



POLICY 7.02

MEMBER SERVICES

Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries Program

POLICY INTENT

The Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries Program intent is to promote and acknowledge academic achievement and community spirit in the membership population, as well as provide aid to members who encounter financial hardships.

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Council

POLICY

Administration of Awards

- 7.02.01 Applications and nominations must be made by the deadline stipulated in each award. Incomplete applications will be rejected unless all supporting documents are received by the deadline. It is the member's responsibility to contact the office to ensure their application has been received and is complete.
- 7.02.02 The AUSU awards committee shall be the selection committee for all AUSU awards, with the exception of the Emergency Bursary.
- 7.02.03 Emergency Bursaries shall be disbursed to qualifying applicants by the executive director with confirmation from the awards committee chair.
- 7.02.04 AUSU staff must forward all completed applications to the awards committee within two weeks of the application deadline. Award recipients will be notified within six weeks of the application deadline.
- 7.02.05 For each fiscal year, any awards that are not given out subsequent to a regularly scheduled awards deadline will be available for the following awards deadline within the same fiscal year. Any leftover budgeted amount will be placed into an internally restricted fund for awards.

- 7.02.06 There shall be two application deadlines per fiscal year for AUSU awards. These deadlines shall be November 1 and May 1, and shall apply to all AUSU scholarships, awards, and bursaries, with the exception of the Computer, Travel, and Emergency bursaries.¹
- 7.02.06.01 Applications for bursaries at the November 1 and May 1 deadlines will be accepted no more than six weeks before the deadline to ensure that applicant information is accurate.
- 7.02.06.02 Applications for Computer and Travel Bursaries shall be accepted year-round and decisions shall be made on the applications within two weeks of the committee receiving all necessary information.²
- 7.02.06.03 Applications for Emergency Bursaries shall be accepted year-round and decisions shall be made on the applications within two weeks of the executive director and the awards committee chair receiving all necessary information.³

Eligibility Criteria

- 7.02.07 AUSU councillors and staff are ineligible for AUSU scholarships, awards, and bursaries.
- 7.02.08 Eligibility criteria will vary by award and will be outlined in detail in each award description.
- 7.02.09 Applicants must be AUSU members on the date of application for year-round awards, and on the date of the application deadline for the bi-annual awards, unless otherwise specified in the award descriptions.
- 7.02.10 Where award descriptions refer to a GPA calculation based on the most recent courses completed, the courses used for this calculation shall be completed courses with the most recent term start dates. When a choice must be made between two or more courses with the same term start date, the course(s) with the highest marks shall be used.
- 7.02.11 Any applicant that is denied a Travel Bursary, Computer Bursary, or Emergency Bursary is required to wait 12 months before reapplying for that same award.
- 7.02.12 An AUSU member may receive a maximum of one bi-annual scholarship, award, or bursary per fiscal year.
- 7.02.13 An AUSU member may receive a maximum of one year-round scholarship, award, or bursary per fiscal year.
- 7.02.14 For the purposes of this policy, “credits completed” refers only to credits earned for the successful completion of Athabasca University undergraduate courses and challenge for

¹ See *Awards Descriptions* 3, 4, and 5 below.

² See *Awards Descriptions* 3 and 4 below.

³ See *Awards Descriptions* 5 below.

credit courses. Credits earned for graduate courses, courses transferred to Athabasca University, or credits assessed under Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) will not be considered.

- 7.02.15 Unless otherwise specified in the council-approved individual award criteria, students must have completed at least 12 credits and have maintained a GPA of 2.00 (C grade) over the most recent 12 credits to be eligible for any AUSU award.
- 7.02.16 If the awards committee has reason to believe the applicant has presented false information on the application for the purposes of obtaining award or other pecuniary benefit:
- a) the awards committee may find the applicant ineligible for a scholarship, award, or bursary; and
 - b) the awards committee may put forward a motion at council to place the member not in good standing.
- 7.02.17 Applicants must submit all requested documents as outlined on the applications to be eligible for the scholarships, awards, and bursaries.

Application Privacy

- 7.02.18 Information and applications submitted for consideration for AUSU scholarships, awards, and bursaries will be used only for the purposes for which it was collected, including review of that information in conjunction with subsequent applications.
- 7.02.19 Applications will be viewed only by AUSU staff, the awards committee, and executive members, as necessary.
- 7.02.20 Applications for all AUSU scholarships, awards, and bursaries will be retained by AUSU as necessary for legal and business purposes as outlined in AUSU's records management policy.
- 7.02.21 AUSU may, at its discretion, publish the names of students who are recipients of merit-based scholarships and awards, and may contact some recipients to seek permission to release further information.
- 7.02.22 AUSU will never publish the names of recipients of bursaries, or those who have been declined for AUSU scholarships, awards, or bursaries.
- 7.02.23 AUSU provides the following awards:
1. Academic Achievement Awards – five awards (minimum two per deadline) of \$1,000 each totaling \$5,000;
 2. AUSU Bursaries – 10 awards of \$1,000 each. (five per deadline);
 3. Computer Bursaries – approximately 14 awards of one computer each valued up to \$800;
 4. Travel Bursaries – \$1,000 maximum each; \$4,000 annually budgeted;

5. Emergency Bursaries – up to \$700 maximum per student annually, for a total of \$4,000;
6. Student Service Awards – five awards of \$1,000 each (minimum two per deadline);
7. Returning Student Awards – eight awards of \$1,000 each. (four per deadline);
8. Balanced Student Awards – eight awards of \$1,000 each. (four per deadline);and
9. # Igo2AU Awards – four awards of \$1,000 each (two per deadline).

Award Descriptions

1. Academic Achievement Scholarships:

Academic Achievement Scholarships are intended to reward excellence in scholarship to Athabasca University students. The minimum GPA required for this award is 3.7. The applicants with the highest GPA over the last 30 credits will be selected as the recipients of this award. The number of A+ grades (tallying A+ grades in 6 credit courses as two) will be used to break ties, followed by the number of Athabasca University credits completed, followed by the number of A grades (tallying A grades in 6 credit courses as two). Members may only receive this award once. Students must have completed at least 30 credits by the applicable deadline to be considered for this scholarship.

2. AUSU Bursaries:

AUSU Bursaries are intended to aid members in financial need. Additional circumstances, such as disabilities, single parent/caregiver status, etc., may be taken into consideration. The award deadline will be used for making this determination.

3. Computer Bursaries:

Computer Bursaries are available to members who demonstrate financial need, to provide them with a laptop computer for their course work. Computers will be purchased by the executive director and shipped directly to the recipient. AUSU assumes no liability for usage of the computer or computer maintenance once the equipment is received by the member. Members may only receive this award once. Applications are accepted at any time of year.

4. Travel Bursaries:

Travel Bursaries are intended to aid members in travelling to attend Athabasca University convocation, labs, practicums, on-site courses, or related conferences. Applications are accepted any time of year, however, they must be submitted a minimum of 30 days prior to the date of travel. AUSU will arrange and directly pay for all travel bookings. In the case of a car rental, the applicant is responsible for the booking and making the payment. Reimbursement for car rental expenses will be provided upon AUSU receiving a copy of the original purchase receipt. AUSU does not assume any car rental liability as this falls to the applicant for the entire period of the car rental agreement. Recent members who have taken an Athabasca University undergraduate course in the last 12 months may also be

considered for travel to attend the Athabasca University convocation with proof of recent graduation from Athabasca University.

5. Emergency Bursaries:

Emergency Bursaries are provided to help members pay for Athabasca University fees, such as course extensions, exam fees, and late exam request fees during times of urgent financial need and unforeseen circumstances. A member may apply for this bursary more than once per fiscal year but may not be awarded assistance greater than the maximum award amount in a fiscal year. Fees will be paid directly to Athabasca University on behalf of the member. Applicants requesting help with supplemental exams fees are not required to be a member at the time of request. Applications are accepted at any time of year.

6. Student Service Awards:

Student Service Awards are intended to recognize members who have made outstanding contributions to their community, which includes members who volunteer their time to AUSU, Athabasca University or to any other community or organization. Members may be nominated by a volunteer supervisor or may self-nominate as long as an appropriate volunteer reference is provided. In order to distinguish between similarly highly qualified applicants, preference may be given to students with contributions to the Athabasca University community and Athabasca University students. Members may only receive this award once.

7. Returning Student Awards:

Returning Student Awards are intended to recognize the challenges faced by students who return to university after two or more years away from any type of formal education. Preference may be given to students who have been away for longer periods of time, are Athabasca University program students, and those who have overcome or are in the process of overcoming significant hardship in the pursuit of their education. These hardships should preferably be other than financial as AUSU bursaries are devoted to addressing those needs. Members may only receive this award once.

8. Balanced Student Awards:

Balanced Student Awards are intended to recognize and reward the scholastic effort of students who balance multiple commitments, including but not limited to, school, work, volunteerism, and family. Preference may be given to those applicants with a higher GPA over the last 30 credits. Members may only receive this award once.

9. #lgo2AU Awards:

Athabasca University is as diverse as its student membership. 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 #lgo2AU Award is intended to celebrate the concept of open enrolment and the flexibility of learning at Athabasca University. It is also

intended to reflect the entire student population and collectively offer an award that encompasses the openness of Athabasca University's mission. Applicants must be members of AUSU and are required to upload a YouTube video of up to two minutes long articulating a personal experience related to their education at Athabasca University.

- 7.02.24 AUSU may, at the discretion of council, create and distribute one-time awards other than, and in addition to, those discussed in this policy.
- 7.02.25 The awards committee may recommend additional awards for council approval in order to utilize the maximum funds in the awards budget.

Policy Review

- 7.02.23 This policy shall be reviewed annually to ensure fair criteria and maximum availability to all AUSU members.

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

This Policy References:

4.03 Records Management Policy

This Policy is Referenced by:

None

Forms:

None

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date: August 15, 2004
Last Review Date: September 12, 2019
Review by Date: September 2020