



**Athabasca University Graduate Students'
Association**

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AUGSA Minutes

Date: June 9, 6:00pm MDT

Place: Web conference

Attendance :

Executive Committee: Mary-Anne Parker (President), Ashley Ravenscroft (VP Operations & Finance),
Judd Asoyuf (VP Academic), Crys Vincent (VP External)

Faculty of Business Representatives: Margaret Clappison, David Newman, Brandon Simmons

Faculty of Health Disciplines Representatives: Julia Cornester, Nicole Klix, Lindsay McNena

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Representative: Kelli Buckreus, David Cloutier, Scott Howell,
Heather McGilvary

Faculty of Science and Technology: Philip Kirkbride, Liliana Quyen Tang

Staff: Meaghan Sullivan (Executive Director), Bob Cole (Communications Coordinator)

Absent: Bernard Kikechi

		PRESENTER	ACTION	TIME
1.0	Call to Order	President	The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm MDT.	6:04 pm
2.0	Approval of Agenda	President	Motion 2.0 To approve the agenda as distributed. Moved: David Cloutier Seconded: Julia Cornester Motion carried without opposition.	6:08 pm

3.0	Approval of Previous Minutes	President	<p>Motion 3.0 To approve the minutes of May 12.</p> <p>Moved: Heather McGilvary Seconded: Crys Vincent Motion carried without opposition.</p>	6:09 pm
4.0	Reports and Presentations			6:10 pm
	4.1 Executive Reports	Executive	As per attached reports.	
	4.2 Financial Report	VP Operations & Finance	No reports.	
5.0	Council Reports			6:42 pm
	5.1 Faculty of Science and Technology	Faculty Representation	<p>Philip Kirkbride: Joined round tables discussions on Earths Carrying Capacity and Climate Change. Suggested to view website:</p> <p>https://horizons.gc.ca/en/2018/10/19/the-next-generation-of-emerging-global-challenges/#living-within</p>	
	5.2 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Faculty Representation	<p>Scott Howell: Bernard Kikechi and Scott Howell sat at a round table this past week that held participants from all over Canada. Indicated the round tables hosted by CIHR/SSHRC are helpful to gain insight into current student's research and projects.</p> <p>Heather McGilvary: The Faculty of Graduate Studies has created a new publication template for your proposal/dissertation document, compliant with APA7. She recommends to review this document or share in the Newsletter.</p>	
	5.3 Faculty of Health	Faculty Representation	<p>Nicole Klix: Keeping cohort informed of AUGSA services and current events, raising awareness of the COVID-19 bursary.</p> <p>Julia Cornester: Preceptorships and clinical placements are the focus. Students are facing a level of uncertainty on getting their preceptorships. Keep this on the horizon for potential advocacy as we move forward.</p>	

			Lindsay McNena: Gave an update from FHD Council on June 4. GCAP pivoted 3 courses onto new learning framework. Coordinators providing as much leniency possible to students. Changes are being made to how preceptors are requested.	
	5.4 Faculty of Business	Faculty Representation	<p>Margaret Clappison: Research difficulties experienced due to an added layer of COVID-19 restrictions. Crys and Mary-Anne noted REB is accepting online research. Research has not stopped for GCAP.</p> <p>Brandon Simmons: New processing fee coming for usage of credit cards. Faculty of Business students cannot pay with debit card (to be confirmed this is still the case). This processing fee is another fee that will be put on business students. AUGSA raised this concern at the AU Digital Governance Committee. Ashley Ravenscroft noted it is a common fee to other institutions, but this doesn't mean it's not worth advocating for. It affects our most vulnerable population.</p>	
6.0	Old Business	President		
7.0	New Business	President		
8.0	Committees	President		7:10 pm
	8.1 Governance Committee	Chair, Governance	Reviewed bylaws and a committee has been struck to review job descriptions, and contracts. Minor changes made to bylaws in preparation for AGM. AGM will be in August.	
	8.2 Awards Committee	Chair, Awards	Held first meeting and reviewed several applications that were recieved.	
	8.3 Engagement Committee	Chair, Engagement	Held first meeting. The committee discussed convocation, grad lounge, and a workplan is being developed for June 22nd.	
	8.4 Finance Committee	Chair, Finance	Has not met yet.	
	8.5 Strategic Planning Committee	Chair, Strategic Planning	Held first meeting and pulled key elements from strategic plan. The focus is tightening	

			up business processes, ie. awards, structure, advocacy, and engagement.	
	8.6 COVID-19 Committee	Chair, COVID-19	COVID-19 team could help VP Academic with some of the concerns on advocacy for students educational journeys impacted by the pandemic (preceptorships, research, etc).	
	8.7 AU Digital Governance Committee Update	Philip Kirkbride	Country-wide wifi service is being discussed at AU, which is beneficial to students.	
9.0	Upcoming Events		Graduate Student Conference: Call for abstracts went out this week and deadline is in August. Free event October 16&17.	7:20 pm
10.0	Other Business	Bob Cole	Communications: encouraged AUGSA representatives to continue to spread the word on what's available and happening at AUGSA, especially awards, job postings, or opportunities that could enhance engagement. Everyone has a role to play. And, to send Bob anything for sharing on our social media channels.	7:24 pm
11.0	Adjournment	President	Motion 11.0: To adjourn the meeting at 7:27 pm. Moved: Julia Cornester Seconded: David Cloutier Carried without opposition.	7:27 pm

 Mary-Anne Parker, President

 Meaghan Sullivan, Executive Director

 Date of Approval



ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

President Report

May 2020

AUGSA Executive/Council Meetings

- May 5th – Executive Meeting (1.5)
- May 12th – Council Retreat (2.5)
- Weekly President/ED Check-Ins
- May 6th – MBA textbook check -in with VPA
- May 13th – Executive check in.
- May 25th – External Team Meeting
- May 25th – Engagement Committee
- May 27th – Governance Committee
- May 28th – Strategic Planning

AU Meetings

- May 1 - FHSS Faculty Council Meeting (3 hrs.)
- May 6th – ILE Covid Update
- May 7th – FGS Faculty Council (4 hours)
- May 8th – AU ILE update
- May 8th – GRC Steering Committee
- May 11th – ILE workflow steering committee
- May 11th – Meeting with D. Hurst. – FB
- May 13th – ILE Operations meeting (2)
- May 14th – ILE Operations meeting (2)
- May 15th – Tools/Processes Review (2)
- May 19th – Moodle/Admin workflow process mtg.
- May 21st – Awards Portfolio – GSRF (2)
- May 21st. Board of Governors – (1.5)
- May 22nd – Board of Governors (3)
- May 25th – AU Governance orientation
- May 29th – FGS-Grad lounge debrief

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (abGPAC)

- May 5th – Executive/Board of Directors transition (1.5)
- May 5th – COVID 19 update

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ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

- May 5th – weekly touch base/governance
- May 8th – Financial meeting
- Ongoing response to COVID-19 – weekly debriefs.
- May 12th – Executive meeting
- May 15th – Check in with VP external
- May 19th – executive check in
- May 20th – Special Board Meeting (1.5)
- May 22nd – Ministerial meetings debrief

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations

- May 26-28th CASA Foundations – (12-15 hours)

Other Meetings/Events

- Grad Lounge – weekly co-hosting duties
- Weekly “president’s coffee” with Natasha Donaghue
- May 7th – Town hall with MBA students
- May 14th – Diligent Training (B of G)
- May 14th – Town Hall 2.0 with MBA Students
- May 20th – mtg with VP EX – strategy for Adv. Minister of Education
- May 22nd – Advance Education Minister Nicolaides

Total Hours – Meetings = 75 hours approx. (conservative)

General/Other

- Approval of Expenses
- Reading reports/developing presentations
- Responding to Email/Text/Phone Communications
- Administrative/Miscellaneous

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HIGHLIGHTS

1. EMERGENCY COVID BURSARIES

Conformation and finalization of COVID – 19 Bursaries. Awards process was brief, and we are still assessing the pros/cons of the application procedure. We did advocate for less stringent qualification criteria and this was implemented. We were a definite catalyst in this and should be proud of the example we presented. Ongoing we will ensure that AUGSA's role is highlighted and follow up on the process.

2. TEXTBOOK ADVOCACY

At the beginning of the month we were approached by MBA students who had received notice that textbooks, previously in print, would now be delivered in e-books format. Since then Judd and I have held two online meetings with students, I've met with the Faculty of Business, and we have sent a letter to the leadership team with suggestions as to how to mitigate these concerns. While no response has been received to date, I feel we have listened to students and represented their concerns.

3. MEETING WITH ADVANCED EDUCATION MINISTER

It was great to have the chance to discuss the uniqueness of AU and its graduate students with the Minister. During COVID we have seen how AU students have adapted quite well but also experience some of the same work/life/life stage challenges as other students in the province but also throughout Canada.

4. COLLABORATION

I have been invited to more than 10 meeting in which internal AU departments have wanted a student voice as part of the planning process. This bodes well for AUGSA in that we are being positioned as the consultative voice within AU. This will also mean a close look at our structure and how we can best take on this consultative arm.

5. SOLIDIFYING OUR COMMITTEES and EXECUTIVE TEAM

Establishing financial systems and priorities, advocacy etc. has all taken place this month while we have been transitioning into these roles. I commend the entire council for being ready to jump in and start. Thank you!

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VP Academic Report

May 2020

AUGSA Executive/Council Meetings

- May 5th - Executive Check In.
 - Imagine learning environment
- May 12th – Council retreat
- May 13th – Executive Check in
- May 27th – Check in with ED

Faculty of Graduate Studies(FGS)

- May 11th – FGS Professional development
- May 19th – Faculty Council (attended by Brandon S on my behalf)

Awards Committee

- May 20th - Reviewed 4 computer bursary awards
 - Awarded 1

General Faculty Council

- May 6th - GFC Executive Committee.
- May 20th - GFC meeting.
 - Imagine learning environment
-

General/Other

- May 10th – MBA e-Text townhall
- May 14th – MBA e-Text townhall
- May 17th – MBA e-Text townhall
- May 25th – Joint AUSU/AUGSA introduction with AU

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VP External's Report

May 2020

AUGSA Executive/Council Meetings

- May 5th – Exec Meeting
- May 6th- Recorded a video to participate in the provincial campaign to raise awareness for sexual assault on campus
- May 11th- Meeting with council member to discuss income opportunity
- May 11th- Meeting with President of AUGSA to discuss strategy for Minister meeting
- May 12th – Council Meeting
- May 13th- Executive Special Meeting
- May 15th- Connected one on one with both External Reps (CASA and abGPAC)
- May 20th- Strategy planning with President for upcoming meeting with MoAE
- May 22nd- Meet and greet with Minister of Advanced Education
- May 25th – Attended presentation on university governance by Caroll Lund with AUSU
- May 25th – Strategy planning session with Kristine Williamson, Vice President, University Relations
- May 25th- Hosted the first External Team Meeting
- May 25th- Hosted the first Engagement Team Meeting

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (abGPAC)

- May 5th – Covid 19 update meeting
- May 5th- Exec Meeting (Committee Chair)
- May 7th- Advocacy and Outreach Committee Chair transition meeting
- May 11th- Background information meeting in prep for Minister of Advanced Education meeting with the U of C GSA president
- May 12th- Executive Meeting
- May 15th- One on one meeting with board chair
- Created a document to outline the strategic intentions for the A&O Committee
- May 18th- One on one onboarding check in with ED
- May 19th- Exec meeting
- May 20th- Special Board meeting
- May 20th- Presentation to ASEC planning/advocacy priority principles planning meeting with Vice Chair
- May 22nd – Attended Calgary Mental Health Regional Network- sub-committee (k-12) and larger group meeting

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- May 22nd- Provincial advocacy debrief and collective knowledge sharing special meeting
- May 25th – Emergency Advocacy meeting regarding the request for the NDP press conference with a 12 hour turn around
- May 26th- Observed the open meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Affairs meeting on PSI with Advanced Education Officials

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations

- May 26, 27, 28th - Foundations conference and training

Other Meetings/Events

- May 1st- Meeting with Assistant Dean of Student Services Dr Paul Jerry
- May 1st- attended Grad Lounge with FGS
- May 13th- Represented AUGSA with the Minister of Advanced Education along with other student leaders, update call

General/Other

- Responding to Email/Text/Phone Communications
- Touched base with Engagement committee to organize meeting times, grad lounge schedule
- Administrative/Miscellaneous

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VPOF Report

May 2020

AUGSA Executive/Council Meetings

- Executive Meeting (May 5)
- Council Meeting (May 12)
- ED/VPOF Meeting (May 7)
- Executive Committee Meeting (May 13)
- ED/Margarett (May 16) - Please review *Memo 'Accounting System Transition'*
- ED/VPOF/President Meeting (May 21)
- AUGSA Governance Meeting (May 27) **Note 1***
- VPOF Meeting with Heather, predi (alot)

Note 1: Governance Meeting

Priprities were established for the year. They are as follows:

- 1) In conjunction with the Awards Committee (or in a hy-bird adhoc committee) generate a financial policy to accompany the awards policy.
- 2) Working on the recommendations of the Labour Relations Committee- review the job descriptions/posting information for the Elected positions, review contracts of the organization, and remuneration (is it too low, too high, on trend with comparables, etc) and lastly seek legal advice as it pertains to the aforementioned.
- 3) Bylaws- the need to tidy up and some of the content needs to be reworked to reflect current practices and legislations. Lastly, seeking legal advice on the document.

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- 4) Creating/Implementation of: Standard expense reports and procedures (including awards/bursary winners) and a code of conduct.

Although the above is encompassed in four bullets we realize that it is a large undertaking and are excited to work steadily on this project.

External Meetings

- AUGSA Governance Digital Governance Committee (May 6th, 2020)

This Committee discusses the Digital Governance of Athabasca University and their current projects related to their digital presence and processes. This includes, but is not limited to:

- AU's websites, online courses, social media, and any other internet based products/services.

The committee is also a forum for members/observers to provide advice or strategies on the high-level issues along with make recommendations to enhance the institutions digital governance. Two key things to consider from this meeting are:

- 1) Would AUGSA be interested in reaching out to the University regarding use of their systems, as an Affiliate (per se, as we are connected, but autonomous)? I.E- use of the internal security systems, Office 365 (there is a potential for savings here), and/or hosting the website on their server).
- 2) There is a new fee for students paying AU with Credit Cards (i.e- Visa, Mastercard, American Express) however, debit cards do not require a processing fee, so students should be encouraged to use them (though I know this is not always practical)! Effective September 2020. Cost to be confirmed.

Next meeting: June 3rd, 2020

General/Other

- Worked with CPA to transfer from SAGE50 to Quickbooks
- Worked with TD on expanding our business services to include dual signatory EFT

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(Electronic Fund Transfer) for future direct deposits on expense, etc.

- Researching online data transfer systems, such as a NAS for secure financial document transfer and long-term storage for the Association
- Reading Association documents again: bylaws, Strategic plan, policies, and researched and read akin documents at AU.
- Researching Quickbooks' sever, which is in Canada, and learn about the virtual accessibility for authorized officers (Ie- View Only, Administrator, etc.).
- Generated documentation for the Monthly payroll deduction and remittance to CRA
- Generated a key pass for VPOF role for secure and virtual access to passwords

VPFO SUMMARY

This transition has allowed me to get a better understanding of the internal workings of AUGSA. Many individuals (ED, Exec, President (past and current)) were informative about the financial processes and where the areas for the improvement could be. This year I am excited to tackle many of those; including, creating a process document for the role, further securing financial information, and streamlining operations.

June through August, I plan to focus on:

- Continue transitioning the books
- Continuing to stream lining financial processes and continue to add to the Standard Operating Procedure/processess for future VPOF's.
- Prepare an RFQ (Request for Quote) for a bookkeeper or CPA (depending on need) to present to council.

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