



**Athabasca University Graduate Students'
Association**

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AUGSA Minutes

September 12, 2017, 6:00pm

Web conference

Attendance:

Jamie Czerwinski, President

Lindsay McNena, Vice President External

Margaret Clappison, VP Operations & Finance

Ross Tyson, Executive Director

Mira Singh, VP Academic

Shawn Ang, Faculty of Business Representative

David Newman, Faculty of Business Representative

Melanie Fuller, Faculty of Health Disciplines Representative

Patrick Corbett, Faculty of Science & Technology Representative

Bob Cole, Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences Representative

Robert Janzen, Faculty of Science & Technology Representative

Vanessa Colettas, Faculty of Business Representative

Eric Snow, Speaker of Council

Absent:

Christopher Rudan, Faculty of Health Disciplines Representative

Emma Johnston, Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences Representative

Steve Swettenham, Faculty of Business

Shelby Guidi, Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences Representative

Regrets:

Reva Ramsden, Centre for Distance Education Representative

INDEX	MINUTES	Presenter
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1.0 Call to Order	Meeting called to order at 6:02 pm MT.	
2. Approval of Agenda	1) Motion: To approve the agenda as distributed. (Pres, VPEx) Carried Unanimously	
3. Approval of Previous Minutes	1) Motion: To approve the minutes of the August 15 as distributed: (Ang, VPEx) Carried Unanimously	
4.0 Reports and Presentations		
4.1 Presentation and questions from Dr. Alain Mays regarding Tuition Payments	<p>Dr. May presented the possible change to policy regarding tuition payment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning what other institutions are doing to prevent the costs of Munaris credit card fees. • Spoke with AUSU and internally as well as AUGSA. • Debit card only payment is a huge concern considering the size of fees at the Graduate level. • We have heard the message and are looking for alternatives. • Originally targeting Jan 1 solution but only the learning resource fee will change at that time. • The alternative will not be debit card only. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions• Q:What are the alternative options in addition to debit card payments.• A: Already have rolled out debit card payment at undergrad level.• Q: Debit card or bank transfer.• A: As I understand how it works we accept both Visa and MasterCard Debit. We will not set up as a payee.• Q: Could the payment deadline be changed so that those who anticipate student loans could pay later.• A: I will have to investigate that option.• Q: Communicating the changes needs to include descriptions of what other institutions are doing and that we are aligning...is that what is planned?• A: Absolutely. Communication is key. We haven't done any because we cannot yet describe what it is going to look like. As soon as we do, the communication will begin.• Q: Grad students need to manage many expenses. Currently credit card payment is common.• A: Different companies have different rates. We love the concept of negotiating the costs.• Q: PayPal?	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A: I will investigate this. The fees may be higher. • Q: Credit cards charge interest all along. Could you phase it in at entry level? The problem is that some will have to quit. • A: We have heard the challenges. The transition might take some time, but will depend on final solution. • Q: Benchmarking our University based on financial basis. Athabasca is quite different than others. • A: I can't say that our University type has not resonated with me. It is a pay as you go model. There is no student account like some Universities. This makes it different. • Q: Aligning with others is difficult since the models are different. • A: I think when we are only talking payment structures that it is well aligned. We have to take payment for courses. • Q: There is a big difference with Grad students. Too many bills • A: We heard that conversation. Lower fee limits, points, etc. Many more smaller issues. 	
<p>4.2 Executive Reports</p>	<p>The executive reported as attached.</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p>

<p>4.3 Financial Report</p>	<p>VPOF let us know that the organization is financially sound. We will be moving funds into restricted fund accounts.</p>	<p>VPOF</p>
<p>4.4 Newsletter Improvement Report</p>	<p>In terms of usage the newsletter is ten times as important as other forms of communication. In June we changed the format and received five times more newsletter openings.</p> <p>There will be a new format this coming month as well. Also we are going to make sure that we release it following exec team meetings, committee meetings, etc.</p>	<p>President</p>
<p>4.5 AU Sue and Derrick Rowlandson Memorial Award for Service Excellence Committee Report</p>	<p>Motion: To defer this item to next Council meeting.</p> <p>Pres, VPOF</p> <p>Carried</p>	<p>Emma Johnston</p>
<p>4.6 CASA Graduate Committee</p>	<p>VPEX reported on CASA graduate committee which is a small committee with only three organizations represented. We want to develop new policies and would love some additional input from AUGSA members. Meetings are twice monthly.</p>	<p>VP Ex</p>
<p>5.0 New Business</p>		
<p>5.1 Election of Faculty of Health Rep</p>	<p>Presentations were accepted from all nominees.</p>	
<p>5.2 Strategic Plan Approval</p>	<p>1) Motion 5.1: Be it resolved that AUGSA Council approves the Strategic Plan as distributed. (President, VPOF)</p> <p>Carried Unanimously</p> <p>A tactical plan will be forthcoming from Governance Committee. Thanks to participants and especially Shawn.</p>	

<p>5.3 Award for Graduate Conference</p>	<p>2) Motion 5.3: Be it resolved that AUGSA Council authorizes the Awards Committee and/or its appointee to disburse up to \$500 in awards to presenters at AU/AUGSA's Graduate Conference. (President, Ang)</p> <p>Carried Unanimously</p>	<p>President</p>
<p>6.0 Old Business</p>		
<p>6.1 Tuition Payment Options Advocacy Plan</p>	<p>3) Motion 6.1: Be it resolved that AUGSA Council approves the Tuition Payment Options Advocacy Plan as distributed. (President, Corbett)</p> <p>The mover recommended voting against the motion. This is not complete. There is a risk of damaging AU's brand with no result. We will stay looped in with Dr. May.</p> <p>Mr. Ang stated that we could carry through with the motion, to advocate for students. There is value in surveying a pulse from members.</p> <p>President: Potentially we could take another survey asking for options from students. This would require amending the plan.</p> <p>VPOF stated that we could get something ready to send out.</p> <p>Motion: To amend the motion: Be it resolved that AUGSA Council directs Executive Committee to present a revised Tuition Payment Options Advocacy plan to Council at its October meeting. (President, VPEX)</p> <p>Carried Unanimously</p> <p>The motion was carried unanimously.</p>	<p>President</p>

	The President will keep his ear to the action from Dr. May and will bring any information back to Council.	
7.0 Other Business		
8. Adjournment	Motion: To adjourn the meeting. (Corbett, President) Carried Unanimously The meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm.	Speaker

Jamie Czerwinski, President

Ross Tyson, Executive Director

Date of Approval