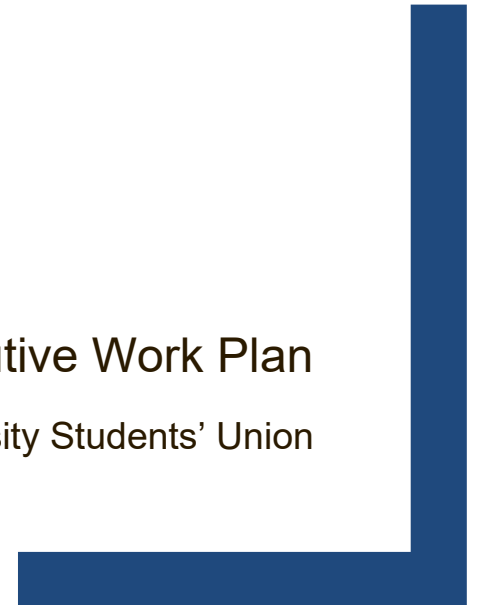




2021/2022 Executive Work Plan

Athabasca University Students' Union



Executive

Work Plan 2021/2022

During the spring of 2021, the 2021/2022 Executive Committee discussed the year's organizational goals, ensuring that they aligned with the overall mission, vision, and goals of the organization as set out by the Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) 2020–2023 Strategic Plan.

The planning process included:

- Virtual brainstorming sessions;
- Review of the previous Executive Work Plans and the 2020 AUSU Survey to identify key areas of focus based on AUSU member's feedback; and
- Discussions regarding the timelines, capacity, and resources of the organization.

How to read the plan:

Strategic Goal – The desired outcome that the Students' Union would like to have this year.		
The specific action that will be undertaken to achieve this desired outcome.	How we will know when we have accomplished our goal.	The Executive taking the lead on this action.

Key Priority



Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is an opportunity for AUSU to develop long-term strategies for meeting the organizational mission and vision. Through the creation of overarching goals, actionable strategies to fulfill those goals, and values to guide the organization along the way, AUSU will continually strive for excellence within the Athabasca University (AU) community.

Mission

The Athabasca University Students' Union exists to serve its student membership and enhance their AU undergraduate experience. Through meaningful services, advocacy, and student leadership, AUSU embraces its student diversity while supporting an exceptional online learning experience.

Vision

The Athabasca University Students' Union has students at the heart of the organization and supports their exceptional online learning journey, while continually seeking opportunities to enhance the AU student experience, now and in the future.

Values and Guiding Principles

Students First: AUSU will keep students at the forefront of its decision making, understanding that its primary objective is to enhance the overall undergraduate student experience at Athabasca University. AUSU is proud of the student diversity within the organization and celebrates the successes of its members. AUSU will continually strive to bring awareness and recognition of its AUSU members and adapt to their ever-changing needs.

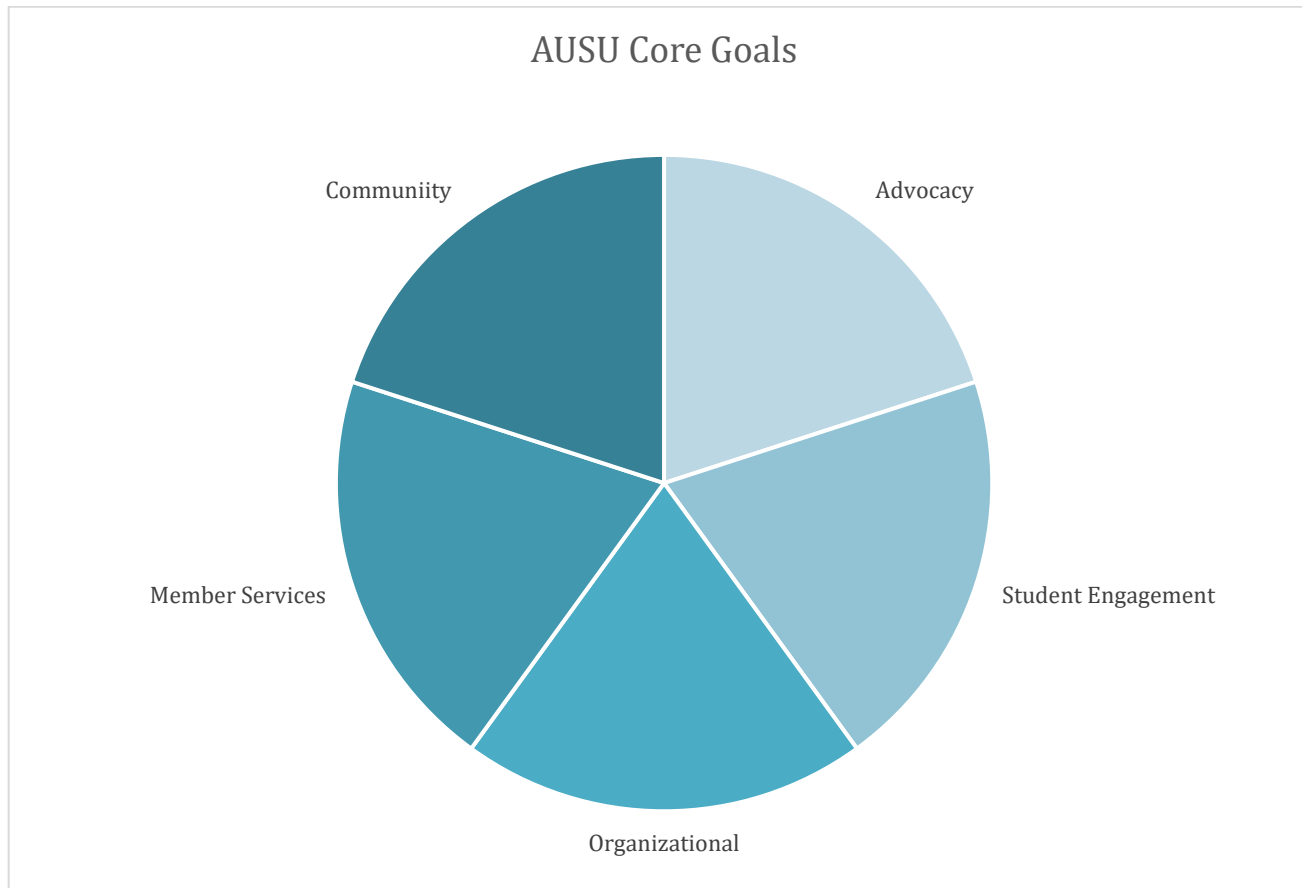
Relevance: AUSU services are developed based on the needs of AU undergraduate students and must be relevant to those ever-changing needs. Adaptability is essential to ensure services achieve a high level of value to our members.

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

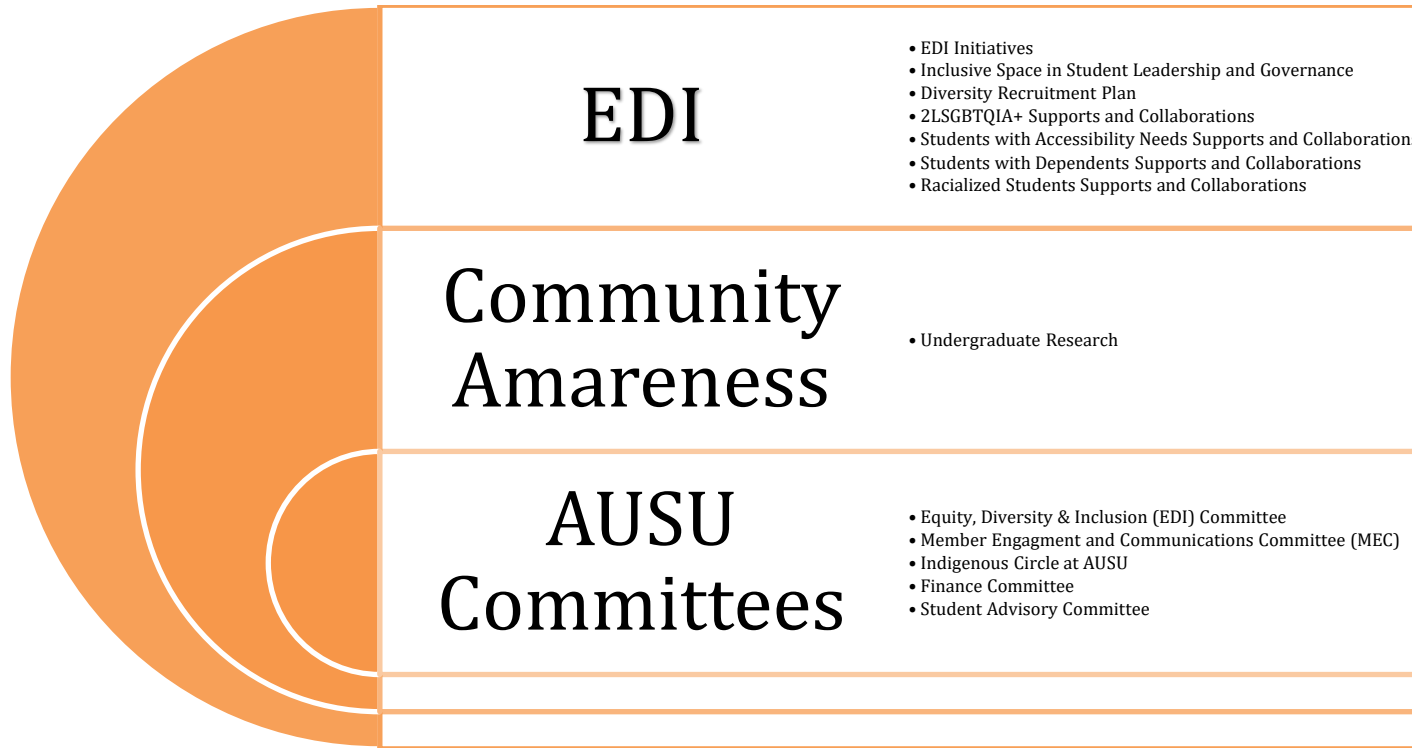
Excellence: AUSU will continually strive for a high level of integrity, quality, professionalism, and respect, while holding AU to the same standard of excellence at all levels of the University.

Community: AUSU will promote and participate in developing awareness and recognition of open, online, and distance education, while fostering an interactive and engaging virtual student community that connects students across borders and faculties.

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 foster strong student leadership and promote the value of an online-distance education.



Student Engagement



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 services offered by AUSU, and the value they bring to their online learning experience.

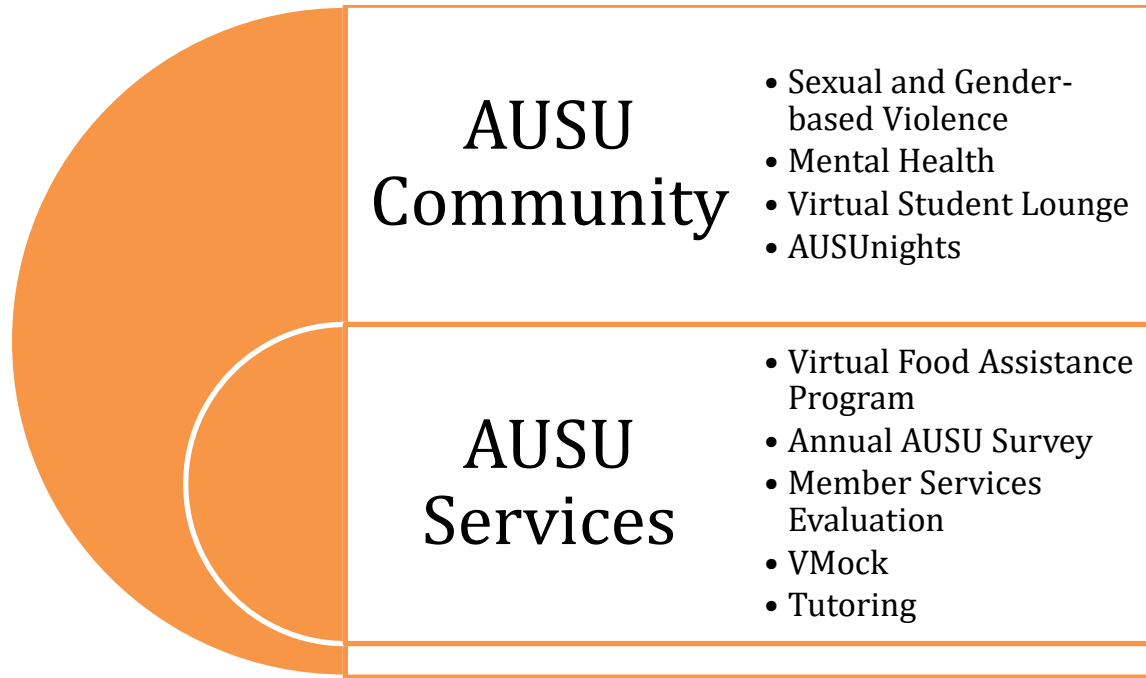
General Equity Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Initiatives	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an internal EDI Style Guide to be used as reference by the Executive Committee, Council, and Staff (July); and • Obtain input about AUSU's EDI policies from the EDI Committee (August). 	VPCW
Diversity Recruitment Plan	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and implement a recruitment plan that increases the diversity of Council candidates (January). 	VPEX

<p>Creating Inclusive Spaces in Student Leadership and Governance</p>	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research how to create more equitable and inclusive student leadership and governance spaces through a student survey (August); and • Create a report and an AUSU Position Policy based on these findings (November). 	<p>VPCW</p>
<p>2SLGBTQIA+ Students Supports and Collaborations</p>	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an informal community centre - <i>The Community: A 2SLGBTQIA+ Centre at AUSU</i> (August); • Host AUSU's first annual Pride Week with speaker panels and a social (October); • Maintain and expand the 2SLGBTQIA+ Discord Server and Resource document to include monthly drop-in hours (Ongoing); • Continue building networking relationships with 2SLGBTQIA+ student leaders (Ongoing); • Advocate to AU to create a virtual Pride Centre (Ongoing); and • Advocate to AU for increased supports for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community (Ongoing). 	<p>VPCW</p>
<p>Disabled Students, Neurodiverse Students, Chronically Ill Students, and/or and Students with Accessibility Needs Supports and Collaborations</p>	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an Ad Hoc Student Working Group to explore the needs of and to better advocate for disabled, neurodiverse, and/or chronically ill students, as well as students with accessibility needs (September); • Develop formal documentation underscoring the unique needs of disabled, chronically ill, and/or neurodiverse students (November); • Liaise with AU Accessibility Services to ensure that student accessibility needs are being addressed (Ongoing); and • Research other student unions/associations and liaise, if possible (Ongoing). 	<p>VPCW</p>
<p>Students with Dependents Supports and Collaborations</p>	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a resource list for students with dependents with consultation from the Executive Committee (Ongoing); and • Advocate for enhanced childcare with VPEX (Ongoing). 	<p>VPCW VPEX</p>

Indigenous Students Supports and Collaborations	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partner with Nukskahtowin to better support Indigenous students (Ongoing); and ● Liaise with and offer support to the Indigenous Circle at AUSU (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Racialized Students Supports and Collaborations	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help AUSU Staff promote events and initiatives for racialized students (Ongoing); and ● Advocate to AU to better support and serve racialized students' needs (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Undergraduate Research and Honours Degrees	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create an Undergraduate Research Awareness Week; ● Create an information campaign over social media to help students understand the specifics about research and Honours Degrees (February); ● Take over the AUSU Open-Mic Podcast and interview both an undergrad who has done research, as well as one of the faculty that is in charge of the undergraduate research course codes (February); and ● Support students in the AUGSA Graduate Research Conference being hosted in October 2021 (October). 	VPEX
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDI)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet quarterly (Ongoing); and ● Develop dialogue around ways to best implement an EDI framework within AUSU, as well as externally (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Member Engagement and Communications Committee (MECC)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet quarterly (Ongoing); and ● Review AUSU Member Services (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Student Advisory Committee (SAC)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet quarterly (Ongoing); ● Provide recommendations for the Terms of Reference (ToR); and ● Streamline SAC, if needed (March). 	VPCW

Indigenous Circle at AUSU	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the Indigenous Circle during its first year to ensure its success and sustainability (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Financial Committee	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet quarterly; ● Ensure that all monthly expenditures conform to the budget by reviewing the most recent variance report each month; ● Approve AUSU’s ongoing finances; and ● Regularly review AUSU finance policies and practices, and recommend changes as needed (Ongoing). 	VPFA

Member Services

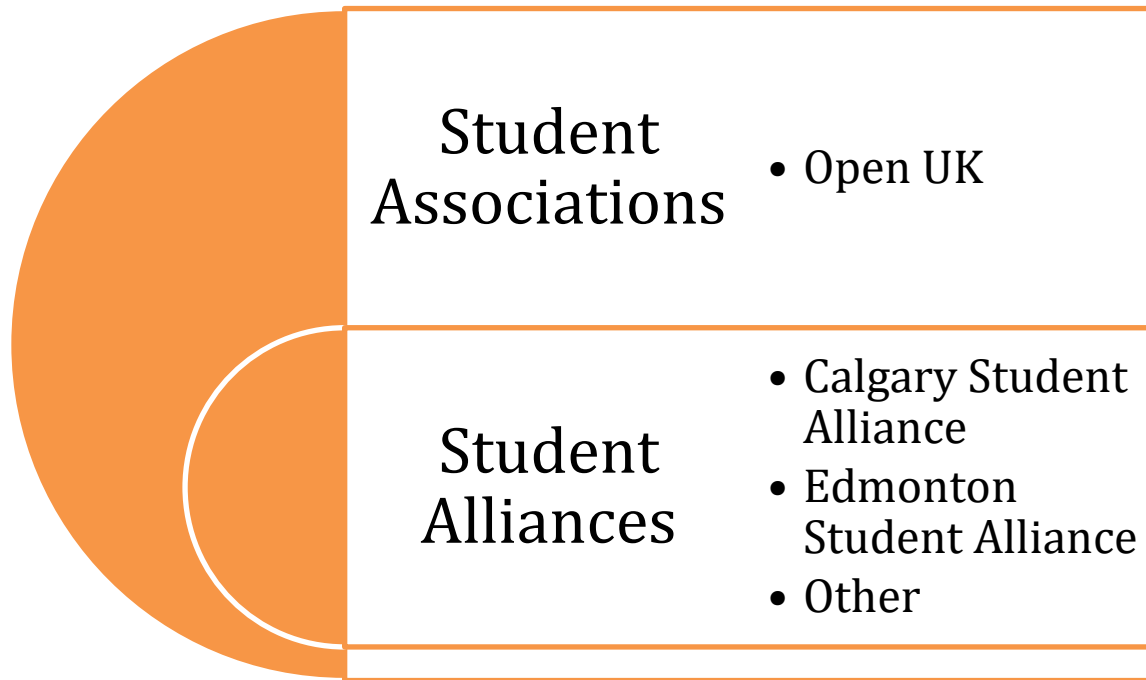


AUSU will create awareness of all its services and student resources, while continuing to seek feedback from its student membership in order to maintain relevancy and meet the ever-changing needs of AU students.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Awareness	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue refining the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Resources (Ongoing); and • Identify and review AU's sexual and gender-based violence policies, including for practicums (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Mental Health Supports	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research initiatives for further mental health supports at AU (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Virtual Food Assistance Program	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the development of the pilot program is sustainable (Ongoing); • Collect data based on the pilot and include questions in the Annual Survey with VPFA (Ongoing); and 	VPCW

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to grow the program in the future, including supplies and donations (April). 	
AUSU Annual Survey	<p>We will know we are success when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Annual Survey to AUSU members (November). 	VPCW
VMock	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make recommendations to Council on VMock's success and next steps after the first year (Ongoing). 	VPFA
AUSUnights	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand AUSUnights to include various events, such as speaker series, via input from Staff and MECC (Ongoing); and Review the one-year anniversary of AUSUnights (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Virtual Student Lounge	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build community with student meetups that are hosted outside of AUSUnights, including the Virtual Student Lounge for undergraduates and for 2SLGBTQIA+ learners (Ongoing). 	VPCW
Member Services Evaluation	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and maintain the Services website page with the VPCW; Have the Executive Committee review Member Services and their usage; Have the Executive Committee review alternatives to underappreciated services; Use data and consultations to make necessary changes to either improve or reallocate resources to different services; and Further research options for health and dental insurance for students (Ongoing). 	VPFA
Tutoring	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with AU stakeholders to identify the level of support tutors are required/expected to give under their contracts and research third-party tutoring services (October); and Prepare a report on third-party tutoring services to bring to Council (December). 	VPEX
Social Media	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Social Media/Communications Staff on a regular basis, as well as MECC (Ongoing); Promote the possibility of advertising AU/AUSU across centralized platforms (Ongoing); and Remain active on AUSU social media plaforms (Ongoing). 	VPCW

Community Partnerships

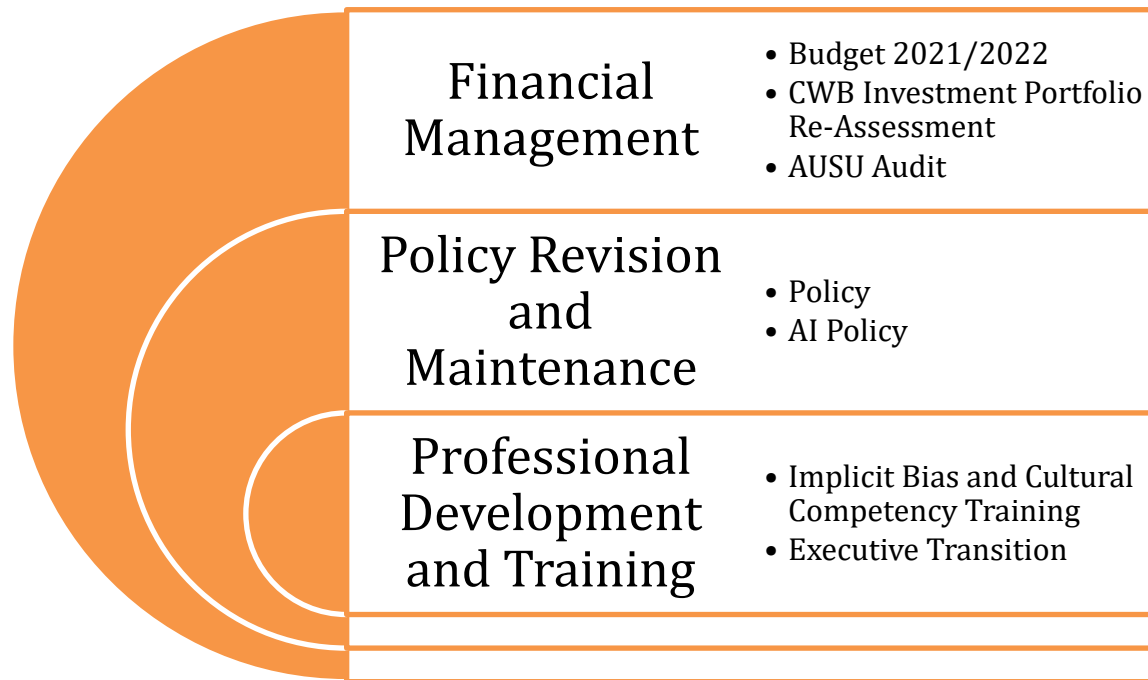


AUSU will strive to create partnerships internally and externally from AU, that seek mutual benefit and enhancement of the AU student experience.

<p>Open University Students Association Partnership</p>	<p>We will know we have accomplished our goal when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate and develop a Terms of Reference (ToR) from the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that reflects all partners' expectations and outcomes with the VPFA ; • Engage with other international distance-learning student representatives and invite them to join the network; • Create a plan for establishing the network's initial activities; and • Set a one-year initial time frame for these partnership activities (Ongoing). 	<p>VPEX</p>
<p>Calgary Student Alliance (CSA)</p>	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain ambassadors for online and distant learners and ensure that they are included within decision making; and 	<p>VPEX</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen AUSU's relationship with fellow student-led organizations (Ongoing). 	
Edmonton Student Alliance (ESA)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect with the Edmonton Student Alliance and observe the organization; Remain ambassadors for online and distant learners and ensure that they are included within decision making; and Strengthen AUSU's relationship with fellow student-led organizations (Ongoing). 	VPEX

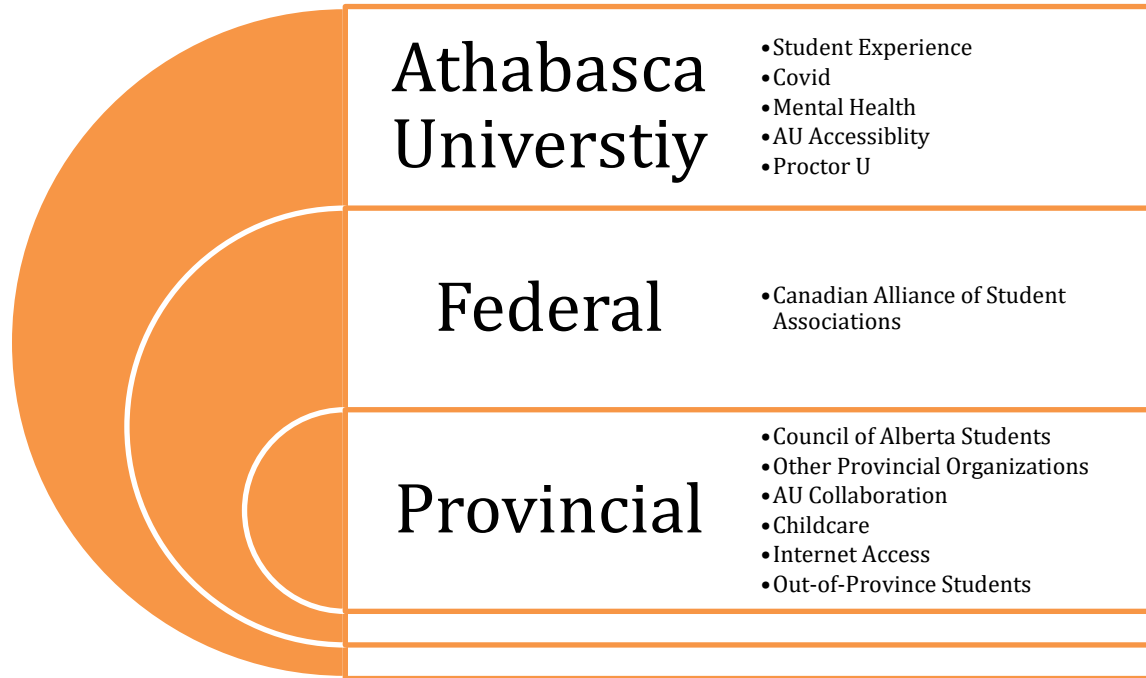
Organizational



AUSU will strive to be an organization of significance, with undergraduate students' needs always being at the forefront of its decision making. AUSU's strong foundation makes it a leader amongst its fellow student organizations.		
Budget Planning Process	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present Council with a final budget submission for approval at the September 2021 Council meeting (September). 	VPFA

Re-Assess CWB Investment Portfolio	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the CWB representative to specify investment requests, such as ESG (environmental, social, and governance) concerns also known as sin stocks; • Keep up-to date with portfolio valuation summaries, performance review of rate of return summaries, as well as complete statement of investments, transaction detail statement, and investment strategy overview; and • Ensure all investments adhere to ethical guidelines (Ongoing). 	VPFA
AUSU Annual Audit	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Council with a completed audit for review at the January 2022 Council meeting (January). 	VFPA
Policy Review	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have reviewed all AUSU policies as per Policy 1.01 following the Policy Review Schedule (Ongoing). 	VPFA
Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Student Data	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Position Policy to present to Council (December). 	VPEX
Implicit Bias and Cultural Competency Training	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide implicit bias training to Staff, Councillors, and Executives (October). 	VPEX
Executive Transition	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the new Executive Committee with up-to-date “Month in the Life” documents; and • Support the transition process to ensure the organization runs smoothly (Ongoing). 	President VPEX VPFA VPCW

Advocacy



AUSU will support and advocate for all AU undergraduate students while representing their unique needs to the university, as well as the provincial and federal governments.

COVID Supports	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that AU continues to offer alternative exams and flexible course extensions; and • Have AU implement Compassionate Grading for students who want it (Ongoing). 	President
Student Experience	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to be included in the Integrated Learning Environment (ILE) construction; • Have AU present the pilot Course Template to Council; 	President

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect data in AUSU's Annual Survey to have an understanding on how AU can improve the student experience; ● Ensure that undergraduates are included in available AU research opportunities; ● Advocate for AU to bring a co-curricular record to AU students; and ● Create a report identifying potential issues with AU policies, specifically, identified issues regarding Harassment and Sexual Harassment (January). 	
Mental Health Supports	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue advocating for the improvement of the Homewood Health service; and ● Attend AU Student Mental Health Advisory Group meetings (Ongoing). 	VPCW
AU Accessibility Services	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocate to AU to allocate resources to Accessibility Services, ensuring that students who use it have a positive experience that is barrier free; and ● See AU support students in applying for grants to access funds through Federal and Provincial Programs (Ongoing). 	President
Cyber Security Concerns – Proctor U	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet with ProctorU and AU representatives to gather information and address concerns; ● Establish transparency between the invigilator (ProctorU) and learners; and ● Provide a detailed report on the findings concerning cyber security in the VPFA Executive Report to Council (Ongoing). 	VPFA
Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend all of AU's EDI Committee meetings (Ongoing). 	VPEX
Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● See our members' needs reflected in the advocacy document; ● Have the President attend the Organization and Planning Engagement Committee meetings on a biweekly basis and participate in events where possible (Ongoing); and ● Attend biweekly Board meetings (Ongoing). 	VPEX
Provincial Advocacy Collaboration with Athabasca University's VP University Relations (VPUR)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p>	VPEX

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate to Ministers and MLAs that AU is a unique institution, with value to those who cannot attend brick-and-mortar institutions (Ongoing). 	
Other Provincial Organizations	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a report outlining other provincial alliances that other AU students would benefit having a voice within (December); and Attend bilateral meetings with other student unions to share resources and strategies (Ongoing). 	VPEX
Childcare	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request a meeting with Minister of Advanced Education in Alberta to advocate for childcare for students (August); Request a meeting with Minister of Children's Services (August); Work with CAUS to advocate for childcare for students (Ongoing); and Work with CASA to advocate for federal funding for provincial childcare (Ongoing). 	VPEX
Internet Access	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request a meeting with Minister Advance Education (October); Request a meeting with Minister of Service Alberta (October); Work with CAUS to advocate for internet for Albertans (Ongoing); and Attempt to meet with Maryam Monsef, Federal Minister of Rural Economic Development to push for rural broadband access (Ongoing). 	VPEX
Out-Of-Province Students	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research similar arguments that have been made and how they worked; Create a generic one-pager to send to politicians (November and December); Share the one-pager with the relevant politician in each province (January); Research a human rights complaint based on disability and family status (November and December); and Follow up with a complaint, if feasible (January). 	VPEX
Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Board	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully oversee the financials of the organization and present to the board monthly and to membership quarterly at conferences (Ongoing); Create a financial document for incoming members to read to promote their financial literacy within the organization (March); Present CASA's financials to the membership on a quarterly basis 	President

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with Graduate Advisory Group on new Operating Procedures, Advocacy Ask and Preparing the Annual Report to the Board (Ongoing) and ● Attend biweekly board meetings, conduct monthly liaison calls with members; and ● Review the “Undergraduate Research” policy for the Federal Policy Committee (Ongoing). 	
Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA)	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure policies at CASA reflect AUSU members’ unique needs, including that initiatives include students of all ages; ● Participate in Get-Out-The-Vote Campaign; and ● Attend the Federal Policy Committee and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) meetings (Ongoing). 	VPEX
Indigenous Student Entrance Bursary	<p>We will know we are successful when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore opportunities to participate in AU’s Indigenous Reconciliation efforts by contributing to the Indigenous Student Entrance Bursary (January); and ● Bring the pilot project to Council for approval (February). 	VPEX