

**Council Meeting** – April 23, 2024 – 5:00pm MST  
Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

Russell Rupok	Chair	Voting Member
Brittany Hollett	Vice-Chair	Voting Member
Rayees Kahan	Council Member	Voting Member
Skyler Todd	Council Member	Voting Member
Lindsay McNena	Council Member	Voting Member
Kelly DeCoste	Council Member	Voting Member
Deborah Exelby	Council Member	Voting Member
Sunny Bhasin	Graduate Student	Non-Voting General Member
Sarrah Ahmed	Graduate Student	Non-Voting General Member
Pamela Ferguson	Graduate Student	Non-Voting General Member
David Roy	Graduate Student	Non-Voting General Member
Kenechukwu Onwundinjo	Graduate Student	Non-Voting General Member
Gagan Jgajj	Graduate Student	Non-Voting General Member
Paul Ackah	Graduate Student	Non-Voting General Member
Meaghan Sullivan	Executive Director	Staff Member

**Regrets:** Jason Kauenhofen (Council Member)

**Agenda Item**

**1.0 Call to Order:**

R. Rupok called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

**2.0 Acknowledgement of Traditional Indigenous Territories:**

R. Rupok gave the Acknowledgement of Traditional Indigenous Territories.

**3.0 Conflict of Interest Check:**

R. Rupok inquired if any Council Members had any real or perceived conflict of interest. No conflicts were declared.

**4.0 Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion:**

To approve the agenda as presented.

**R. Khan /K. DeCoste  
7-0-0  
Motion Carries**

*The motion was approved by general consent.*

**5.0 Adotion of Previous Minutes:**



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## 5.1 Regular Minutes of the Council from March 19, 2024.

### Motion:

To approve the minutes as circulated.

**B. Hollett/K. DeCoste**  
**7-0-0**  
**Motion Carries**

*The motion was approved by general consent.*

## 6.0 Required Approvals:

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

## 7.0 Items for Discussion:

### 7.1 Ends

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

### 7.2 Executive Limitations

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

### 7.3 Governance Process

R. Rupok explained that this meeting agenda has been kept light and serves as an observational training opportunity for the incoming Council Members in attendance today. R. Rupok gave an overview of the governance process for AUGSA Council, emphasizing the importance of listening to, and representing the student voice of, graduate students at Athabasca University. Reflecting on examples of the past year objectives and successes regarding representation and governance, R. Rupok summarized the following:

#### Student Representation

1. In response to membership concerns, AUGSA Council advocated for a freeze to graduate student tuition across the board. After monthly consultations with AU stakeholders, tuition experienced a 0% increase at the graduate level after year-over-year increases.
2. In response to membership feedback and year-over-year advocacy, AUGSA advocated for a new awards management system or processes be implemented at AU. The University prioritized and approved this project, which is currently undergoing the implementation phase. Several Council Members were involved in the advocacy for this.
3. AUGSA successfully bargained a new collective agreement for academically employed graduate students, which included wage increases for academically employed graduate students. AUGSA also successfully approved a 1% union due at a recent Special General Meeting for academically employed graduate students to support stronger representation efforts moving forward.



4. There were no major ad-hoc student representation concerns that arose this year.

#### Governance

5. AUGSA received governance training in spring 2023.
6. AUGSA created a financial policy in summer 2023.
7. AUGSA created ends policies in fall 2023.
8. AUGSA made minor amendments to the Council Policy Manual in winter 2024.

R. Rupok explained that all the objectives that have been worked on and/or completed have focused on the best interests of graduate student members of AUGSA. R. Rupok explained the hope is that the incoming Council can continue the momentum in strongly representing the membership.

#### **7.4 Board-Executive Director Relationship**

No business was conducted in the current meeting.

### **8.0 Ownership Linkage:**

#### **8.1 Council Member Reports**

R. Rupok provided an update on the collective bargaining process. Currently, AUGSA is waiting on the Athabasca University Board of Governors to approve the agreement on behalf of the University. Once approved, the agreement is complete; however, it is set to expire in June 2024. The 1% union due proposed at the Special General Meeting that took place on April 18th, 2024 was approved. The due is set to come into effect August 2024.

#### **8.2 Update on CASA Exploration**

L. McNena explained that the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) approved the observer status request for AUGSA. This approval took place at their Annual General Meeting in Edmonton, Alberta in March 2024. CASA provides AUGSA the opportunity to conduct advocacy at the federal level. The CASA Foundations conference is scheduled for May 13 – 17th, 2024 and AUGSA plans to have members present to represent Athabasca University graduate students.

#### **8.3 Update on abGPAC Exploration**

R. Rupok explained that the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (abGPAC) is under review at this time in terms of whether AUGSA will remain a member, transition to a new provincial advocacy group, or find another provincial advocacy solution. This remains a high-priority item for the incoming Council to address.

### **9.0 Monitoring Executive Director Performance**

No monitoring reports were presented at this time. M. Sullivan explained that the focus is currently set on facilitating the transition of AUGSA Council and ensuring the incoming Council are set up for success. After the Council meeting tonight we will begin the Council Onboarding training and assigning Council roles. Governance training will begin after May 1st when the appointments officially begin.



**10.0 Self-Evaluation & Governance Process**

R. Rupok explained that when attending student advocacy meetings it is always best to have multiple representatives attend rather than just one, or the same student all the time, to ensure diversity and a stronger representation when speaking with stakeholders.

K. Onwudinjo expressed admiration for the outgoing Council regarding their willingness and openness to receive feedback and demonstrating a desire to continually improve.

**11.0 Information Requested by the Board**

M. Sullivan presented the March 2024 financial reports.

**12.0 Questions/Adjournment**

**Motion:**

To adjourn the meeting at 5:29 MT.

**R. Khan/K. DeCoste**  
**7-0-0**  
**Motion Carries**

*The meeting was adjourned by general consent.*

