



POLICY 8.13

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Indigenous Circle at AUSU

POLICY INTENT

This policy defines the roles and objectives of the Indigenous Circle at AUSU.

POLICY

Role

- 8.13.01 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU is a governance body of AUSU members who self-identify as Indigenous and is supported by Council to represent Indigenous students at Athabasca University to AUSU and the greater community and advise AUSU on all matters from the lens of Indigenous students.

Authority

- 8.13.02 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU has the authority to:
- a. select a representative to sit on the AUSU council;
 - b. request information from any source that the Indigenous Circle deems appropriate in the support of their roles and responsibilities and such requests shall be forwarded to the Executive Director who will determine the best way to obtain the required information;
 - c. monitor progress made on Indigenization as identified in the Strategic Plan or Executive Works Plans of AUSU;
 - d. request funds from council to support their activities and utilize any granted funds in the manner outlined in the request; and
 - e. make recommendations to council and AUSU committees on any matter which falls under the committee's role or related to the importance of Indigenization at Athabasca University or within Athabasca University Students' Union.
- 8.13.03 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU is responsible for representing Indigenous members at AUSU.
- 8.13.04 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU may be asked for advice on all position policies, as well as specific council governance policies and terms of reference during development and review as it relates to Indigenous students.
- 8.13.05 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU shall select one of its members annually to represent the Indigenous Circle to AUSU Council.

- 8.13.06 In collaboration with the Executive Committee the Vice President Finance and Administration shall consult with the Indigenous Circle in the development of the AUSU budget prior to going to Council for approval.
- 8.13.07 In collaboration with the Executive Committee the Indigenous Circle at AUSU may choose to take a leadership role in representing Indigenous AUSU members to Athabasca University, government, and the larger community.

Membership

- 8.13.08 The membership of the Indigenous Circle at AUSU shall be comprised of the following:
- a. elected AUSU members who must self-identify as Indigenous;
 - b. a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of thirteen (13) members of the Indigenous Circle; and
 - c. the President, or Executive delegate, and the Executive Director as non-voting ex-officio members.
- 8.13.09 AUSU members who are elected to council and are also elected to sit on the Indigenous Circle at AUSU may not serve as the Indigenous Circle representative to council.
- 8.13.10 In the event that membership of the Indigenous Circle at AUSU falls below three (3) members, then AUSU shall hold a by-election to fill the vacant seats.
- 8.13.11 The first Indigenous Circle at AUSU established in 2021 will be appointed by Council. AUSU will advertise the positions during the spring of 2021 to interested members who self-identify as Indigenous and encourage them to submit applications. The Executive Committee will review all applications and put forward a shortlist to Council no larger than fifteen (15) applicants for consideration by Council.

Indigenous Circle at AUSU Representative to Council

- 8.13.12 The first meeting following a general election and again prior to the May meeting of council the Indigenous Circle at AUSU will select one member of the Indigenous Circle to sit on council as a voting member.
- 8.13.13 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU representative to council will also provide a report in writing at every council meeting on the activities of the Indigenous Circle at AUSU and of items of particular interest.
- 8.13.14 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU representative to council cannot be a sitting councillor elected during the general election or in a by-election.
- 8.13.15 As a sitting member of Students' Council the Indigenous Circle at AUSU representative to council must continue to meet the criteria needed to be a councillor, such as remaining in good standing with AUSU and completing at least one course during a given council year and any other criteria set by AUSU bylaws or policy.
- 8.13.16 For the first Indigenous Circle at AUSU appointed by Council in 2021 the Indigenous Circle at AUSU representative to council would not have a vote on council. The individual

selected in the 2021-2022 council term would still attend Students' Council and provide the report from the Indigenous Circle at AUSU but would not cast a vote or be counted towards quorum for council.

Elections

- 8.13.17 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU shall be elected by self-identified Indigenous members at AUSU every two (2) years, alongside AUSU Students' Council at the general election.
- 8.13.18 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU election shall follow AUSU Policy 3.01 Election Conduct and any rules or regulations for a general election and for candidates in the general election shall apply to the Indigenous Circle at AUSU election unless otherwise stated in AUSU policy.
- 8.13.19 The election for the Indigenous Circle at AUSU shall comprise two questions:
 - a. one question requesting the voter to self-identify or not as Indigenous; and
 - b. one question on who to elect to the Indigenous Circle at AUSU provided the member answered in the affirmative to the self-identity question before. Voters may select up to thirteen (13) candidates.
- 8.13.20 The conduct of candidates and voters in the election process would be held to the same standard as the council election, with important sensitivity when it comes to race and culture, especially when looking at questions of eligibility as either a candidate or an elector for the Indigenous Circle at AUSU.

Meetings

- 8.13.21 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU shall meet at least quarterly, but may meet up to six (6) times annually by teleconference.
- 8.13.22 The Indigenous Circle at AUSU shall operate by consensus and with respect for Indigenous cultures and traditions.

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

This Policy References

AUSU Policy 2.07 Member Representatives on AUSU Committees
AUSU Policy 3.01 Election Conduct
AUSU Policy 9.25 Access to Education for Indigenous Learners in Canada
AUSU Policy 3.03 By-elections

This Policy is Referenced by

None

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Council

POLICY HISTORY

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