

Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association History/Foundation Documents

This file contains a number of documents relating to the foundation and early history of AUGSA, including emails, minutes from early meetings, and other documents.

Because some of the information contained within this document has been copied and pasted from email programs and other sources, there may be formatting issues that cannot be resolved. Sorry for an inconvenience that may result from these issues.

Email Thread - Agenda for Meeting #2, October 17/07

to: Steering Committee for AUGSA
from: Consultant for development of AUGSA
subject: Agenda for Meeting #2 October 17/ 07
date: 10/12/2007

Teleconference Info:

Participant Pass Code: 79494#

Dial-In Numbers:

1-877-385-4099 (Toll Free North America wide)
1-403-232-0994 (Calgary/Overseas)
1-780-421-1483 (Edmonton)
1-604-899-2339 (Vancouver)
1-416-883-0133 (Toronto)
1-613-212-4220 (Ottawa)
1-514-395-9913 (Montreal)

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes from last meeting
4.
 - * Reports from representatives on Academic Council, SAC
 - * Communications Committee update
 - * Constitution - review on Google doc's
 - * Financial Committee update
 - * Membership, Governance and Council Committee update
 - * Meeting with Executive November 26?
 - * Handbook
 - * Meeting with GSB
5. Report on demographics of students

6. Next steps
7. Next meeting November 21, 2007 6 pm MST

Comments

1. For introductions, please state your name, program of study and city of residence.
2. Please identify yourself (first name only) when speaking during the meeting

Good morning;

At our last Steering Committee meeting we determined that we did not want to meet with the Executive in November, however because we are tentatively proposing to begin charging fees in May, perhaps November is an appropriate time to discuss this with the University. Please let me know your thoughts on this matter as soon as possible.

Please let me know your availability for teleconferencing in November 26, 2007. I have just sent an email to Carol requesting confirmation of the date and time but in the meantime I would ask your input on this matter.

Thanks very much
Dixie

Good afternoon;

I am sending this to all for general planning and informational purposes.

I have included meetings with AU next week as well as a schedule of meetings for AUGSA alone. Please respond to these items:

1. I am meeting with Graduate Studies Board:

Agenda:

- a) introductions
- b) status of Doctoral programs
- c) how credits will work with Doctoral programs
- d) general discussion of implementation of fees
- e) marketing items, informational items for AUGSA
- f) hand book information discussion
- g) AGC update

2. I am meeting with McLennan Ross to discuss Consitution.

I've sent our draft of the Interim Policy to the law firm and they have responded with some minor changes. I am meeting with them to discuss this together with the Consitution and next steps.

3. Membership and Council meeting scheduled for Monday November 5, 6 pm MST will have to be rescheduled as I will be travelling at that time. I would suggest an alternate meeting date of November 12 6 pm MST please let me know your availability.

4. The President of the CAAP GSA (joint venture psychology program between

U of C, U of L and AU - is being restructured and CAAP GSA is being disbanded) I will meet with the President to see how we can incorporate CAAP students into AUGSA.

5. I am meeting with Director of Finance of AU to discuss the following:
 - a) adding AUGSA materials to course materials (stickers, handbook, marketing tools)
 - b) identifying students who do not receive print materials
 - c) how much lead time AU needs for implementation of GSA fees
 - d) administration of AUGSA fees in interim
 - e) fee by credit.
6. Ad Hoc Academic Structure review - to discuss the change in the structure of AU. This is particularly relevant given the hiring of the Dean of Graduate Studies.
7. Nov 8, 6:00 pm Finance committee meeting - will have to be rescheduled as I will be travelling home at this time. I would suggest an alternate date of November 13, 6 pm MST. Please let me know your preference.
8. November 21, 6 pm Steering committee meeting
9. November 26 AUGSA Steering Committee will have from 12:00 to 12:30 with the Executive Group..please email Agenda items to myself. The university has requested Agenda items by November 14.
10. Claudius has attended the interviews for the Dean of Graduate Studies, and I was able to teleconference for a few minutes with each as well. I will prepare formal comments and send to the VP Academic.
11. That is all!

Cheers,
Dixie

Good day;

Please find below the agenda for our meeting on Monday November 12, 2007 at 6 pm MST.

AGENDA
Membership, Council and Governance Research Committee
Meeting #2
Time: 6:00 MST – 7:00 MST
Date: November 12, 2007

Teleconference Info:

Participant Pass Code: 79494#

Dial-In Numbers:
1-877-385-4099 (Toll Free North America wide)

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1-514-395-9913 (Montreal)

1. Interim Policy: I met with the lawyer last week who had some changes to Interim Policy to clarify it and make it more appropriate. We discussed it in detail and she will forward it myself when she has made the changes within the doc. I emailed her scanned document to you for your review – through our discussions, it became clear that she required a better background of our association.
2. Constitution: I have sent a copy to the lawyer and she would like to hold it until we have agreed to a final interim policy.
3. Meeting with Graduate Studies Board: They have indicated that further research is required on student needs, and have recommended a cost/benefit analysis. This will be undertaken by my office in the upcoming weeks. Please find a draft survey that I would like to send to all students at AU:

Graduate Student Needs Assessment Survey

The purpose of this survey is to assess the current graduate student needs at Athabasca University to establish priorities for the newly formed Graduate Student Association. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. Responses will be used in aggregate to ensure the anonymity of individual respondents. Thank you for your time and participation!

GRADUATE STUDENT ISSUES

1. Please check four of the following issues that are most important to you

Research funding grants
 Travel funding grants
 Faculty mentorship
 Peer Mentorship
 Conflict Resolution
 Connecting with other Graduate Students
 Health, dental and other benefits
 Affordable housing
 Participation in graduate student advocacy (government regulations, legislation affecting graduate students and so on)

2. AUGSA (Graduate Students' Association of Athabasca University)

Please indicate your level of knowledge about AUGSA:

Somewhat knowledgeable _____
Knowledgeable _____
What is AUGSA? _____

3. Will you vote in AUGSA elections? _____ Yes _____ No
4. Are you willing to participate in AUGSA? _____ Yes _____ No
5. What events would you be interested in attending?

- _____ Thesis/Dissertation writing workshop
- _____ Research Grant Application writing workshop
- _____ Workshops on areas of Academic Interest
- _____ Presentation or speaking skills workshop
- _____ How to Prepare and Publish a Manuscript workshop
- _____ Other Please explain:

DEMOGRAPHICS

6. What degree are you currently working toward?
7. How many years have you been a student
8. Would you consider an Assistantship at AU if offered?

4. Executive Group Committee meeting
5. Other discussion?

Good afternoon.

We have a Finance Committee meeting scheduled for November 13, 2007, at 6 pm MST. Please find below an agenda for such:

AGENDA

Finance Committee
Meeting #2

Time: 6:00 to 7:00 pm MST

Date: November 13, 2007

Teleconference Info:

Participant Pass Code: 79494#

Dial-In Numbers:

1-877-385-4099 (Toll Free North America wide)
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1. Fees:

a) Met with Graduate Studies Board who requested further research and a cost benefit analysis- I have prepared a draft survey that we can send to all students. (see below)

b) Director of Finance had some ideas on the way to charge fees: by credit with an annual cap that would make it similar to other institutions. Comments?

2. Budget: GSB requested a general budget (we do not have to provide them with one, but we should do it. Please think of items required in the budget in a perfect world.)

3. Handbook: Director of finance has indicated a willingness to enclose a pamphlet of some kind in with new students. It would be our duty to create this. Comments?

Graduate Student Needs Assessment Survey

The purpose of this survey is to assess the current graduate student needs at Athabasca University to establish priorities for the newly formed Graduate Student Association. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. Responses will be used in aggregate to ensure the anonymity of individual respondents. Thank you for your time and participation!

Website Development Notes

Unidentified Individual (Robbie Chernish?)

1. Ability to manage site via web (create/edit pages etc ...)
2. Ability to assign various levels of access to whomever needs it
3. Public and private area - private areas can be for working groups, confidential docs etc ...
4. Perhaps various web tools for quickly creating documents, letters etc ... - allows group collaboration without having to leave "our" space - this would allow a document to be created for the web, print, email distribution etc ... and be proofread all in one fell-swoop.
5. RSS feed for those who want to automatically see updates
6. Job Board - perhaps automagically link from the CDE job board
7. Online forums, polling/voting facilities
8. Site does not have to be graphics intensive - doesn't have to contain any pics or such, but should be well laid-out and clean.

Other issues:

We should definitely look at what an outside contractor can do for us but in terms of ongoing maintenance, AUGSA should look at hiring (i.e. for pay) a student with skills in this area to update the site throughout the year. The amount could be an honorarium or per hour.

The contractor should create a shell that we can expand or shrink as needed without having to go back to them (i.e. we should be able to add sections or pages on our own).

Once we've agreed on what we need, we should then rank-order in terms of importance so a sensible RFP can be created.

This is all I can think of at the moment.

Dave (David Keene?)

Links to all AU program sites.

Email facilities for students.

Bulletin Board

- Scholarship Availability

- Student News, etc

- Community "Happenings"

Ombudsperson link

Council News - meeting minutes

Rob (Rob Janzen?)

The following is a quick skeleton for a site map. Once we determine the specific areas we want to represent / showcase we can channel the students better / plan our style. We should definitely have our site map / content done by the end of retreat and be ready to roll it out shortly after that.

News →

Ask AU

Privacy Policy / Terms of Use

MyAU

Graduate Programs / Courses

Tell A Friend

Contact Us

Upcoming Scholarships

Membership Benefits

Workshops / Virtual and Physical

Council News / Meeting Minutes

Submissions / Contributions / Volunteer with AUGSA

Home

Use this page to briefly introduce ourselves, what we do, and our benefits to the student body. Link to specific AU pages and AUGSA news. News page cover anything we think is important for that month, etc.... These are just some thoughts for discussion. This should be a good workshop topic.

RC

Email regarding discussion with Carol Lund (University Secretary) and Steering Committee

Good Morning:

I sent the proposed Agenda to Carol this morning and within 5 minutes got a phone call from her. She had the following to say:

1. Requesting a stipend is a terrible way to start the relationship with Executive. We can propose to her, with more details and she will either approve this or not.
2. Website. Carol called Brian Stewart (head honcho of Information Systems) and I got a call from him right away. He indicated a willingness to provide training to a few of us, and the correct access. He is waiting for me to give him contact information of those willing to take this on. Please let me know if you are interested in learning a bit about PLONE and being available to update our website regularly. I would like to get back to him by Friday Morning at the latest.
3. In discussions with Carol, it was concluded that the Steering Committee

needs to understand the structure of AU better and to that end, Carol agreed to attend our SC meeting on March 5 at 6:00 pm to give us an overview or Governance 101. We jointly determined that it was probably best if the Steering Committee met with Executive after March 5, that is, the April 7 meeting. Therefore, the February 20 meeting has been postponed to April.

I think we made huge progress today - Brian himself is on the Website care (finally), and Carol will attend a meeting to help you all (and me) understand how we fit in to AU better. I think we'll have lots to do with the website finally (keep your fingers crossed) working.

Thanks so much and if you have any great suggestions, ideas or would like to volunteer for web development, please let me know by Friday morning.

Please find the Agenda for the General Meeting this Wednesday November 21, 2007 at 6 pm MST. Nicolle Bourget will be chairing the meeting with Sarann present to take notes. I apologize for my absence but have the utmost confidence that Nicolle and the rest of the committee will be able to have a productive meeting. Please find attached meeting Notes from Oct. 17 meeting for your approval.

to: Steering Committee for AUGSA
from: Consultant for development of AUGSA
subject: Agenda for MEETING NOVEMBER 21, 07 6:00 MST
date: 11/19/2007
Teleconference Info:

Participant Pass Code: 79494#
Dial-In Numbers:
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 - * Reports from representatives on Academic Council, SAC
 - * Communications Committee update
 - * Constitution – being Reviewed by lawyer
 - * Financial Committee update – line items for budget

- * Membership, Governance and Council Committee update
- * Meeting with Executive November 26- delayed until further notice

5. Planner – AU willing to put in course materials package to each new student.
6. Line items for budget – posted on Google Doc's – all should have it.
7. Implementation of fees May 2008 – for discussion
8. Fee structure: by credit with annual cap – for discussion
9. Steering Committee Retreat – discuss, decide when, where, how long, Agenda items. Dixie will send proposal and budget to Carol for approval.
10. Alberta Graduate Council: we've been invited to join, 1st year is free, after which it is \$1.00 per person per year. It is important from a political perspective that AU Grads voice is heard. Should we join? If so, can we elect a representative (preferably from Edmonton) to attend meetings. They meet quarterly. Website is HYPERLINK "<http://www.albertagrads.ca>"

Comments

1. For introductions, please state your name, program of study and city of residence.
2. Please identify yourself (first name only) when speaking during the meeting.

Minutes from "AUGSA Next Steps Meeting"

In attendance:

- Santhosh - Richmond Hill, ON - MAIS
- Nicolle - Chilliwack, BC - MAIS
- Jason - Edmonton, AB - MAIS (via email)
- Robbie - Athabasca, AB - MAIS
- Claudius - Winnipeg
- David - Saskatchewan - MAIS
- Dixie - Fernie, BC - Consultant

Date: October 17, 2009
Location: Teleconference

	Who	Action(s)
No minutes from last meeting provided.		
Motion to approve agenda; Santhosh seconds. Motion carried.	David	

<p>Communications Committee Report:</p> <p>Discussed letter to Brian Stewart expressing our interest in getting website and email promises moving along. Dave wrote the letter and Claudius read it to those present.</p> <p>Grammar and wording were discussed, changes were made, and it was agreed that Dixie would make final changes and send it to Brian this week.</p>		
<p>Membership/Council/Governance Committee Report:</p> <p>Draft constitution has been prepared by this committee and is posted on Google Docs for review. The Steering Committee felt it important to discuss each article. Committee discussed the constitution and made significant changes. It will continue to be posted on Google Docs for a few more days. Dixie to send to lawyer for review once changes are made.</p>		
<p>Finance Committee:</p> <p>Suggested charging fees by credit, either \$5/credit or \$3/credit; also suggested that fees come into effect May 2008. Dixie to discuss with AU Executive to determine how much lead time is needed, administration issues, etc.</p>		
<p>Next meeting: November 21, 2007 (original document reads 2006, but this is presumed to be a typo); AUGSA will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6pm MST via teleconference.</p>		
<p>Other discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dixie to send agenda items to GSB meeting to Steering Committee for comment • Discussed February meeting with AU Executive 		
<p>Meeting adjourned at 8:08pm MST.</p>		

Timeline

ID Name Start

create communications plan for the elections May

What positions are being elected June

job descriptions for the positions June

define what information we want from nominees and how we determine who wins

email to students notifying them of upcoming election and process with timeline June

post information on the website June

Ask for nominations

Inform students of nominees and start election

Notify students of elected council and first meeting

1. Inaugural general meeting of AUGSA - Thursday, October 18, 2007
2. Schedule inaugural meeting of AUGSA - Tuesday, January 1, 2008
3. Notification to AUGSA members of first general meeting - Monday, December 3, 2007
4. Agenda confirmed for first general meeting - Monday, November 5, 2007
5. Ex-officio secretary appointed and salary confirmed - Monday, December 31, 2007
6. constitution voted on - Monday, December 31, 2007
7. nominations for executive - Monday, December 31, 2007
8. executive elected - Monday, December 31, 2007
9. Constitution, By Laws & Policies - Monday, December 31, 2007
10. by laws drafted - Monday, December 31, 2007
11. job descriptions for executive - Monday, December 31, 2007
12. lawyers review of by laws - Monday, December 31, 2007
13. by laws voted on - Monday, December 31, 2007
14. constitution drafted - Wednesday, October 17, 2007
15. lawyers review of constitution - Monday, December 31, 2007
16. Constitution voted on - Monday, December 31, 2007
17. policies drafted - Monday, December 31, 2007
18. lawyers review of policies - Monday, December 31, 2007
19. policies voted on - Monday, December 31, 2007
20. Fees - Monday, December 31, 2007
21. Amount decided on - Friday, February 1, 2008
22. AU notified of fee - Monday, March 17, 2008
23. account set up for fees - Monday, March 17, 2008
24. process approved for disbursement of funds - Monday, March 17, 2008
25. provide wording to AU around fee increase - Friday, February 1, 2008
26. AU notification of fee increase to students - Monday, December 31, 2007
27. budget - Monday, December 31, 2007
28. Each committee to provide line items for budget - Monday, December 31, 2007
29. Initial budget line items created - Monday, December 31, 2007
30. Budget approved by executive - Friday, February 1, 2008
31. Any revenue items (i.e. advertisers, jobs) - Monday, December 31, 2007
32. communication
33. AUGSA communication to members - Monday, December 31, 2007
34. Determine content and tool(s) - Friday, February 1, 2008
35. Value to students highlighted - Monday, February 18, 2008

36. documentation provided to programs for links to the AUGSA website - Monday, February 18, 2008
37. AUGSA website up formally launched - Monday, February 18, 2008
38. website processes in place (support, advertisers, posting of information) - Monday, December 31, 2007
39. Students register for term - Monday, March 17, 2008
40. May term begins - Thursday, May 1, 2008

Email to Dixie from Lawyer re: Constitution

Dixie, my apologies for the delay in getting back to you. Further to our meeting, Section 94(2) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act specifies that each graduate students association ("GSA") is a corporation. The complete section states:

Graduate students association

94(1) If a university offers a program of graduate studies, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may by order establish a graduate students association for the university and shall give the graduate students association a name consisting of the words "The Graduate Students Association of" followed by the name of the university.

(2) Each graduate students association is a corporation and consists of the graduate students of the university.

(3) The graduate students association of a university shall provide for the administration of graduate student affairs at the university, including the development and management of graduate student committees, the development and enforcement of rules relating to graduate student affairs and the promotion of the general welfare of the graduate students consistent with the purposes of the university.

(4) If it has the approval of the board to do so, a graduate students association may acquire real property by purchase, lease or otherwise and may hold and dispose of it.

Accordingly, the corporate status of a GSA arises out of the Post-Secondary Learning Act and not the Business Corporations Act. In light of this information, section 16(a)(vi) of the Interpretation Act would apply. This section gives a corporation the power to regulate its own procedure and business and provides as follows:

Corporate rights and powers

- 16 Words in an enactment establishing or continuing a corporation
- (a) vest in the corporation power
 - (vi) to regulate its own procedure and business;

Thus, a GSA established under the Post-Secondary Learning Act has the power to regulate its own procedure and business, including the drafting of its own bylaws and the bylaws need only comply with section 95(2)(a)-(h) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act. As these subsections are very broad, the GSA has a great deal of flexibility when determining its bylaws. The relevant subsections state:

(2) The council of a student organization may make bylaws governing

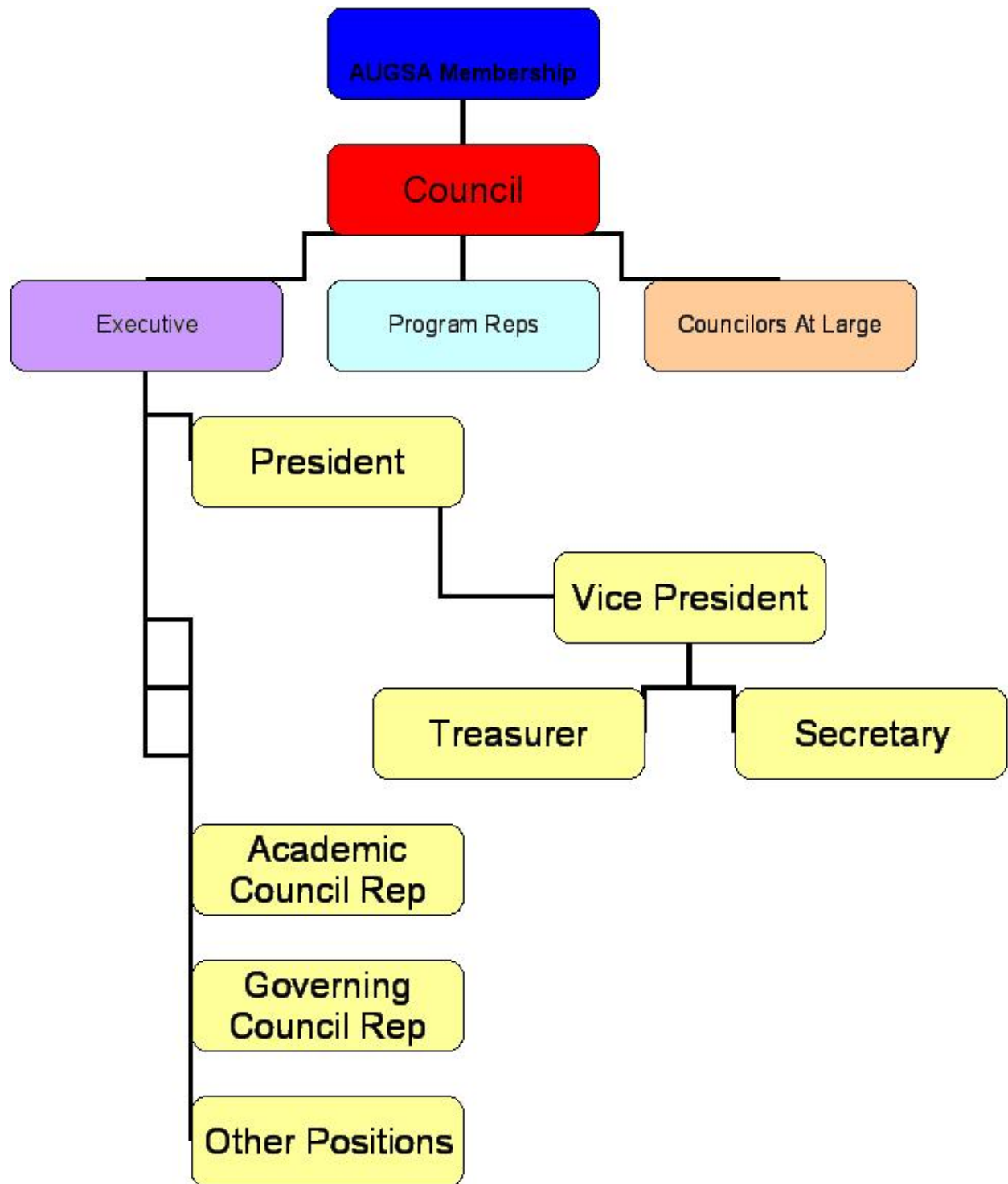
- (a) the requirements for membership in the student organization;
- (b) the qualifications for election as a member of the council and the time and manner of conducting the elections;
- (c) the number of persons and the officers that the council is to consist of;
- (d) the calling of meetings of the council and the quorum and conduct of business at those meetings;
- (e) in the case of a students association, the maintenance of the association by the levy of membership fees on its members;
- (f) in the case of a graduate students association, the maintenance of the association by the levy of membership fees on its members;
- (g) the acquisition, management and disposition of property by the student organization;
- (h) any other matter pertaining to the management and affairs of the student organization.

However, for clarity sake, I would still recommend that the AU GSA develop a set of comprehensive bylaws (from a more generalized constitution) putting in place the necessary procedures and mechanisms to ensure the GSA can operate efficiently. We have started to revise the documents, but unfortunately have not completed the same. Once completed, we will circulate them to you for your review to ensure that our changes will not upset those who have worked hard on them.

For informational purposes only, I have attached the bylaws from the GSA of the University of Lethbridge and the University of Saskatchewan.

Regards,

Denise



Council Orientation Handbook

Confidential

For the Orientation and Reference of New AUGSA Councilors

Created by Dixie Harris, on May 21, 2008

Guiding Statements

Mandate:

The Graduate Student Association of Athabasca University (AUGSA) is dedicated to serving its students worldwide, by promoting a global community and acting as a liaison between students and the university.

Objectives:

- 1.To promote the general welfare of the graduate student body and provide official representation on behalf of graduate students.
- 2.To advocate for and disseminate information with respect to opportunities for research, development, employment, teaching and funding.
- 3.To provide orientation and procedural information for new students and encourage opportunities for peer-to-peer mentoring.

Mission Statement:

The mission of AUGSA shall be to foster a cohesive graduate student community, act as an advocate for graduate students and build a positive relationship with the University.

Objects:

The objects of AUGSA are to

1. provide for the administration of the affairs of graduate students;
2. promote the unity and welfare of graduate students;
3. serve and further the intellectual, cultural, social, and political activities of graduate students;
4. promote and maintain communication among graduate students, the University and other groups;
5. act as the official voice of graduate students;
6. raise funds to operate AUGSA.

AUGSA Background

AUGSA has a varied and interesting history. The original process of developing a graduate student association began sometime around 2002 – 2004. The specific history is vague as there are no notes or documentation surrounding the processes of AUGSA until September 2005. On September 8, 2005 the Lieutenant Governor In Council incorporated a graduate students association to be known as "The Graduate Students Association of Athabasca University". This was recommended by the Minister of Advanced Education and thus, AUGSA was formed.

In early 2007 a Development Consultant was retained by AU to continue the process of the development of AUGSA. Much time was spent researching the history of this graduate student association, and the governance documents required to continue the process. A Steering Committee/Development Team was formed after contacting all current graduate students, and the first order of business was to develop an Interim Policy that governs the Steering Committee until such time as a Council was elected. This policy was approved in July 2007. During the summer and fall the Steering Committee also developed a Mandate, Objectives and worked a great deal on by-laws. The Mandate and Objectives were approved in late 2007. The Objects and Mission statement above are quoted from the Draft Bylaw document provided by AU. The post secondary learning act is not clear on the process by which the 'first' council is elected, nor is it clear when by-laws were to be approved, however, after much research, it was determined that by-laws were to be developed and approved by an elected council. To create the election process, the Steering Committee used a Draft copy of bylaws provided by AU. This document, together with the Interim Policy is the governing policy of the Development Team, in effect only until council is elected. The Development Team has made no attempt to change the provided by-laws, rather has used them to guide the thinking and processes as the task of developing AUGSA, a Council and Executive is undertaken.

AU provides a list of current students once a month via secure email.

Throughout the spring 2008 the Development Team has been working on election processes and researching ways in which to hold AUGSA's first election. They have been working with AUSU who has kindly offered the use of their secure voting system and documentation surrounding the process of elections.

AUGSA was chosen as an acronym for The Graduate Students Association of Athabasca University, and is used by the Development Team as an abbreviation of the longer name.

Welcome to AUGSA

This handbook is prepared to provide history, background, expectations and processes already in place that will help new Councilors become aware of their responsibilities and duties as incoming officers for AUGSA. Please do not hesitate to contact the Development Consultant at any time for further information, questions or to provide feed back.

As a new Councilor on AUGSA, you are representing one of the first Distance Education Graduate Student Associations. We have students worldwide that are interested, engaged and willing to help in this process. Because this is an inaugural Council, it will come with challenges, due to the distance factor; learning to communicate is a critical component of this position.

Who Are We?

Membership in AUGSA is mandatory for all Athabasca University students who are enrolled in graduate level course(s) or registered in programs beyond the baccalaureate degree. This includes Doctoral programs as well.

AUGSA originally consisted of a Development Team, originating from volunteer student members interested in going through the process of developing AUGSA.

The elected Council can be as large as eight members. Within this Council, an Executive will be elected, consisting of a President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Also within the Council there is one Academic Council Representative, and one Governing Council Representative. Appendix ** provides an Organizational Chart designed to show the responsibilities of Council.

Relationship between AUGSA, AU and AUSU

AUGSA, AU and AUSU are three separate and distinct organizations. AUGSA represents only graduate students, and we classify our membership as 'members' even though they are students as well. AUSU represents only undergraduate students, and as well, refers to their membership as 'members'. We are all students of AU.

AUGSA represents the graduate (including Doctoral) students of Athabasca University who will pay a fee as determined by the new Council. Some research has been completed on this

matter, so indicated in appendix **. This fee will be paid with each course registration fee, and membership will begin on the start date of a course. Membership will remain active for a period of time after their course end date. AU will most likely administrate the fees, as fees will be collected with course registration.

Demographics

The information that is provided by AU regarding demographics is current to the 2006-07 year. At that time there were 7,505 graduate students, two thirds of which were from Ontario or Alberta. The proportion of women graduate students was 62% but varied significantly from program to program. Many graduate students are between the ages of 25 and 44, overall average age is 40.

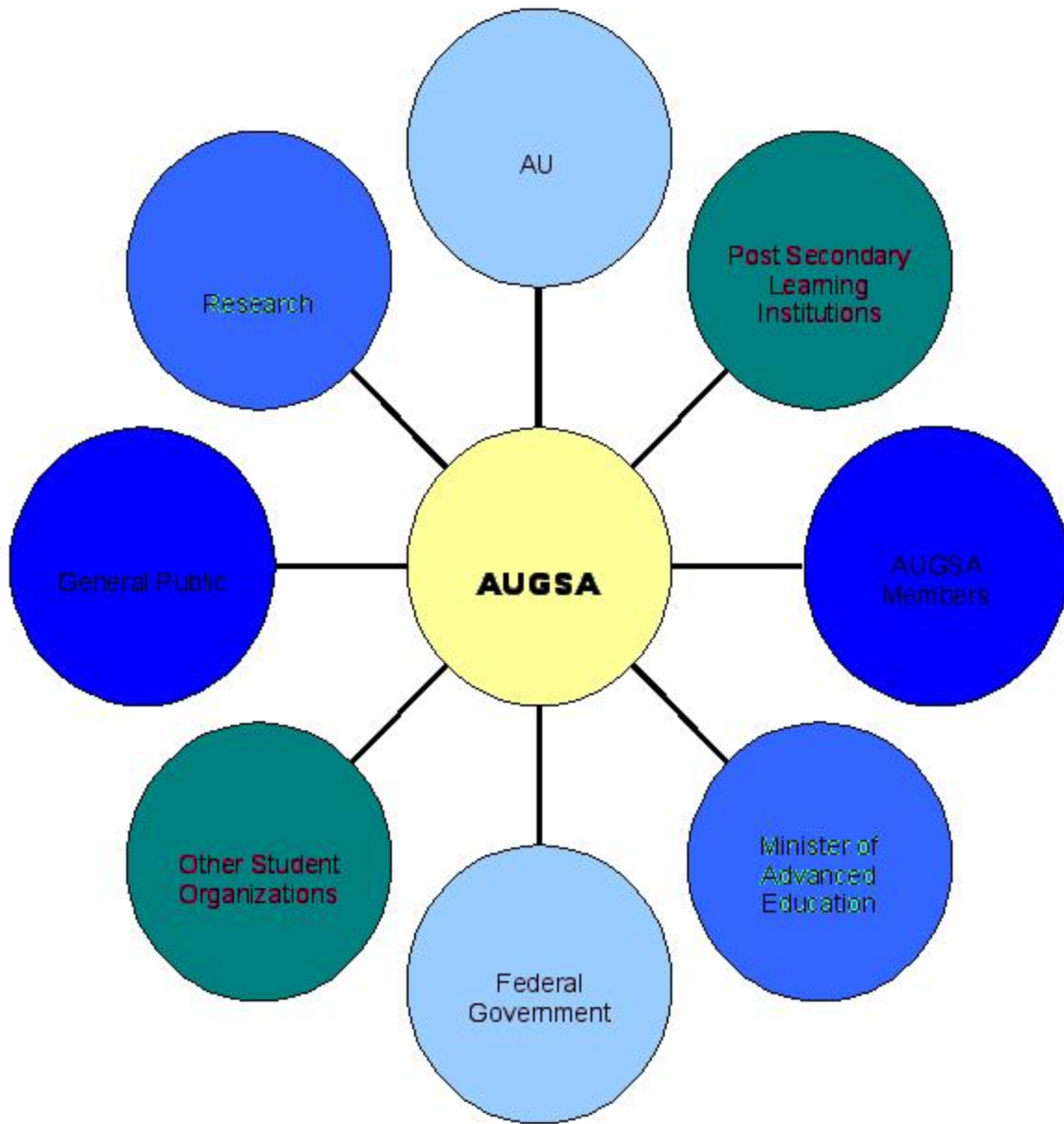
AUGSA Council Structure and Duties

The Post Secondary Learning Act mandates that 1 "the graduate students association shall provide for the administration of graduate student affairs at the university, including the development and management of graduate student committees, the development and enforcement of rules relating to graduate student affairs and the promotion of the general welfare of the graduate students consistent with the purposes of the university." The graduate students association²"has the exclusive authority, on behalf of graduate students, to negotiate and enter into an agreement with respect to the employment of graduate students with the board of the university."

Therefore, the primary purpose of AUGSA is advocacy and student services.

Advocacy

The Council must adhere to the Post Secondary Learning Act as their first frame of reference, and as such, the promotion of the general welfare of graduate students is the first duty of council. Graduate students are mature researchers, so 'advocacy' varies slightly from an undergraduate student representation. Graduate students may be seeking work as Research Assistants, Teaching Assistant and other employment opportunities within the University. This requires that a strong relationship be forged with Executive, Professors, and Tutors at AU.



Within this framework, AUGSA acts on behalf of its members in many ways. For example, by working with the Alberta Graduate Council, AUGSA can have an impact on post secondary learning issues within Alberta and Canada. Currently there is a representative on this Council that is working to have all AU Graduate students recognized in Alberta.

AUGSA may also advocate for individual members; the membership body; and all graduate students.

Part of representing graduate students consists of representation at the University level. Representatives from AUGSA sit on Athabasca University committees such as Governing Council, Academic Council, and sub-committees of these councils such as Strategic Budget Committee, Student Awards Committee, and other Ad Hoc committees as required by AU.

The graduate student membership have a voice within the university, opinions are heard, taken into consideration and often respected.

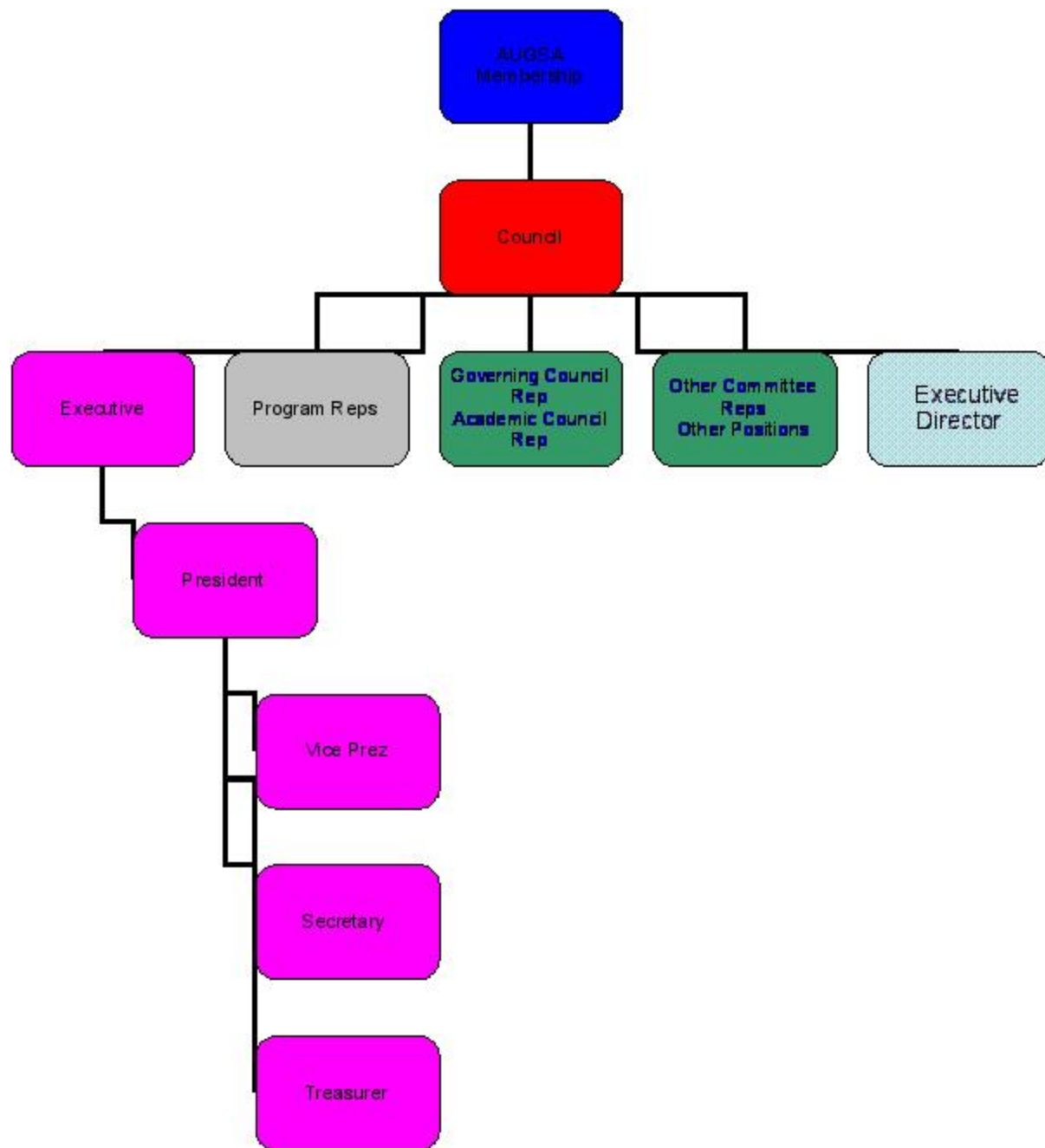
Student Services

Traditional universities have different student services than distance education universities, however, opportunities exist to provide AUGSA members with student services despite the distance factor.

We have a toll-free telephone line to the current Development consultant, as well as e-mail addresses so that members may contact someone at any time. There is a website at <http://gsa.athabascau.ca> that is updated on a regular basis with news, opportunities and other items that may interest members.

Future services include a handbook for graduate students, a weekly or monthly newsletter, mentorship programs, research opportunities, and forums where discussions can take place. The implementation of these services is the new Council responsibility.

Structure of AUGSA



As is illustrated in this diagram, the Council is responsible to the entire AUGSA membership, and consists of the Executive, Program Reps, Governing Council Rep, Academic Council Rep, Other committee Rep and Other positions. The Executive consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Executive Director is responsible to Council.

Roles and Responsibilities

Working within the structure

The majority of the work of running AUGSA is the responsibility of the Executive and Council. This is due to the fact that there is no staff, nor funding at the point of first council elections. One of the first duties will be to revise, if necessary, and approve the provided draft by-laws. Policy must be developed and approved in order to determine fees, fee structure, administration, and other items necessary for the running of AUGSA. The primary role of council members is to attend meetings, help develop policy, become aware of issues that are important to graduate students and vote on AUGSA by-laws, policy and other procedural issues.

Executive

The Executive manages the business and affairs of AUGSA in accordance with the Act and is accountable to Council. The responsibilities of Executive are:

- A. establish, revise and ensure implementation of policies governing AUGSA;
 - B. carry out the business of AUGSA;
 - C. uphold and further the objects of AUGSA;
 - D. report fully to the members at least annually;
 - E. prepare the annual budget of AUGSA;
 - F. take such action as Council considers necessary.
- Council

Council is responsible for the general affairs and property of AUGSA. Council meets as often as necessary; at least four times per year. Duties of Councilors are as follows:

- 1.attend all council meetings
- 2.solicit feedback and opinions of AUGSA members
- 3.facilitate an annual meeting of the graduate students in their department
- 4.perform all other duties assigned by Council.

Governing Council Representative

Governing council representative is AUGSAs nominee for appointment to Governing Council. On appointment, Governing Council Representative shall:

- 1.attend all Governing Council meetings
- 2.present a report at each Executive meeting on the activities of Governing Council

Academic Council Representative

The Academic council representative is AUGSA's nominee to Academic Council. On appointment, the Academic council rep shall:

- 1.attend all Academic Council meetings;
- 2.present a report at each Executive meeting on the activities of Academic Council.

AUGSA Budget 2009-10

NOTE: This budget has turned out to be highly inaccurate, especially in regard to the projected revenue; with the exception of Graduate Student Fees, there were no revenues in the 09/10 budget year. It also does not reflect real expenses incurred.

Budget April 01, 2009 to March 31, 2010	
REVENUES	
Student fees	120,000
Advertising	0
Interest	100
Events	0
Vending	0
Merchandising sales	1,000
Donations	10,000
Grants	5,000
Contracting	5,000
Other	0
Total revenue	141,000
EXPENSES	
Administration	
Amortization	
Bank charges	100
<i>Technology expenses</i>	
Hardware	1,400
Services	
Software	1,600
Elections expenses	
Teleconference meetings	
Insurance	2,000

License and Permits	
Merchandise promotional advertising	1,000
Branding	2,000
Miscellaneous	
<i>Office expenses</i>	
Supplies	800
Furniture	
Telephone	920
Postage/Courier	100
Payroll processing	
<i>Professional fees</i>	
Accountant	500
Lawyer	2,500
Other	
Publication supplies	
Reference materials	
Subscription fees	1,000
Training	
Travel	10,000
Website expenses	
Facilities	
Rent	
Security	
Utilities	
Salaries and Benefits	
Honorariums	
Councilor benefits	
Staff salaries	60,000
Staff benefits	
AUSGA tax portion	
Events and Programs	
Special events	2,500
Convocation	1,000
New letter	

Publications	500
Student handbook	
Service recognition	
Awards	
Contests	500
Gift and donations	500
Student awards	1,500
Representation Expenses	
Advocacy and lobbying	2,000
Professional development	
Membership fees	200
Travel	3,000
Total expenses	95,620
Net income	141,000
Total revenue over expenses	45,380

AUGSA Call for Nominations and Upcoming Election

Athabasca University's Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA) will be issuing a first call for nominations for membership on the AUGSA council starting in July, 2008.

To date, the development of the AUGSA has been coordinated with the help of a steering committee, and is now ready to pass the torch onto the newly elected council. Graduate students enrolled at Athabasca University are encouraged to submit a nomination if they, or someone they know, is interested.

The AUGSA web page is located on the internet at <http://gsa.athabascau.ca>.

This site contains history, documentation, and information on the upcoming timelines regarding the election and nomination process.

Letter to Brian Stewart

Brian Stewart

Chief Information Officer
Athabasca University
1 University Drive
Athabasca, AB, Canada T9S 3A3
October 18, 2007

RE: Communication modes necessary for the further development of AUGSA

Dear Brian,

On behalf of the Athabasca University Graduate Students Association (AUGSA) Steering Committee, we would like to express our appreciation for your commitment to provide the following modes of communication:

1. A higher degree of access to the AUGSA web page
2. Access to Moodle
3. Creation of email addresses for our committee members

Because AUGSA is preparing for its first elections, and developing by-laws, we require full access to these resources as soon as possible. As you are well aware, distance communication is difficult without these technical resources.

To help facilitate the process, please find attached some Steering Committee requirements.

We look forward to seeing this resolved as soon as possible, ideally early November 2007.

Sincerely,

AUGSA Steering Committee (Athabasca University Graduate Student Association)

Detailed AUGSA Steering Committee Requirements

1. A higher degree of access to the AUGSA web page
 - As per Mel Sylvestre's communication with Marguerite Koole (September 18, 2007).
2. Access to Moodle
 - Creation of a Moodle shell for the Steering Committee and future sub-committees, executive etc ...
3. Creation of email addresses for our committee members; Currently we need:
 - 1 generic e-mail address for each committee (Steering, Finance, Communications, Membership)
 - 1 e-mail address per Steering Committee member:
 - Jennifer Cameron

- Catherine Molloy
- Christian Idicula
- Claudius Soodeen
- Jacqueline Cote
- Jason Ponto
- Mel Sylvestre
- Dave Dahlgren
- Robbie Chernish
- Santhosh Varghese
- Sathesan Kumarasamy
- Dixie Harris
- Nicolle Bourget