



2022-2023
AUSU Executive Workplan
Athabasca University Students' Union

Who We Are and Why We Are Here

Mission

The Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) exists to serve its student membership and enhance their Athabasca University (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 AU. AUSU is proud of the student diversity within the organisation 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.

Workplan Purpose, Process, and Organization

Purpose

Executive workplans ensure that Council has the opportunity to give direction on the work that the Executive Committee does for the year. It also allows the Executive Committee and Staff to ensure that the team's plans are feasible and take into account Staff availability and organizational capacity.

Planning and Priorities

Each year, the AUSU Executive Committee submits their plans for the year to Council for discussion and approval. The workplans are formulated by the Executive Committee based on the AUSU Strategic Plan (a document developed every three years to guide our long-term planning), and incorporate ideas from Council that have been expressed both in informal council sessions, the April council survey, as well as key initiatives from the platforms the Executive Committee ran on when elected to their roles. Recommendations from the AUSU Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Report (2022) also inform the workplans.

Organization

AUSU's Strategic Plan is built around five pillars, namely Advocacy, Member Services, Student Engagement, Community Partnerships, and AUSU's Organization. The workplan has sections for each of these pillars, divided up into goals, each of which has a number of tasks associated with it. Beside each task, the workplan indicates the primary Executive(s) taking the lead on it, although it's important to note that the Executive Committee often collaborates and provides support for each other.

In addition to projects, a significant component of the Executives Committee's work is to represent AU students on AU and external committees. This work is included in a sixth section, which details who is sitting on which committees.

Representation Work

One of the major ways that AUSU ensures student voices are heard is by sitting on committees. Some of these committees are within AU whereas others are connected to our external advocacy groups. Within AU committees, EC members have the opportunity to speak up on behalf of students as well as vote, as decisions are made. On the committees associated with our external advocacy groups, the Council of Albera University Students (CAUS) and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), your Executives help make decisions and guide the work being done on AUSU's behalf.

Organization	Committee	Councillor
Athabasca University	Board of Governors (BoG)	President VPFA
Athabasca University	BoG Finance and Property	VPFA
Athabasca University	BoG Governance	President
Athabasca University	BoG Honorary Awards	VPFA
Athabasca University	General Faculties Council (GFC)	President VPFA
Athabasca University	GFC Executive Committee	President
Athabasca University	GFC Student Academic Appeals Committee	VPFA
Athabasca University	GFC Academic Excellence Awards Committee	VPFA
Athabasca University	GFC Student Awards Committee	VPFA
Athabasca University	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty Council	VPEX VPCW
Athabasca University	Faculty of Science and Technology Faculty Council	President
Athabasca University	Faculty of Health Disciplines Faculty Council	VPCW
Athabasca University	Faculty of Business Faculty Council	VPEX
Athabasca University	Undergraduate Business Program Council	VPCW
Athabasca University	Integrated Learning Environment Steering Committee	President
Athabasca University	Digital Governance Council	VPEX

Athabasca University	Mental Health Advisory Committee	VPCW
Athabasca University	Frontline Learner Services Transformation Steering Committee	VPEX
Athabasca University	Faculty of Science and Technology Program Planning Working Group	President
Athabasca University	Student Mental Health Advisory Group	VPCW
Athabasca University	Tuition Steering Committee	President
Canadian Alliance of Student Associations	Policy Committee	VPEX
Canadian Alliance of Student Associations	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee	President
Canadian Alliance of Student Associations	Governance and Internal Review Committee (Observer)	President
Council of Alberta University Students	Board	VPEX President
Council of Alberta University Students	Policy-Chair	VPEX
Council of Alberta University Students	Organizing and Public Engagement Committee	President
Council of Post-Secondary Presidents of Alberta	Transfer Credit Committee	VPEX
AUSU	Chair of Finance Committee	VPFA
AUSU	Chair of Awards Committee	VPFA
AUSU	Chair of 2STNBGN Award Selection Committee	VPFA
AUSU	Chair of Member Engagement and Communications Committee	VPCW
AUSU	Co-Chair of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee	VPCW
AUSU	Indigenous Circle Representative at AUSU	VPEX

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. Advocacy can take a number of different forms, including speaking up at committees, meeting with stakeholders to discuss key issues, collaborating with partners within and outside of AU to create change, or organizing a sustained campaign to bring attention to an issue.

Many of these priorities are ongoing and, in many cases, connect to committees the various Executives sit on.

Institutional Advocacy

Goal	Important Aspects	Councillor
Keep Education Affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for no tuition increases for September 2023 Eliminate out-of-province fees Advocate for choice in learning resources and associated saving for students 	President President President
Improve the Student Experience with AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate how the course registration process could be improved Advocate for better communication from AU through more thorough student-facing content Advocate for a self-serve option to allow students to update their display name Advocate for an AU anti-Black racism task force to address Scarborough Charter Liaise with Nuksahtowin to help support the needs of Indigenous students Advocate for practical and industry relevant training for students, including micro-credentials Investigate how gender markers are used for students within AU 	President President VPCW & President VPCW VPCW VPEX VPCW
Improve Student Consultation at AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create student priorities document for tuition consultation Create guide for AU on how to invite students into consultation 	President President

Improve the Quality of Education at AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for regular course updates every four years Advocate for Work Integrated Learning opportunities Advocate for tutor accountability in marking and response times Advocate for equitable course content Advocate to AU for an EDI focus in course content Advocate for students to have access to highly skilled employment opportunities and funding streams through stakeholder engagement 	President President President & VPCW VPCW VPCW VPEX
Improve Quality of Services Offered by AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for better mental health services, including Homewood Health Attend Student Mental Health Advisory Group meetings and regional committees Advocate to AU for culturally-appropriate and trauma-informed counselling options to take into account individuals with unique identities 	VPCW VPCW VPCW
Advocate for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at AU, as well as the Decolonization and Indigenization at the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for courses and programing in Indigenous Languages (Call to Action 16) Advocate for AU's nursing programs to require all students to take a course dealing with Indigenous health issues, including Indigenous teachings and practices, intercultural competency, and anti-racism (Call to Action 24) Advocate for a standing committee to be formed out of the General Faculties Council to work on Decolonization at AU 	VPCW, VPEX, & President President & VPCW President

Federal Advocacy

Goal	Important Aspects	Councillor
Improve Access to Financial Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for better access to financial aid for part-time students Advocate for the age cap on the Canada Summer Jobs program to be removed Advocate that married students should not need spousal permission to access federal financial aid and be accessed individually 	President & VPEX President President

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for allowing additional and more convenient identity verification options and for student financial aid 	
Ensure AU Students' Unique Needs are Represented at our Federal Advocacy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and contribute to meetings at the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Attend CASA's Foundations Conference and help set the advocacy priorities for the year Sit on CASA's Policy Committee Sit on CASA's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Sit as an Observer on CASA's Governance and Internal Review Committee Advocate to Members of Parliament and Senators during CASA's Advocacy Week on Parliament Hill Advocate for students to have access to highly skilled employment opportunities and funding streams through stakeholder engagement Attend CASA's Annual General Meeting 	<p>VPEX & President</p> <p>VPEX & President VPEX President</p> <p>President</p> <p>VPEX & President</p> <p>VPEX</p> <p>VPEX & President</p>
Improve AUSU's Ability to Do Advocacy Well Year-After-Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an institutional consultation framework to improve inclusion of students and Council members at the institution to ensure continuity and improve voice strength Create a provincial educational systems map for both current and future VPEXs to use to plan advocacy Explore other organizations that AU students would benefit from AUSU having a relationship with 	<p>VPEX</p> <p>VPEX</p> <p>VPEX</p>
Advocate for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education (Call to Action 11) 	<p>President & VPEX</p>

Provincial Advocacy

Goal	Important Aspects	Councillor
Improve Access to Financial Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for better access to financial aid for part-time students 	President
Ensure AU Students' Unique Needs are Represented at our Provincial Advocacy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and contribute to meetings at the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) Attend CAUS' Changeover Conference and collaborate with other student leaders to set advocacy priorities for the year Chair CAUS' Policy Committee Sit on CAUS' Organizing and Public Engagement Committee Advocate to Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Minister of Advanced Education on emerging issues impacting AU learners throughout the year Advocate for AU students' needs at the Provincial Legislature during CAUS' Advocacy Week Advocate for students to have access to highly skilled employment opportunities and funding streams through stakeholder engagement Attend CAUS' Counterparts Conferences to collaborate on ongoing advocacy and for professional development 	<p>VPEX & President VPEX & President</p> <p>VPEX President</p> <p>VPEX & President</p> <p>VPEX</p> <p>VPEX</p> <p>All</p>
Ensure Alberta voters are empowered to vote in the 2023 Provincial Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a Get Out the Vote campaign for Alberta AU students Collaborate with other CAUS members for a general GOTV Campaign 	<p>VPEX</p> <p>President</p>
Improve AUSU's Ability to Do Advocacy Well Year After Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an institutional consultation framework to Improve the inclusion of students and Council members at institution to ensure continuity and improve voice strength Create a provincial educational systems map for both current and future VPEXs to use to plan advocacy Explore other organizations that AU students would benefit from AUSU having a relationship with 	<p>VPEX</p> <p>VPEX</p> <p>VPEX</p>

Advocate for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate that the provincial government provide the necessary funding to AU to educate faculty on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into courses (Call to Action 62.ii) 	President & VPEX
--	--	------------------

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.

This year, students and Council have asked for more workshops, which will invest in our students and empower them to succeed academically and professionally. This pillar focuses on this work, and also evaluates current services and explores new ideas.

Project	Details	Councillor
Investigate Possible New Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study and report on member services other student unions in Alberta and elsewhere in Canada offer to their students Create a badging program so that AUSU can acknowledge AUSU's work and participation 	President & VPFA President
Evaluate and Modify Existing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with MECC to evaluate and explore services for AUSU members Review VMock pilot to determine if AUSU should proceed with service Look into options to expand AUSU's Virtual Food Assistance Program 	VPCW VPCW VPCW
Organize Workshops and Educational Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run a series of workshops with external partners (i.e. AU), to invest in our students Run a week-long event where we empower students to know how to navigate research Run a program-specific career development workshop Request funding from AU for joint-collaboration for student engagement 	President & VPCW President President VPEX

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.

This year the Executive Committee will continue to maintain and solidify ways of connecting with students that have been established (i.e. the podcast, student social events), as well as working with the Staff to ensure that students have access to the information and support they need.

Project	Details	Councillor
Student Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Executive Director to develop the AUSU Annual Survey Investigate the needs of AUSU International Students Work with the EDI Committee and Member Engagement Committee Obtain input about AUSU's EDI policies from the EDI Committee. 	President VPCW VPCW VPCW
Convocation Gift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select and order a graduation gift for convocation 2023 	President
Community Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be active on AUSU social media platforms Host quarterly Virtual Student Socials. Attend and host (as needed) AUSUnights 	VPCW VPCW VPCW
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Social Media/Communications Staff 	VPCW
Engage with and Support Students in Secure Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather further information on the needs of students in secure environments Gather information from AUSU Survey to students in secure environments Refine AUSU welcome letter if needed 	VPCW VPCW VPCW
Plan and Record Various Podcasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarborough Charter Episode Pride Episode Accessibility Services Episode ProctorU Episode 	VPCW VPCW President President

Community Partnerships

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

One major piece of feedback from last year was that students have a desire to be more closely connected with faculty and programs at AU, our community partnerships focus this year is largely building into and supporting communities of students. Additionally, AUSU will seek to build ongoing partnerships with AU to provide programming and special events for students. This falls within both the community partnerships and member services categories and is detailed in the member services section of the workplan.

Category	Activities	Councillor
Ensure there is a Self-Sustaining Indigenous Circle at AUSU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous student engagement Connect and engage with Indigenous Organizations Organize Cultural Events Create opportunities for information sharing Develop a consultation and governance framework Develop access to leadership positions for Indigenous Circle Members 	VPEX VPEX VPEX VPEX VPEX VPEX
Support Indigenous Students at AUSU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan Indigenous Week with input from EC and IC Offer support to the Indigenous Student Circle 	VPCW VPCW
Support Racialized Students at AUSU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan Black History Month with input from the EDI Committee and students Help staff promote events and initiatives for racialized students Plan an event or campaign addressing Anti-Asian Racism 	VPCW VPCW VPCW
Support Disabled Students, Neurodiverse Students, Chronically Ill Students, and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan Disability Week 	VPCW VPCW

Students with Accessibility Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refine AUSU Accessibility and Accommodations document ● Develop policy for disabled, neurodiverse, chronically ill, and/pr students with accessibility needs ● Liaise with Accessibility Services to ensure that student accessibility needs are being addressed ● Advocate for staff increases within Accessibility Services ● Advocate for a streamlined online portal that connects students, instructors, Accessibility Services, the Exam Unit, and providing training for instructors 	VPCW & VPFA VPCW VPCW VPCW
2SLGBTQIA+ Student Supports and Collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help plan AUSU June Pride Month. ● Develop Ad-Hoc 2STNBGN Awards for June Pride Month ● Apply for AU sponsorship to AUSU October Pride ● Develop a 2SLGBTQIA+ Award for the Awards Committee ● Help plan and host AUSU's Second Annual Pride Week ● Moderate the 2SLGBTQIA+ Discord Server and host Pride Student Socials ● Consolidate June and October Pride Month/Week into one June event for incoming VPCW ● Advocate to AU to create a virtual Pride Centre ● Advocate to AU for affirming name changes 	VPCW VPCW & VPFA VPCW VPCW & VPFA VPCW VPCW VPCW VPCW VPCW & President
Resource Gathering of Employment and Student Funding Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocate to AU to email student employment opportunities (research assistant, internal remote employee positions) ● Collect and consolidate regional level employment networking events for students 	VPEX VPEX

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and consolidate regional level funding opportunities for students (start-up funding, undergraduate research funding opportunities, grants, scholarships) Advocate to faculty to improve access to reference letters for support of student opportunities 	VPEX VPEX
--	---	------------------

Organization

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.

We will ensure that AUSU is run in a way that is efficient, transparent, and reflects a commitment to excellence, this includes ensuring best-practices are followed in policies and processes.

Category	Activities	Councillor
Internal Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the EDI Policies - 8.12 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Terms of Reference and 9.28 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion 	VPCW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine AUSU's Accessibility and Accommodations Processes document with input from the EDI Committee 	VPCW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine the AUSU EDI Plan and Goals with input from the EDI Committee 	VPCW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee monthly review of AUSU policies 	VPFA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Policy 4.04, Councillor Professional Development 	VPCW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and develop an Environmental Best-Practices Protocol for AUSU 	VPCW
Financial Well-Being of AUSU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with council and stakeholders regarding budgetary needs 	VPFA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 	VPFA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for annual audit 	VPFA VPFA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Finance Committee Orientation Guide Review investment policy and guidelines 	VPFA
Improve Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a process to track advocacy asks from year to year Develop a calendar on AUSU's website to communicate event information for both internal and external events Perform the Executive Director's Annual Review Refine VPCW portfolio over the second year of position 	President President All VPCW
Awards Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Awards Committee to ensure application process and questions reflect best-practices Consult with Committee on inclusion of Members-at-Large in awards and update Terms of Reference if needed Update Awards Committee Orientation Guide Pride Award Development for 2022-2023 Indigenous Award Development January 2023 	VPFA VPFA VPFA VPFA President & VPFA