



**Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association**  
10818 Jasper Avenue  
PO Box 35092  
Edmonton, AB T5J 0B7

Phone: 1-866-625-5943

Fax: 780-497-7003

Web: <http://www.augsa.com>

---

## Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** April 17, 2012

**Place:** Web conference

**Time:** 6:30pm MST

**Attendance:**

Amanda Nielsen, President  
Greta Kirstein, VP External  
Rob Janzen, VP Academic  
Adam Chisholm, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) Rep  
Margot Van Sluytman, FHSS Rep  
Moiz Bhamani, Faculty of Business Rep  
Wilson Ho, Faculty of Business Rep  
Ric Wheeler, Faculty of Business Rep  
Steve Harris, Faculty of Science and Technology Rep  
Lorna Howieson, Speaker of Council  
Adam Snider, Coordinator

**Regrets:**

Eric Lavoie, Faculty of Health Disciplines Rep  
Meg Andronowska, Faculty of Health Disciplines Rep

**Absent:**

Jade Clarke, Centre for Distance Education Rep  
Sarah Gauvreau, Centre for Distance Education Rep  
Nathaniel Ostashewski, VP Operations & Finance

| INDEX                                     | MINUTES   | ACTION |
|---|---|--------|
| <b>1.0 – Call to Order</b>                | Meeting called to order at 6:36pm MST.  |        |
| <b>2.0 – Approval of Agenda</b>           | <b>MOTION: To approve the agenda as presented.</b><br>(Janzen / Kirstein) Unanimously carried.                            |        |
| <b>3.0 – Approval of Previous Minutes</b> | <b>MOTION: To approve the February 15, 2012 meeting minutes as presented.</b> (Janzen / Kirstein)<br>Unanimously carried. |        |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | <p><b>MOTION: To approve the March 21, 2012 meeting minutes as presented.</b> (Chisholm / Harris)<br/>         Unanimously carried.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>4.0 – Non-instructional Fee Policy Presentation and Q&amp;A</b></p>                   | <p>Dr. Haughey was unable to attend this evening, so the formal Q&amp;A session with her will be held at the next council meeting.</p> <p>The AUGSA President presented information to the Council regarding mandatory non-instructional fees based on the attached briefing note.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>5.0 – Reports</b></p>   |  |  |
| <p><b>5.1 – Executive Reports (February &amp; March)</b></p>                                | <p>The Executive Committee presented their monthly reports for the months of February and March.</p> <p>The VPOF did not present his reports, as he was not in attendance. His written reports were distributed to the Council for review.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>5.2 – Financial Report / Audit Update (February &amp; March)</b></p>                  | <p>The VPOF was absent and did not submit a written financial report or audit update.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>5.3 – Awards Committee Report</b></p>   | <p>The President presented the Awards Committee Chair’s report on her behalf.</p> <p><b>MOTION: That the GSA Council table the 2011/2012 awards report for review by the 2012/2013 Awards Committee to determine if relevant Awards Committee policy revisions should be made.</b> (Nielsen / Janzen) Unanimously carried.</p> |  |
| <p><b>5.4 – CASA Annual General Meeting &amp; AUGSA Halifax Meet &amp; Greet Report</b></p> | <p>The VP External presented a report on the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations’ (CASA) annual general meeting, as well as on the AUGSA Meet &amp; Greet event that was held in Halifax during the week of the AGM.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>6.0 – Unfinished Business</b></p>   |  |  |
| <p><b>6.1 – Alumni Awards Selection Committee</b></p>                                       | <p><b>MOTION: That the AUGSA appoint Margot Von Sluytman to the AU Alumni Awards Selection Committee.</b> (Janzen / Chisholm) Unanimously carried.</p>   |  |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>6.2 – Chief Returning Officer’s Recommendations &amp; Elections / Referenda Process (Discussion Item)</b></p> | <p><b>MOTION: That this item be tabled until the next meeting.</b> (Nielsen / Chisholm) Unanimously carried.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>6.3 – Motion Regarding Health &amp; Dental Plan Referendum</b></p>  | <p>The VP Academic withdrew the motion from consideration.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>7.0 – New Business</b></p>  |   |  |
| <p><b>7.1 – Resolution on Adopting Associate Membership in CASA</b></p>   | <p><b>MOTION: That item 7.1 be tabled until December 2012 for consideration by the GSA Council at that time.</b> (Kirstein / Janzen) Unanimously carried.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>7.2 – Motion Regarding AGC Conference Award</b></p>   | <p><b>MOTION: That the AUGSA create one-time award(s) of up to \$1,500 to be presented for the best academic poster presentation by an Athabasca University graduate student at the Second Annual Alberta Graduate Conference in May of 2012.</b> (Nielsen / Harris) Unanimously carried.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>7.3 – ASEC Prospective Membership (Discussion Item)</b></p>   | <p><b>MOTION: That we suspend the orders of the day and consider items 7.4 and 7.5 before this item.</b> (Nielsen / Kirstein) Unanimously carried.</p> <p>Upon returning to this item, the follow motion was made:</p> <p><b>MOTION: That this item be tabled until the next meeting.</b> (Janzen / Harris) Unanimously carried.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>7.4 – Motion Regarding iPad Purchase</b></p>  | <p><b>MOTION: That the AUGSA spend up to \$850 to purchase an iPad for the GSA President.</b> (Janzen / Kirstein) Unanimously carried.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>7.5 – Resolution Regarding Support for the AU President and Board of Governors</b></p>                        | <p>The following resolution was moved and seconded (Janzen / Harris):</p> <p><b>Whereas</b> the Athabasca University Graduate Students’ Association (AUGSA) supports the Board of Governors of Athabasca University and the Athabasca University President,</p> <p><b>Be it resolved</b> that the AUGSA shall officially disagree with the decision to call for the Board</p> |  |

|                             |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
|                             | <p>of Governors to take action against President Frits Pannekoek made by the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) and the Athabasca University Faculty Association (AUFA);</p> <p><b>Be it further resolved</b> that the AUGSA supports Dr. Frits Pannekoek retaining his role as the Athabasca University President.</p> <p>The resolution was unanimously carried.</p> |  |
| <b>8.0 – Other Business</b> | No other business.   |  |
| <b>9.0 – Adjournment</b>    | <p><b>MOTION: That the meeting be adjourned.</b> (Janzen / Wheeler) Unanimously carried.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 8:36pm.</p>   |  |

---

Amanda Nielsen, President

---

Adam Snider, Coordinator

---

Date of Approval

# Briefing Note on the Stance of Alberta's Students' Associations Regarding Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees

---

## What are mandatory non-instructional fees?

Mandatory non-instructional fees are any fees a post-secondary institution levies on students which are not directly related to tuition or learning resources, from which students are unable to opt-out. An example of a mandatory non-instructional fee would be a building construction fee that students must pay, but which does not cover costs that are directly related to instruction (such as faculty salaries, research materials, library resources, etc.).

These fees have been proposed and/or passed at a number of colleges and universities in the province. One example is the Student Services fee at the University of Calgary, which is a \$300 mandatory fee on top of regular tuition costs (Anderson, 2012).

While non-instructional fees are often necessary in order to fund the university, many of Alberta's student associations are critical of the fact that the fees are currently unregulated, seeing them as little more than tuition in disguise. According to the Canadian University Press, these fees are seen by many a loophole for schools to get around the fact that tuition cannot be raised beyond CPI (i.e., the Consumer Price Index; the rate of inflation) without special approval from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology (Eldridge, 2010).

## What are the province's student associations saying?

### Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS)

CAUS represents the undergraduate students' unions at the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge. CAUS has developed a policy regarding mandatory non-instructional fees that they have lobbied on for the past two years. The policy can be found on their website at: <http://www.caus.net/docs/P-MandatoryFees.pdf>.

In brief, the policy states that the Government of Alberta should regulate mandatory non-instructional fees such that all new mandatory non-instructional fees, as well as increases to such fees that already exist, should be capped at CPI. Under the policy that CAUS proposes, any increase in mandatory non-instructional fees beyond CPI would require a student referendum.

### Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC)

ASEC represents students studying at colleges, polytechnic institutions, and some universities. Their membership includes, among others, students' associations from NAIT, MacEwan University, SAIT, Red

Deer College, and Mount Royal University. This year, the Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) joined ASEC as a prospective member.

ASEC's stance is essentially the same as that of CAUS, but it is somewhat stricter, in that they would like to see "regulations for all non-academic and ancillary fees [embedded] into the *Tuition Fee Regulation*" (ASEC, 2011). This would mean that increases to mandatory non-academic fees would be capped at CPI in the same way that tuition increases are. The difference between the ASEC policy and the CAUS policy is that ASEC's policy, as written, would not allow for increases beyond CPI to be put to a student referendum—they simply could not happen.

ASEC's full policy can be found on their website at: <http://www.albertastudents.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Albertas-Future-Our-Present.pdf>.

### **Alberta Graduate Council (AGC)**

AGC represents the graduate students studying at Alberta's four research-intensive universities: Athabasca University, and the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, and Lethbridge.

AGC does not have an official policy statement on non-instructional fees.

### **References:**

Alberta Students' Executive Council. (2011). *Post-Secondary Education: Alberta's Future, Our Present*. Edmonton, AB.

Anderson, S. (2012, March 1). Student Services fee remains at \$300. *The Gauntlet*. Retrieved from <http://thegauntlet.ca/story/16179>

Council of Alberta University Students. (n.d.). *Non-Instructional Mandatory Fees*. Edmonton, AB.

Eldridge, A. (2010, August 20). Alberta students march to the legislature. *CUP Newswire*. Retrieved from <http://newswire.cup.ca/articles/29191>