



ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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# Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA)

*STRATEGIC PLAN*  
*2019 – 2022*

*Prepared: August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019*

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## A Message from the President

*It is with pleasure that I present to you the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan for the Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA). Representing more than 4,000 graduate students, AUGSA provides services and advocacy that enhances the graduate experience at Athabasca University (AU). The Strategic Planning Committee, the Executive Committee, and Council have worked diligently in gathering feedback on student expectations and needs. Through this consultative process, newly defined values and strategic priorities intend to strengthen AUGSA's commitment to the graduate experience and graduates' success at AU.*

*A 2019 survey of AUGSA Members has laid the foundation for AUGSA's strategic plan. Increased visibility of services and delivering increased value has become the focus for AUGSA. AUGSA currently offers many services that our graduate students can take advantage of but are not presently aware, emphasizing the need for AUGSA to strengthen communications. From bursaries and awards, student support, advocacy, graduate student research conference, professional services, engagements, and more, AUGSA provides a portfolio of services designed to help facilitate and navigate the landscape of online learning. Our AUGSA Members are invested in graduate studies largely for career progression and at the same time seeking work-life balance. AUGSA plans to extend its support to meet graduate students' broader goals through the added delivery of career support services, awards, professional services, and continued advocacy.*

*Through this strategic plan, we look to our futures. Continuous improvement coupled with key deliverables, AUGSA is committed to supporting AU graduate student's lives, communities, and academic journeys.*



*Sincerely,*

*Meaghan Sullivan, MBA Student  
President  
Athabasca University Graduate Students Association*

## Our Customers and Stakeholders

### *INTERNAL CUSTOMERS AND STAKEHOLDERS*

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- Executive Director (ED)
- Executive Committee (EC)
- Councilors
- Internal committees as assigned by AUGSA Council processes and policies
- AU Graduate Students (AUGSA Members)

### *EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS AND STAKEHOLDERS*

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- Athabasca University (AU)
- External committees as assigned through AU and AUGSA collaboration
- Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA)
- Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab GPAC)
- Government of Alberta
- Athabasca University Students Union (AUSU)
- General Public



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## Core Principles

### *OUR MISSION*

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AUGSA's mission statement specifies the mechanisms by which AUGSA will achieve its vision. It provides a scope for how AUGSA's vision will be attained.

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*AUGSA provides services and advocacy in pursuit of an accessible, affordable, and quality Graduate Student experience at Athabasca University.*

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### *OUR VISION*

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AUGSA's vision statement sets the high-level direction and justification for AUGSA's operations. All AUGSA's activities should be consistent with the attainment of the following vision statement.

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*Delivering programs and services in support of a graduate student learning community, while navigating AU's distributed learning environment.*

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### *OUR VALUES*

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AUGSA is committed to its core principles that shape the culture and the organization's operational decision making. The core principles of AUGSA are as follows:

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*Communication*  
*Continuous Improvement*  
*Engagement*  
*Inclusivity*  
*Integrity*

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## Strategic Goals

To maximize the probability of success, AUGSA will focus on a three strategic goals, supported by strategies, actions and success measures. These goals and strategies are a response to feedback from our student body, current events and opportunities.

The goals of AUGSA for 2019-2022 are:

<i>GOAL 1</i>	<b>TO CONNECT WITH AU GRADUATE STUDENTS THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES</b>
<i>GOAL 2</i>	<b>WORK WITH AU TO CREATE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AMONG GRADUATE STUDENTS THAT PROMOTES LEARNING AND COLLABORATION</b>
<i>GOAL 3</i>	<b>REPRESENT AUGSA IN PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL STUDENT ADVOCACY ASSOCIATIONS</b>

## AUGSA Strategies

### *GOAL 1 TO CONNECT WITH AU GRADUATE STUDENTS THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES*

<i>STRATEGY 1.1</i>	Development of communications
<i>STRATEGY 1.2</i>	Review and development of service offerings
<i>STRATEGY 1.3</i>	Review of operational needs

### *GOAL 2 WORK WITH AU TO CREATE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AMONG GRADUATE STUDENTS THAT PROMOTES LEARNING AND COLLABORATION*

<i>STRATEGY 2.1</i>	Continue to build relationships and collaborate with Athabasca University
<i>STRATEGY 2.2</i>	Work with AU to deliver and enhance the graduate student experience

### *GOAL 3 REPRESENT GRADUATE STUDENTS AND AUGSA IN PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL STUDENT ADVOCACY ASSOCIATIONS*

<i>STRATEGY 3.1</i>	Represent AUGSA's stakeholders within abGPAC
<i>STRATEGY 3.2</i>	Represent AUGSA's stakeholders within CASA



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## Action Plan

### ***GOAL 1: TO CONNECT WITH AU GRADUATE STUDENTS THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES***

#### ***STRATEGY 1.1 DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS***

SUPPORTING ASSOCIATIONS,  
DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS  
AND/OR PROGRAMS

Executive Committee, Executive Director, Council,  
Graduate Students

<b>Initiatives and Action Steps</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Metrics</b>
Recruitment of Communications Coordinator	President	Approved job description, Employed personnel
Implementation of communications strategy	Communications Coordinator	Strategy developed and approved
Implementation of engagement plan	VP External	Number of meet and greets, engagement success measures

#### ***STRATEGY 1.2 REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE OFFERINGS***

SUPPORTING ASSOCIATIONS,  
DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS  
AND/OR PROGRAMS

Executive Committee, Executive Director, Council,  
Graduate Students, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Sponsors

<b>Initiatives and Action Steps</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Metrics</b>
Enhance awards portfolio process and procedures	VP Academic	Updated procedures
Implement contracted delivery of career and professional services	President	Signed contract
Deliver annual graduate student research conference	Steering Committee	Event Evaluation





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Continue student advocacy efforts	Executive Committee, Council	Provincial and federal budgets, lobby meetings, AU committee work
Assessment to administer professional development training (PDU's), and peer-to-peer voluntary mentorship program, legal services	Executive Committee	Assessment and Recommendations

**STRATEGY 1.3 REVIEW OF OPERATIONS**

SUPPORTING ASSOCIATIONS, DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS AND/OR PROGRAMS	Council, Executive Committee, Executive Director, Graduate Students	
<b>Initiatives and Action Steps</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Metrics</b>
Strike labour relations committee to review current AUGSA roles and operational needs	Labour Relations Committee	Final recommendations
Review of governance structures	Governance Committee	Approval of updates

**GOAL 2: WORK WITH AU TO CREATE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AMONG GRADUATE STUDENTS THAT PROMOTES LEARNING AND COLLABORATION**

**STRATEGY 2.1 CONTINUE TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND COLLABORATE WITH ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**

SUPPORTING ASSOCIATIONS, DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS AND/OR PROGRAMS	Council, Executive Committee, Executive Director, Graduate Students, GSRC Working Committees, FGS	
<b>Initiatives and Action Steps</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Metrics</b>
Deliver annual Graduate Student Research Conference (GSRC)	Steering Committee	Conference surveys, number of presenters and attendees, budget



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		and financial statement
Establish structured communications with key AU personnel, and AU access points (ie. MyAU, scheduled quarterly and bi-annual meetings with key AU roles)	Communications Coordinator	Communications Register Implemented, Access Points for AUGSA Increased

**STRATEGY 2.2 WORK WITH AU TO DELIVER AND ENHANCE THE GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

SUPPORTING ASSOCIATIONS, DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS AND/OR PROGRAMS	Council, Executive Committee, Executive Director, Graduate Students, Athabasca University
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Initiatives and Action Steps	Resources	Metrics
Continue to increase presence at convocation, orientations, and other AU-ran events	Executive Committee	Annual survey, communication with AU, number of events attended
Maintain and improve a presence on faculty councils, standing committees within AU, as well as ad hoc committees, that affect graduate student	Executive Committee	Number of committees AUGSA sits on, invitations to sit on ad hoc committees

**GOAL 3: REPRESENT AUGSA IN PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL STUDENT ADVOCACY ASSOCIATIONS**

**STRATEGY 3.1 REPRESENT AUGSA'S STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN ABGPAC**

SUPPORTING ASSOCIATIONS, DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS AND/OR PROGRAMS	Council, Executive Committee, Executive Director, Graduate Students, CASA, abGPAC, Provincial Government, Federal Government, Alberta Innovates
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Initiatives and Action Steps	Resources	Metrics
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Understand the barriers and the required strategic advocacy initiatives of the graduate student body at Athabasca University.	VP Academic, External Designates	Attendance at Faculty and Board of Governor meetings,  All other committees attended by AUGSA members
Engage in strategic planning, priorities, policy development, and distributed committee work.	VP External, President	Attendance, Committee Work/Meetings, Outside feedback regarding abGPAC
Participate in advocacy meetings and collaborations with provincial stakeholders on defined graduate student priorities.	VP External, President	Attendance  Committee Work and Membership

**STRATEGY 3.2 REPRESENT AUGSA'S STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN CASA**

SUPPORTING ASSOCIATIONS, DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS AND/OR PROGRAMS	Council, Executive Committee, Executive Director, Graduate Students, CASA, abGPAC, Provincial Government, Federal Government, Alberta Innovates
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Initiatives and Action Steps	Resources	Metrics
Understand the barriers and the required strategic advocacy initiatives of the graduate student body at Athabasca University.	VP Academic, External Designates	Attendance at Faculty and Board of Governor meetings,  All other committees attended by AUGSA members
Engage in strategic planning, priorities, policy development, and distributed committee work.	VP External, External Delegates	Attendance, Committee Work/Meeting, Outside feedback regarding CASA



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Participate in the 2019 Get Out The Vote national campaign.

VP External,  
External  
Delegates

Attendance,  
Committee  
Work/Meeting,  
Outside feedback  
regarding CASA



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## Organizational Chart

