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1. Council and Executive Policies

1.01 Executive and Council Elections

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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This policy governs the elections of AUGSA Executive and Council Members

A. Scope:

This procedure governs the annual elections for:

- 1) council positions of the Association
- 2) executive positions of the Association

B. Eligibility

- 1) Members who are in good standing with the organization.
- 2) Permanent full time AU staff are not eligible to run for Executive positions, but may run for Council positions, provided that they declare any conflicts of interest, and adhere to all guidelines within AUGSA's Code of Conduct regarding how to professionally and ethically manage situations that may pose (or be perceived as) a conflict of interest.

C. Election and Referenda Committee:

- 1) Responsibilities:

The Election and Referenda Committee shall be responsible to Council for the following:

- a) remaining impartial and unbiased on election and referenda issues or candidates and make no public statements concerning the election or referenda except in respect to procedural matters; b) approving or rewording all referenda questions once they are approved by the council or a general meeting to ensure questions are not biased;
- b) ensuring that elections and referenda are properly advertised to members of the Association;
- c) ensuring that elections and referenda are run fairly based on the Council documents on elections and referenda;
- d) ruling on all allegations made against candidates or referendum committees;
- e) review appeals submitted against AUGSA election results;

The Chief Returning Officer shall be responsible to Council for the following:

- a) reviewing all nomination forms to ensure that candidates are eligible to hold office with the

Association;

- b) reviewing and approving all materials that candidates and campaigns submit;
- c) ensuring that all decisions of the Election and Referenda Committee are reported to the council of the Association;
- d) setting all appropriate deadlines necessary for compliance with all rules for candidates;
- e) communicating between candidates and the Election and Referenda Committee;
- f) preparing a report for the council of the Association no later than the last day of April outlining any decisions made by the Election Committee and recommending changes based on information gathered during the election; and
- g) preparing, updating and reviewing a document of past Election and Referenda Committee decisions to ensure that the committee uses past decisions as precedent in making decisions.

2. Membership:

The Election and Referenda Committee shall be elected by the council of the Association no later than January of each year or earlier if necessary, to run by-elections.

The Election and Referenda Committee shall normally be comprised of the following individuals:

- a) a Chief Returning Officer who shall be the chairperson;
- b) two (2) voting members of Council who cannot be running for re-election; and
- c) one (1) member at-large who cannot be running for election

In the event that two outgoing councilors cannot be found to sit on the Elections Committee, two students-at-large will be selected, by 2/3 majority vote of the Council of the Association, to sit in their place.

D. Timeline:

The Association shall hold elections during the months of February and March each year. The elections of the Association shall consist of a nominations period, preparation period, campaign period and the polling period.

The nomination period for both Executive Committee elections and Councilor elections shall be announced and widely advertised by the Chief Returning Officer or Executive Director and begin no later than the second Monday of January. Timelines for Executive and Councilor elections will conform to the scheduled posted on the AUGSA website. The website should be updated with the elections schedule no later than the second Monday in January.

Executive Committee elections:

- a) Nominations shall close the last Friday in February.
- b) The preparation period shall last for a minimum of 5 days following the close of nominations.
- c) The campaign period shall last for at least 7 days.
- d) Two consecutive days of polling shall take place at the end of the second week of March each year.

Councilor elections:

- a) Nominations shall close 4 days following the conclusion of Executive Election polling.
- b) The preparation period shall last for a minimum of 5 days following the close of nominations.
- c) The campaign period shall last for a minimum of 7 days.
- d) Two consecutive days of polling shall commence upon the conclusion of the campaign period.

By-elections shall reflect the timeline of Councilor elections following a 10-day nomination period.

E. Nominations:

During the nomination period, any Active Members of the Association may nominate themselves for a position with the Association by submitting an official declaration of intent form, which shall be posted on the Association's official website.

Rules for Candidates

Throughout the course of the campaign period, candidates have the right to the following:

- a) communicating their candidacy and campaign in any way they see fit, provided said communication does not extend beyond the campaign period;
- b) expressing opinions about candidates, the institution and the Association and the issues affecting students of the Association;
- c) enlisting the assistance of volunteers to perform campaign duties; and
- d) soliciting and communicating endorsements of their campaign.

Candidates for positions in the Association shall be responsible for the following:

- a) submitting and updating a list of official campaign volunteers to the Chief Returning Officer;
- b) ensuring that all campaign methods utilized by their volunteers are above reproach;
- c) When a student is running for re-election, avoiding the use of AUGSA resources (access to website, newsletter, staff time, budget, and materials) that he or she has access to solely by virtue of his or her *current* position that he or she would not have access to if he or she was not holding an Association role presently;

Candidates for positions in the Association shall be responsible for ensuring that they or a member of their campaign team do not do the following:

- a) misrepresent the position or character of other candidates in the election;
- b) endorse candidates in their own or other races;
- c) distribute gifts that have more than nominal value for the purpose of campaigning;
- d) disseminate deliberately libelous or purposefully incorrect information about another candidate; or
- e) widely communicate campaign information in a period outside of the campaign period; and f) spend any money on advertising.

F. Allegations:

Any member of the Association may privately make an allegation to the Chief Returning Officer if they believe that a candidate has broken the rules of the Association. Allegations must be delivered to the Chief Returning Officer

All allegations must include the rule believed to be broken and supporting evidence.

The Chief Returning Officer shall report all allegations to the Elections Committee and the accused within twenty-four (24) hours of the allegation being filed.

Candidates who are accused of breaking a rule of the Association shall be given twenty-four (24) hours after they are notified by the Chief Returning Officer to provide the committee with evidence against the allegation.

Upon receipt of evidence from an accused candidate or the end of the time period allotted for evidence to be provided by the candidate to the Election Committee, the Chief Returning Officer shall hold a meeting of the Election Committee to determine the validity and severity of the accusation.

After reviewing the accusation and the evidence, the Election Committee will either rule the accusation frivolous, deny the accusation or rule the accusation to be true.

Accusations ruled to be in contravention to the Rules for Candidates shall result in disqualification by the Election Committee.

Decisions of the Election and Referenda Committee may be appealed to the Bylaw Committee if the accused or accuser believes that the committee did not properly follow the rules of the Council in making their decision.

G. Results



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Results of elections for the Association shall normally be announced that day after the close of polling by the Chief Returning Officer. Individual requests to view the vote count can be submitted as long as the request is made to BOTH the Chief Returning Officer and Executive Director.

H. The Chief Returning Officer shall be responsible to Council for the following:
Notifying candidates of recognition of their candidacy by way of email in the form prescribed by the “Appendix: Recognition of Candidacy Letter Template”

I. Voting

Instant Runoff Voting is to be used to determine the winner of elections of members of the Executive Committee. Single Transferable Vote is to be used to determine the winner of elections of Faculty and Centre Representatives. In the event of a tie, the elections committee shall make a ruling on the outcome of the vote.





1.02 Council Meeting Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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This policy governs the meeting requirements for Council, Executive, and Committees.

- A. Council shall meet a minimum of twelve times per year. Meetings shall take place using appropriate technology, but always online to allow all council members to be present.
- B. Executive shall meet a minimum of twelve times per year.
- C. Council members who put their names forward to participate on a committee shall participate in the required meetings as per the terms of reference for the committee. Committees shall meet as appropriate. Meeting times and dates may be determined using appropriate online software allowing input by all committee members.





1.03 Council Reporting Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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This policy governs the reporting by employees and/or volunteers of Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association ("AUGSA"). For the purposes of this policy, reporting refers to verbal or written reports presented to either Executive or Council.

- A. All members of the Executive shall submit a written monthly report to Council. These reports shall be submitted no later than the last day of the month to the Executive Director for distribution to Council prior to the regular meeting date.
- B. All employees shall submit a verbal or written report to Executive monthly or more often if applicable.



1.04 Executive Committee Compensation Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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A. Duration of Term: Executive Committee: An executive committee member appointment length is one (1) year, commencing on May 1st and expiring on April 30th the following year unless otherwise terminated in accordance with the Termination of Executive Duties policy.

B. Time Commitments and Schedule: The president's work generally requires between 50 to 85 hours per month of AUGSA work.

The vice president's work generally requires between 35 to 50 hours per month.

Because of the nature of executive positions, and in consideration for the students who serve as executive members, work hours are fluid and vary from week to week.

C. Leave

Executive committee members are entitled to Leaves of Absences as approved by the Human Resource Committee

Executive committee members are entitled to the same statutory holidays observed by the University, including the addition weekdays that AUGSA is closed for the December holidays.

D. Honoraria

The president shall receive an honorarium of \$45,000 per year, paid monthly.

The vice presidents shall receive an honorarium of \$28,000 per year, paid monthly.

E. Tuition Reimbursement Benefit

Each executive committee member shall be eligible for a \$2,500 tuition reimbursement during their term in office, payable by proof of payment. Tuition reimbursement must be submitted within one (1) month of the conclusion of the executive committee term.

No pro-rated benefit will be available to executive committee members who resign or are removed from their position prior to completion of their term. This is a taxable benefit.



F. Communication Benefit

Executive committee members shall receive \$75/month for cost of communications, such as internet, phone, etc.. This is a taxable benefit.

G. Equipment

If an executive councillor does not have a working computer that is adequate to complete their executive duties, AUGSA shall loan the executive councillor a laptop computer. Equipment shall be selected and shipped by the executive director at a value no greater than \$1500 (unless approved by Council), and the executive director shall determine scheduling and procedures for the security and maintenance of the device(s). If an executive councillor is not in need of this equipment, no cash value or substitute shall be provided.

This equipment is the property of AUGSA and must be returned within two weeks of an executive councillor leaving their position on executive. Shipping of any returned equipment and accessories must be arranged and paid for by the AUGSA office.

H. Adjustments to Honoraria

Council may reduce the compensation at any time if deemed necessary based on a significant change in AUGSA financial resources.

A two-thirds majority vote of council is required to increase or decrease executive compensation by more than 10%.





1.05 Faculty Rep. and Council Compensation Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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Faculty Representatives will be paid on a per-meeting basis, with a cap of \$250 per month.



2. Financial Policies

2.01 General Finance

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. Efforts should be made to ensure that the least expensive options are chosen when spending AUGSA funds. If the least expensive option is not feasible, a sound, rational argument (verbal, or in writing) should be provided to Council
- B. AUGSA will collect fees from graduate students attending Athabasca University via the Western Deans' Agreement, as AUGSA will be providing students with representation while they are at AU.
- C. The AUGSA financial books may be viewed as per AUGSA Bylaws, and otherwise may only be accessed as per directions of the VPOF.
- D. The fiscal year of AUGSA is from January 1 – December 31.
- E. AUGSA cheques require two signatures and the following individuals may have cheque signing authority as arranged through the bank and determined by Executive Council:
 - a. President
 - b. Vice President Operations and Finance
 - c. Vice President External
 - d. Vice President Academic
 - e. Executive Director
- F. There should be a minimum of three persons with signing authority for the AUGSA bank account at any given time, with all cheques signed whenever possible by the Vice President Operations and Finance. During the Executive Committee handover (i.e. from elections) the new signing authorities should register their signature with the bank as soon as possible. All expense payments except for those pre-approved in the budget process must be approved by two Executive Members prior to payment.
- G. The AUGSA central office shall not maintain a petty cash fund
- H. A financial audit must be performed annually by the Post-Secondary Learning Act of Alberta. The audit shall be performed by an independent accounting firm appointed each year by Council.



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- I. Any decision made by people or committees under these financial policies may be appealed to Council to be decided by Council resolution. Council's decision is final.



2.02 Budget

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Budget Timetable

- A. The first draft of the budget shall be prepared by the President and VPOF with the assistance of AUGSA staff. This initial draft shall:
- a. be based on a review of the previous year's budget and any known variances;
 - b. incorporate new project plans for the upcoming year;
 - c. be adjusted for any anticipated changes in revenue; and
 - d. allocate funds for any unmet needs or major purchases that can be anticipated;
- B. The initial draft of the budget for the upcoming fiscal year shall be forwarded to the AUGSA Council by November 1st of the current fiscal year for comment, revision, and recommendations from Council.
- C. The final budget should be approved by Council by December 15th of each year. The budget shall take effect January 1 of the following year.
- D. The approved budget shall be posted publicly on the AUGSA website. Any reallocation of funds requires council's approval.

Quarterly Variance Reporting and Forecasting

- E. The VPOF shall present council with a monthly verbal report regarding any concerns or items of interest pertaining to AUGSA's current financial standing. These reports are intended to determine how AUGSA is trending regarding current expenditures vs. budgeted expenditures.

2.03 Expenditures

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. Before any expenditure is made, it must be determined if the expenditure is budgeted or unbudgeted.
- F. The Executive Committee determines whether any expenditure is budgeted or unbudgeted. The Executive Director has the right to operate the day-to-day needs of AUGSA (without Committee approval), but should consult the Executive Committee for pre-approval for purchases over \$500.

Budgeted Expenditures

- G. Budgeted expenditures over \$500 shall have two prior written approvals from Executive members.
- H. Contracts requiring payments extending into the next fiscal year and beyond require the approval of Council.

Unbudgeted Expenditures

- I. Requests for funds that exceed budgeted amounts or those exceeding \$300 which are not included in the budget, require a motion of Council.

Preferred Practices

- J. AUGSA prefers these methods of payment in the following order:
 - a) To be invoiced and pay by cheque or direct deposit
 - b) Reimbursement of expense claims by cheque or direct deposit
- K. Where possible, AUGSA does not pay in advance for services or delivery of goods.
- L. Where possible, AUGSA pays in full rather than financing any purchase.
- M. Where possible, AUGSA does not enter into contracts extending more than 2 years. If this is necessary, then the contract must be approved by Council.
- N. AUGSA will use a competitive bid process for purchases over \$4500. Sole source justification is required where a competitive bid process is not used.
- O. AUGSA Executive team shall review on an annual basis all contracts that are setup



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continuously, such as web / email services, banking, telephone, post office box and software services to ensure services provided are current and meet the needs of AUGSA.



2.04 Expense Claims

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. Expense claims and reimbursements are to be used only when no other method of payment would have been available.
- B. To claim a reimbursement a Councillor or member of staff must complete AUGSA *Expense Reimbursement Form* and submit it and all relevant receipts to the Vice President Operations and Finance and the Executive Director within 30 days of incurring the expense. All expense claims require the approval of two executive members. Any additional requests for expense approval will be reviewed by Executive. All outstanding expense claims must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of the elected member's term in office.
- C. Approval of reimbursement requests for purchases that did not receive prior approval is not guaranteed.
- D. Expenses without a receipt shall not be considered for reimbursement unless specified otherwise in AUGSA policy (e.g. certain travel expenses, incidentals, daily meal stipend) or unless special approval of Council is granted.
- E. Unbudgeted expense claims must be approved through the method outlined in the policy for unbudgeted expenses.
- F. If a reimbursement is requested by cheque, the Executive Director prepares the cheque and submits it for signatures and delivery. AUGSA pays by cheque only in exceptional circumstances and requires the prior approval of the Executive.
- G. Expense claims that are approved shall be paid by direct deposit on the next payables cycle. The Bookkeeper processes the expenses and issues a bank deposit to the payee's account. The Bookkeeper submits the bank deposit proof to the Executive Director for filing.
- H. Monthly salary payments shall follow the same method of payment as above.

2.05 Travel and Related Expenses

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. All travel on behalf of AUGSA requires the prior approval of the Executive. Travel that includes airfare, and/or car rental requires the approval of Council.
- B. Whenever appropriate, alternatives to travel shall be used to fulfil roles and responsibilities. These methods may include, but are not limited to
- a) e-mail,
 - b) teleconferencing, and
 - c) videoconferencing
- C. All travel will be made using the most economic means reasonable. However, if an individual traveling for AUGSA has special needs that may require extra costs and/or accommodations, AUGSA will attempt to meet these needs in the most economical way that it deems reasonable. All special accommodations should be raised in detail to the Executive Director. If the additional cost is less than 30% of the base price (i.e. flight + 30%; hotel + 30%; car + 30%, etc.), the Executive Committee has the authority to approve the additional expense (as long as it falls within budget). If the Executive Committee does not unanimously approve the additional expense, it should be brought to Council for their majority approval. Expenses that add 30% or more to the base price shall be brought to Council for approval. A detailed description of the special need **should not** be brought to Council. Only a statement that there is a requirement for accommodation and the additional dollar amount associated with it.

When travelling on AUGSA business, members of council and staff may book individual rooms (as opposed to sharing a room); members should book a *standard double* room at a hotel.

- D. The following rates will apply for travel expenses:
- a) personal automobile – AUGSA will use the CRA ‘Automobile Allowance Rates’ which are updated each calendar year. Mileage shall be verified on Google Maps. Travel by personal automobile should not exceed 500km one-way in a single trip.
 - b) meal allowance
 - i) breakfast - \$25/day
 - ii) lunch - \$25/day
 - iii) dinner - \$25/day

The above meal allowance includes all gratuities and taxes. The meal allowance does not apply to any meals included in accommodation or conference fees.

- c) Incidentals - \$15/day (Within a 24-hour period- receipts are not required)
- E. An expense claim (including a completed *Expense 2* form) with receipts shall be submitted to the Executive Director and VPOF in accordance with the expense claim policy to receive reimbursements for:
- a) parking and taxi fees;
 - c) meals which unavoidably exceed the allowance (require approval);
 - d) fuel for rental vehicles. Rental vehicles must be filled before returning them to rental agency; or
 - e) other necessary and unavoidable expenses in excess of the daily allowance.
- F. AUGSA will not reimburse travelers for the following regardless of receipts:
- a) family, pet, or home care;
 - b) entertainment;
 - d) gifts or expenses for persons other than the traveler, except when they fall under hospitality costs;
 - e) personal vehicle maintenance other than previously listed per-diem costs;
 - f) merchandise or souvenirs;
 - g) medications purchased while travelling; or
 - h) room service or mini-bar snacks in excess of the per-diem allowances.
 - i) alcohol
- Notwithstanding the above, Council has the authority to approve (by majority) unusual or exceptional travel reimbursement costs that may be listed above (such as sickness related costs while traveling to represent AUGSA)
- G. Extra expenses incurred by AUGSA as a result of travelers changing flights or other bookings may be billed to the traveler if a sufficient and reasonable explanation has not been supplied.
- H. If, during travel, an emergency occurs the traveller should immediately contact the President who will arrange for emergency accommodations, travel, or other requirements. If the President cannot be reached by phone, text, and email, the other Individuals should be contacted in the following order:
- a) Vice President Operations and Finance
 - b) Vice President Academic



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- c) Vice President External
- d) Executive Director

Only if none of the above can be contacted should the traveller pay for such expenses out of pocket without prior approval.

- I. Travel expenses incurred for travel to Athabasca University meetings may be covered by the university, but this must be clarified before travel is booked.





2.06 Hospitality

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. With the approval of the Executive Committee, Councillors and staff may provide relevant stakeholders with hospitality in the course of doing business on behalf of the AUGSA.

- B. Hospitality costs may include meals and venue costs (e.g., hotel costs for hosting a hospitality suite). Alcohol is not an eligible expense except in the case of an AUGSA hosted hospitality. Reimbursement for alcohol will occur only if the amounts have been pre-approved in the cases of AUGSA hosted hospitality events.



2.07 Reserves and Investments

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. AUGSA shall adhere to low risk, prudent investment practices in making investment decisions and in managing the total investments of any invested funds.
- B. *Primary Objectives*
Any invested AUGSA funds should be invested with a view to:
- Preserve the capital of the invested funds; and
 - Achieve real appreciation (i.e. an average rate of return, net capital gains and income, in excess of inflation) in the capital of the invested funds over the long term.
- C. *Investment Limits*
The finance committee should present investment options/alternatives for any proposed AUGSA investments to Council. Council should be informed of any investment strategy (new and/or changing) and approve the investment amounts and general investment strategy by majority vote.

Investment Conflicts of Interest

- D. Any AUGSA employees, Executive, Council, and any AUGSA approved external Investment Advisor(s), its partners, and employees shall:
- avoid conflict between their duties and responsibilities to AUGSA and their own interests;
 - refrain from engaging, directly or indirectly, in any activities in actual or perceived conflict with the prudent administration of the invested funds
 - not accept or be the beneficiary of any gift or other consideration in respect of any investment transaction or have any pecuniary interest in any investment transaction
 - not use insider information with respect to any investments or transactions with AUGSA funds;

3. Communication Policies

3.01 Privacy Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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A. **Personal Information** refers to information collected by AUGSA which may be used to identify an individual. This may include, but is not necessarily limited to, first and last name, street address, email address, telephone number, credit card information, and date of birth. This information will be referred to, generally, as Personal Information regardless of the form in which is collected or stored (e.g., electronically, on paper, etc.).

B. **Collection of Personal Information**

From time-to-time, AUGSA may collect Personal Information of AU graduate students or other relevant parties. This information may also be given to AUGSA by the AUGC, in accordance with the terms of an Information Sharing Agreement that may exist between these two organizations.

AUGSA only collects and saves such Personal Information as is necessary for the delivery of services to AU graduate students or other relevant parties. Upon request, AUGSA will delete or otherwise destroy (e.g., shred physical documents) a member's Personal Information.

C. **Use of Personal Information**

A member's Personal Information will be used in order to provide the member with better service. This includes the use of information for completing transactions or communicating back to the member. Credit card numbers are used only for payment processing and are not used for any other purpose.

We may also use Personal Information in a manner that does not identify you specifically nor allow a member to be contacted but does identify certain criteria about AUGSA's members in general (e.g., we may inform third parties about membership numbers or the number of registered users on the AUGSA website).

D. **Security of Your Personal Information**

Storage of Your Personal Information

A member's Personal Information will only be stored for as long as is necessary to complete the purpose(s) or task(s) for which it was collected. If a member's Personal Information is needed for



reasons not specified at the time that it was originally collected, AUGSA will obtain that member's permission prior to using it for said reasons.

Electronic Records

All personal Information that AUGSA collects and/or stores in an electronic format will be stored on a secure hard drive or USB key.

When possible, Personal Information stored in an electronic format will not be transmitted over the Internet. When such transmission is necessary, the Personal Information will be transmitted in either an encrypted format, a password protected file, or both.

Physical Records

All physical records containing personal information shall be stored in a secure and locked location.

E. *Sharing Your Personal Information*

AUGSA will NOT sell or rent a member's name or Personal Information to anyone else. We DO NOT sell, rent or provide outside access to our mailing list at all.

If required by law, search warrant, subpoena, court order, or credit card fraud investigation, AUGSA may be required to release such Personal Information.

Information is updated monthly and personal information from individuals who are no longer students is destroyed.

F. PIPA and PIPEDA

AUGSA is regulated by the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) of the province of Alberta and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) of the Canada, collectively referred to hereafter as "the Acts." As the Acts are revised from time-to time, it may be the case that there are discrepancies between the Acts and this Privacy Policy. In the case of any discrepancies, the Acts will take precedence over this Privacy Policy, and any portions of this Privacy Policy which are not in compliance with the Acts shall be considered null and void.

If any portion of this Privacy Policy is deemed null and void, that shall not affect the validity of the rest of the document.



3.02 Confidentiality and Confidential Information Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. "Confidential Information" means all information which is of a confidential or secret nature relating to or possessed by AUGSA and without limitation, includes information concerning AUGSA, its members, employees, elected officials and office holders, operations, methods of doing business, agreements, research and development, innovations, methodologies, finances, regulatory matters, member discipline matters and government relations matters, but which information does not include:
- a) information that is within the Public Domain at the date of its receipt, or which thereafter enters the Public Domain through no fault of the person receiving the information (but only after it becomes part of the Public Domain). "Public Domain" shall mean readily accessible to the public in a written publication, and shall not include information which is only available by substantial searching of the published literature, and information the substance of which must be pieced together from, or which requires the integration of information from, a number of difference publications and sources;
 - b) information which one can establish was already known to them at the date of its receipt and is not then subject to any confidential restrictions to third parties; and
 - c) general skills and experience gained during one's association with the AUGSA, which one could reasonably have been expected to acquire in similar work with another organization.
- B. All those who receive, interact with or are privy to Confidential Information, including but not limited to students, employees, contractors, agents, office holders and elected members of AUGSA (the "Users") are required to hold such Confidential Information in the strictest of secrecy and shall not reference, view, access, use, duplicate, save or disclose (hereinafter described as "Use") any Confidential Information other than the extent necessary to carry out the business operations of AUGSA.
- C. All Users acknowledge and agree that AUGSA is the sole and exclusive owner and proprietor of the Confidential Information. Confidential Information may only be Used for AUGSA's benefit and in accordance with this policy and the applicable law.
- D. No User shall in any way, directly or indirectly, make any unauthorized use any

Confidential Information, including Use for the User's benefit of for the benefit of any other person or entity.

E. All Users will take reasonable steps to safeguard the Confidential Information, including maintaining and disposing of any Confidential Information in a secure manner. This includes safeguarding the login and password information for

- a) "@augsa.com" email,
- b) AUGSA-issued computer, and
- c) AUGSA social media account(s), forums or websites

and ensuring that the hard-drive on AUGSA -issued computers or devices is encrypted. Users shall not share their password and login information except in accordance with AUGSA policies. To the extent User are privy to hard copies of Confidential Information, they shall take steps to ensure the appropriate storage and ultimate destruction of such hard copies.

F. The obligations arising under this policy survive one's departure from AUGSA for any reason. Upon departure from AUGSA, Users will immediately return all Confidential Information to AUGSA and destroy any electronic copies still in their possession.

G. Users who breach this policy or are aware of others who have will immediately report the breach to the AUGSA Executive Director or member of AUGSA Executive. The issue should then be investigated and resolved in line with AUGSA's Dispute Resolution Policy.



3.03 Social Media Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees and/or volunteers of Graduate Students' Association of Athabasca University and its related companies ("AUGSA"). For the purposes of this policy, social media refers to mediums of online publication and commentary, including but not limited to: blogs, wiki's, social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Pinterest) and YouTube.

AUGSA employees and/or volunteers are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. AUGSA employees and/or volunteers are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as an AUGSA employee including but not limited indirect identification (such as a personal profile description). Incidental mentions of AUGSA as a place of employment contained on a personal blog or web post on topics unrelated to AUGSA are exempt.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. However, social media also is more permanent than many other forms of publication or commentary. Once something is published in social media the original author loses control over further dissemination of that information.

- B. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that AUGSA employees and/or volunteers must otherwise follow.

- C. AUGSA employees and/or volunteers will ensure that:

1. Social media username/login ID's do not use AUGSA's name without prior approval from the Executive Director and President.
2. AUGSA related social media is updated regularly, kept current and remain relevant.
3. Confidential information including but not limited to unpublished details of current projects, financial information, research, trade secrets and in camera discussions items is not shared, posted or discussed on social media.
4. They avoid the use of pseudonyms, false screen names or posting anonymously.
5. They respect copyright laws by crediting the appropriate source through links and proper referencing.
6. All posts align with current AUGSA policies, the AUGSA website, and the AUGSA mission and vision.
7. All posts are based on facts and conducted in a respectful and professional manner (including proper grammar, spelling, and avoiding social media "fights").





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8. They do not commit AUGSA to a new action or policy that has not been agreed upon by council.
9. They clearly identify the views expressed are their personal views and opinions and do not represent the official views of AUGSA.
10. Mistakes are acknowledged and corrected quickly
11. Partners, suppliers, individual members, or customers are not obviously referenced without their prior approval.
12. Misrepresentations made about AUGSA are brought to the attention of the President and VP External

D. Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination for cause.



4. Administrative Policies

4.01 Password and Account Legacy Policies

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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- A. Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the continuation of AUGSA's various online accounts from one Council to the next, as well as to facilitate a smooth transition in the event of volunteer and/or staff turnover.
- B. Account Legacy: Certain AUGSA accounts (such as email accounts) and property (such as laptop computers) are intended to be used by future executives, council members, volunteers and employees. As such, the login information for these accounts and property (i.e., user names and passwords) must be passed on to the Executive Director at the time that a person leaves his or her position. The Executive Director will then provide the incoming person with this information (which he or she may then change, so that the Executive Director cannot unduly access these accounts).
- C. In the event that the Executive Director is leaving his or her position, he or she will provide the information in question to the President, to be passed on to the incoming Executive Director. Login information that must be passed on upon resignation or termination from a position includes, but is not necessarily limited to:
- Your @augsa.com email password;
 - The password to your computer (if the computer is the property of AUGSA);
 - Any encryption keys used on official documents that you may have created or controlled (and a copy of the software used to encrypt the documents, if requested);
 - The password to any and all official AUGSA social media accounts (such as the official @AUGSA Twitter account); and
 - Administrator privileges and/or passwords for any forums, websites, or social media groups that you may have created on behalf of AUGSA.
- D. Password Storage: Such information as discussed in the previous section of this policy must also be recorded in a fashion that will be recoverable in the event that you are incapacitated, injured, or otherwise rendered unable to carry out your responsibilities to AUGSA, but which will remain secure unless such an incident occurs.



E. **Social Media Accounts:** The use of social media relating to AUGSA is governed by the **AUGSA Social Media Policy**.

In the event that your term as an elected member ends or you resign or are terminated from your position, you must immediately indicate that you are no longer associated with the AUGSA on any social media with which you had previously indicated your former association with the AUGSA.

Any individual/personal member accounts that make use of the AUGSA identity—whether by name, or by use of any official AUGSA logos or graphics—must either cease to use the AUGSA identity or be surrendered to AUGSA as per the *Account Legacy* section of this policy. For example, if you are the outgoing President of AUGSA and have a Twitter account with the user name @AUGSA_President, you must either change the user name (if you intend to continue using the account as a personal account) or provide the Executive Director with the login information for this account so that it can be used by the incoming President.

Official social media accounts representing AUGSA as a whole, such as the @AUGSA Twitter account managed by the Executive Director must be surrendered as per the *Account Legacy* section of this policy upon your resignation, termination, or the end of your elected term.



4.02 Code of Conduct

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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POLICY INTENT

This Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is a statement of the ethical principles, values, and behaviors expected of staff and councilors of AUGSA. The Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility is intended to assist staff and council members to identify ethical issues that may occur during their employment or duties relating to AUGSA. This policy does not eliminate or substitute the rights and obligations of staff and council members under common law or legislation.

POLICY Definitions:

- **Conflict of Interest:** A conflict of interest is a situation in which the personal interests of a council member will benefit or be perceived to benefit because of the council member's exercise of council duties.
- **Bias:** Describes a circumstance or personal belief that may affect a council member's views on a group, person or idea. Biases are not considered conflicts of interest but should be understood as an inherent influence on the decision-making processes of all council members.

Application and Objectives:

- A. All AUGSA council members and staff are responsible for abiding by and following all applicable laws, regulations, and AUGSA policies that relate to their respective positions, including this Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility.
- B. All AUGSA council members and staff have the responsibility to raise questions and bring potential problems to the attention of the AUGSA executive committee, as well as the duty to make appropriate disclosures, such as a conflict of interest, as necessary.
 - a) While this policy cannot cover every possible situation, it aims to provide direction to council members and staff regarding expected conduct while affiliated with AUGSA;
 - b) Assist council members and staff in dealing with ethical issues in ways that uphold AUGSA's reputation and;
 - c) promote professionalism and excellence in AUGSA's dealings with both internal and external partners.
- C. AUGSA recognizes that council members and staff may also be bound by codes of conduct or ethics defined by their professional societies or groups, or by personal beliefs. It is the responsibility of each AUGSA council member and staff member to notify the AUGSA president (or delegate) in any circumstances where conflict does or may potentially arise.

Standards of ethical behaviour

D. AUGSA council members and staff shall adhere to the following minimum standards of ethical behaviour:

- a) adhere to AUGSA policies and procedures to the best of their ability;
- b) follow the laws and regulations in effect in the jurisdictions where they and/or AUGSA carry on activities, and not be either directly or indirectly involved in any illegal or unacceptable practices. If the jurisdiction is in question, Alberta and Canadian laws shall apply;
- c) not engage in any activities or behavior that would prejudice the interests, image, or reputation of AUGSA;
- d) not use or attempt to use their position to gain personal benefit from gifts, gratuities, or hospitality of any kind; and
- e) never give the impression that their personal opinion is representative of the official position of AUGSA, unless the opinion being expressed is outlined in AUGSA'S position policies, published communications, or prior authorization is received to do so.

Professional Conduct:

E. AUGSA council members and staff shall:

- a) conduct themselves with fairness, courtesy, and mutual respect;
- b) carry out the duties and responsibilities of their role in good faith;
- c) actively support the goals, objectives, and mission of AUGSA;
- d) respect and support all decisions established through a democratic process;
- e) place the needs of members at the forefront of all decisions;
- f) always and in all circumstances act with prudence, diligence, honesty, and professionalism.

Conflict of Interest and Bias:

F. Conflict of interest should not be confused with bias. It is understood that all council members may have personal biases which direct their decision making, and that such biases are not to be interpreted as conflicts of interest unless the council member may derive personal benefit through exercising their council duties. Significant biases should be declared for information purposes.



- G. A council member must disclose any potential conflict of interest as soon as the issue or motion fostering the conflict arises. Disclosure must be to a member of the executive committee and the executive committee shall disclose potential conflicts to council.
- H. Council may determine whether a valid conflict of interest exists, or if the potential conflict constitutes an allowable bias that may be disclosed for information purposes.

Conflict of Interest – employment

- I. Whereas AUGSA is an entity separate from Athabasca University, and whereas AUGSA must be able to perform University level advocacy; no member of AUGSA's Executive may be employed by Athabasca University, except for student research positions.
- J. An employee of Athabasca University may run for AUGSA council, provided that they declare their potential conflict of interest and bias to the rest of council if elected. If a situation arises where an issue creates a conflict of interest for the council member, the council member shall abstain from voting on that issue. The meeting minutes shall show that a conflict of interest was disclosed.
- K. Abstentions due to conflict shall be noted in the minutes as "council member X abstained due to Conflict of Interest."

Confidentiality:

- L. AUGSA council members and staff may, during their duties, access confidential information, both verbal and written, and they shall use this information only for the purposes for which its possession is intended.
- M. AUGSA council members and staff shall take care to maintain the integrity and privacy of all confidential information they acquire during their duties and shall never use confidential information for their own benefit or that of a third party.
- N. The obligations mentioned in this policy continue to apply even after the relationship of the council member or staff member with AUGSA ends.

Reporting and Resolution:

- O. Any AUGSA council member or staff who feels that they face an ethical dilemma or who has questions regarding the interpretation and application of this policy should consult the AUGSA executive committee as soon as possible.





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- P. AUGSA council members and staff who have knowledge of a fact that, in their opinion, may constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility, shall report it to the AUGSA executive committee, unless the issue involves a member of the executive committee, in which case it may be reported to the remaining executive council members and the executive director.
- Q. Necessary steps will be taken to maintain confidentiality of any council member or staff member reporting an issue.
- R. No sanctions will be taken against a council member or staff member who has reported an issue in good faith.
- S. Any violation of this policy shall be handled promptly by the AUGSA executive committee by applying *the dispute resolution policy*.



4.03 Dispute Resolution Policy

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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Where as

All Council Members, Executive members and staff members are expected to behave in a manner consistent with other procedures and policies of the organization. This is defined as conduct that is ethical, respectful, trustworthy, competent, considerate and empathetic such that the individual is acting with integrity while performing their duties.

Where as

Interpersonal disputes among team members are normal. However, assistance may be needed to resolve a dispute. This policy and related procedure provide council members, executive and paid staff direction in seeking assistance and resolving dispute.

Be It Resolved That

if an AUGSA Member, Council Member, Executive Member or Staff Member finds themselves within an interpersonal dispute with a Council Member, Executive Member or Staff Member, the aggrieved party initiates the dispute resolution procedure below.

Dispute Resolution Procedure.

Issues regarding performance, bullying, harassment, abuse and/or violence must be brought to the attention of the entire executive committee immediately.

This policy does not supersede the AUGSA code of conduct, AUGSA Bylaws including those regarding removal of a council or executive member, AUGSA terms of employment, nor any provincial or federal legislation.

Stage 1. Independent Dispute Resolution

The aggrieved party shall bring the dispute to the attention of the Member with whom they have the dispute. If the dispute cannot be resolved between the parties involved, they proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2. Third Party Involvement

1) Notify Third Party.

The aggrieved party must bring the dispute to the attention of the appropriate party in writing within 10 business days of the event, or within such a time that the responsible person will allow. The notification matrix below identifies the appropriate party.

Notification Matrix

The Aggrieved Party is a:	AUGSA Member	Council Member	Executive Member	Staff Member
The Injurious Party is a:		cc. Executive Director	cc. Executive Director	
AUGSA Member	AU Policy	VPOF	VPOF	President
Council Member	VPOF	VPOF	VPOF	President
Executive Member	VPOF	VPOF	President	President
Staff Member	President	President	President	President

Alternates: The President is the alternate if the VPOF position is vacant, is on holidays or is one of the parties involved in the dispute. The VPOF is the alternate if the President position is vacant, is on holidays or is one of the parties involved in the dispute. If both positions are vacant, on holidays or involved in the dispute the aggrieved party shall proceed to Stage 3 immediately.

Recommendation: The aggrieved party is encouraged to provide a copy of the complaint to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is one of the parties involved in the dispute, the aggrieved party is encouraged to include the VPOF and the President on their correspondence. 2) The appropriate party has five (5) business days to review the complaint and propose next steps.

Review of Complaint

The complaint must meet the following criteria to be considered for this policy:

- the complaint relates to AUGSA business;
- the complaint does NOT contravene a policy/procedure/contract that triggers an alternate dispute resolution or grievance process; and
- the complaint is deemed serious enough to justify the expenditure of AUGSA human and/or financial resources to members.

If the complaint does not meet all three of the above criteria, the aggrieved party is notified that their complaint does not fall under this dispute resolution policy, the rationale why, and referred to the appropriate dispute resolution process if applicable. The aggrieved party is also informed of their option to bring the issue to the attention of the entire Executive Council if they disagree with this decision.

Resolution Steps

If the complaint meets all of the above criteria the VPOF or President shall mediate the dispute. If resolution or progress towards a mutually agreed upon solution/resolution cannot be found within five

(5) business days, the process escalates to Stage 3. At any point, either party involved in the conflict may request the mediation to be escalated to Stage 3 Executive Council.

Stage 3. Executive Council

The Executive Council will review the complaint within five working days. Executive Council shall take one the following steps to address the dispute:

- a) support the VPOF/President's decision and/or recommendation;
- b) propose alternate resolutions to the problem for the aggrieved parties to consider (Stage 3b);
- c) propose a dispute resolution committee (Stage 4) be struck at the next council meeting to resolve the dispute;
- d) take any other reasonable action to resolve the dispute that fall within the scope of their roles and responsibilities;
- e) in unresolved circumstances obtain neutral third party agreed upon by both individuals (Stage 3b) not to exceed a total of \$500.00 per dispute.

If the recommended resolution of the executive team is rejected by one or both of the parties involved, they are informed of their option to escalate the dispute to Stage 5. AUGSA Council as a whole.

Stage 3b: if either party involved in the dispute disagree with the proposed resolutions of the Executive Council, or the dispute cannot be resolved with the assistance of a professional mediator within 21 business days, the dispute shall escalate to stage 4.

Stage 4. Dispute Resolution Committee

Either party involved in the dispute must indicate to the Executive Committee in writing (cc. Executive Director) their desire for a Dispute Resolution Committee to be struck.

At the next council meeting an ad hoc Dispute Resolution Committee shall be struck. Individuals who are directly or indirectly involved in the dispute (such as family, friends, colleagues, or current classmates with the individuals involved with the dispute) are ineligible to sit on the committee.

If either party rejects the resolution by the Dispute Resolution Committee, either the injurious party or the aggrieved party may bring the issue to Stage 5. Council as a Whole.

Stage 5. Council as a Whole

As a last resort, the dispute is presented to council as a whole at the next council meeting. A special meeting of council may be called to address the issue if deemed necessary.

The process for council to hear and resolve the issue will be:

- 1) VPOF/President presents the dispute as per the original submission of the aggrieved party. At this time it is recommended the meeting move into camera.
- 2) Each party directly involved in the conflict will have a maximum of 10 minutes to present their perspective of the dispute and present their desired resolution.
- 3) A representative of executive committee will have five minutes to describe previous attempts to resolution including previously proposed solutions including any feedback and recommendations from a third party.
- 4) The council as a whole will deliberate and decide upon a final resolution.
- 5) Motion to move out of camera.
- 6) Motion containing the resolution will be presented to council for final vote. Proposed resolution must achieve simple majority. Individuals who are directly involved with the dispute are required to abstain from voting.
- 7) As Council is the highest and final deciding body in AUGSA, the solution proposed by Council is final.

Resolutions initiated by council may include but is not limited to:

- Suspension of a staff member, Council member, or executive Member
- Termination of a staff Member
- Motion to initiate the process to remove an executive member or council member from office

Council may also suggest resolutions that do not include disciplinary action. It is the responsibility of the parties involved to abide by the recommendation presented by council. If the parties do not agree to or comply with Council's suggested resolution, the involved parties are to resolve the dispute through other methods they pursue independently. At this time, Council will remain removed from the process.

Grievance Committee Proposed Terms of Reference

- A Grievance Committee is struck by council as needed.
- There shall be no less than 3 and no more than 5 Council members who are not involved or associated with the dispute on the Grievance Committee. If 3 members cannot be found, AUGSA may seek external arbitration.
- The VPOF shall chair the grievance committee. If the VPOF is involved or associated with the dispute, the President shall chair the committee. If both the VPOF and President are associated with the dispute a chair shall be selected from eligible council members at the time the committee is struck.
- The Chair of the Committee shall not have a vote except in the case of a tie.



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- The Chair of the committee will be responsible for coordinating the meetings and obtaining the required information for the committee and reporting to executive committee and council.
 - To respect the confidentiality of the parties involved, the solution shall remain confidential and the committee shall only report the fact the dispute has been resolved to council or if the dispute is escalating to the next stage.
- The Committee shall determine the information they need to resolve the dispute. This includes but is not limited to statements from the aggrieved and the accused parties, statements from witnesses, and evidence of harassment and injurious behavior.
- The committee is to only seek information specific to the dispute at hand.
- The committee will decide and present a recommended solution to the involved parties and executive council within 21 days.
- Proposed resolutions may include disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, removal from executive or council position. In the case of termination or removal from executive or council position is the recommendation, the appropriate policy shall be initiated immediately.



4.04 Termination of Executive Duties

Last Reviewed: April 8, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April, 2021
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Termination of Executive Duties

- A. An Executive Officer may hold a position as a member of the Executive Council for a maximum of two (2) terms.
- B. An Executive Officer may discontinue his/her duties as a member of the Executive Council in the following ways and circumstances:
- a) Resignation – A resigning Executive Officer shall submit to the Executive Director a written resignation
 - b) Ineligibility by reasons of loss of membership in AUGSA;
 - c) An Executive Officer who is absent from three (3) consecutive council meetings (Executive Council and AUGSA Council) without notice and just cause given to the presiding officer shall be automatically removed from office. The President shall give notice of delinquency to the absent Executive Officer after two (2) consecutive absences;
 - d) An Executive Officer who is found guilty of an AUGSA Code of Conduct violation and has exhausted all appeals;
 - e) Dereliction of duty or misconduct – unanimous approval by the remaining Executive Council members and a 2/3 majority vote by AUGSA Council shall be sufficient to remove a member of
 - f) Executive Council from office for improper or indiscreet conduct or neglect of duty;
 - g) An Executive Officer shall automatically be removed from office if at any time during his or her term if he/she becomes no longer insurable for Directors and Officers liability coverage;
 - h) Failure to remain a student in good standing as defined by her or his program of study
 - i) The Executive Council or Council determines that the Executive Officer has breached his or her Executive Agreement.

5. Student Award Policy

5.01 Administration of Awards and Bursaries

Last Reviewed: June 14, 2022	Prior Revision Date: April 8, 2022
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Administration of Awards and Bursaries

- A. 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. Though the office will do its best to notify the applicant that their application has been received and complete, it is ultimately the member's responsibility to contact the office to ensure their application has been received and is complete.
- B. The AUGSA awards committee (AC) shall be the selection committee for all AUGSA awards. In the event that an applicant is a member of AUGSA Council or Executive that member must declare a conflict of interest and not be involved in the decision making regarding any award or bursary for which said member has made application.
- C. Whenever possible, the "Awards and Bursary Application Procedure" must be followed. The AC will review this procedure annually and adjust accordingly.
- D. For each fiscal year, any awards or bursaries that are not given out subsequent to a regularly scheduled awards or bursaries deadline will be available for the following awards or bursaries deadline within the same fiscal year. No award will be carried over into the following fiscal year. From time to time, the AC can elect to move funds around based on availability and need.
- E. There shall be two deadlines per fiscal year for AUGSA awards. These deadlines shall be March 15 and October 15.
- F. There shall be four application deadlines per fiscal year for AUGSA bursaries. These deadlines shall be March 15, June 15, September 15, and November 15. These deadlines apply to all AUGSA bursaries except for Emergency bursaries.
- G. Applications for Emergency Bursaries shall be accepted year-round.

Eligibility Criteria

- H. Eligibility criteria will vary by award and will be outlined in detail within each respective award description.



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- I. Applicants must be AUGSA members on the date of application for year-round awards, and on the date of the application deadline for the bi-annual awards, unless otherwise specified in the award descriptions.
- J. Any applicant that is denied a bursary is required to wait six months before reapplying for that same bursary.
- K. If the AC 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 AC may find the applicant ineligible for a scholarship, award, or bursary; and/or
 - b. the AC may put forward a motion at council to place the member not in good standing.
- L. Applicants must submit all requested documents as outlined on the respective application to be eligible for the awards, and bursaries.
 - a. Information and applications submitted for consideration for AUGSA 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.
 - b. Applications will be viewed only by AUGSA staff, AC, and executive members, as necessary.
 - c. Applications for all AUGSA awards and bursaries will be retained by AUGSA as necessary for legal and business purposes as outlined in AUGSA's records management policy.
 - d. AUGSA may, at its discretion, publish the names of students who are recipients of merit based awards, and may contact some recipients to seek permission to release further information.
 - e. AUGSA will never publish the names of recipients of bursaries or those who have been declined for AUGSA scholarships, awards, or bursaries.
- M. AUGSA Executives are not eligible for any AUGSA bursaries or awards.
- N. AUGSA Faculty Representatives on Council are eligible for all AUGSA bursaries and awards.
- O. AUGSA provides the following bursaries:
 - 1. Accessibility Needs Bursaries – up to \$1000.00;
 - 2. Childcare Bursaries – up to \$500.00;



3. Technology Bursaries – up to \$1000.00;
4. EDI Bursaries - \$1000.00;
5. Emergency Bursaries – up to \$1000.00;
6. Family Care Bursaries - \$500.00
7. General Bursaries –\$1000; and
8. Travel Bursaries – up to \$500.

P. AUGSA provides the following awards:

- a) Award for Learners Over 50 - \$1000.00;
- b) Graduate Citizenship Award - \$1000.00;
- c) AUGSA Leadership Award for Women - \$1000.00; and
- d) Outstanding Distinction Award - \$1000.00.

Q. AUGSA reserves the rights to add awards and bursaries throughout the year on approval from Council.

R. Bursary Descriptions

1. Accessibility Needs Bursaries: The purpose of the AUGSA Accessibility Needs Bursary is to provide support for learners who require accessibility furniture items to help complete their studies. Examples of furniture items include ergonomic chair, adjustable desk, adjustable monitor, desk riser. Other items may be approved, and applicants are encouraged to describe other items for consideration. Recipients are eligible to receive the bursary one time only.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this bursary:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of their accessible furniture item and how it will help them
- Students may receive the bursary one-time only
- Receipts are required to show proof of purchase
- Submit the completed online application

2. **Childcare Bursaries:** The purpose of the AUGSA Child Care Bursary is to provide parents or legal guardians with extra support for childcare expenses. Examples include obtaining paid childcare to study for or write a proctor exam, complete a school assignment, or attend an unpaid practicum placement. Recipients are eligible to receive the bursary once in a calendar year.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this bursary:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of childcare need and evidence of cost
- Students may receive the bursary once in a calendar year
- Submit the completed online application

3. **Technology Bursaries:** The purpose of the AUGSA Technology Bursary is to support learners with technology needs to complete their studies. Examples of technology items include computers, monitors, and computer accessory items. Other items may be approved, and applicants are encouraged to describe other technology items for consideration. Recipients are eligible to receive the bursary one time only.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this bursary:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of the technology item and how it will help them
- Students may receive the bursary one-time only
- Receipts are required to show proof of purchase
- Submit the completed online application

4. **EDI Bursaries:** Recipients are eligible to receive a general bursary one time only.

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this bursary:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Students may receive the bursary one-time only
- Submit the completed online application

5. **Emergency Bursaries:** The Emergency Bursary is provided to assist graduate students in meeting an emergency/temporary need by bridging a financial gap that would otherwise impede the students' ability to complete their studies. Eligible expenses include but are not limited to: rent & living expenses, childcare expenses, travel due to death or terminal illness, health care, prescriptions, exceptional unanticipated expenses. Debts, financial obligations, tuition and other program related expenses do not qualify for this bursary. 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. Applications are accepted at any time of year.

6. **Family Care Bursaries:** The purpose of the AUGSA Family Care Bursary is to provide students who are in a primary caregiver role with extra support for family care expenses. AUGSA defines a "dependent" as a family member who cannot physically meet their own daily needs and a "primary care giver" as the individual who is responsible for ensuring that the dependent's physical and financial needs are met. Examples include, obtaining care for elders or other family members for student to write a proctor exam, or extra care to provide study time or complete an assignment. Recipients are eligible to receive the bursary up to once in a calendar year.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this bursary:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of family care need and evidence of cost
- Students may receive the bursary once in a calendar year
- Submit the completed online application

7. **General Bursaries:** General Bursaries are intended to aid members in financial need. Additional circumstances such as disabilities, single parent/caregiver status, etc., may be taken into consideration. Awards are payable to the recipient by electronic funds transfer. No member may

receive the AUGSA Bursary more than once per six-month period. The award deadline will be used for making this determination.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this bursary:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing (unless request is to attend convocation)
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application (unless request is to attend convocation)
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of needs for bursary funds
- Students may receive the bursary once in a calendar year
- Submit the completed online application

8. Travel Bursaries: Travel Bursaries are intended to aid members (Athabasca University Graduate Students) in travelling to attend AU convocation, labs, practicums, on-site courses, or related conferences. Applications are accepted any time of year; however, they must be submitted a minimum of 30 days prior to the date of travel. Applicants requesting help with travel to AU convocation are not required to be AUGSA members at the time of the request; however, proof of graduation from AU is required. Recipients are eligible to receive the bursary once in a calendar year.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this bursary:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing (unless request is to attend convocation)
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application (unless request is to attend convocation)
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of travel and cost
- Receipts are required to show proof of purchase
- Students may receive the bursary once in a calendar year
- Submit the completed online application

S. Award Descriptions

9. Awards for Learners Over 50: The purpose of the AUGSA Award for Learners over 50 is to support students who have returned to school to start or complete their graduate studies. Applicants are asked to describe how completing their degree will enhance their workplace leadership, research goals, citizenship, community involvement etc. We want to hear your story. Recipients are eligible to receive the award one time only.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this award:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Be 50 years of age or older
- Brief explanation of how completing a degree will affect their career
- Students may receive the award one-time only
- Submit the completed online application

10. Graduate Citizenship Award: The purpose of the Graduate Citizenship Award is to recognize graduate students who have demonstrated outstanding dedication and leadership in their community. Recipients are eligible to receive the award one time only.

Application Criteria

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this award:

- Be an AUGSA student in good standing
- Must be actively registered in at least one AU course at the time of application
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of their community leadership contribution
- Students may receive the award one-time only
- Submit the completed online application

11. AUGSA Leadership Award for Women: The purpose of the AUGSA Leadership Award for Women is to recognize women who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of women in their industries. This award recognizes extraordinary leaders who have demonstrated vision and influence in their work. Recipients are eligible to receive the award one time only.

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for this award:

- Be an AUGSA Member in good standing
- Have completed a minimum of 3 AU credits
- Brief explanation of their leadership contribution
- Students may receive the award one-time only
- Submit the completed online application

12. Outstanding Distinction Award:

This award recognizes Athabasca University faculty, students, and staff who have demonstrated a high degree of leadership and engagement in their communities, their studies, and/or their professional lives. Only students qualify for the financial award amount. Each year multiple student awards will be given, one faculty award, and one staff award. In the event that there are no nominations received in a certain category, there will be no award given for the category.

Selection Criteria

- T. The application process must remain clear and relatively simple to fill out. The idea is that the application itself should not be a barrier to a member applying
- U. The AC, whenever possible, will use a “matrix style “evaluation process in evaluating awards and bursary applications. The AC will predetermine the criteria for each section of the matrix prior to starting the review process, assigning an arbitrary point value to each criterion. The winning applicant will be the one with the highest cumulative point value based on all the individual predetermined criteria scores. The AC will ensure to select criteria that is specific to each award and bursary when using the matrix evaluation process.

Policy Review

- V. This policy shall be reviewed regularly to ensure fair criteria and maximum availability to all AUGSA members.