AUGSA

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AUGSA Council Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2025 – 6:45 pm MST
Microsoft Teams

Council Attendance

Executive Committee: Dave Roy (President), Kia Buchanan (VP Academic), Judy Parnell (VP External)
Faculty of Business Representatives: Dennis Delgado, Pawel Zygmunt
Faculty of Health Disciplines Representatives: Erica Wong, Aliya Karmali
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Representative: Hyeyung Park, Emily Grady
Faculty of Science and Technology: Gagan Jhajj, Paul Ackah

Graduate Labour Relations Representatives: G. Keshavarz
Staff: Meaghan Sullivan (Executive Director)
Regrets:

		PRESENTER	ACTION
1.0	**Call to Order**	President	The meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm MT. D. Roy provided a land acknowledgement to honour the Indigenous peoples on whose lands we gather.
2.0	**Approval of Agenda**	President	**Motion 2.0: to approve the agenda as amended.** Moved: H. Park Seconded: P. Zygmunt Motion carried without opposition.
3.0	**Approval of Previous Minutes**	President	**Motion 3.0: to approve the minutes of June 17, 2025.** Moved: K. Buchanan Seconded: P. Ackah Motion carried without opposition.
4.0	**Reports and Presentations**		Reports were presented as distributed.

4.1	**President Report**	President	**Upcoming Activities and Strategic Plan Progress:** D. Roy noted that although there were fewer meetings in the past month, several important initiatives are underway. Notably, preparations are ongoing for the upcoming Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Policy & Strategy Conference. Additionally, progress has been made on multiple initiatives aligned with the AUGSA 2025–2026 Strategic Plan through sub-committee work, which will be reviewed later in the meeting.
4.2	**VP Academic Report**	VP Academic	K. Buchanan reported having attended various university council and committee meetings over the past month. **Health & Safety Training Initiative:** K. Buchanan provided an update on the Health & Safety training proposal. The AUGSA Human Resources Committee reviewed a training plan submitted by Salopek & Associates, AUGSA's Human Resource firm, which included suggested sessions for the 2025 and 2026 AUGSA Councils. Due to unbudgeted costs associated with the proposed 2025 sessions, the Executive Committee will further assess funding options before making recommendations to Council. Training proposed for 2026, including onboarding sessions, will be incorporated into the budget development process this fall as part of the 2026 Council onboarding plan.
4.3	**VP External Report**	VP External	**Engagement Committee Update:** The Engagement Committee has been actively involved this past month preparing goals for this year. A presentation celebrating AUGSA's 20th anniversary was delivered to both the Faculty of

			Graduate Studies and University Relations. The Annual Membership Satisfaction Survey is currently live and being promoted. Looking ahead, the committee plans to focus on graduate mentorship and strengthening connections through alumni during their September 2025 meeting. Professional development will also be a key topic of discussion. **EDI Committee Update:** The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee held its inaugural meeting to establish priorities, including developing relevant policies for AUGSA, discussing a strategic plan, and exploring the development of a resource section on the AUGSA website. **Other:** K. Buchanan and J. Parnell participated in a student awards session to provide feedback on graduate student funding at Athabasca University.
5.0	**Financial Reports**	Executive Director	No reports presented at this time.
6.0	**Committee Updates**		
6.1	**Governance Committee**	President	The Governance Committee and Finance Committee co-hosted their sub-committee meetings this past month, focusing on shared strategic plan objectives. Key topics discussed included the Investment and Reserves Policy as well as the Travel Policy.
6.2	**Finance Committee**	President	D. Roy presented the Investment and Reserves Policy to Council, as recommended for approval

			by the Finance and Governance Committee. E. Grady emphasized the importance of maintaining an ethical investment approach. K. Buchanan noted that AUGSA should focus on managing short-term investments in the interim, while continuing to develop a comprehensive investment and reserve strategy. **6.2.1. Motion: to approve the investment policy as presented.** Moved: P. Ackah Seconded: K. Buchanan Motion carried without opposition. D. Roy explained that the former VP External incurred costly meal and travel expenses while representing AUGSA. In response, the Governance and Finance Committees reviewed and recommended increasing meal allowances for representatives traveling on behalf of AUGSA. The proposed daily allowances for meals not covered by accommodation or conference fees are as follows: • Breakfast: $30 (receipts not required) • Lunch: $30 (receipts not required) • Supper: $50 (receipts not required) Additionally, a daily incidental allowance of $20 (receipts not required) is proposed for days involving overnight travel. P. Ackah asked whether partnering with hotels could help reduce travel costs. D. Roy suggested exploring options like CAA discounts and emphasized the importance of economical travel.

			K. Buchanan recommended booking hotels that include breakfast to further manage expenses. **Motion 6.2.2: to approve the Travel Policy as recommended by the Finance and Governance Committee.** Moved: K. Buchanan Seconded: P. Ackah Motion carried without opposition.
6.3	**Human Resources Committee**	VP Academic	K. Buchanan presented the Human Resource Committee Terms of Reference to Council, as recommended for approval by the Human Resource Committee. **Motion 6.3: to approve the HR Committee Terms of Reference as recommended.** Moved: J. Parnell Seconded: P. Zygmunt Motion carried without opposition.
6.4	**Engagement Commit-tee**	VP External	No further updates.
6.5	**EDI Committee**	VP External	K. Buchanan presented the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee Terms of Reference to Council, as recommended for approval by the EDI Committee. **Motion 6.5: to approve the EDI Terms of Reference.** Moved: P. Ackah Seconded: E. Wong Motion carried without opposition.
6.6	**Graduate Labour Re-lations Committee**	G. Keshavarz	G. Keshavarz reported that the Labour Relations Committee has appointed David Newman as Vice Chair. Newman previously attended the June 17th Council Meeting. The Committee has final-ized its Terms of Reference, which have been submitted to Council for approval.

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			Motion 6.6: to approve the Labour Relations Committee Terms of Reference and presented. Moved: P. Zygmunt Seconded: D. Delgado Motion carried without opposition.
6.7	**External Advocacy Committee**	VP External	J. Parnell welcomed P. Ackah as the fourth representative on the External Advocacy team. P. Ackah will contribute to strengthening AUGSA's representation efforts. This summer, D. Roy and P. Ackah will attend the Student Leaders Orientation (SLO) in Calgary. In addition, A. Karmali and J. Parnell will represent AUGSA at the upcoming CASA Policy & Strategy Conference.
7.0	**Event Updates**	Executive Director	**Graduate Student Research Conference (GSRC):** The Call for Abstracts and conference registration for the 2025 Graduate Student Research Conference are now open. M. Sullivan encouraged all Council Members to promote the conference widely to faculty, staff, and both graduate and undergraduate students. The Call for Abstracts closes on August 29, 2025. This year's goal is to expand the conference's reach and increase participation to ensure more students benefit from the experience. **2025 Membership Satisfaction Survey:** The 2025 AUGSA Annual Membership Satisfaction Survey is now live. Council Members are encouraged to complete the survey and share it within their networks. The survey will remain open until early September.
8.0	**Other Business**	P. Ackah	**IEEE Update:** P. Ackah provided an update on efforts to arrange a meeting with IEEE, sharing the ongoing

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			email correspondence, which has involved considerable back-and-forth communication. In the most recent exchange, the IEEE representative inquired about the number of individuals interested in establishing a chapter. P. Ackah emphasized that interest will grow once the process is initiated, stating, "if we begin the process, the people will come." H. Park noted that the email indicated the current number of interested individuals does not meet IEEE's minimum requirement. P. Ackah clarified that once the required number is confirmed, the representative will assist with setting up the chapter.
9.0	**New Business**	H. Park	**Sub-Committee Agendas:** H. Park asked whether sub-committees should prepare meeting agendas. D. Roy responded that having an agenda is helpful, particularly when there are multiple topics to cover. J. Parnell noted that the first sub-committee meetings addressed the 20th anniversary, the membership survey, and student grants. J. Parnell also shared that each committee has an established action plan for the year and that motions arising from committee meetings are forwarded to the Chair and/or Executive Director for inclusion on the Council agenda. H. Park mentioned that their committee meetings have been lengthy, lasting approximately 1.5 hours each. D. Roy recommended adopting a meeting agenda format like that used for Council meetings to improve efficiency.
10.0	**Old Business**	President	**GSRC Abstract Eligibility Inquiry:** G. Keshavarz asked whether graduate students

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			from institutions outside of Athabasca University are eligible to submit an abstract for the Graduate Student Research Conference. M. Sullivan agreed to look into the eligibility criteria and follow up with additional information.
11.0	**Adjournment**	President	**Motion 11.0: to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 pm.** Moved: H. Park Seconded: P. Zygmunt Motion carried without opposition.

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Dave Roy, Chair

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Meaghan Sullivan, Executive Director

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Date of Approval