakeholders such as the provincial and federal governments. In the challenging financial times that Alberta and Canada are experiencing, this role is even more vital. AUSU will continue to seek out advocacy priorities from our members, and continue to build solid ties to the provincial government at the ministerial level and all faculties and executive offices at Athabasca University. In addition, AUSU has all the tools and resources that CASA provides to facilitate our advocacy work.

Member services will continue to be monitored for effectiveness and uptake by our members to ensure we put the membership resources to the best use in providing services that they want and need. Ideas for new services are always encouraged and will be considered based on available resources and member needs moving forward. AUSU will also strive to maintain excellent communications, transparency, and engagement with our members with a dedicated communications strategy.

The administration of an organization like AUSU, which relies heavily on volunteer resources and is funded almost exclusively by member dues, constantly needs to be streamlined and assessed. The council will continue to institute best practices for governance, policy, procedures, and member communications.

As you will be able to see from the strategic plan AUSU set for the upcoming three years, AUSU will continue to work hard on behalf of the membership to provide advocacy and services, and to ensure that AUSU operates with an effective set of bylaws and policies, knowledgeable staff and council, and the AUSU values and principals in the forefront of all of our actions.

AUSU 2017-2020 Strategic Plan

Note: This three-year strategic plan was approved by council on September 12, 2017.

AUSU Values and Principles:

Students First: AUSU will keep students at the heart of the organization, understanding that its primary objective is to enhance the overall undergraduate student experience at Athabasca University. AUSU is proud to be a student organization and celebrates its members successes, while enhancing the recognition of AUSU members and their interests.

Relevance: AUSU programs and services are developed based on the needs of AU undergraduate students and must be relevant to those ever-changing needs.

Accountability: AUSU will strive to be transparent and accountable in all aspects of the organization, while always respecting student dollars. AUSU will be aware that all actions set precedent.

Excellence: AUSU will continually strive for a high level of integrity, quality, professionalism, and respect, while holding AU to the same level of excellence at all levels of the University.

Community: AUSU will promote and participate in developing awareness and recognition of open, online, and distance education.

Advocacy: AUSU will advocate to all levels of the university and government to ensure that undergraduate students are represented and their voices are heard. AUSU will advocate for the individual but never to the detriment of the whole.

AUSU Council will strive to uphold the values and principles of the organization and constantly measure themselves against them.

AUSU Goals:

- 1) **Advocacy Goal:** AUSU will support and advocate for all AU undergraduate students while representing their unique needs to the university, and provincial and federal governments.

In pursuit of the advocacy goal, AUSU will:

- Continue to update and expand on position policies;
- Advocate for universal accessibility to post-secondary education;
- Utilize an AUSU advocacy document, based on the goals and priorities identified by the membership;
- Research municipal and provincial advocacy groups and seek opportunities for partnerships and collaborations;
- Strengthen AUSU's relationships with student-led organizations at the provincial and federal levels;
- Develop the capacity to be a research leader in student advocacy and to support the students' council, executive council, and professional staff;
- Be a strong resource for CASA to ensure the voice of AU undergraduate students is heard; and
- Advocate to AU to ensure an excellent academic and student experience, as well as affordable education costs.

- 2) **Student Engagement Goal:** AUSU will cultivate a collaborative environment that fosters a high level of student engagement. Within this environment AU undergraduate students should feel supported and aware of all programs and services offered by the AU Students' Union.

In pursuit of the student engagement goals, AUSU will:

- Foster an environment where all AU undergraduate students know what services are available to them throughout their academic career;
- Conduct annual surveys seeking feedback from the AUSU membership;
- Showcase student governance;
- Highlight student leadership opportunities through AUSU elections;
- Create awareness of all AUSU programs, services, and resources;
- Implement the Social Media and Communications Strategy;
- Continue to develop AUSU mobile app opportunities; and
- Utilize the Voice Magazine as a student engagement tool to promote member engagement.

- 3) **Member Services Goal:** AUSU will create awareness of all its programs, services, and student resources, while continuing to seek feedback from the student membership in order for student needs to be met.

In pursuit of the member services goal, AUSU will:

- Collect and analyze annual data to assist in measuring success of member services;
- Ensure AUSU's programs and services are meeting the unique needs of AU undergraduate students;
- Ensure mental health support is maintained as a priority for the membership;
- Investigate innovative programs and services unique to the distance learning environment;
- Develop student awards to meet the diverse needs of the AU student body; and
- Be a strong advocate for The Voice Magazine to elevate its profile within the AU community.

- 4) **Community Partnerships Goal:** AUSU will strive to create partnerships both internally and externally from AU that seek mutual benefit and enhancement of the AU student experience.

In pursuit of the community partnerships goal, AUSU's will:

- Develop strong internal relationships by hosting regular meetings with AU stakeholders;
- Be a strong resource for AU to ensure they always seek to have a student at the table when making decisions;
- Partner with AU to establish AUSU office space within the AU campus in Edmonton;
- Act as ambassadors for online and distance learners to the general public and post-secondary community;
- Strengthen AUSU's relationships with fellow student led organizations; and
- Be a strong partner and resource for CASA.

- 5) **AUSU Organizational Structure Goal:** AUSU will strive to be an organization of consequence, with undergraduate student needs always being at the forefront of its decision making. AUSU's strong foundation will make it a leader amongst its fellow student organizations.

In pursuit of the organization structure goal, AUSU's will:

- Develop a strong foundation for AUSU to grow as an organization;
- Keep professionalism, collaboration, and team work as pillars for the Association;
- Create a professional environment that maximizes the potential of staff, executives, and councillors;
- Foster a culture of consequence, understanding that what AUSU does for students matters;
- Become experts in managing change to allow for seamless transitions for the executive teams and council;
- Review the AUSU fees to ensure sustainable growth moving into the future;
- Offer both distance and face-to-face opportunities for student leadership collaboration; and
- Solidify AUSU's governance structure by maintaining relevant bylaws and policies.



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