



Athabasca University Students' Union

2020 Annual Survey Results

Public Report



2020 Annual Survey Summary

AUSU circulated our Annual Survey to all current AU undergraduate students in November 2020 and received 1,310 responses.

The most notable results are that the majority of respondents were experiencing significant barriers to their education due to COVID-19, particularly due to difficulties getting support from the University, mental health struggles, distractions impacting their ability to study, and the costs of tuition.

In addition, the majority of students were satisfied with most of AUSU services, however, there was an indication of less overall service usage. Current survey results show an average of 37% of students using services, compared to an average of 46.7% in 2019 and 16% in 2018.

It is apparent from some responses and statistics collected that, as in previous years, there may be misunderstanding about whether some of the questions refer to AUSU or the University, particularly regarding the services. AUSU continues to work on ways to promote our services to our members and ensure clarity between AU and AUSU services. We will be able to use the survey data to help identify areas where communications can be improved.

Most of the individual comment received this year pertained to Athabasca University specifically and primarily indicate a high level of frustration with the support and response times from the University.

In addition, the survey highlighted student priorities, which included, based on responses to numerous questions:

- Reducing the cost of attending Athabasca University
- Improving the quality of education at Athabasca University
- Improving Athabasca University customer service, including but not limited to:
 - Reduced response times for student inquiries and concerns
 - Better phone service and support
 - Improved support and marking times from tutors/academic experts
 - Improved support and response times from Athabasca University
- Increased access to student financial aid
- Improved career services and work-integrated learning
- More student support due to COVID-19 including:
 - exam extensions
 - assessment options
 - improved understanding of student barriers
- Improved awards and bursaries program at AUSU

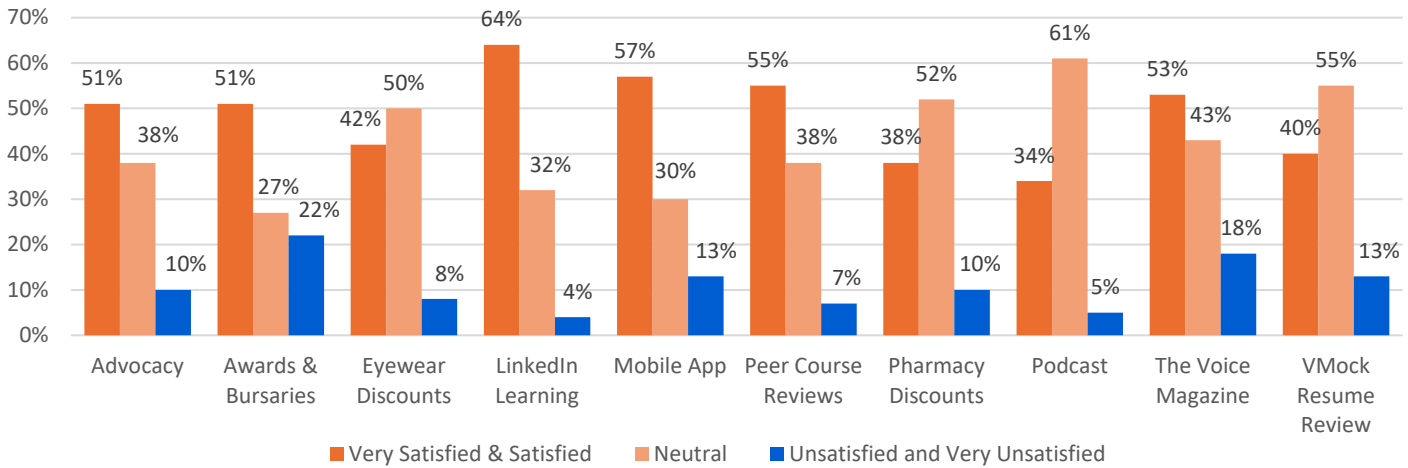
Overall, the data will be very useful in determining priorities, initiatives, and advocacy goals for AUSU in the coming year. AUSU would like to thank all students who participated!

Sent to 26,238 Members

Responses – 1,310 Total

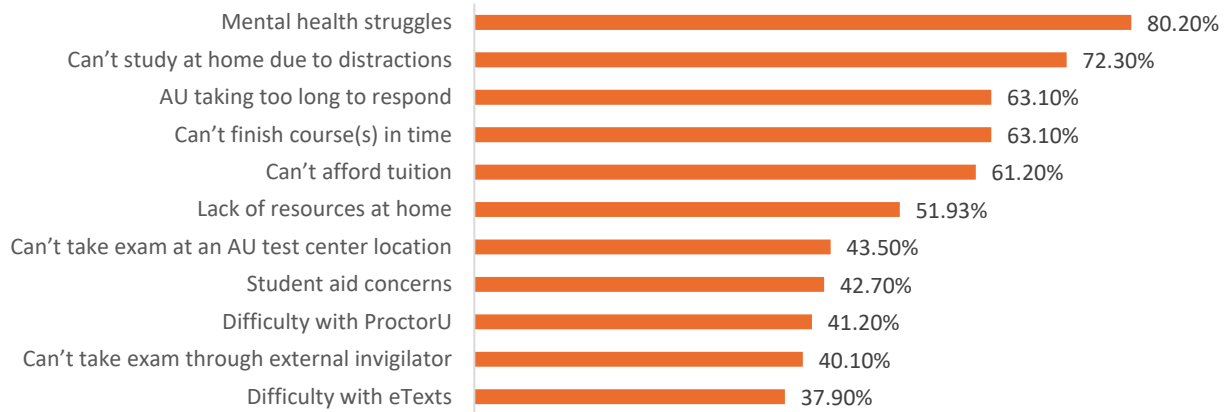
Key Survey Highlights

AUSU Student Service Satisfaction



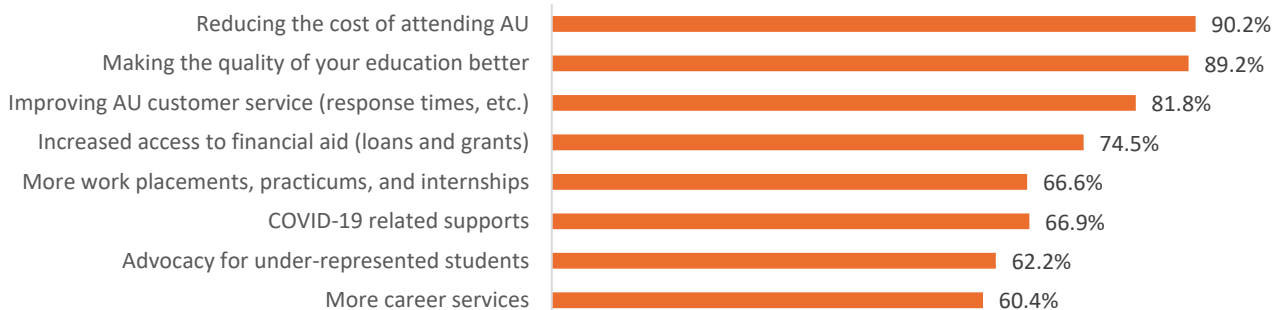
Percentages are based on the responses from students who did not check "have not used service" for each service.

Impact of COVID-19 on Studies



Percentages include students who indicated "Significant Impact" and "Some Impact"

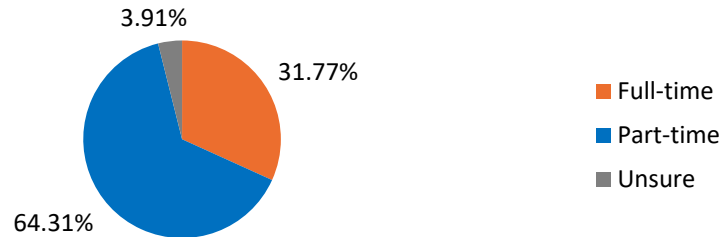
Advocacy Priorities



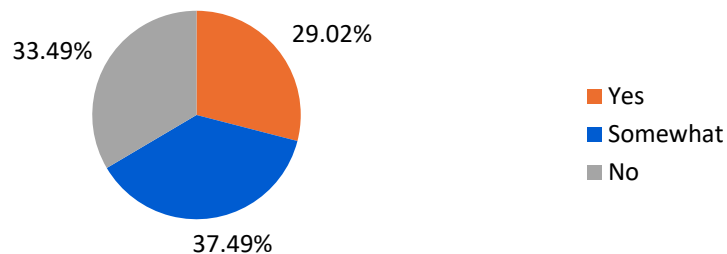
Percentages include students who indicated "Extremely Important" and "Somewhat Important"

Survey Data

Q1: Are you a full time or part-time student at Athabasca University?



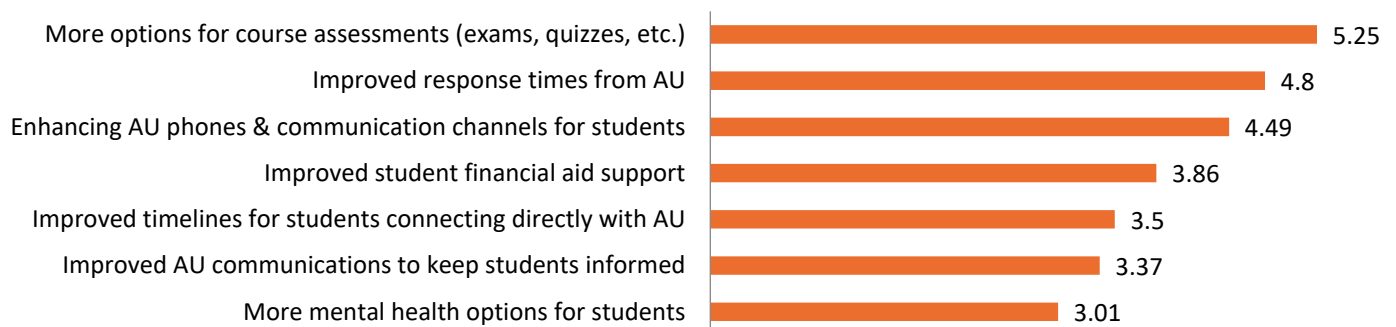
Q2. In Spring 2020, 80% of AU students said that their AU studies were affected or somewhat affected by COVID-19. Does COVID-19 continue to affect your ability to continue your Athabasca University studies?



Q3. During the COVID-19 pandemic, AUSU has been actively advocating on behalf of students to Athabasca University.

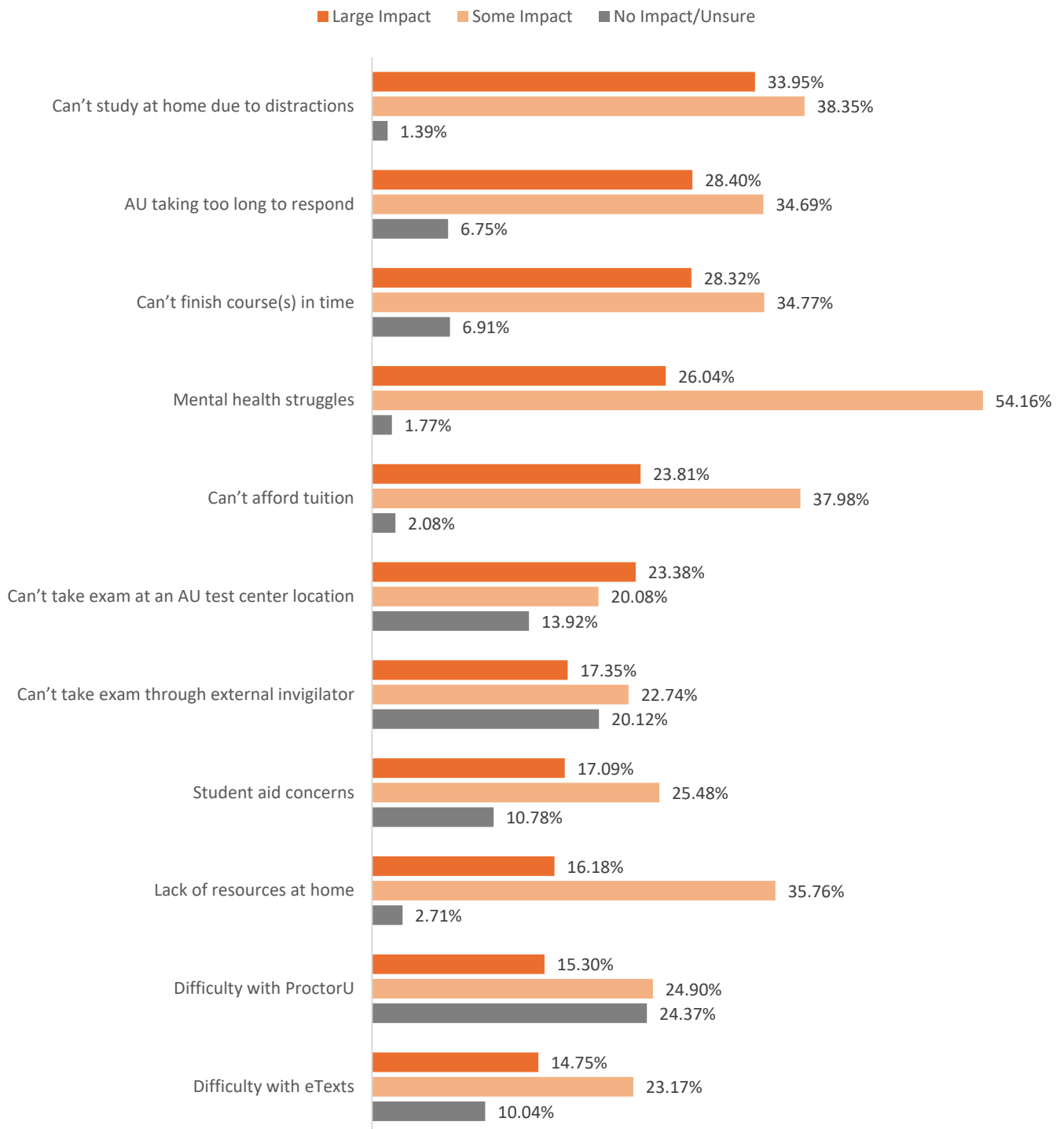
Please rank the following advocacy priorities from your perspective (*from most important to least important*).

Answers listed in overall ranking order:



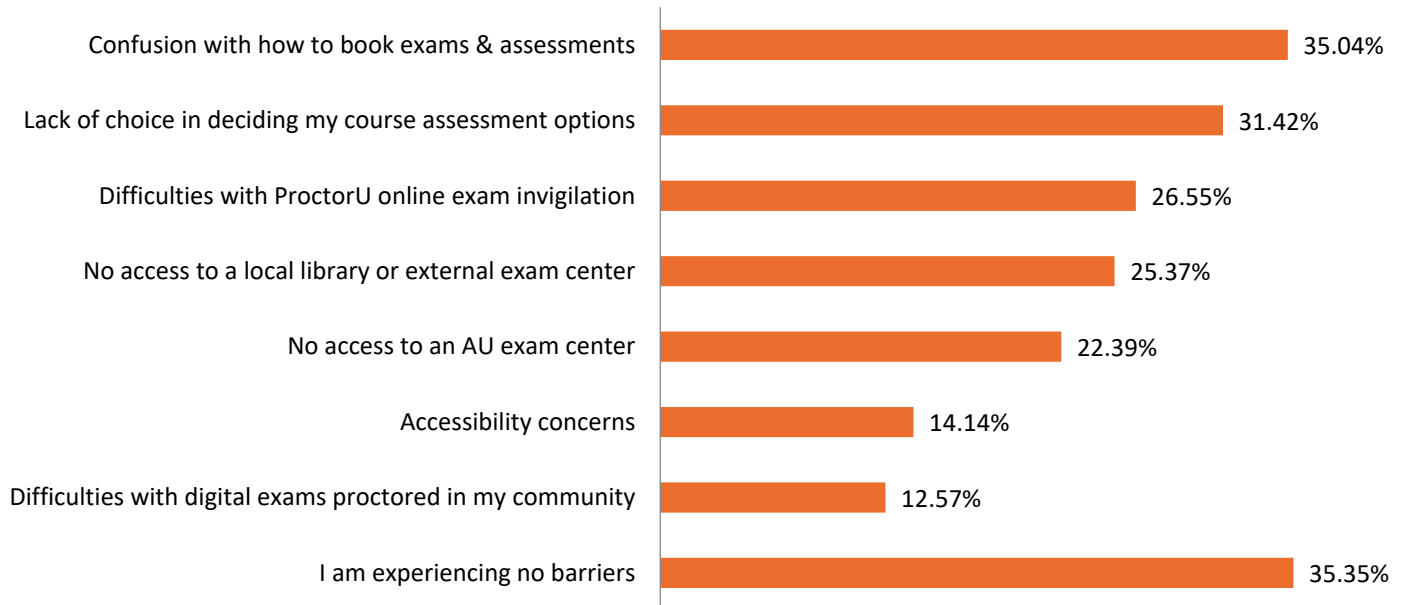
Q4. AUSU empathizes with all AU students who have been impacted by COVID-19 and recognizes that further support will be needed as we move toward 2021. Please rate how much the following COVID-19 challenges impact you currently

Answers listed in overall ranking order:



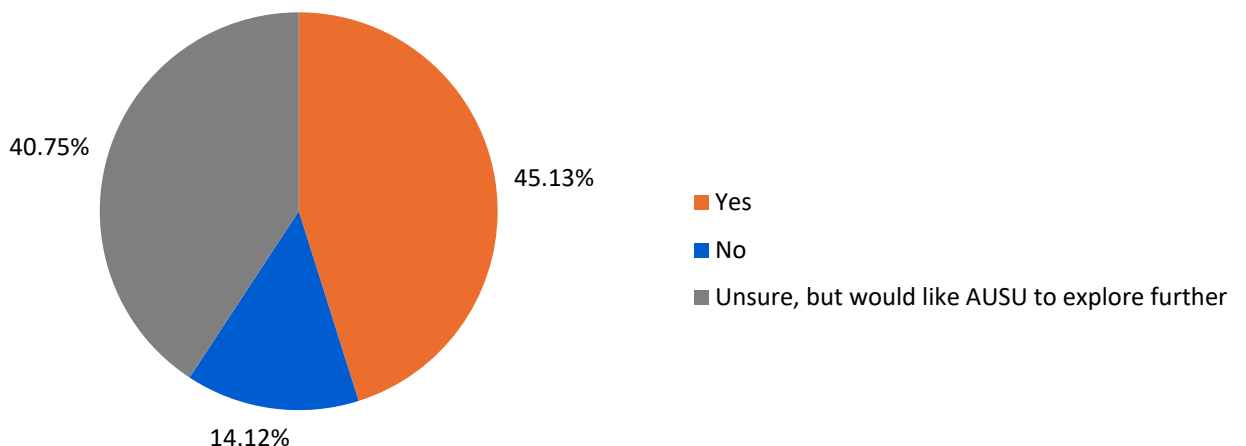
Q5. Your students' union is currently working with Athabasca University to explore new concepts in student course assessments. (i.e.: quizzes, exams, assignments, papers, etc.)

What barriers do you currently face relating to your individual course assessments at AU? (select all that apply).



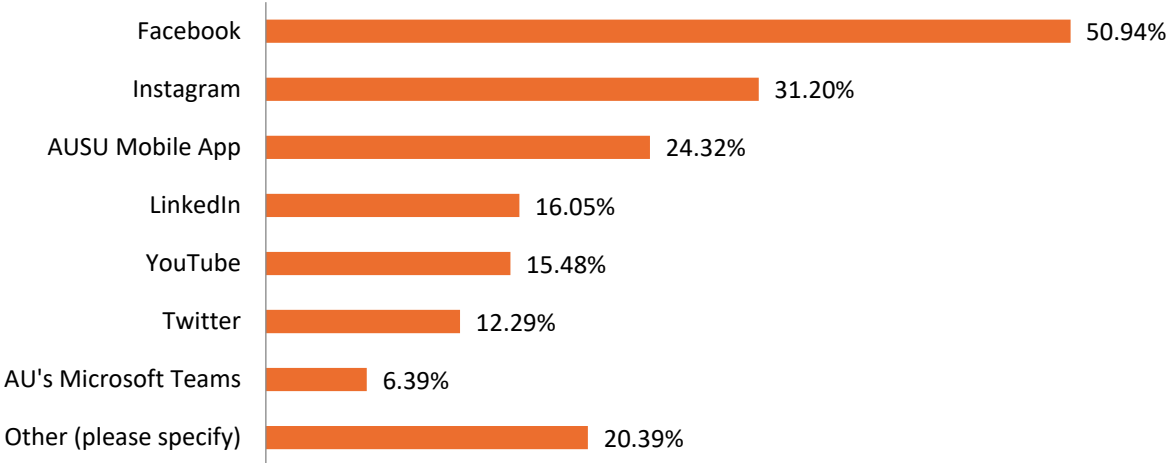
Q6. A co-curricular record is being adopted by many institutions to measure student involvement outside of their course content. This can support AU students by capturing soft skills that add value to your degree (such as leadership or volunteer opportunities, committee involvement, non-credit skill building, webinars, etc.).

Do you think this would be a valuable addition to your AU experience?



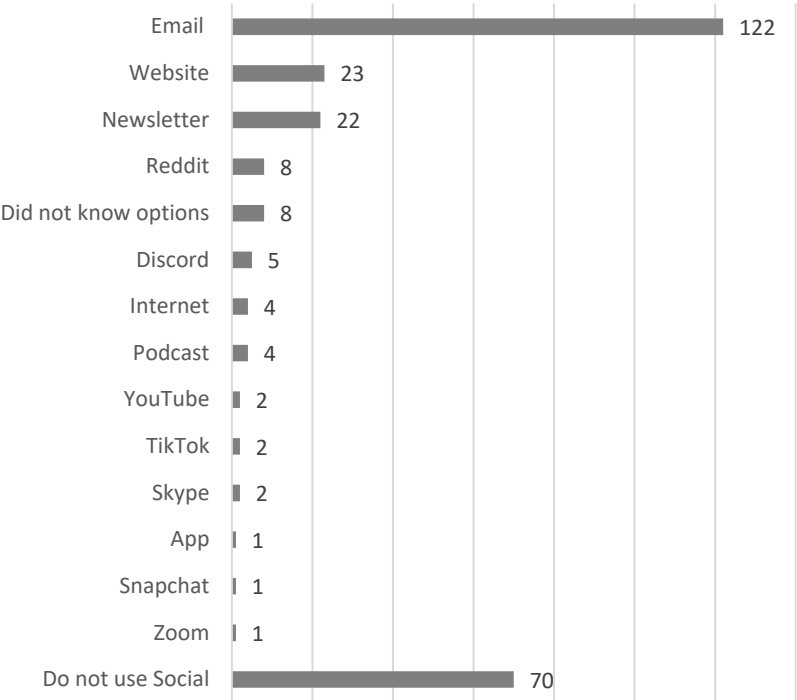
Q7. What social media platforms do you currently use the most to stay informed while attending AU?

Pro-tip: You can follow AUSU at @austudentsunion on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, or Twitter or check us out on YouTube.



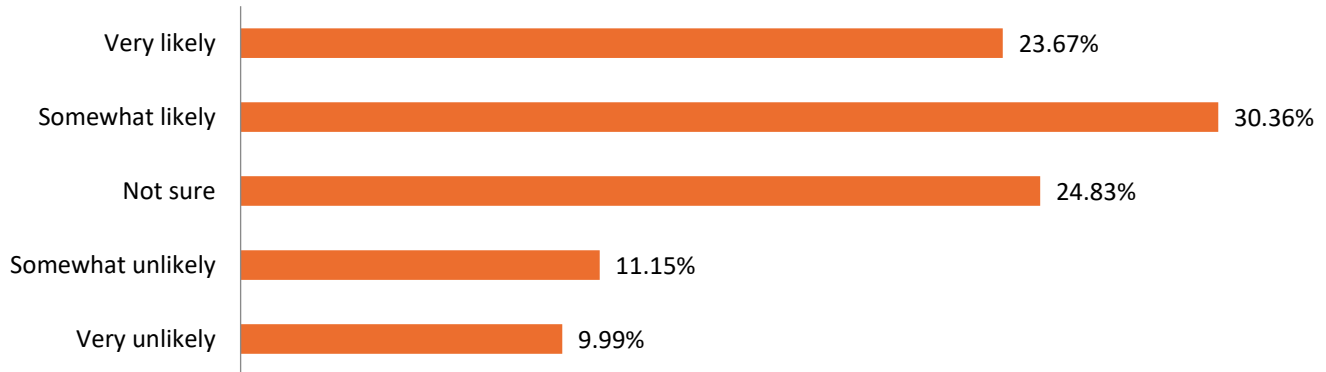
Other (please specify):

This is a compilation of the manual write-in comments in the “Other (please specify)” section.



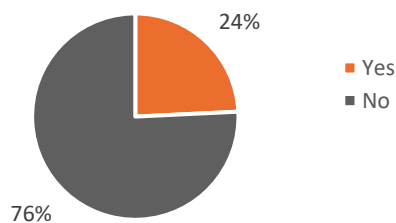
Q8. AUSU has worked hard to enhance its career services based on student feedback. In September 2020, AUSU was proud to launch a new online resume review service with VMock.

How likely are you to use this service to help build an amazing resume?

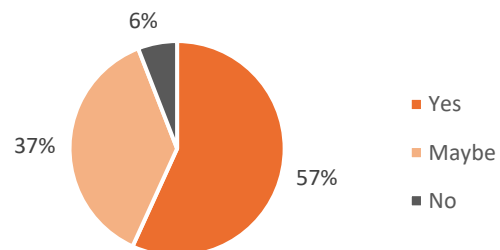


Q9. AUSU has recently rebranded its Peer Course Review service. The new Peer Course Reviews allow students to rate their AU courses anonymously and also review how other students have rated their courses. So far, over 800 reviews have been completed and are available to view! We want your feedback!

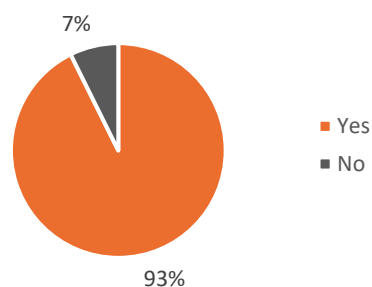
Have you filled out a Peer Course Review?



Do you plan to fill out a Peer Course Review in the Future?

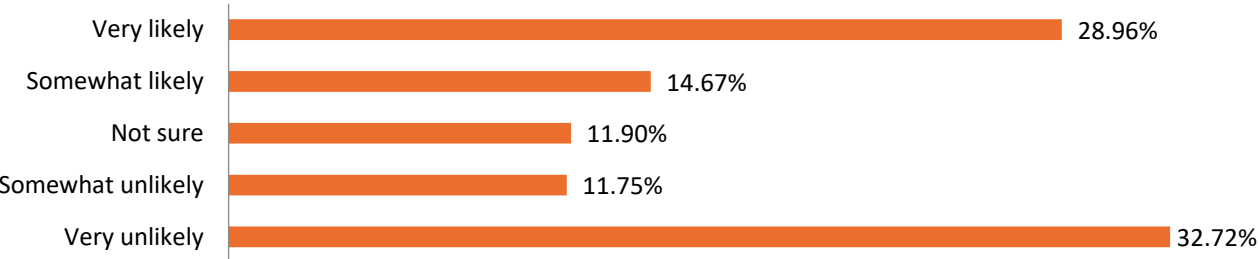


Was the Peer Course Review user-friendly and easy to fill out?

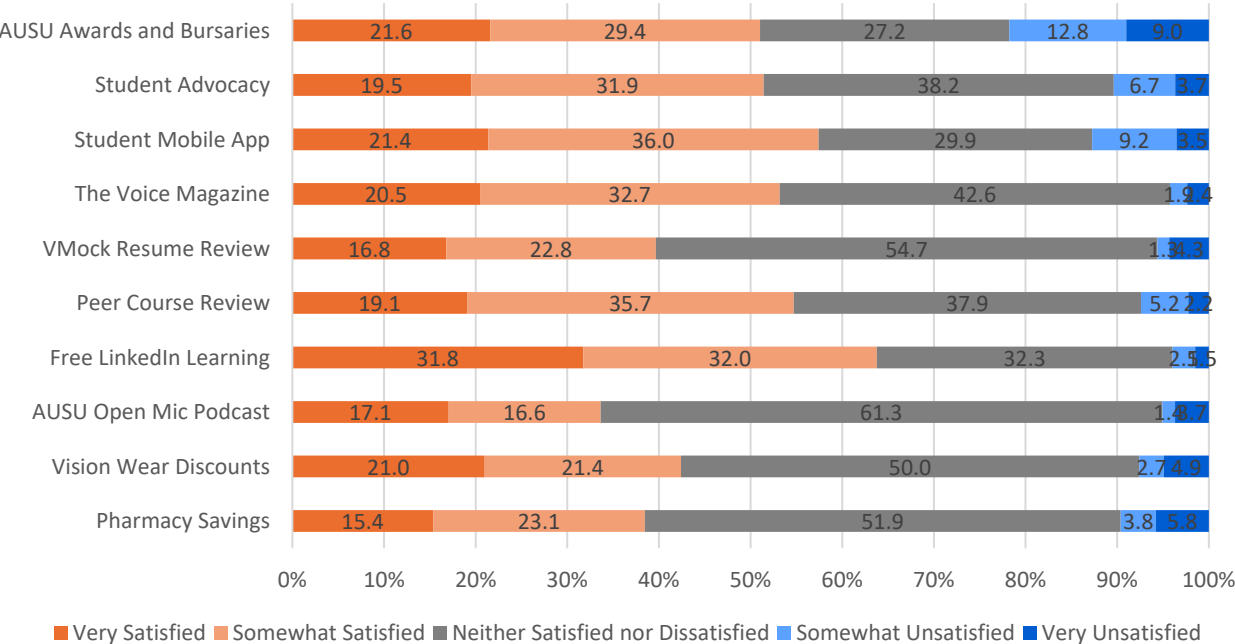


Q10. Your AU students' union is currently exploring ways to develop a Virtual Food Assistance Program for AU students in 2021. Students would be eligible to enter a draw for 1 of 5 grocery gift cards worth \$50 each month. Based on need, how likely would you be to apply for this food assistance program?

Do you think this would be a valuable addition to your AU experience?



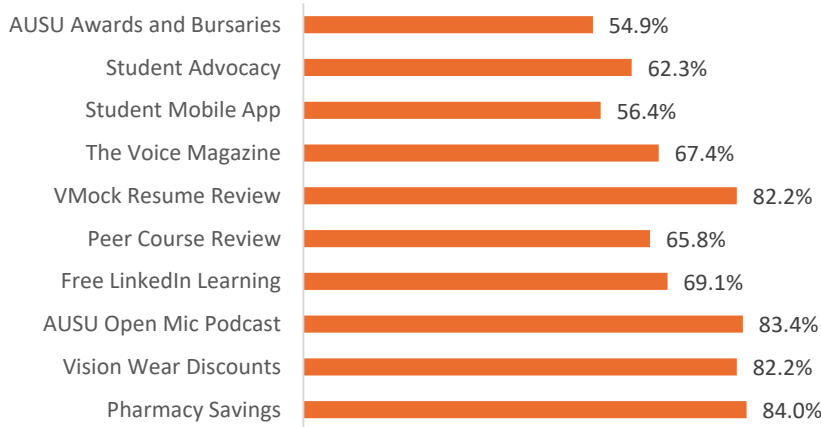
Q11. AUSU provides a variety of student services to AU undergraduates. Please share with us your level of satisfaction with the following AUSU services.



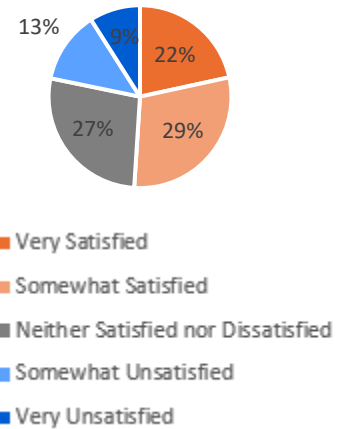
Service Satisfaction outlined in further detail on following page.

Q11 Continued: Please share with us your level of satisfaction with the following AUSU services.

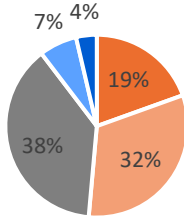
"N/A (Never Used) Service"



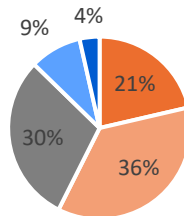
AUSU Awards & Bursaries



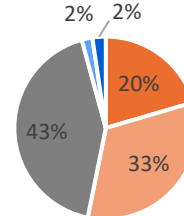
Student Advocacy



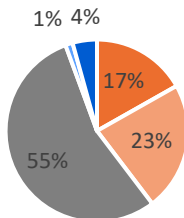
Student Mobile App



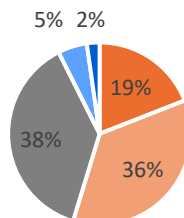
The Voice Magazine



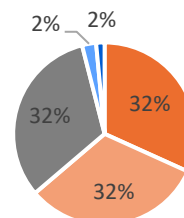
Vmock Resume Review



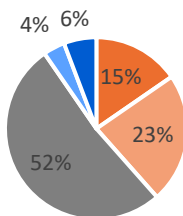
Peer Course Review



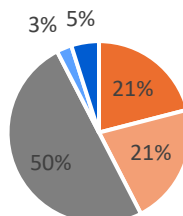
LinkedIn Learning



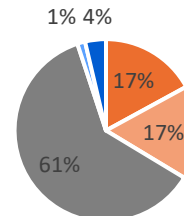
Pharmacy Savings



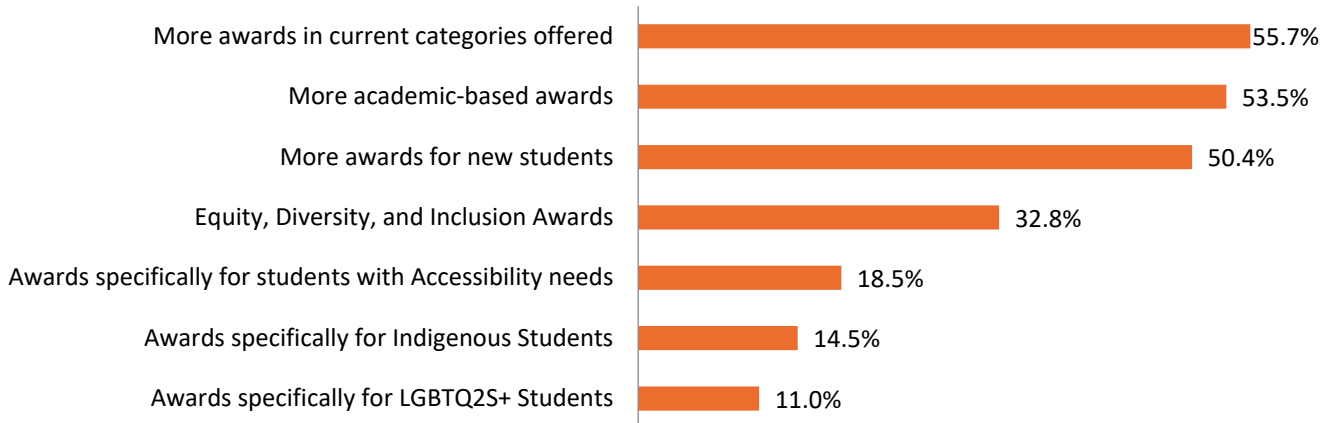
Visionwear Discounts



AUSU Open Mic Podcast

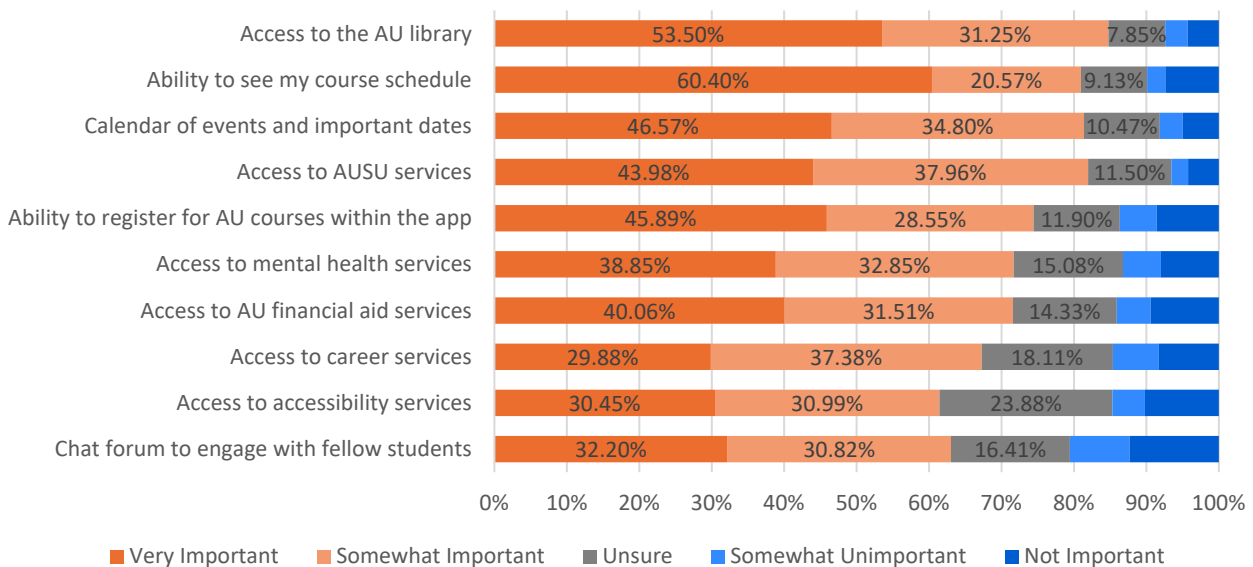


Q12. AUSU is looking for ways to expand its Awards and Bursaries Program. Please select the TOP 3 options you would like AUSU to consider:
(Make note, this question is pertaining to the Awards and Bursaries offered by the AU Students' Union, not Athabasca University)



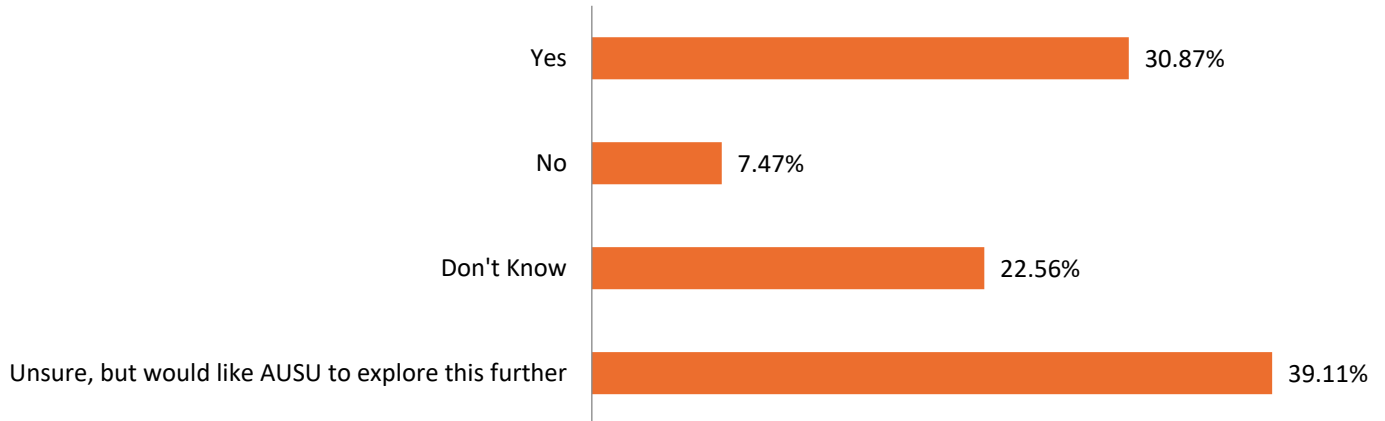
Q13: AUSU is partnering with AU on a new student mobile app in 2021. Please rate the importance of the following elements of this AU mobile app once developed?

Answers listed in overall ranking order from highest to lowest priority.



Q14. Many post-secondary institutions and students' unions have been implementing measures that adopt to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Though many of these goals relate to how in-person activities occur, some are relatable to the AU community.

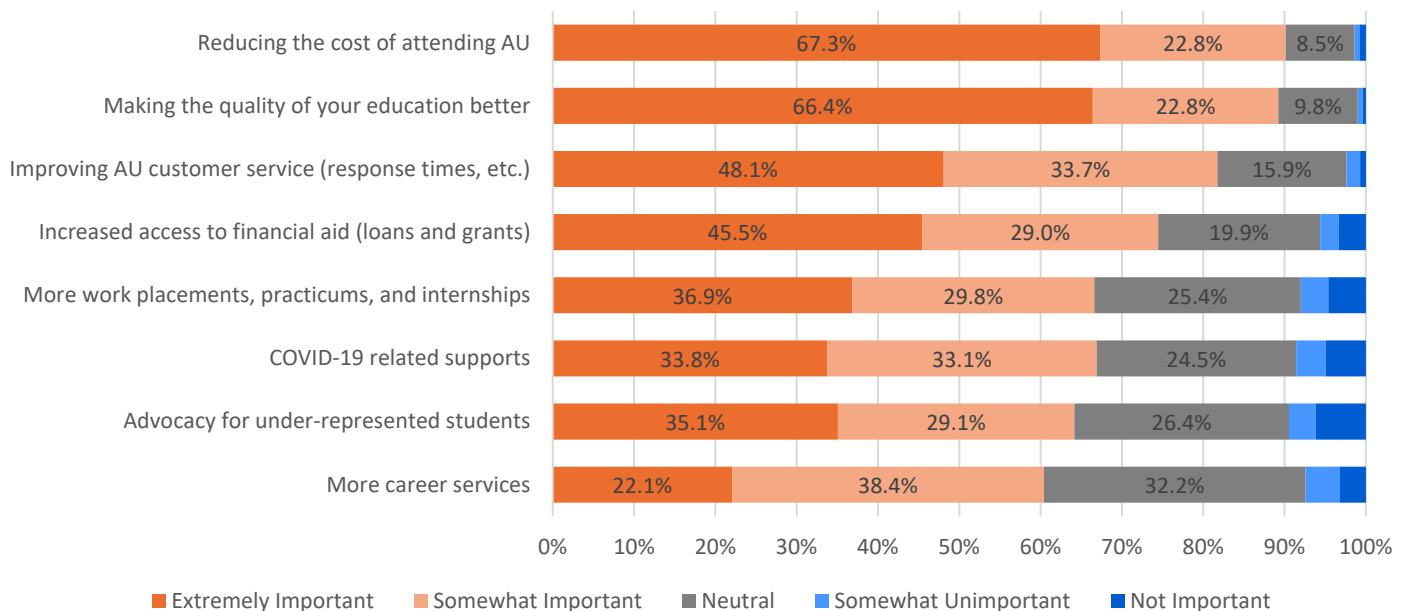
Are these goals something that you would think are important for AUSU to adopt and/or advocate for?



Q15. AUSU wants its advocacy efforts to reflect AU student priorities.

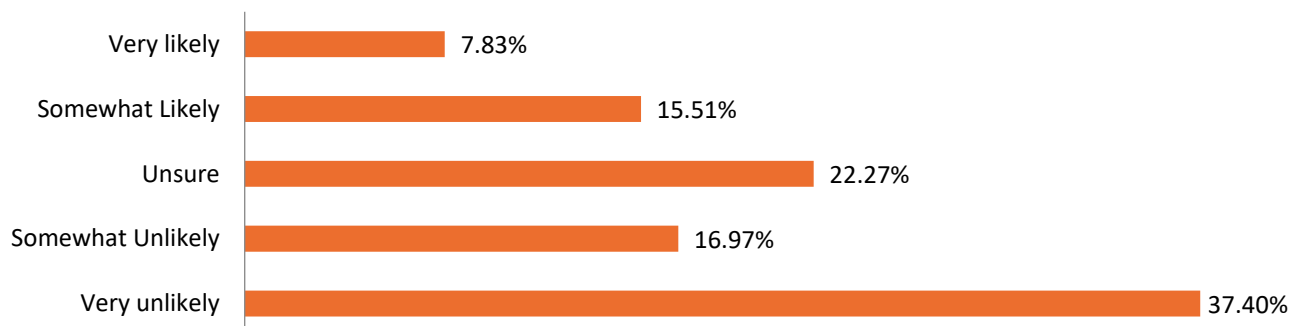
What areas do you feel AUSU should be focusing its advocacy efforts on the most? Please rate how important the following advocacy topics are to you:

Answers listed in overall ranking order:



Q16. AUSUnights is a new student social activity night hosted by AUSU for AU students to attend virtual student events, such as Trivia nights. These events are hosted via Zoom on the last Thursday of every month.

How likely are you to attend an AUSUnights Virtual Student Social?



Q17: Do you have any ideas about how your AU Students' Union could serve you better? (If no comments or ideas, please leave blank)

AU Phones / Student Support Improvements	55	More Support for Mature / Part Time	8
Awards & Bursaries Improvements	29	Health Benefits	6
Course / Program Improvements	25	Improved Marking Times	6
Student Connection / Engagement	21	Improve Existing Services (<i>Miscellaneous</i>)	6
Reduce Costs / Financial Support	20	Career Resources / Practicums	4
Exam / Assessment Issues	17	Mobile App	4
More Info About Supports / Services	17	Advocacy - Miscellaneous	4
Positive Feedback	17	Discounts	5
Course Extensions	9	Improved Education Quality	4
Text / E-Text Choice	8	Library Resources	2
		Other / One-Off Comments (<i>Miscellaneous</i>)	17

The majority of comments pertain specifically to Athabasca University, not specifically AUSU. However, they all speak to the advocacy that students would like to obtain from AUSU. The comments are categorized to highlight the main themes, but many comments fit multiple categories. For privacy sake, the individual comments are not displayed but will be reviewed internally by AUSU council to help establish priorities and initiatives in the upcoming year.

If you have any questions about the 2020 AUSU Annual Survey or the data presented, please contact AUSU at ausu@ausu.org