



POLICY 3.1

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Employee Code of Conduct

POLICY STATEMENT

Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association ("AUGSA" or the "Organization") is committed to being a respectable Organization and are proud of the integrity, ethics, and good citizenship of our employees. Maintaining our reputation depends upon a high standard of conduct by all employees in their work and as representatives of the Organization. The Code of Conduct (the "Code") serves as the foundation for all policies, procedures and guidelines contained in this manual, and outlines expected behaviours and actions in support of responsible and ethical behaviour.

POLICY GUIDELINES

Guidelines for Conduct

3.01.1. All employees have the individual responsibility to adhere to the Code in their actions and behaviours; it is a condition of employment for all employees. Employees are required to ensure their personal and professional dealings are conducted in an honest and ethical manner and are free of any deceitful, fraudulent, disrespectful, or illegal activities. The Code applies to all directors, members of Council, employees, and contractors of AUGSA. Anyone who violates the standards in this Code will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for "Just Cause" ("Cause").

Work Integrity

3.01.2. Effective work habits require fundamental honesty with use of time as well as use of property. It means staying on task, utilizing resources and time efficiently and effectively including starting work on time, keeping absences to a minimum, restricting personal telephone calls or activities, and staying with the work at hand.

Workplace Etiquette

3.01.3. AUGSA's workplace operates remotely. Establishing workplace etiquette is a high priority for the Organization especially in a remote work environment. To develop and maintain a positive work environment, it is important that employees recognize that certain

behaviours and actions can be disruptive to the team. Examples of desired etiquette include, but are not limited to:

- a. Ensuring you complete your responsibilities to the highest level, meet or exceed established deadlines, and follow through on commitments.
- b. Using breaks for personal commitments and business.
- c. Be available, accessible, and responsive to graduate students and colleagues during AUGSA's core working hours.
- d. Limiting disruptions including phone usage during meetings.
- e. Ensure video sharing is turned on for all meetings.
- f. Be engaged in and contribute to discussions during meetings (virtual and in-person).
- g. Exercising care and judgement in constructing emails to ensure they are kept to a minimum and that the tone is respectful and does not convey the wrong message.

Accuracy of Records and Reporting

3.01.4. The Organization's financial statements and the books, records, and accounts on which they are based must appropriately and accurately reflect the Organization's activities and conform to applicable legal, accounting and auditing requirements and to the Organization's system of internal controls. Employees handling money must know and follow instructions for the protection of Organization funds.

Outside Employment

3.01.5. While employed by AUGSA, an employee is prohibited from working for another similar Organization (i.e., another student association within AGUSA or external student association). However, other paid employment is allowed, as long as it does not interfere with the employee's ability to perform their duties on behalf of AUGSA and no conflict of interest exists. If either of these situations occurs, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if they wish to remain with AUGSA.

Conduct Outside Work

3.01.6. Any unethical, unbecoming, or illegal behaviour outside the workplace by an off-duty employee that could potentially bring the Organization into disrepute or damage its reputation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Respect in the Workplace

3.01.7. At AUGSA, people are the foundation of our operation, and we are committed to building and maintaining a respectful, safe, and inclusive workplace. All employees have a responsibility for maintaining high standards of personal behaviour and for ensuring that others can carry out their work assignments in an atmosphere free of harassment, discrimination or violence.

Discrimination, Diversity & Inclusion

3.01.8. We believe team diversity drives better decision making and creates competitive

advantage, and we are committed to providing equal opportunity in all aspects of employment. Discrimination or disrespect of any kind will not be tolerated. AUGSA prohibits discrimination based on personal characteristics of individuals or groups of individuals under the Alberta Human Rights Act that include the protected grounds of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, and sexual orientation.

Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention

- 3.01.9. All employees are responsible to prevent, report and stop harassment from occurring in the workplace. Workplace harassment is defined as a single or repeated incident of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying, or action intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group. It is a serious issue and creates an unhealthy work environment resulting in psychological harm to workers.
- 3.01.10. It does not include any reasonable conduct of an employer or supervisor related to the normal management of workers or a workplace. Differences of opinion or minor disagreements between coworkers are also not generally considered to be workplace harassment if steps are taken to resolve the conflict.
- 3.01.11. All employees are also responsible to prevent, report and stop violence from occurring in the workplace. Violence, whether at a work site or work-related, is defined as the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm. It can include physical attack or aggression, threatening behaviour, verbal or written threats, domestic violence and sexual violence.

Health, Safety and the Environment

- 3.01.12. AUGSA is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our employees, contractors, and the public while preventing and reducing impacts on the environment where we operate. AUGSA's approach to health and safety is based on three key principles: Right to Know, Right to Refuse Dangerous Work, and Right to Participate. Management, supervisors, employees and others engaged on AUGSA's behalf will be informed of, as well as accountable and responsible for, ensuring the health and safety at AUGSA.

Impairment, Fitness for Work, and Drugs and Alcohol

- 3.01.13. Employees must understand and adhere to all policies and procedures related to fit for work, impairment, and the use of drugs and alcohol. Employees are required to be fit for work at all times while on duty and shall never be impaired while on duty. Impairment can exist from a range of causes and includes impairment from the use of drugs (including the use of prescription or non-prescription drugs and/or the use of legal or illegal drugs), the consumption of alcohol or by any other impairment (i.e., fatigue). All employees are responsible to prevent, report and stop unsafe work practices and behaviour from occurring.

Protection of Organization Property

- 3.01.14. All employees must protect the Organization's assets against loss, damage, unauthorized use, theft and disposal, as well as to ensure their efficient use. Any suspected incident of fraud or theft should be reported immediately for investigation. All AUGSA owned property and/or equipment used to conduct AUGSA's business remains Organization property and must be used responsibly, ethically and efficiently and as intended solely for purposes directly related to Organization operations.
- 3.01.15. At termination or departure, all AUGSA owned or issued property must be returned including, but not limited to, keys, electronic and paper files and documents, computer hardware, cellular phones, laptops, cameras, security passes, picture ID and name tags.

Confidentiality and Intellectual Property

- 3.01.16. Employees must maintain the confidentiality of sensitive and confidential information entrusted to them as outlined in the AUGSA Confidentiality & Confidential Information policy and Privacy policy.

Appropriate Use of Technology

- 3.01.17. Employees are required to use all technology appropriately in alignment with the Code of Conduct including adhering to the following restrictions:
- a. Viewing, creating, or distributing inappropriate, sexually explicit, discriminatory, violent or offensive materials
 - b. Accessing or storing illegal or unlicensed material
 - c. Copying, sharing, or reproducing Organization documents or information for personal use
 - d. Installing unauthorized software; and,
 - e. Conducting business for another commercial organization.
- 3.01.18. All employees using Organization devices or systems shall have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of Organization facilities or resources, including anything viewed, created, stored, sent, or received using Organization devices, systems or the internet.
- 3.01.19. When representing AUGSA, employees are expected to operate online in the electronic world and in social media channels as they are expected to behave and operate during their daily work as outlined by the Code.

Social Media

- 3.01.20. AUGSA reserves the right to not tolerate any discriminatory or harassment in posts or comments on any AUGSA platform. They will also not tolerate any discriminatory or harassment in posts or comments on the social media platforms of the AUGSA Council Members, or AUGSA staff. AUGSA employees will not share or post information on social media that compromises the Organization or the Council's policy or public image.

Conflict of Interest

3.01.21. Employees are required to act objectively, in the best interests of the Organization without bias. A conflict of interest may exist when a person's private interests interfere in any way with the interests of the Organization or when the employee, members of their family or someone with whom there is a close personal relationship, receive advantageous or improper personal or financial benefits as a result of their position or work with the Organization. Any employee who becomes aware of a conflict or potential conflict should immediately disclose the actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest to a manager who will outline the measures to be taken to remedy the situation.

Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships at Work

3.01.22. AUGSA permits the employment of immediate family members or of any employee who has a personal relationship with another employee of the Organization. Due to the potential for perceived or actual conflicts of interest, the parties involved must disclose the relationship to the Executive Director or a member of AUGSA Council in the case of the Executive Director. Personal relationships with individuals working with a supplier, business partner or contractor to the Organization should also be disclosed.

3.01.23. If two employees form a close romantic relationship with each other, there is a possibility the relationship could lead to a conflict of interest situation or have the potential for harassment. The employees are required to declare the relationship to the Executive Director who is under an obligation to treat the information as confidential. Employees in a close romantic relationship should refrain from public displays of affection or excessive personal conversation in the workplace. Romantic relationships involving an employee and their direct manager are particularly sensitive and risky for both the Organization and the individuals involved. Should this situation arise, the relationship must be declared to the Executive Director, and the Organization may require position changes and/or reassignment. Position changes or reassignment undertaken by the Organization in this situation does not constitute constructive dismissal.

Gifts, Entertainment and Improper Payments

3.01.24. Business gifts and entertainment are often customary courtesies designed to build goodwill and constructive relationships among community and business partners. Employees should use good judgment when accepting gifts from customers and/or suppliers to ensure no undue influence affects the performance of their duties. Any gift given to an employee that exceeds \$200 in value must be reported to the Executive Director. Where possible, and to ensure that no conflict is perceived, employees may wish to share gifts received with others in AUGSA (e.g., holiday gift baskets) or politely decline the gift if it seems unusually excessive (e.g., an all-expense paid trip). Employees should discuss with their manager any gifts or proposed gifts about which they have any questions or concerns. Employees shall never give nor receive bribes or improper payments for the sake of receiving any business privilege or influence.

Guidance and Compliance to the Code

3.01.25. While the Code of Conduct covers a wide range of business practices and procedures and is a guide for responsible and ethical behaviour, it does not and cannot cover every issue that may arise. When there is uncertainty about actions or decisions, it is advisable to seek further guidance and support.

Internal Complaints

3.01.26. Employees are always encouraged to speak first to the Executive Director with any questions or concerns related to the Code. Often this is the most effective way of working through a question or concern. AUGSA encourages an open and honest environment in which any problem, concern, complaint, question, or suggestion can be brought forward to the Executive Director for serious consideration. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint in a reasonable, business-like manner.

3.01.27. In situations that are more challenging or of a more serious or sensitive nature, or in situations in which the Executive Director is not an appropriate or trusted contact, employees should contact the Confidential Employee Hotline (administered by 3rd part Salopek & Associates at 1-877-681-1232 or by email hotline@salopekconsulting.com or speak to a member of AUGSA Council.

Acknowledgement of and Revisions to the Code

3.01.28. All employees will be required to sign off on the Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A). The Code of Conduct, and its supporting policies, may be updated from time to time, with such changes being formally communicated and which will supersede existing policies or practices.

RELATED REFERENCES AND POLICIES

This Policy References

This Policy is Referenced by

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Executive Director

POLICY HISTORY

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