



December 2015 News

President's Message:



This was a busy month as both AbGPAC and CASA met to set our priorities for the coming year.

Graduate student leaders from Alberta met in Lethbridge for AbGPAC's annual general meeting. In a strategic planning session we outlined a plan for the next 5 years. We agreed that we want to affect change in several areas including labour relations between graduate students and supervisors, immigration policy for graduate students, fair tuition policies (including mandatory non-instructional fees), funding for mental health and professional development programs, and a province-wide quality assurance program.

We also had the opportunity to meet with Lisa Fox from the Ministry of Advanced Education to discuss upcoming changes to the Post-Secondary Learning Act. The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled on a case regarding the right to strike in post-secondary education and the outcome is a need to make changes to the PSLA to allow graduate students (TAs and RAs) and faculty the right to strike. There is an on-going consultation process and the meeting with Lisa Fox gave us the chance to share our concerns and ask questions about the process. On November 19th three representatives from AbGPAC participated in a round table discussion with the ministry and our position was supported by the group.

The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations met in Halifax to set lobby priorities for the next year and develop committee work plans. When we meet with MP's in February we will be focusing our advocacy on four topics; financial aid and loan repayment, unemployment and entrepreneurship, access and services for equity seeking groups (which includes those with disabilities, northern and rural students, mature students, as well as students from diverse backgrounds), and issues around research. These priorities should have a direct impact on AUGSA members and I am looking forward to advocating on policies that are of importance to our members and students across the country.

As November comes to a close and we are all becoming busier with classes, family, and holiday demands please take some time to relax and recharge for your own well-being. AUGSA executives and staff will be on a "slow down" over the holiday period starting December 21st and returning to regular duties on January 4th.

Cynthia Gordon
President
Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association

Student Life Line: This service offered to you on behalf of AUGSA.

Student Life Line offers monthly links to help you in a number of areas of your life.

Click the link below to access a PDF e-flyer containing a description of the topic, as well as your link to the resource.

[Tackling Your To-Do List \(PDF\)](#)

[Giving Back \(PDF\)](#)

Simply log in **user name: AUGSA** and **password: wellness** to log in to your program website.

Ceridian EAP/EFAP is here for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with expert help for work, life and everything in between.

See Student VIP options at: <https://www.studentvip.ca/augsa/>

OohLaLa Mobile App: Just a reminder to download the Athabasca University Students mobile app to your smart phone if you have not already done so. Simply search **Athabasca University Students** at your app store. We are very pleased at the number of students accessing this free resource offered by AUGSA and AUSU to our students.

Faculty of Graduate Studies News:

AU Library

The Library is offering a free webinar via Adobe Connect for students from 6-7pm MT on Wednesday, December 2. To see the date and time in your time zone, click here:

<http://tinyurl.com/dec2lib>.

The webinar will provide an orientation and overview of the Library and the services it offers. All students are welcome to attend.

The Adobe Connect link is: <https://athabascau.adobeconnect.com/library/>. Please log in as a guest.

The recording will be available shortly after the session at:

<http://library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html>.

Major topics include:

Overview of AU Library collection (books, e-books, journal articles, databases etc.) Services available to students Tour of the Library website Basic search for journal articles Using the Library catalogue Finding full text journal articles from a citation Getting help for writing, citing, and research Reference librarians (an amazing resource available to students!)

Questions can be directed to Jennifer Rempel (jrempel@athabascau.ca; 780-675-6257) or Burke Mortimer (burkem@athabascau.ca; 780-675-6232).

AU Student Awards

As a reminder, AU's Students Awards Program offers the following two awards to support dissemination/presentation opportunities for AU graduate students:

[Graduate Level Student Travel Awards](#)

[Profiling Alberta's Graduate Students](#)

More information on these two awards is available at

[Student Awards](#).