



POLICY 7.02

MEMBER SERVICES

Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries Program

POLICY INTENT

The intent of the Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries Program 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

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, unless extenuating circumstances have been demonstrated, at the discretion of the Awards Committee. It is the Member's responsibility to contact the AUSU 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 and Ad-Hoc Awards and Bursaries.
- 7.02.03 Ad-Hoc Awards and Bursaries shall be disbursed by an Ad-Hoc Selection Committee determined by the Executive Committee and/or Council.
- 7.02.04 Emergency Bursaries shall be disbursed to qualifying applicants by the Executive Director with confirmation from the Awards Committee Chair.
- 7.02.05 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.
- 7.02.06 For each fiscal year, any awards that are not given out subsequent to a regularly scheduled awards deadline will be transferred to the Internally Restricted Reserve for Awards as established in Policy 6.07 Reserves and Investments.
- 7.02.07 There shall be two (2) application periods per fiscal year for AUSU awards. These application periods shall be October 1-31 and April 15-May 31 annually, and shall apply to all AUSU scholarships, awards, and bursaries, with the exception of the Computer, Travel, and Emergency Bursaries.
 - a. Applications for Travel Bursaries shall be accepted year-round and decisions shall be made on the applications within two (2) weeks of the committee receiving all necessary information.

- b. Applications for Computer Bursaries shall be accepted year-round. Decisions shall be made on the application within two (2) weeks of the Committee receiving all necessary information.
- c. Applications for Emergency Bursaries shall be accepted year-round and decisions shall be made on the applications within two (2) weeks of the Executive Director and the Awards Committee Chair receiving all necessary information.

Eligibility Criteria

- 7.02.08 AUSU Councillors and Staff are ineligible for AUSU scholarships, awards, and bursaries.
- 7.02.09 Eligibility criteria will vary by award and will be outlined in detail in each award description.
- 7.02.10 Awards and bursaries applicants must be AUSU members on the date of the application, unless otherwise specified in the award description..
- 7.02.11 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 (2) or more courses with the same term start date, the course(s) with the highest marks shall be used.
- 7.02.12 Any applicant that is denied a Travel Bursary, Computer Bursary, or Emergency Bursary is required to wait twelve (12) months before reapplying for that same award.
- 7.02.13 An AUSU Member may receive a maximum of one (1) bi-annual scholarship, award, or bursary per fiscal year.
- 7.02.14 An AUSU Member may receive a maximum of one (1) year-round scholarship, award, or bursary per fiscal year.
- 7.02.15 For the purposes of this policy, “credits completed” refers only to credits earned for the successful completion of Athabasca University (AU) undergraduate courses and challenge for credit courses. Credits earned for graduate courses, courses transferred to Athabasca University (AU), or credits assessed under Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) will not be considered.
- 7.02.16 Unless otherwise specified in the Council-approved individual award criteria, students must have completed at least six (6) credits and have maintained a GPA of 2.00 (C grade) over the most recent six (6) credits to be eligible for any AUSU award.
- 7.02.17 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.

- 7.02.18 Applicants must submit all requested documents as outlined on the applications to be eligible for the scholarships, awards, and bursaries.
- 7.02.19 The Awards Committee may request additional information from applicants if needed to determine eligibility or selection of recipients with a deadline of five (5) business days for applicants to supply the information.

Application Privacy

- 7.02.20 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.
- 7.02.21 Applications will be viewed only by AUSU Staff, the Awards Committee, and Executive Committee Members, as necessary.
- 7.02.22 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.
- 7.02.23 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.
- 7.02.24 AUSU will never publish the names of recipients of bursaries, or those who have been declined for AUSU scholarships, awards, or bursaries.

Awards

- 7.02.25 AUSU provides the following awards
 - a. Academic Achievement Awards – six (6) awards of \$1,000 each (three (3) per deadline);
 - b. AUSU Bursaries – ten (10) awards of \$1,000 each. (five (5) per deadline);
 - c. Computer Bursaries – approximately sixteen (16) awards of one (1) computer each valued up to \$750;
 - d. Travel Bursaries – four (4) awards of up to \$1,000 each per year;
 - e. Emergency Bursaries – up to \$500 maximum per student annually, for a total AUSU annual budget allocation of \$4,000;
 - f. Student Volunteer Awards – six (6) awards of \$1,000 each (three (3) per deadline);
 - g. Returning Student Awards – eight (8) awards of \$1,000 each (four (4) per deadline);
 - h. Balanced Student Awards – eight (8) awards of \$1,000 each (four (4) per deadline);
 - i. # Igo2AU Awards – four (4) awards of \$1,000 each (two (2) per deadline); and
 - j. New Student Bursaries – eight (8) awards of \$500 each (four (4) per deadline).
- 7.02.26 AUSU may, at the discretion of Council, create and distribute one-time awards other than, and in addition to, those discussed in this policy.
- 7.02.27 The Awards Committee may recommend additional awards for Council approval in order to utilize the maximum funds in the awards budget.

Policy Review

7.02.28 This policy shall be reviewed annually to ensure fair criteria and maximum availability to all AUSU Members.

Award Descriptions

Academic Achievement Scholarships:

Academic Achievement Scholarships are intended to reward excellence in scholarship to Athabasca University (AU) students. The minimum GPA required for this award is 3.85, which reflects an AU academic achievement of great distinction. The applicants with the highest GPA over the last thirty (30) credits will be selected as the recipients of this award. The number of A+ grades (tallying A+ grades in six (6) credit courses as two) will be used to break ties, followed by the number of Athabasca University (AU) credits completed, followed by the number of A grades (tallying A grades in six (6) credit courses as two). Members may only receive this award once. Students must have completed at least thirty (30) credits by the applicable deadline to be considered for this scholarship.

AUSU Bursaries:

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

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.

Travel Bursaries:

Travel Bursaries are intended to aid Members in travelling to attend Athabasca University (AU) convocation, labs, practicums, on-site courses, or related conferences. Applications are accepted any time of year and can be submitted prior to travel and up to six (6) months after travel occurred. The application process will request details of the applicant's travel needs with anticipated costs and will be awarded based on this information, up to \$1,000 per application per year. A direct deposit of the bursary will be made to the recipient in order for the recipient to book their own travel arrangements. Recent members who have taken an Athabasca University (AU) undergraduate course in the last twelve (12) months may also be considered for travel to attend the Athabasca University (AU) convocation with proof of recent graduation from Athabasca University (AU).

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 (AU) 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.

Student Volunteer Awards:

Student Volunteer 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 (AU) 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 (AU) community. Members may only receive this award once.

Returning Student Awards:

Returning Student Awards are intended to recognize the challenges faced by students who return to university after two (2) 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 (AU) 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.

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 thirty (30) credits. Members may only receive this award once.

#Igo2AU Awards:

Athabasca University (AU) 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 #Igo2AU 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 (AU) mission. Applicants must be Members of AUSU and are required to upload a video on social media of up to two (2) minutes long articulating a personal experience related to their education at Athabasca University (AU).

New Student Bursaries:

The New Student Bursary is intended to support new AU students who have recently begun their academic journey and are in financial need. Starting out can be financially challenging and AUSU recognizes the financial barriers associated with being a student with less than six (6) AU credits, who would historically not qualify for other awards, scholarships, or bursaries. The New Student Bursary does not have a minimum credit criteria to qualify and applications are accepted during the two (2) annual application periods.

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

This Policy References

Policy 4.03 Records Management

This Policy is Referenced by

None

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Council

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date: August 14, 2004

Last Review Date: January 19, 2023

Review by Date: September 2023